

TradeTalk

no. 2



We're Back!

with

Tiskos

Kustria

The Boristi Church

Scenario: Restless Death

Strange Broo

TRADE TALK

Tradetalk is an amateur magazine dedicated to the role-playing game *RuneQuest*, the World of Glorantha and all related games. All contents of this magazine are made by fans of this game and is not official, unless otherwise stated.

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IN OUR NEXT ISSUE: EAST RALIOS

Including Ralian Myths,
Kolar's Visit to Ralios,
the obscure Stygian
religion of Otkorion
and much more!

CHANGES

This is the second issue of Tradetalk, but it's very different from Tradetalk #1. A lot has been changed since our first issue was published. The first Tradetalk reprinted material from Free INT, the magazine of the German RuneQuest Society (officially the "RuneQuest-Gesellschaft"), but as the flagship publication of the international Chaos Society, Tradetalk is no longer simply 'the best of Free INT'. It's now a magazine of its own, covering RuneQuest, Glorantha and related games. Future issues will include occasional material from Free INT (which continues to be published and has been renamed 'Schattenklinge'), but the majority of material will come from members of the Chaos Society and independent authors around the world. We'll cover mostly Glorantha and RuneQuest material, but each issue will have at least one article about Call of Cthulhu, Elric!, Nephilim or Hawkmoon.

Publishing Schedule

From now on, Tradetalk is published on a regular basis - with a target of three issues per year. If we're forced to make a choice we'll emphasise quantity over quality, but we'll try our very best to print the highest quality material possible in Tradetalk. We hope that you'll like it and use it.

The main purpose of Tradetalk is to give role-players useful material for the games they play. Avalon Hill has produced little new Gloranthan material over the years; they may publish more RuneQuest supplements in the future, but these will not include Glorantha material. Chaosium has announced plans to produce 'Glorantha: The Game', but not before 1998. Right now, the only sources of new material for Gloranthan/RQ role-players are magazines such as *Tales of the Reaching Moon*, *The Book of Drastic Resolutions*, *RuneQuest Adventures*, *Codex*, and others.

Our intention in Tradetalk is to publish material suitable for beginners. That's not to say that gamers experienced with Glorantha won't find Tradetalk interesting, but the goal is to provide articles and scenarios that won't require extensive research and work to be useful. Each issue will include at least one adventure for RuneQuest. This issue features 'The Restless Death' by Shannon Appel.

Another change is our new editor. Tom Zunder has retired as editor of Tradetalk and Ingo Tschinke has taken over the job. Our thanks to Tom Zunder for his great work in creating Tradetalk #1! Without him the RuneQuest-Gesellschaft/Chaos Society wouldn't have started the Tradetalk project in 1996, and you might not be reading this.

By the way, if you'd like more information about the RuneQuest-Gesellschaft/Chaos Society take a look at the article 'The Birth of Chaos' in this issue.

WHY TRADETALK?

Many readers may be wondering why this magazine is called Tradetalk. The reason is actually quite simple: the RuneQuest Society has been producing Free INT (Schattenklinge) magazine in German for six years now. But over time we found that most RuneQuest/Glorantha fans didn't read our magazine, because the vast majority of them couldn't read German. Since more than 90% of official RuneQuest/Glorantha material is written in English, it was clear that we had a problem reaching our natural readership! Jörg Baumgartner therefore declared English to be the effective equivalent of Tradetalk for RQ/Glorantha fans on Earth. It's the one language that almost every interested gamer in every country understands. The decision to name the new magazine of the international Chaos Society 'Tradetalk' was obvious - and irresistible.

This And Upcoming Issues

This issue focuses on the western part of Safelster, which lies in western Genertela. It includes descriptions of the realms of Tiskos and Kustria, information about special religions and places, and more. The upcoming issue, Tradetalk #3, will cover the east of Safelster and the myths of Ralios. Future issues will cover Sartar, the Dragonewts, the Lunar Empire, Maniria and Prax. Contributions on any aspect of Glorantha, especially adventures and artwork, are very welcome. But we're also interested in material covering related Chaosium games and articles on generic roleplaying issues such as how to create a scenario, achieving 'Maximum Game Fun', designing interesting NPCs, etc.

CHAOSIUM

Tradetalk primarily covers the products of Chaosium Inc. That's no accident. One of the principal goals of the Chaos Society is to support RuneQuest, Glorantha and related games. But since we've decided to widen our field of interest, we now also support all Chaosium products. In exchange we have the moral support of Chaosium and of Greg Stafford, who is one of our members of honour.

Submit your
free Classified
Ad's for the
next issue !

Write of Passage

We're eager to hear your opinions on Tradetalk. Comments and letters to the editor can be emailed to me, Ingo Tschinke, at tschinke@nordwest.de Send paper mail to:

Ingo Tschinke
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Germany

Your feedback will help us improve the magazine. If we get enough letters, we'll add a Letters to the Editor feature in Tradetalk #3.

Enjoy the issue!
Ingo

THEIR SEPARATE WAYS

Not long before this issue went to press Chaosium released the following announcement:

Chaosium Inc.
950 56th Street
Oakland, CA 94608
(510) 547-7681 phone, (510) 595-2445 fax

Press Release:

Chaosium and Avalon Hill have officially ended their fourteen year business relationship. The trademark "RuneQuest" and the rules to the RuneQuest role-playing game are now the sole property of Avalon Hill. Chaosium Inc. will not ever produce RuneQuest again. All of the rights to Glorantha remain the sole property of Chaosium Inc. Avalon Hill will continue to sell the Glorantha products it has in stock, but no future Avalon Hill publications shall be Glorantha.

When asked for a comment, Chaosium president Greg Stafford stated, "This is another step in our own development of a full line of Glorantha games and books. Avalon Hill can now pursue their own development and creative freedom with the RuneQuest line, and we wish them good luck with it."

Shortly thereafter Avalon Hill announced the split via the Internet.

Press Release:

Avalon Hill Acquires RuneQuest
From: ahruneq@aol.com (AH RuneQ)
Date: 1997/03/13

Avalon Hill Acquires All RuneQuest® Rights
Baltimore, MD - Avalon Hill Game Company has concluded a buyout of the RuneQuest® role-playing system. The company has been marketing RuneQuest and related products since 1984. "We are very pleased to have made this acquisition from Chaosium, the systems original owner," according to Mark Hall, AH VP Sales and R&D. "We part ways with them on excellent terms and wish them the best of luck with Glorantha®, a property they are retaining."

Followers of RuneQuest will be pleased to learn that the systems future is very bright. While the role-playing category is quite flat at this time, there are thousands of devotees of this type of game who will look forward to an innovative and fresh approach to RuneQuest. They will be comforted by the knowledge that Avalon Hill's plans are to support it with additional campaign material, new scenarios, and accessories. "It's too early to say when the new products will debut but we plan to keep the industry informed of our progress," said Hall.

Obviously this is a major change in the hobby and the end of an era for RuneQuest. It's far too early to know what it portends for the future, but as the events unfold Tradetalk will stay on top of them.

UPCOMING GLORANTHAN CONVENTIONS

GLORANTHA-CON V

July 25-27, 1997; Victoria, BC, Canada; Guest of Honour are Greg Stafford, Sandy Petersen, Nick Brooke, MOB, David Hall, Chris Gidlow and Stephen Martin. The featured LARP's are 'Life of Moonson', 'The Fall of the House of Malan', and 'Revolt in the Redlands'. This gala event is co-sponsored by the Society for Interactive Literature and the Seattle Farmers Collective. It's being held with help from Chaosium and the Reaching Moon Megacorp.

All this is in the lush and idyllic setting of the University of Victoria campus. The basic costs are US \$40 plus lodging. Contact: Neil Robinson, 2996 Dysart Rd. BC, V9A 2K2, Canada, Email: nrobinso@direct.ca

GLORANTHA-CON VI

Tentatively planned for January 1998 in Melbourne, Australia (the Washington DC Con is now cancelled). This time around they'll be having big chairs to sit on and, by popular demand, lots of BEER!!! The featured LARP is likely to be Life of Moonson. Guests are yet to be confirmed, but Michael O'Brien, David Hall, and Nick Brooke are all possibilities!

CONVULSION '98

July 24th to 27th, 1998 at College Hall, Leicester University. Rooms are expected to be less than £20 pounds B&B per night. Guests of Honour include Greg Stafford, Sandy Petersen, David Hall, and Nick Brooke. The featured LARP will be Life of Moonson. Contact: Lewis Jardine, 43 Windermere, Liden, Swindon, Wilts, SN3 6JZ, UK.

Email: Jardine@RMCS.Cranfield.ac.uk



TISKOS

BY PAOLO GUCCIONE

The Gloranthan West has been largely neglected in Avalon Hill publications to date. It is described only superficially in the English version of *Genertela - Crucible of the Hero Wars*. The description is hardly sufficient to run an adventure there, let alone a campaign, without substantial preparation. Issue #13 ("Go West") of *Tales of the Reaching Moon* provided a foundation for further exploration of the West, a development that started with the LARP *How the West was One*. In

Germany, the LARP *Rise of Ralios* added more information, published in the booklet *The World's Greatest Tournament*. However, all of this information is still just a small step towards providing a solid basis for planning a campaign in the West. This article describes one of the many city-states which surround Lake Felster, in the Gloranthan region of Ralios. The political and religious situation described here refers to the years ranging from 1621 to 1625.

Paolo Guccione

has been playing RQ since 1987, and Glorantha since 1990. He maintains a web page at <http://www.geco.it/~guccione> where you can find more about this topic and others, both in English and in Italian.

DESCRIPTION

Tiskos is a large city on the southern shores of Lake Felster, surrounded by many fields and hilly terrain. A small river, also named Tiskos, enters the lake in the city harbour area and creates a small swamp just outside of the city walls. This river is a branch of the Estali river delta. Tiskos is the capitol and largest city of the county of the same name. Well-situated as a junction for land and water trade routes, this city has been acquiring increased importance as a trading centre in the Safelster area over past centuries. The surrounding countryside houses a flourishing agricultural base, which provides raw materials for trading and manufacturing in the urban area. Many more small trade centres exist along the way to the nearby city-states of Azilos and Estali, and one town, Holy March, has been founded along the trail to the sacred ruin of Hrelar Amali in order to serve as a way station for pilgrims.

Culture

Tiskos is a perfect example of the Safelstran culture. Western and Theyalan traits have found many points of contact in this city.

INHABITANTS

The denizens of Tiskos are all humans of Wareran stock. The population originated from both the surrounding barbarian lands and repeated Seshnelan invasions. Population density is high throughout the county, especially in the area around the city.

Language

The spoken language is Safelstran. Tiskos speech has only minor differences from that of other cities, allowing undisturbed communication with citizens of other Safelstran states. People born in a Lightbringer-worshipping family of the Henotheist Church can often speak Ralian, a Theyalan language, as well as some cult language such as Stormspeech. Despite the general scorn exhibited by the noble class towards the old speech of the evil God Learners, the growing influence of the merchant middle classes has forced a lot of nobles to learn at least the basics of Tradetalk, which most merchants and artisans can speak fluently.

GOVERNMENT

The current government form is an elective monarchy. When the city needs a new ruler, the High Council elects one. The winner has always been a Rokari baron so far. This is probably due to the claim of descent from the Kingdom of Seshnela. The increased power of the Guilds and the fact that some of them are affiliated to the Henotheist Church may produce odd results the next time an election is called. The current ruler, however, is rather despotic and contemptuous of traditional ways and his heir is likely to seize the throne at his death rather than calling an election, thus initiating a new dynasty.

The Count is aided in his duties by the High Council, formed by representatives of the nobles, the clergy and in more recent times, the merchants. Seats on the Council are divided: one for the Count, one for each of the twelve barons, one for the high priest of each of the major temples (Rokari, Henotheist, High Priestess of Ernalda and Ralia) and one for the master of each of the seven major guilds. Since there is strict co-operation between religious authorities and supporters among the nobles, the noble component largely outnumbers the artisan component when the interests of the two are in competition. Nevertheless, the Count has become more and more respectful of the merchants' point of view over the past few years.

HISTORY

Tiskos was founded about 1150 years ago, when Arkat's Dark Empire was at its height. During the twelve centuries of its existence, it was once sacked and destroyed by invading enemies when the Empire collapsed because of disunity among different races. The inhabitants rebuilt the town, and over the last 400 years it has known many sieges but no defeats.

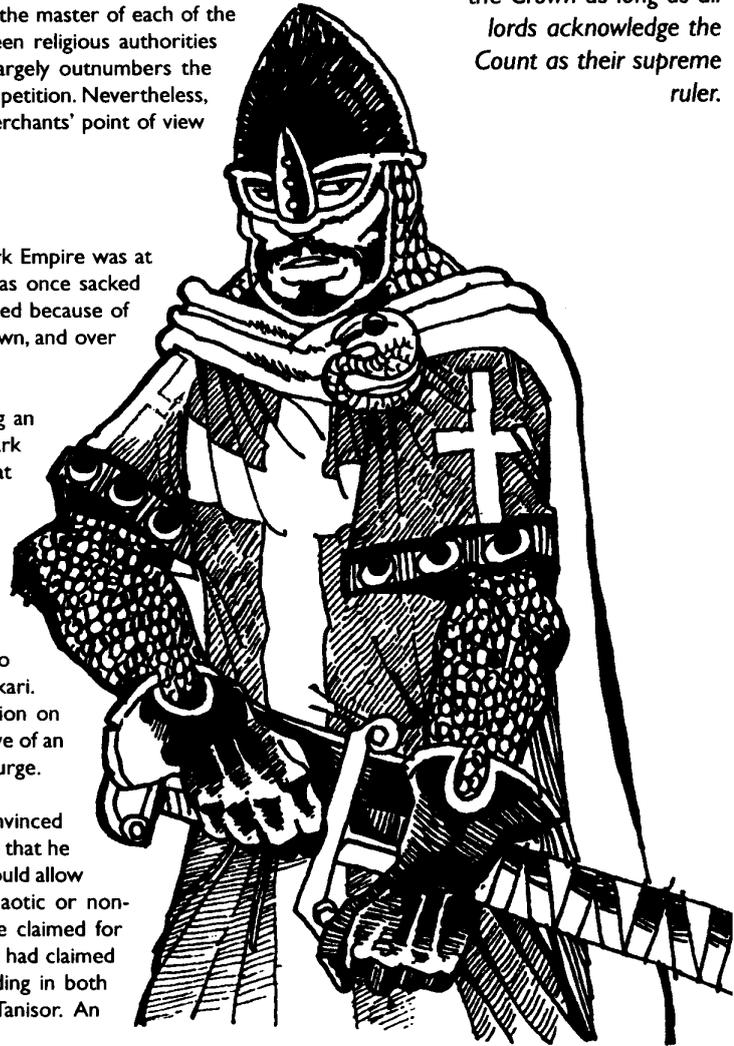
In 1500, a crisis arose when the Count died without leaving an heir. Technically, the county should have returned to the Dark Emperor, but there was no one who claimed the title at that time. The Rokari barons wanted the new Count designated by the King of Seshnela, while the Stygian nobles maintained that the Count should rule on behalf of the Dark Emperor. A civil war was on the verge of breaking out when a solution was found: the new ruler would be elected by the nobles, and it would be his decision what state religion to adopt. Unfortunately, although most of the populace belonged to various Stygian sects, the majority of the barons were Rokari. This discrepancy was the legacy of the last Seshnelan invasion on the part of Ulianus III. The Stygian Barons faced the prospective of an unpleasant reunification with Tanisor, or at least a religious purge.

Nevertheless, an ambitious Rokari noble named Hangalor convinced the Stygian nobles to support him in the election by swearing that he would keep the land independent from Tanisor and that he would allow all beliefs in the city, assuming nobody would worship chaotic or non-human deities. Thus he became the first elected Count. He claimed for himself the title of Prince of Eastern Seshnela which nobody had claimed since the death of Vikard of the Tournaments, thus succeeding in both making the county Rokari and keeping it independent from Tanisor. An era of splendour and tolerance began.

Hangalor decided that the old city fortifications enclosed too small an area for the many new denizens who had settled there in hope of good trading opportunities, and so started the construction of a second circle of strong walls. The inner walls, which had previously withstood so many battles, were left as crumbling ruins, reminders of the city's glorious past. A new city developed from the peasant buildings that had been built outside the old walls, and by the time the new walls were complete several new districts had filled the enlarged area almost completely. A Rokari Cathedral was erected in the New city to rival the ancient Henotheist Cathedral of Old Tiskos, and missionaries from Seshnela once again spread the word of Rokarism. Two huge merchant quarters housed manufacturing activities which had been previously unknown, and artisans formed powerful and well-organised guilds whose masters' residences rivalled noble mansions in wealth and splendour. A new port was built and an area was reserved for farmers who wished to sell their goods in the city.

As a result of these developments the merchant class became almost as powerful as the nobles, and so the county became weaker for lack of unity of intents, like all Safelster regions.

The countryside is ruled by feudal nobility. Each noble family has its own small domain, swearing loyalty in turn to the lord of their shire. This is tolerated by the Crown as long as all lords acknowledge the Count as their supreme ruler.



“An important and often elaborate part of a fighter's costume is the helmet, which is considered a distinctive sign. Only poor fighters in the service of a lesser master wear a mere chain coif.”

MILITARY

The Count himself commands the army only when at war. In most cases, including the last purge against the Guild of Chaos Monks, it is the Count's brother, Baron Ducat Abyron, who is the actual leader of the county military. A small militia of footmen, the City Guard, is sponsored by the Crown even in times of peace and commanded by Lord Alcyo Tamovar. Every family or clan in the city and its surroundings must provide an established number of soldiers when the Crown musters the city army. Traditionally, barons who own a residence in the town must provide all their men, while lords who reside in the countryside need only send an established number of warriors. The baron often commands his troops himself, particularly when he wants to distinguish himself in battle in competition with other nobles.

The complete army mustered out from the city supply amounts to 1500 men, half of which are cavalry. The footmen include the City Guard and another 300 more footmen taken from the personal guards of noblemen. There are two regiments of cavalry, one of Henotheist origin and another constituted mainly of mounted Rokari Knights.

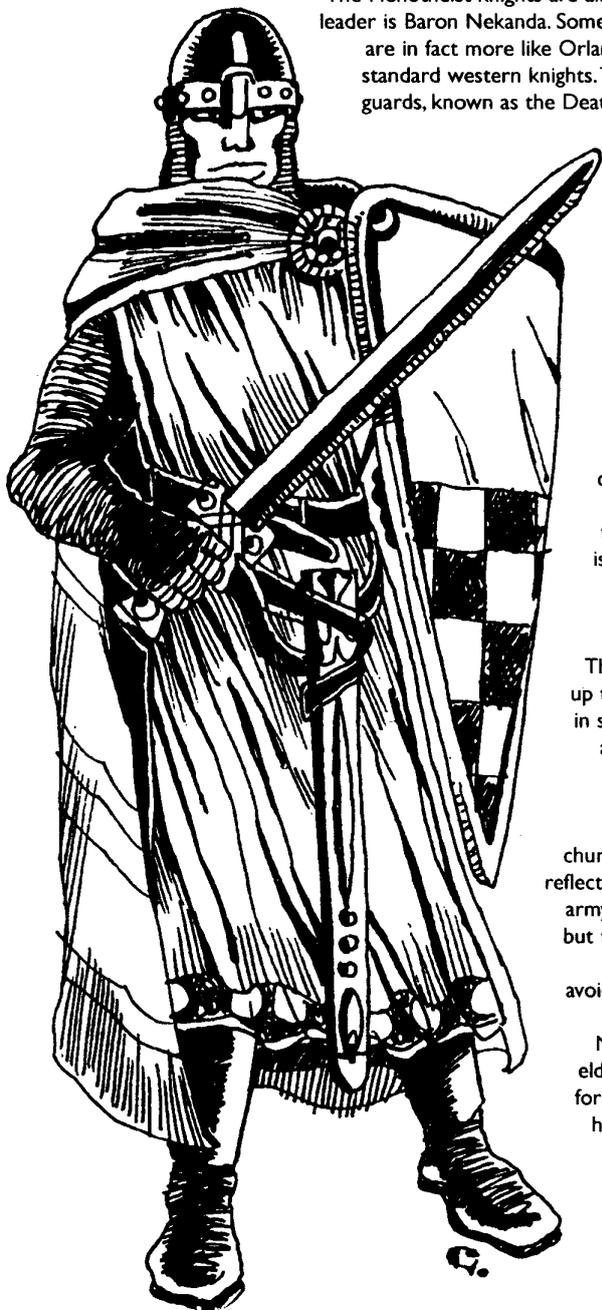
The Henotheist knights are all mounted, and their leader is Baron Nekanda. Some fighters in this unit are in fact more like Orlanthi housecarls than standard western knights. The Humath temple guards, known as the Death Platoon of Tiskos,

are the largest elite formation in the army, capable of suicide attacks that are almost sure of killing an enemy commander when spotted, whatever his defences may be.

The Rokari cavalry regiment is commanded in name by Baron Harago. In fact, since the Baron is very old, it is Alcyo Tamovar who fulfils this role, too.

The nobles who make up the army are divided in small groups centred around more or less powerful figures.

Internecine conflicts between families or churches are likely to be reflected in disputes in the army chain of command, but total collapse on the battlefield is usually avoided by the fame and charisma of Quinto Nekanda, the Baron's eldest son. He is noted for leading knights who have been arguing for hours to unity and victory by simply invoking Arkat's name and charging straight into enemy formations.



NOBLE PERSONALITIES

This section describes the main noble families and religious and trading organisations of the city. The outstanding personalities that PCs are likely to meet as group representatives, as well as their roles, are described or at least mentioned here.

The description also details how many fighters each family or organisation can rely on and of which skill level. Overall military organisation has been discussed in a separate section, however.

The Crown

The current Count is Reynaldi, a cunning and ambitious man. His position is peculiar, because it was not he who had been elected Count by the High Council, but rather his nephew, the first Henotheist convert to reach this position. When the new Count died mysteriously a few days after the election, Reynaldi claimed the throne and the title of Prince of Eastern Seshnela for himself. This title had not been used since the times of Hangalor the Pretender, and apparently this was enough to gain the approval of the Rokari barons for the unorthodox way in which he reached the throne.

Despite his membership in the Rokari Church Prince Reynaldi is open-minded towards all non-chaotic cults, whose rites he allows in town. He is also somehow friendly to non-human races which show no relationship with chaos. The Crown controls two hundred militia-quality town guards plus fifty more good soldiers, all on foot, commanded by Alcyo Tamovar. These are primarily for police use, and the town relies upon the armies of the Baronies in case of danger.

The Nekanda family

Baron Astor Nekanda is the most powerful Henotheist leader. His family is one of the oldest in town and his military force, which he commands himself, is second only to that of Sir Quinto Nekanda, a famous Heroquester. Although having no command responsibility himself, apart from being in the first ranks of the Nekanda forces in battle, he is the outstanding fighter in Tiskos, reputed to have survived several rounds of combat with Garyunder. The powers he has gained by following Arkat's path include using any melee weapons as if they were thrown weapons. All Henotheist clergymen are willing to cast spells on him at any time for free, so he is normally overloaded with defensive and characteristic- and weapon-enhancing spells, as well as many more. This makes him a deadly opponent for anyone, but he is reputed to never resort to violence without a good motivation, which is probably the reason why he has survived so many heroic quests. Most of the considerable wealth the family has gathered during the past century comes from the founding of a new city, Holy March. The town is on the way to the both Seshnela and Hrelar Amali and is an almost compulsory way station for pilgrims and traders. Built upon an orthogonal map, Holy March resembles the new cities built by the Lunars rather than the mediaeval burghs built around the Lord's castle that are so common in

the West. Although the town is now the major point of interest, the Nekandas have not moved their residence, which is still sitting on the mountainside nearby, reminding passers-by about the presence of a powerful Baron ready to come to the aid of the harmless merchant town.

The Harago family

The Harago are the most powerful and famous Rokari family. Their total embodiment of Rokari virtues, as well as generous tithing to the local Rokari church, have won them the trust and friendship of the ecclesiastical hierarchies. Their good reputation has caused their most powerful warrior, Alcyo Tamovar, to be appointed commander of the city militia by the Count.

Baron Hindo Harago is the family head. He is old and performs no physical duties, but his name is revered above all by Rokari noblemen. Although he was bested by Reynaldi, who had the Guilds' support, in the election he witnessed his grandson become a powerful and pious man-of-arms the latter quality being more important in his opinion anyway. This, however, could not cancel the unexplainable sadness that one can always discern in his eyes, especially after his daughter's death. When asked about this he will always answer "I am unhappy for that much Evil which is in the World. Wouldst God that we could right all wrongs forever!"

The two heirs of Hindo are Alcyo and Kario Tamovar, the sons of the Baron's only daughter, Lyndia, and Sir Stephan Tamovar, a valiant and independent knight. They were adopted in the family along with more members of the Tamovar lineage because of the lack of male heirs to the Baron and the great righteousness that their father, now dead, showed. At Hindo's death Alcyo will become the new Baron, and has some chance of becoming the next Count if an election is called in the future.

The story of Alcyo and Kario's parents is complex and painful. Twenty years ago, Lord Stephan led a Rokari army against an invading force from Saug, and died as a hero in the battle. All Orlanthi throughout Ralios learned to fear the name Tamovar at that time, for their forces were vanquished to the last man. Some four years ago, the vengeful Brannan Humathi from the Death Mountain had an argument with Lady Lyndia, and falsely accused her of practising evil rituals upon a young maiden of their family who served her as a chambermaid. Soon after this rumour had spread, Lyndia got ill and eventually died of a broken heart. Alcyo exacted his revenge on the Brannan clan, and killed their best warriors on the field of honour, but this could not compensate for the loss of his own mother caused by the pagans' evil lies.

The family militia in the town consists of 20 men, some of which are mounted knights. Baron Hindo is too old to command them directly, so Kario is the actual leader of the family forces. They serve also as reinforcements to the Rokari Church defenders. In return, the Bishop willingly sends his adepts to the spiritual and magical aid of the family

members, who have no full-time priest in their pay. In their castle at Haragoburg they have at least four hundred full-time fighters, most of whom are knights. The Harago coat of arms, which the Tamovar may use too, is a green dragon on a white background.

The Limestone family

Baroness Terentia Limestone, widow of Baron Staniseus Limestone, is the oldest survivor of this ancient family. They are the most powerful and faithful followers of the Stygian sect, who have undergone a period of great misfortune. Although still impressive, the family wealth is but a shadow of its former splendour, and, more importantly, lacks new blood to invigorate the lineage. The Baroness currently relies on a force of fifty men, of which forty are foot militia and the remainder are knights. Since she has now formally abandoned the Stygian sect for Henotheists, she can rely on the Nekanda military in case of a direct attack upon her fief. Many suspect this is the only reason why the Limestone family has not yet been vanquished by its rivals, as well the real reason for the conversion.

Terentia's heir is Lelio Limestone, a 19-year-old youngster currently undergoing fighter training. His younger sister, Lavinia Limestone, is currently studying at the Black Arkat Temple in Muse Roost. The baroness' plans for her include marriage with a representative of a rich noble family in order to restore some wealth and a powerful ally to the family. Should Terentia die without heirs the family would become extinct and its titles and wealth would go to Sir Sigmund Ocke.

Although very few fighters wear it nowadays, the coat of arms of the Limestone family is made of two crossed black swords on a gold background, an ancient symbol. Bearing the same colours that were in Arkat's coat of arms is a privilege dating back to the Dark Empire, and the family always claimed it was granted to their ancestors by the Destroyer himself. This coat of arms, the last family heirloom of any use, is highly regarded by fanatic Arkati such as the Proven Appearance of Arkat movement, and grants the family much more influence than its puny power could ever give it when dealing with Henotheist or Stygian outsiders.

Ducat Abyron

The Count's younger brother and a valiant and pious Rokari Talar, Ducat Abyron is the most famous fighter in Tiskos. He is the exact opposite of the Count in many ways. He is brave and valiant where his brother prefers intrigue to fighting. He is a faithful member of the Rokari church, obeying the religious hierarchy where his brother always tries to exploit the Church to his own interest. He is sincere and straightforward where his brother is a cunning manipulator. Nevertheless, Ducat is loyal to his brother and has been his most useful tool in the conquest of power. The Count has always let him command the army for all major operations, such as the crusade against the Guild of Chaos Monks. This is a role that suits Ducat much more than the Count, and he has never had any reason to complain about his brother's actions - at least so far.

The DeRania

Baron Fidele DeRania is a reclusive Rokari noble, ruling one of the richest fiefs in Tiskos. He has built one of the two bridges on the River Tiskos and imposes a heavy tribute upon traders who use it. Many people think that the original purpose of this bridge could have been an invasion of the Limestone fief, exploiting the weakness of the Limestone family and the support of the Baron's relatives to the South, but since Baroness Limestone obtained an alliance with the powerful Baron Nekanda this hypothesis has never been verified.

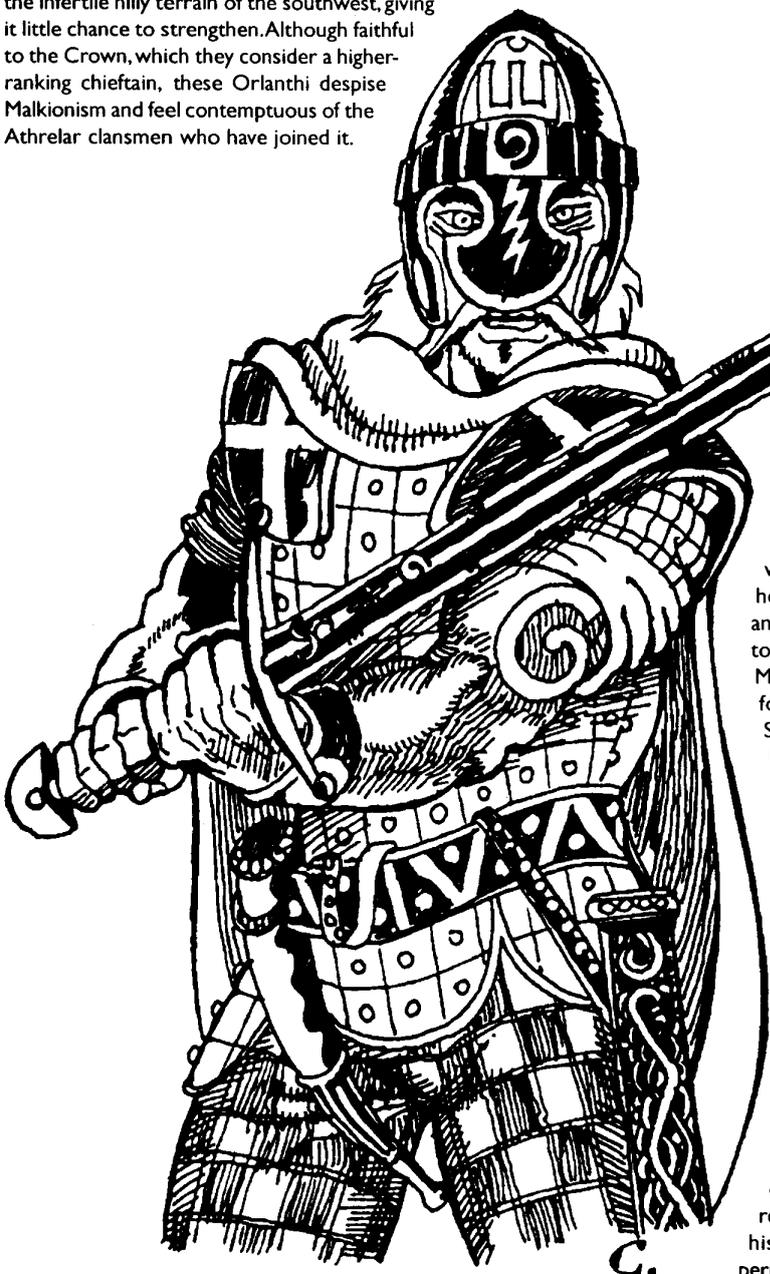
In major wars, Malkioni traditions require that more feudal units be requested from the countryside lords rather than levied from the civil populace. This practice, however, increases the problem of keeping cohesion among the troops, and so hiring mercenaries is the preferred option.

The DeCosmi

Baron Aldiprandus DeCosmi rules the southernmost area of the County. This rather poor region was part of Daran until fifty years ago, when a dispute arose between Tiskos and Daran. After a couple of seasons' struggle Daran was forced to forfeit its border lands and one castle to Tiskos. The Count gave this land to one of Baron DeRania's cousins, Balto DeCosmi, along with the task of defending a potential route of invasion from Seshnela. It is supposed that the choice fell upon a Rokari noble also because the area south of the Tiskos river was ruled by Henotheist barons only, creating a dangerous anti-Rokari enclave. Whatever the reason for his appointment, the new ruler started a bloody persecution of the local peasants who refused to abandon the Dangan Church for the enlightenment of the Rokari faith. The persecutions have lasted till the present day, but in spite of this many peasants in this fief still openly profess their Dangan faith.

The Njulsen clan

The Njulsen are the only surviving Orlanthei clan living in the County. As a result, the clan chieftain, Gondar Carlsson, is a Wind Lord of the local temple, and two of his cousins are Storm Voices, making the clan authority undisputed among Orlanthei worshippers. The clan, who refused to give up their pagan beliefs, has been confined to the infertile hilly terrain of the southwest, giving it little chance to strengthen. Although faithful to the Crown, which they consider a higher-ranking chieftain, these Orlanthei despise Malkionism and feel contemptuous of the Athrelar clansmen who have joined it.



The Athrelar family

The Athrelar family is actually an Orlanthei clan that was converted to the Henotheist faith en masse. The grandfather of Chieftain Svendi Athrelar, clan leader, was converted through the words of Arkat himself, or at least so he claimed. Their Malkioni beliefs make the Athrelar more influent in Tiskos than their rivals, the Njulsen, though the latter are both more numerous and more powerful. Svendi's personal militia consists of fifteen mounted warriors of fair quality, which he controls personally, plus the troops of his cousins Lang and Ulgo and his niece Verja, each of which controls five more knights/housecarls. Another influent family member in the city is Khan Olomond Athrelar, a Storm Khan who was also converted to Henotheism.

Merchant nobles

Malkioni noblemen generally despise earning their living in any other way than collecting taxes from the peasants. So, although some merchants have currently much more funds available than most nobles, and the Crown itself often relies on faithful members of the middle classes to borrow money to supply its military in case of conflict, the nobility in Tiskos wants to have nothing to do with common business even though some noble families have been living in the city area for as many as three generations. There are, nevertheless, two exceptions: nobles who have established a trading activity of their own, ensuring considerable wealth for themselves at the expense of breaking the traditional code of western nobility.

Lord Nikolas Grimman, Grand Knight of the Steel Sword, was once confronted with the humiliating thought of selling his family possessions to pay his father's debts with some moneylenders. To avoid this stain on the family honour, he took his faithful men with him, travelled to Rhis and exploited his friendship with the local Seshnegi nobility to get a load of iron at low prices in Laurmal. His pride as a Malkioni Knight allowed him to purchase iron personally, for owners of this metal are highly respected among Safelstran nobles. Once back in Tiskos, he could sell his Ur-metal at considerably lower prices than all others who used to get it in Bad Deal, and doubled his initial investment in a week's time. Since that time, he has repeated his journeys to the sources of the precious metal time and again, and has accumulated a considerable amount of money and possessions, which give him a higher status than his noble rank would normally bestow. Lord Nikolas has developed a great deal of resentment towards the Crown and his fellow nobles, who did nothing to avoid his dishonour when they could have, and is much more likely to support the Guilds than the Nobles should a dispute take place.

Sir Luis Lamprey, on the other hand, started his trading activity when a trader from Otkorion asked the captain of his family ship to carry a precious load of spice to the opposite shore of the lake. Such was the income that resulted from the trade agreement that Sir Luis overcame his traditional distaste for business and established a permanent trading route across the lake. He is now the richest



ship sponsor in town, owner of three good merchant hulls which sail constantly into and out of the city harbour. His considerable estate, now almost thoroughly coming from his business, equals the wealth of the richest families and allows him to support a personal militia of twenty hired footmen, plus twenty more part-time thugs for dirty work. Sir Luis has very few scruples and can make agreements with anyone who can improve his income. His worst rival is the plebeian sponsor Zuma of Nochet, who owns a fast merchant craft, the Water Lily.

RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Religious faith is a main subject in Safelstran struggles and intrigues, and Tiskos is not an exception. Rivalries between cults and sects are even stronger than family feuds, and often form the basis for them. The main cults are described here, as well as their main leaders, but the reader should keep in mind that the most influential members of the main family or clan supporting a cult are only slightly less important than the cult High Priest or Bishop, and definitely outrank normal clergy, for it is they that provide military and political support to their church.

The Rokari Church of Eastern Seshnela

A relic of old Seshnelan influence, the Rokari Church is the most powerful religious organisation in Tiskos thanks to the Tanisorian lifestyle revived by the Crown. The local leader is Bishop Finallio De Poincenotte, detailed in other manuscripts.

Due to the ancient influence of their pagan neighbours, the Rokari of Tiskos have developed quite unorthodox points of view about matters which are uncontested in Tanisor. For instance, they think that moneylending should not be considered usury if the interests are low enough. This is probably due to the fact that the Guild of Coinage is a Rokari Guild, providing a large share of the overall tithing to the Church. In recent times Bishop Finallio has tried to stop moneylending in order to appear worthy in the eyes of the Ecclesiarch, but he had little success because too many Rokari take advantage of the Guild.

Five adepts and seventeen apprentices tend the cathedral, as well as one hundred lay people among which ten guards of good fighting capabilities are recruited to protect the battle-inept priests. Their best resource in case of conflict, however, are the trustful Haragos. Other important nobles who live in town are Sir Galvanus Arginulfus the Brave and Sir Kond Roiktor the Fierce.

The Henotheist Bishopric of Tiskos

This Bishopric is a collection of the scattered remnants of all the obscure stygian sects that made up the religious panorama of Safelster a few years ago, and so cannot be described as a real,

independent Henotheist Church. Its Bishop, Oriolandus Dervay, started his career as just another Arkati abbot among the many, but he was lucky in that his parish in town included the ancient Cathedral of St. Arkat, dating back to the time of the Dark Empire itself. When Foyalfine of Azilos declared himself the leader of the Henotheist Church of Azilos by right of descendance from Arkat, many Arkati nobles claimed to belong to his Church. This was a formal adhesion rather than a radical change in belief, since most converts actually kept their old cult habits. Oriolandus reunited all these new converts under his guidance and restored the old Cathedral to its former splendour with some help on the part of Baron Nekanda and some influential guildmasters. His next step was to have himself appointed Bishop of Tiskos by Foyalfine, but this was just a question of personal prestige rather than actual integration in the Henotheist Church of Azilos, since Prince Reynaldi demanded that the new Bishop not swear loyalty to Foyalfine.

Under the Bishop are two adept-level priests and about ten apprentice-level acolytes who tend the cathedral. Although many of these are capable of fighting, the church has a full-time militia of ten men, led by a sergeant. The latter, of course, are in addition to the Nekanda and their knights.

Apart from the Nekanda, who own and inhabit a mansion in town, other outstanding nobles form the urban Henotheist gotha. These include Sir Barbar Defoe the Faithful, a powerful Humathi, Lady Berthe Arax the Intemperate, a virgin Babeester Gor warrior, and Sir Luis Lamprey (described elsewhere).

The Orlanth Temple

The chief Storm Voice is Lord Stafford Bruma of the Njulssen clan, a rigid follower of Orlanthi precepts. He hardly tolerates his initiates to attend Malkioni churches, although most of them in fact do. Under him serve seven more Storm Voices, and the temple also has twenty good guards and three big sylphs to defend it. Should these turn out to be inadequate Bruma would not hesitate to summon Humathi warriors as reinforcements. Remember that in the Ralios version of Orlanthi mythology Humath has not severed all of his ties to the Storm tribe, and is numbered among the Lightbringers by the Henotheist Church of Azilos.

The Humathi & the Dead Mountain

Please note that I have adopted the Ralian spelling for the name of the Lord of Death. The Shrine of Humath, which claims to have been founded by the Owner of the Unbreakable Sword himself, is small but very powerful in the city. Thirty warriors who have devoted themselves to Humath form the Death Platoon of Tiskos, the elite military formation of the County. These are trained to perform the Death Slash of Humath (a tactic devised by Arkat) against enemy leaders in combat if a situation becomes critical. The Sword of this shrine is the deadly Thane Rigmand Stoneslasher.

The Arkati

Nominally a cult for outsiders, the Arkati are in fact dispersed in innumerable subjects, often struggling among themselves as well as against purges by the main Churches. The biggest temple, to Great Arkat, has only 80 initiates in town. Its leader is Father Elzemond Blackhand, a reputed troll-friend who has two apprentices in his service. Excluding the now-Henotheist Limestone family, two peculiar nobles form the backbone of the Stygian nobility: Sir Letho Longknop, a former wandering knight who is thought to be a retired Heroquester, and Lord Nikolas Grimman, who is discussed in the merchant nobility section.

On the southern border of the County lies the Dead Mountain, a place of mystery where monsters are not unknown. Even though the main land ruled by the Njulsen is infertile, this mountain is completely incapable of supporting farmers. The Njulsen clan has granted this land to their Humathi cousins, the Brannan family. They inhabit it and maintain a minor temple to Humath there. All the members of the family are warriors, and so are initiated into the cult. The family has been nearly destroyed in warfare against the Haragos during the last few years. Frequent pilgrimages performed by city-dwelling Initiates seeking rituals and magic they cannot find in town are the only thing that allows the Brannans to run even a Minor Temple at present.

The Temple of Ernalda and Ralia

Because of the strong appeal that this religion has on farmers, the majority of population in the surroundings, the temple of Ernalda is more influential than the cult of Orlanth. Most followers of this cult and its associate deities are also faithful Henotheists. The Chief Priestess is Dame Mellar Obsomold, and under her serve eight priestesses and acolytes and ten gnomes. The Temple grounds also house a minor temple to the Grain Goddess Ralia and a shrine to Babeester Gor. The initiates of the Holy Avenger, led by the fierce Arthaya Rumbleslash, serve as defenders to the whole temple complex. A competent High Healer of the Chalana named Damsel Steffin Salazar also resides there, and has the right to call upon the Berserkers of Bemurok in order to protect herself. Her presence gives access to Resurrection to all Earth-friends.

MERCHANT

ORGANISATIONS

As a consequence of the Crown policy and the growing importance of trade in the area, the merchant class has grown in strength and influence. The main activity of the artisans of Tiskos is the manufacture of cloth and leather, which they export to other areas more specialised in making clothes and garments than in spinning and weaving. Raw materials are taken from the countryside when available in that climate and culture (as is the case of linen and wool), or imported from distant lands when unknown in Ralios (such as silk, for example). The Crown has great respect for the Artisan Guilds, which provide much more wealth to the city than the peasant-oppressing nobility, and each of the Seven Guildmasters have gained a seat in the City Council together with the major nobles and the Bishops and High Priestess.

Many guilds exist, grouping the hundreds of crafters and burghers who live in the eastern part of New Tiskos. Each guild is lead by a master, and has at least one priest of its protector cult among its members. Only seven of them, though, have the status of Great Guilds, with the assignment of a guild building as elaborate as a palace and a noble mansion for the Guildmaster. An interesting fact is that the title of Guildmaster of one of the Seven Great Guilds, although elective, lasts until the death

of the volunteer retired retirement of the Mestral. This custom was probably inspired by the selection procedures for the Crown itself, increasing the similarities between master artisans and nobles.

Each Guild has a protector cult. This may be a Malkioni saint for Rokari guild, or an appropriate Lightbringer deity for a Henotheist guild. Artisans often convert to the primary faith of their guild to take advantage of religious bonuses. The cults which support the Seven Major Guilds always have an opening for the Guild Master if he or she wants to become a priest, no matter how many they have, so they are usually at least adept wizards or acolytes of the deity. In spite of their priesthood, they do not deal with worshipers and temple business, because running the guild absorbs most of their attention. They are relieved of normal priestly restrictions regarding time and income, as long as they spend 90% of their time for the guild and pay 10% of the guild funds to the cult.

The Henotheist Guild of Trade

This guild groups all merchants who trade with foreign countries, except those whose specialities force them to adhere to another guild, such as silk traders. Extremely rich, they support a small army of guards and thugs who escort caravans to and from abroad. All guild members speak Tradetalk and at least one foreign language almost as well as natives. Many of them have traded with trolls or elves at least once in their lives, and so they are rather open-minded with the Elder Races except for dragonewts whom they despise for their inexplicable (for humans) lack of interest in trading. The guild patron is, of course, Issaries, a very useful cult for people wishing to travel barbarian lands.

Honest Mirandolus (a self-styled title, as anyone who has bought anything from him can confirm) is the revered master of the traders. Two nobles, Grimman and Lamprey, formally adhere to the guild, but their noble origin allows them much more freedom of action than all other members. Especially so since they keep a personal guard, a practice strongly discouraged by most Major Guilds.

The Rokari Guild of Coinage

This organisation groups all moneychangers in the city. Since Safelster consists of a mixture of cultures and city-states, coinage exchange is useful even when travelling to the nearest city. Thus all other guilds in town depend upon the Guild of Coinage when dealing with outside traders, not to mention the need of tons (speaking literally) of bolgs whenever a troll trader drops in. Hinrik the Almighty, one of the richest men in Tiskos, is the guildmaster. He is on very good terms with the Harago family, to whom he can supply a lot of funds in case of need. The Guild can also provide money to the Crown through the military commander, Alcyo. The Prince has exploited this connection on several occasions, eliciting considerable indignation on the part of traditionalist nobles who deprecate such an exhibition of weakness in front of an artisan. However, the fact that the loan was issued to the Harago family has prevented any formal complaint.

The Rokari Guild of Coinage is responsible for minting the official city currency. It is a small silver coin, called a "guilder" after the minters themselves, roughly one penny in value. Lunars may be exchanged for guilders at the guild's building or at any money changer's shop, though some artisans accept lunar currency as payment. True Rokari merchants never use or accept wheels, since Dromali artisans cannot handle gold without committing a capital sin.

"The art of silk manufacture is one of the most lucrative and mysterious crafts in this part of the world, where silkworms are almost unknown and most of the precious substance itself must be imported from the Far East."

All guild members are devout followers of the Rokari church. This is due to an ancient Safelstran legend, dating back to the time of the Dark Empire. According to the guild, God had given one language and one coinage to each people. Arkat fought a great battle against evil and chaos, stepping aside from the path of justice during his quests for victory. For his valour against the Enemy, God stated that his empire could achieve the political and economical unity that the Elder Races had never had. For his betrayal of the true faith in favour of false gods, He caused the Dark Empire to collapse politically after Arkat's departure, and the monetary unity that had cost so much to the Dark Government degenerated again into the coinage chaos of the Dawning. After that, the job of moneychanger has always been held in great consideration by Malkioni orthodoxy because it reminds all believers of what happens to even the bravest hero when his feats do not follow the Path of true Virtue. This is also the reason why Saint Talor, one of Arkat's companions who did not betray the true faith, is the guild patron.

The Rokari Guild of Protocol

This Guild includes all scribes, scholars, sages and artisans who devote their lives to the art of writing and comprehending written words. The Guild runs an important library which contains interesting tomes about the history and costumes of Safelster, and can assist outsiders in dealing with local personalities and almost everybody in the area of Lake Felster. The guild patron is Saint Mardron. The guildmaster, Braganost Archmage, is an adept sorcerer. The explanation of the relative importance of this small guild lies exactly in the fact that its members do not disdain selling their sorcery spells in addition to their literary services, and since most scribes are in the wizard caste they have access to High Magic. Thus, all nobles and major guilds use their services to enhance their capabilities and to strengthen their guards. Apart from them, few people can afford the prices charged by the Guild's wizards, which are at least twice as high as the normal fees for sorcery and even higher for non-Rokari.



The Rokari Guild of Wool

The first major textile job in Tiskos is that of weaver. Weavers mostly use wool in this town, and so their guild is the Guild of Wool. Although Safelstran cities never tend to autarchy, usage of local raw materials for manufacturing is strongly encouraged by the authorities and this guild has become very important. Several minor jobs not directly connected to weaving but necessary for mass production of cloth are also supported by this organisation. Herders in the surrounding countryside are supported, sometimes even financially, by guild officials, who are always looking for the best qualities of wool to improve the products of artisans. The protector of this Guild is Saint Mennin (see appendix for description), and Mistress Steffin Swiftloom is the Chief Weaver.

The Henotheist Guild of Silk

The art of silk manufacture is one of the most lucrative and mysterious crafts in this part of the world, where silkworms are almost unknown and most of the precious substance itself must be imported from the Far East. The guild sponsors several caravans per year, and at least one per warm season, which travel from Kralorela through the Wastes and Maniria, thus intensifying the relationships between the city and these areas of Genertela which are often frequented by adventurers.

Ennus Kingsman is the current guild master. He is a priest of Orlanth Rex, the only god who is reputed noble enough to protect this rich guild which handles magical materials. Recently, some guild members have been accused of maintaining trade relationships with insect herders and traders from Halikiv or Guhan, thus obtaining a different quality of silk while taking less risk than their fellows who get theirs from the traditional source. These people are rumoured to have joined the cult of Argan Argar as lay members, though the rumour is unconfirmed.

MENNIN'S BLESSING

Mennin was a young shepherd boy who loved all beasts that God had created. His sheep and dog loved him very much for his kindness, and were willing to give their lives for him. Mennin was tending his flock when pagan (some even say chaotic) troops invaded his homeland in Tanisor. Spotted by scouts, he attempted to flee and alert his Lord, but he was caught. With his last breath, one moment before the sword of an enemy soldier sunk deep into his chest, he shouted at his animals, telling them to go to the castle. The beasts obeyed their master's last command and headed for the Baron's manor, but the scouts mistook their behaviour for fear and did not stop them. When they saw the dog and sheep running together towards them with no one to lead them, the Baron's troops immediately realised something was very wrong, and the invading troops were discovered and stopped before they could pillage the countryside.

Mennin grants his devotees the ability to establish a telepathic communication with a domestic animal. The link is in no way similar to the relationship between a wizard and his familiar, but it has no range limit and if the beast is properly trained it can be given very complex instructions, and it will obey all non-suicide orders. The link persists until one of the two creatures dies or the blessing is invoked upon another animal. The blessed person can be in contact with only one animal at a time, and must invoke the blessing again to change the beast he is linked to. A special permit from the Bishop must be obtained if the devotee wants to use the blessing upon a dangerous or weird beast. The blessing does not work on magic or normal INT creatures. It costs three POW to gain Mennin's blessing.

"A common practice for the Silk caravan leader is to hire extra guards in Pavis or Dragon Pass before attempting to cross the Wastes, or on their way back from the lands of the rising sun when their original escort, which usually includes low quality Safelstran mercenaries, has been decimated by broos or Praxians."

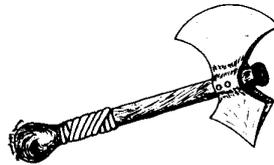
Military Equipment

In spite of the wide variety of cultures represented in the county, military equipment is rather standardised in town. The standard Seshnelan weapons (straight-bladed, double-edged sword and shield, plus spear or mace or axe as secondary weapon, and short bow or javelin for ranged combat) are the only common instruments of war. Two-handed swords, axes and maces are used by single warriors whenever these suit their personal taste better than standard one-handed weapons, but the standard two-handed weapon for foot soldiers is the spear. Some Henotheist nobles are said to equip their archers with crossbows for enhanced firepower, a practice regarded as blasphemous by all Rokari believers, and peasants from the countryside are often competent in sling usage rather than archery.

Leather armour is available but not widely used, and leather armour with metal reinforcements (bezainted, ring mail and scale) is manufactured exclusively by Orlanthe smiths in the hills. The standard body armour for all civilised troops is chain mail. Often the mail suits for lesser troops have shorter sleeves reaching only the ankle and a pantless hauberk which protects only the hip, so the lower legs and forearms are covered with leather. This kind of coverage is the rough equivalent of ring mail in both encumbrance and protection, so such a suit provides only five points of protection to the soldier's limbs but weighs 30% less (14 kilograms for a medium-sized human). Lamellar, brigandine and plate armour is uncommon.

An important and often elaborate part of a fighter's costume is the helmet, which is considered a distinctive sign. Only poor fighters in the service of a lesser master wear a mere chain coif. All noble fighters, as well as troops in the pay of powerful nobles, use open helms with nose protections, equivalent to chain mail for cost, encumbrance and protection. While the symbol that distinguishes one barony from another is painted on the shield, the helm shows the cult affinity of a fighter. Rokari fighters wear a simple unadorned headgear, featuring a small sculpted symbol on the forehead, similar to the shield decoration, only when worn by a family leader. Orlanthe fighters wear winged helms, except for initiates of Urox who prefer horned ones. Arkati and Henotheist warriors wear ornate helms, showing wings, horns or runes as befits their Orlanthe, bemuroki or darkness affinities, plus a family symbol to distinguish themselves from people who do not believe in the Invisible God. The town watch wears helms with a small crown on the forehead.

Other weaponry or armour pieces other than those mentioned, imported from Seshnela or Maniria, may be available on particular or rare occasions, but when found they can only be bought at the small city price level or higher.



The Rokari Guild of Furs

This guild trades furs with all the denizens of the countryside and produces heavy clothes, leather artefacts and armour, which are sold in the city and the immediate surroundings and dispatched to other countries in case of overproduction. Some leatherworkers are able to use raw materials not coming from common cattle, so skins and furs from other creatures are often welcome. Strange artefacts and armour pieces with uncommon properties are sometimes for sale through the Guild of Furs. Argo the Broad is the respected guildmaster. The guild patron is Saint Paslac.

The Rokari Guild of Healing

Although very few in number, Healers are very respected in all societies. Tiskos is no exception, and so their guild is among the Seven. Their protector is Saint Xemela, and the Guildmaster is the sweet Mother Sarabel Elisia. Healers are

considered part of the wizard caste, and so they are taught the special Rokari prayer of Neutralise Body Damage. This guild can sell healing to anyone, even non-Rokari. The Henotheist equivalent of the Guild is the small shrine to Chalana Arroy in the Earth temple.



THE BIRTH OF CHAOS

With the inception of *Tradetalk* as a regular magazine publishing about three issues per year, the international Chaos Society marks its first major effort. A lot of people have put in a lot of work and time to bring us to this point. Two years ago the members of the German RuneQuest Society (officially named the RuneQuest-Gesellschaft) decided to found an international organisation for all non-German-speaking RuneQuest players. With the help of a lot of friends and members of the RuneQuest Society, especially Scott Knowles and Andrew Bean, we're proud to announce the new international Chaos Society as a sister (or brother or whatever) organisation of the RuneQuest Society. Wondering what the RuneQuest Society is? Here's the story.

In the Beginning

The RuneQuest Society was founded in 1990 in Germany by twelve fans of RQ and Glorantha. Its main goal was to produce a German magazine for RQ, Glorantha and related games (Call of Cthulhu, Elric!, Nephilim, Hawkmoon and ElfQuest). The new magazine was named *Free INT*, and the first issue was published in 1991. Since that time 16 issues of *Free INT* have been published. Over the past seven years the RuneQuest Society also organised eight RQ Cons in Germany. The eighth one just took place; it was held at beautiful Castle Stahleck in Bacharach, Germany on the weekend of May 16-19, 1997.

**For more
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the Chaos Society:**

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Growing Support

The need for strong fan support in Germany was strong. RuneQuest, Call of Cthulhu and Elric! have not been promoted in Germany by their respective licensees, when they've had licensees at all. As a result, those systems nearly disappeared among role-players in Germany. The RuneQuest Society's work on *Free INT* and the RQ Cons have helped maintain and strengthen RQ's presence on the German roleplaying scene. Since our founding we have enlisted 160 new members from around the world.

Chaos Society Global Info:

Chaos Society USA

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The success of the RuneQuest Society got us thinking about exporting our set-up to other countries. After all, there are a lot of gamers out there. But far too many of us are isolated, unable to get support material for our favourite games in any quantity. We realised that a worldwide organisation for all RuneQuest/Gloranathan fans could be a great thing for all of us, allowing gamers to communicate with each other, share new material, and pool ideas.

It soon became clear, however, that it wouldn't be practical to run an international RuneQuest Society from a single headquarters in Germany. The task is just too big, and the result would be too unwieldy. The solution was obvious. If a single world-wide RQ Society was too big to handle, we'd start sister organisations throughout the world, administered locally, but co-operating internationally.

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Our Friends Overseas

And so we searched for and found committed fans in the USA and Australia to organise local RQ Societies (renamed the Chaos Society in those areas). Scott Knowles is the co-ordinator of the Chaos Society in the USA, and in Australia Andrew Bean recently passed the torch to Hugh McVicker and Peter Tracey, who are jointly running the Australian organisation. Each is responsible for running the Chaos Society in their respective regions. They'll handle the distribution of products we have produced so far and plan to publish in the future.

As our first step towards an international RuneQuest Society, we published the English-language magazine *Tradetalk*. The first issue was made up of articles translated from German originals in *Free INT* magazine; however this and future issues will draw on the huge volume of fan-created material from all around the world, most of which are originally written in English. Since *Tradetalk* is an English-language magazine, that makes our job much easier. Incidentally, *Free INT* will continue to be published in German and has been renamed *Schattenklänge*.

Our Time Has Come

An international fan society for RuneQuest and Glorantha is definitely an idea whose time has come. Most new material for RuneQuest over the last decade has been created and published by fans of the game and of Glorantha. Look at all the things that fans have been creating:

- The RQ Conventions around the world (Convulsion, RQ Down Under, RQ Con USA, and the German RQ Con)
- An enormous variety of outstanding fanzines and magazines (*Tales of the Reaching Moon*, *Codex*, *RuneQuest Adventures*, *New Lolon Gospel*, *Free INT*, *Tradetalk*, and others)
- A huge quantity of on-line discussion and info published by fans on the RQ Digest, Glorantha Digest, and RQ Rules Digest
- Over 1,000 World Wide Web home pages offering cult write-ups, scenarios, campaign write-ups, art, and new material of all sorts for RQ and Glorantha

Mind you, that list is hardly complete! There's far more activity out there than we could catalogue. The Chaos Society will help to bring all RQ/Glorantha fans together in one club, enabling us all to give better support to RuneQuest, Glorantha and the related Chaosium games we play. Our first steps are magazines - *Schattenklinge* and *Tradetalk* - but we're always looking for ways to expand and improve. We're supported in this effort by Chaosium and the discoverer of Glorantha, Greg Stafford (who is one of our honorary members, as are Sandy Petersen and Ken Rolston).

The membership fee is 30,- DM per year, UK £12, US \$20, or AUS \$30 in the respective regions—the latter prices subject to change depending on the future plans of the Chaos Societies overseas.

All members receive:

A subscription to that year's *Tradetalk* (probably three issues a year), access to all material produced in the past (*The Jonstown Guide* and *The World's Greatest Tournament*), all material published in the future, and the membership list of 170 RQ fans round the world.

With support from our Australian and American branches we hope to get enough submissions to produce *Tradetalk* four times per year (and things are looking good—we already have enough material for at least three issues in 1997). The physical quality of *Tradetalk* won't be quite as high as that of *Tales of the Reaching Moon* (for example), but our main goal is to make as much high-quality material as possible available to players. First and foremost, *Tradetalk* is a magazine made by fans for fans.

LEGENDS & RUMOURS OF TISKOS

The Lame Knight

Once upon a time lived a valiant knight named Otho of the Lankh family. His heroic deeds were great, but not as much as his pride. So he sought more and more power, and looked for it in the Otherworld. Time and again he Heroquested for battle skills, and finally, it is said, he met the Devil, and nobody knows who conquered whom. After this he became reclusive, and in the end the Crown banished him from the city, for it was thought that he had joined the Secret Register of the Boristi and started Tapping life force from Chaos. When he walked away on foot and cloaked in a humble black robe, through the doors he had proudly passed mounted so many times, everybody noticed that his steps had a strange rhythm. So people said that Sir Otho Lankh had become lame in his battle with the Devil. Shortly thereafter his father died without heirs, leaving his estate to the Crown, and some people think that he found death in exile, too.

The Disappearance of the Galvosti

The Galvosti Church of Nomia has no longer any known member in the city. The forces of the Rokari have destroyed them all, in the name of the True Faith, to prevent their practice of Tapping innocent beings. Alcyo Tamovar, grandson of Baron Hindo, led the Crusade himself, and succeeded in spite of the fact that more than half of the Harago forces were engaged in a blood feud with the hill barbarian clan of the Brannan, who had falsely accused his mother of crimes against Life. For being victorious against two enemies at the same time, and nevertheless showing piety and faith in the virtues of the Invisible God, Alcyo was chosen as the City Guard commander.

The Chain of Argan Argar

A terminal of the Chain of Argan Argar is known to exist in the ghetto, although its exact location is not known. The site in it is not attended by troll officers, but nevertheless people who frequent it are considered krjalki-friends. However, cloaked figures have been spotted entering the darkest part of the ghetto at night, where the site is supposed to be, and someone claims to have recognised members of the Major Guilds. The accusations have never been confirmed or proved false.

The Being Who Knew Arkat

The city of Tiskos, although modern in most other respects, has never been equipped with a sewer system. This is commonly credited to the fact that something strange has always occurred when digging operations have been initiated within the city boundaries. People who have known workers employed in one of these attempts say that one morning a great carving was found on the wall of one of the galleries, and on the following day the very gallery had disappeared! The carving read something like: "I, who knew the Founder of the Empire himself, have elected my residence in this place. Nobody shall dig under the ground surface in Tiskos". The Crown prudently chose to follow the advice, whatever the source might have been.

The Guild of Chaos Monks

As in all other areas of Safelster, Tiskos once housed a branch of the Guild of Chaos Monks. Darl Shotnag was its leader, but made the mistake of overtly attempting to overthrow the Crown itself. The result was a great purge against all "squids", waged by all the forces of Good in town. Broos who roamed the trails around the inhabited places were tracked down and exterminated. Practitioners of evil rituals were executed in public, starting with Darl. Since that time the Arkati have exerted a strict control over the aura of the town, and no more signals of chaos have been detected.

KUSTRIA

by Ingo Tschinke
translated by
Hans van Halteren



Kustria, situated in the Safelster region of Ralios, has been studied before. The booklet 'The Greatest Tournament In the World' includes events and some history of Kustria. This article expands considerably on that foundation. It should be noted, however, that the Kustria described herein is that of the year 1617 ST. It is somewhat different from the Kustria of 1627 ST in which "Rise of Ralios" takes place.

DESCRIPTION

The kingdom of Kustria is one of the most important states on the north-eastern bank of Lake Felster in the middle of Ralios. The kingdom is the second biggest city-state of the Safelster region, second only to Sentanos. Kustria spans about 7,800 square kilometres and is divided into three counties (Kuret, Foret and Glanville) and three baronies (Rumiges, Beulan and Doix).

There are three cities of notable size in the domain. Of these the capital, Kustria, is by far the largest, with 20,000 inhabitants. The second largest city is Toral on the Tanier River, which has 2,000 residents. Last and not least is the city of Griedau, which lies further inland with a mere 1,400 inhabitants.

The total population of Kustria is 270,000. Two thirds of which belong to the farmer caste and live in small villages throughout the land. Kustria is a rich place, thanks mostly to fertile land and extensive trade. Both agriculture and trade have thrived in the stable peace which has graced Kustria for many years.

Due to its relatively peaceful and defence-oriented position Kustria has had little experience with internal or external wars, unlike other states on Lake Felster. As a result, the trading houses of the capital are the largest in all of Ralios. Since the agricultural base of the land is very highly developed, only a few forest areas are left in the region. As a result, wood for building houses and ships must to

be imported from other states in Ralios. The most important general trading partners are the kingdoms of Tiskos, Tarasdal and Sentanos.

Kustria borders on Tinaros in the east, Holut in the north, Tarasdal in the south and Uron in the west. Of these, only Tarasdal shares friendly relations with Kustria. The other neighbours view Kustria with hostility. As a result of this attitude, the kings of Kustria have safeguarded their borders strongly over the years. One major Kustrian defence are the thirteen castles within its borders. According to feudal law in Kustria, the counts and barons of the nation are obliged to take care of border fortifications and the defence of the realm.

Kustria also contains nine abbeys, all of which belong to the Rokari faith. The Rokari church has long been the state religion of Kustria. The sect holds a very important political position in the land, embodied by the Bishop of Kustria. The church is also one of the largest land owners in Kustria. Of the total land area, the church controls about 400 square kilometres. Within church-owned lands, the king and his nobles have little to no power. In addition, the church commands the Holy Order of the Kustrian Knights of Saint Rokar, which has its headquarters near the capital. Through this order, the church controls two of the thirteen border castles, staffing them exclusively with its own members. The order can field 500 infantry units, 200 knights and 20 high knights. The leader of the order is Richard FitzOsbern.

Ingo Tschinke

has been playing RQ (and nothing else) for 12 years. He is one of the coordinators of the RQ Society/Chaos Society. Ingo has written two freeform games: "Rise of Ralios" and "Heroes of Wisdom". He is the chief editor of Tradetalk. Some of his adoring staff refer to him as Mr.T.

HISTORY

Ulianus III was one of the great Kings of Seshnela, a member of the dynasty that was founded by Bailifes the Hammer in 1412 and that is rules Seshnela. Ulianus III succeeded in uniting all the counts and barons of Seshnela under his banner. Together they conquered almost all of Ralios and founded the kingdom of Kustria. Ulianus was second only to Bailifes the Hammer himself in spreading the faith of the Holy Church of Rokar throughout Ralios. Under his rule Kustria grew to be one of the most powerful entities in the area..

His son, Vikard of the Tournays, tried to follow his ideals. However, he did not understand the true nature of the peace-bringing Tournaments of Kustria and succumbed to the joy of fighting and competition. His desire to organise ever larger and more expensive tournaments led him to increase taxes harshly. The result was inevitable: revolt. When Vikard concentrated his forces in Kustria to put down the rebelling forces, subjected rulers in Ralios saw their chance and revolted as well. Those loyal to the royal house suddenly found themselves cut off from their homeland. Kustria faced destruction. The man of the hour was Heuleuse de la Leplain, the forefather of the current King, Gerad de Chevalier. Setting himself at the head of the Seshnelan loyalists, together they succeeded in fighting off every attack. Their extraordinary prowess in battle was the result of long training in the tournaments of Kustria.

There were great power struggles during the founding years of Kustria. At the time, Kustria still had the status of a Seshnelan duchy, albeit separated from Seshnelan power. Heuleuse, as leader and champion of Kustria, was primarily involved in the defence of Kustria against external enemies, which he managed to repel with his knights. Revolts and internal power struggles between the nobles of Kustria prevented any rightful successor from coming to power in the duchy. In the resulting anarchy, the people suffered greatly. Disgusted by the long battle for power between the counts of Kustria, Heuleuse turned against them and took the throne for himself.

As a simple knight he did not have a strong legal claim to the throne, but he was an undefeated champion and the best strategist in the state. Having saved Kustria from enemies without, he was able to force the counts to accept him as ruler in the king's place. Heuleuse also established the tournament in Kustria's legal charter (see The Tournament of Kustria).

Heuleuse de la Leplain founded the dynasty of the Tournament Kings, the Kings of Kustria. He also established the many Rokari monasteries in Kustria. For a long time he hoped for reunification with Seshnela, but despite decades of waiting his hopes were in vain. When reunification with Seshnela became manifestly hopeless, Heuleuse's grandson, Fredel de la Leplain, let himself be crowned as King of Kustria.

the Kings of Kustria held fast to the Rokari faith a long time. The father of Gerad de Chevalier abolished Rokarism as the state religion, however, and converted to the Church of Dangan. Since this church preached tolerance towards lesser gods, he had it publicly announced that there would be religious freedom in Kustria as long as other faiths did not conflict with the Laws of Malkion.

THE ARMY OF KUSTRIA

The army of Kustria is one of the best in the Genertelan West. There are several factors in this pre-eminence. The foremost is simply necessity. Kustria has been surrounded by enemies for centuries, and has again and again repelled attacks from foes in both the north and the east. The wild rider hordes from Holut have historically been the most constant threat, but there have also been long wars with Tinaros. The comparatively small size of Kustria has made vigilance and a skilled army of vital importance for the kingdom.

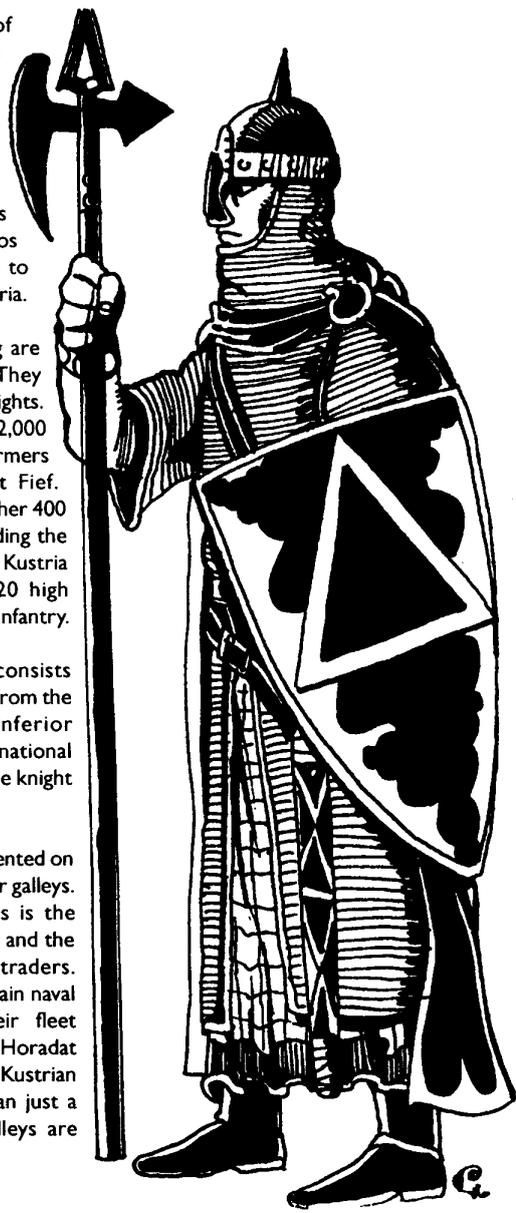
The extraordinary strength of Kustria's army is based on its knights, who compete against each other at the annual tournament. Victory in the tournament brings higher political position and glory throughout all of Ralios. For this reason, the best knights of Ralios and even Seshnela often gather to joust under the banners of Kustria.

These elite warriors of the king are called the Knights of Kustria. They consist of a contingent of 400 knights. Subordinate to the knights are 2,000 infantry, mostly recruited from farmers who dwell in the Tournament Fief. Counts and barons provide a further 400 knights and 6,000 infantry. Including the Order of the Knights of Rokar, Kustria can field a total strength of 20 high knights, 1,000 knights and 8,500 infantry.

The light infantry of Kustria consists mostly of archers and spearmen from the farmer caste, who receive inferior military training. The focus of national defence is the heavy cavalry of the knight caste.

In addition, Kustria is well-represented on Lake Felster with a fleet of six war galleys. The main task of these galleys is the protection of the Kustrian coast and the trading ships of the Kustrian traders. Some time ago Kustria tried to gain naval supremacy on the Lake, but their fleet was destroyed at the battle of Horadat in the year 1578. Since then no Kustrian king has tried to field more than just a presence on the Lake. The galleys are crewed with a total of 480 men.

In its foreign policy Kustria has always consistently maintained a neutral position among the Safelstrian states. Kustria almost never commits itself to alliances, which history has shown are not worth much anyway in Ralios. The Kings of Kustria prefer to take on the role of the proverbial rock in the ocean, an unmovable bastion of peace and justice.



THE TOURNAMENT OF KUSTRIA

The Tournament of Kustria is an ancient tradition in Ralios. Many consider it an anachronism from a time long gone, in which the King of Seshnela managed to ruin himself financially and politically by organising the Tournament. Others appreciate the high goals of the Tournament and count it among the best traditions of Ralios. The Kings of Kustria possess the title of Tournament King. Their dynasty has always striven to keep innocent bystanders, common people such as farmers and crafters, safe during the conflicts and wars which occasionally break out between the nobility of Ralios. It has been this dynasty's axiom that such conflicts should always be decided in Tournaments ever since Ulianus III, the King of Seshnela institutionalised the Kustrian Great Tournament. He built the Castle of Kustria and the huge arena, which is unique in Ralios and Seshnela. He also designed a fief whose sole purpose was to sponsor the annual event. Its charter states its purpose to be "a proving ground for the lords and knights of Ralios, wherein to settle differences in a civilised manner according to the rules of chivalry, whereby the helpless farmers of this land may be saved from needless pain and fear."

LAW IN KUSTRIA

Kustria is ruled by the usual Rokari feudal law, i.e. the population is divided into the castes of farmers, knights, priests and lords. This is symbolised by the triangle, the holy sign of the Rokari. This rule, which is about 200 years old, forbids caste members to change into another caste. In the last 30 years of religious freedom, the rule has led to a lot of friction and even revolts (especially among the farmers), since many other religions (e.g. the Henotheist Churches of Azilos and Otkorion) allow special dispensations which let people change caste. This friction has put a lot of stress on the ruling structures of the kingdom.

However, King Gerad de Chevalier cannot bring himself to revoke his father's decree, particularly since some of the more powerful families have already joined another faith.

The priest caste is approximately 15 percent of population. This includes monks, abbots, nuns, deacons, etc. Most members of the priest caste lives in the many abbeys of the land.

The remaining 5 percent of the population is the nobility. Within the nobility there are fine distinctions of rank, ranging from simple knights to the king himself.

The right of succession forbids inheritance through the female line (although even here exceptions confirm the rule), requiring that the eldest son inherit land, fief and title. Younger brothers receive nothing and are relegated as simple knights, however important a role they may play within the clan.

All the land in the realm is the personal property of the king of Kustria. He may grant portions of it as fiefs to his 'loyal' vassals. In fact, however, the counties are seen as hereditary property which even the king finds difficult to take from the noble families who hold them. Baronies are in principle also hereditary property, but barons are much more dependent on the king's goodwill. Baronies can be freely granted by the king and can also be freely taken away again if there is doubt about the baron's loyalty.

Taxes, the so-called 'tenths' which every trader, crafter and farmer from the farmer caste has to pay, are equally divided between king and count or baron. The high nobility must use these taxes for the upkeep of their castles and the protection of the borders. All other activities are subject to financing by the crown.

The king has no influence over lands held by the church. Although these lands are theoretically his property as well, the king is not allowed to take them from the church. Nor can he demand taxes from them, as these go directly to the church instead.

The farmer caste forms about 80 percent of the total population of Kustria. That caste officially includes traders and craftsmen, who make up about 15 percent of the total population. Members of the craft guilds and traders view themselves as higher in rank than the farmers. This opinion is substantiated by the special rights granted to the guilds and the influence they possess.



RELIGIONS OF KUSTRIA

Until about 30 years ago, the Rokari church which originated from Seshnela was the single governing spiritual power in Kustria. Every other religion was considered heresy and followers were severely persecuted by the knightly order of the church. However Kustria differed from Seshnela in that Kustria lacked a Rokari Inquisition. The Seshnelan Inquisition was notable for its strength.

It is in some part due to the influence of the Rokari church that Kustria has always had been in a strong position relative to the rest of Ralios, even in times of internal turmoil. The Rokari church has always ordained the Kustrian societal structure and has kept Kustrian society frozen in a Seshnelan pattern. It is therefore unsurprising that during the first 80 years of the existence of Kustria, the ruling families considered it appropriate and pious to gift the Rokari church with goods and lands. This made the church to the largest landowner next to the king. Since law states that the king has no influence over the church's lands, the Rokari church, embodied by the ruling Bishop of Kustria, has a substantial political influence even in worldly matters.

Monks and priests of the abbeys are allowed to marry daughters of the priest caste. However, this does not occur very often as these unions rarely bring forth daughters. The priests and monks usually procreate with daughters of the farmer caste, which they may impregnate but not marry. Sons born from such unions are automatically accepted into the priest caste. Daughters go into the farmer caste and are counted as serfs. This is a major cause of the 80 percent skew of the serf population on church lands towards females.

For some time there has been a growing number of followers of the Linealist Church of Hrestol in Kustria, imported from Old Seshnela by priests and knights. Linealist Hrestoli put great importance in chivalrous behaviour, which is very much appreciated by many Kustrian nobles. These idealise the ideals of the Tournaments of Kustria, which have become less important in the Kustrian consciousness in the last few decades. As the Hrestoli church also forbids caste mobility, fixing every caste member in place, there is not much friction with the Rokari church. However, the growing membership of the Hrestoli church does imply a consequent loss of political power for the Rokari, who try to prevent defections by all possible means.

The same is true for the relatively few members in Kustria of the Church of Nomia. This church's presence is mostly limited to the county of Holut, which is in a continuing state of war with Kustria and generally follows an isolationist policy. As a result, the Church of Nomia has always been seen as the enemy's faith and its influence on Kustrian politics is extremely limited.

Kustrians are more conflicted over the various Arkat cults, the Church of the Boristi and the several types of Stygian/Henotheist Churches of Ralios. The

latter have recently inspired the farmers of Kustria into revolt, by promising them free caste mobility and the concomitant free development of personal will. Since this calls existing structures in Kustria into question and endangers the position of the Kustrian nobility, missionaries of these churches are only admitted under very strict conditions. They are forbidden, on pain of death, to rouse the farmers against their lords. According to the Knights of the Order of Rokar, foreign missionaries break this rule whenever they open their mouths.

THE IMPORTANT FAMILIES OF KUSTRIA

The House of De la Leplain

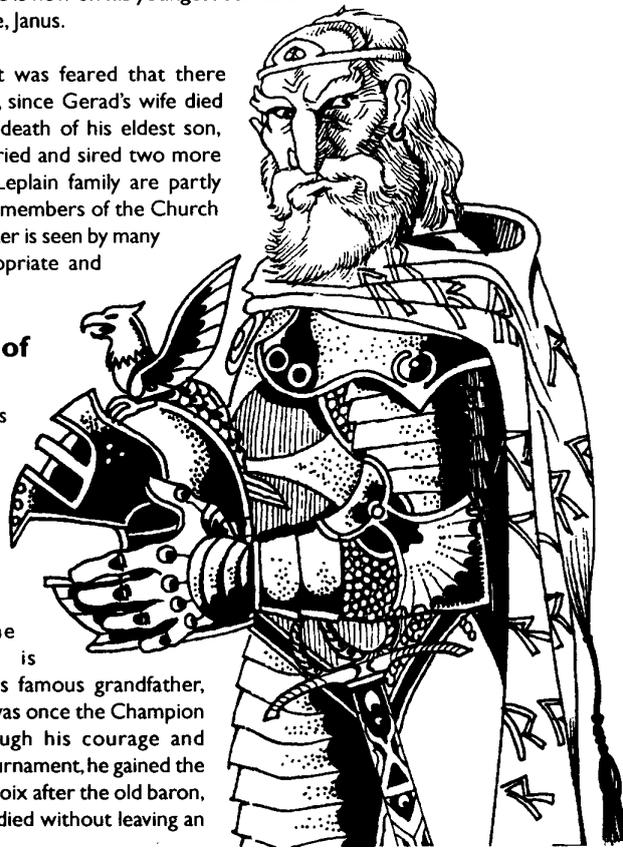
Since the foundation of Kustria as an independent state, separated from Seshnela, this family has provided the ruler of the dynasty of de Chevalier, producing a total of six kings from 1512 to 1619. The first *de facto* ruler and founder of the state was Heuleuse de la Leplain. First of the official dynasty was Fredel de Chevalier, who let himself be crowned king and made the Duchy of Kustria into the Kingdom of Kustria. Susdial de Chevalier (known as the Pious) declared freedom of religion in Kustria and so brought an end to the special status of the Rokari Church, which was the state religion until that time. His son, Gerad de Chevalier now rules Kustria. There have been several attempts on his life, all of which he has survived. His escapes from death have at times seemed miraculous. However two of his sons have been killed during assassination attempts. Thus Gerad's hope is now on his youngest son and heir to the throne, Janus.

For some time it was feared that there would be no heir, since Gerad's wife died shortly after the death of his eldest son, but Gerad remarried and sired two more sons. The De la Leplain family are partly Rokari and partly members of the Church of Dangan. The latter is seen by many nobles as inappropriate and even heretical.

The House of Tirel

The Tirel family is the youngest of the great families of Kustria, but also the most powerful. It controls two baronies, Doix and Beulan. The current baron is Walther Tirel. His famous grandfather, Griedeuse Tirel, was once the Champion of Kustria. Through his courage and strength in the tournament, he gained the title of Baron of Doix after the old baron, Ornier de Doix, died without leaving an

In total, Kustria contains nine abbeys and two castles of the Order of the Kustrian Knights of Saint Rokar. The corresponding lands are populated solely by priests, knights of the order and their serfs.



heir. For a long time after Griedeuse Tirel became baron, he was accused of foul play in obtaining the barony and of intentionally killing the only son of the old baron in the tournament. However, that charge was never proven. Nonetheless, the house of Remieges has claimed the right to the barony of Doix ever since, because the only daughter of Orinier de Doix was married to baron Tridel de Remieges. A proposal to allow inheritance of the title through the female line, however, was rejected by the king at the time, Moinande de Chevalier. The current king, Gerad de Chevalier, is especially grateful to the Tirel family; Walther de Tirel managed to prevent a murder attempt on the king by Baron Robert de Beulan. He also apprehended the would-be assassin who tried to escape on the way to the capital and was killed. As punishment the entire De Beulan family was taken into custody and disappeared into the dungeons of the king's castle. Only the five year old son Alandis de Beulan and his older sister escaped this fate. Following his escape, the location of the boy was kept secret for many years. His surviving sister was already married by



“The old family of De Glanville has always been accused of being no more than a bunch of peddlers. In fact the family does own several trading houses in the city and is also engaged in money lending and changing.”

THE WORLD'S GREATEST TOURNAMENT BOOK

Compiled for the LARP *Rise of Ralios*, it contains practically everything worth knowing about Ralios and an overview of the religion of the West: Malkionism. Much contained here has not been previously published. The booklet contains:

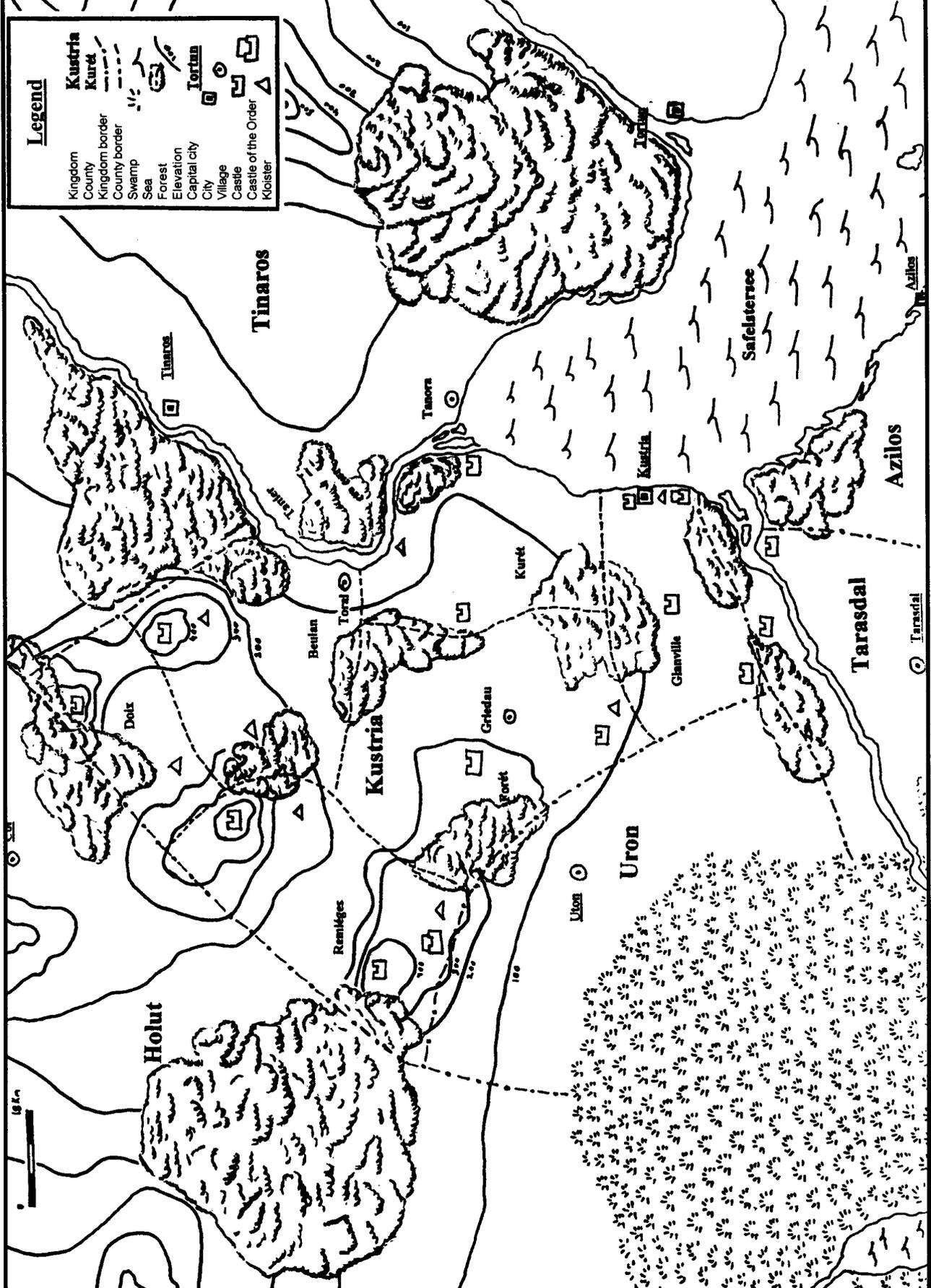
- Kustria and the Tournament; this previously Seshnelan kingdom has the largest tournament grounds of the entire West
- The Laws of Malkion; the laws to which every pious Malkioni should adhere, or face persecution
- The City States of Ralios; an overview of the mishmash of city states within Ralios
- A Map of Ralios; this map is the first total overview of the region
- Important Persons of Ralios; the 'Who's Who' of Ralios
- A History of Ralios; the colourful history of Ralios sheds light on the Arkati mythos
- A History of Malkionism, with a summary of the developmental phases of this religion
- The Malkioni Churches of Ralios; outlines the major and minor religions in the West
- The Orlanthi of Ralios; different from what one expects
- The Trolls of Ralios; the Troll nations of Halikiv and Guhan

the time he made his escape (although she was only 12 then), to the grandson of the Count of Kuret and was under their protection.

In gratitude for his bravery in rescuing him from assassination, King Gerad de Chevalier made Walther Tirel Baron of Beulan and gave him his daughter in marriage. She eventually gave birth to more than ten of Walther's children. In the present day Walther's five sons (Sir Robert, Sir Grimard, Sir Hierleuse, Sir Orinador and Sir Pietite) have already made a name for themselves in Kustria, and the Tirel clan is famous and/or infamous at the king's court. The Tirel all belong to the Rokari faith. On their land can be found three of the largest abbeys of the realm and even though Walther Tirel is not known as extremely devout, he did donate much of his fief to the church.

Legend

- Kingdom **Kustria**
- County **Kurá**
- Kingdom border
- County border
- Swamp
- Sea
- Forest
- Elevation
- Capital city
- City
- Village
- Castle
- Castle of the Order
- Kloister



The House of De Remieges

The De Remieges are a relatively new noble family in Kustria. They gained their title through Sir Osbert, the great-grandfather of the current count, Robert de Remieges. Sir Osbert distinguished himself as the leader of the Kustrian knights at the battle of Ratak, where they defeated the army of Tinaros. As a reward, he received the hand of Juliet, ward of the king and heiress of the old Baron de Remieges, in marriage. Since then the families of De Remieges and De Beulan have had a special relationship, as the Baron de Beulan, the then champion of Kustria, was a close comrade of Sir Osbert.

There is a special enmity between De Remieges and Tirel, as the De Remieges claim ownership of the Barony of Doix. According to them the last daughter of the house of Doix, Claire de Remieges, should have succeeded her father as Baron(ess) of Doix, and the king was wrong to award the barony to the Tirel clan instead. To this day Robert de Remieges claims the barony of Doix. Religiously, the house of Remieges is divided. Baron Robert is a member of the Rokari church, but his children have converted to the Linealist Hrestoli. The Baroness follows the Church of Dangan.

The House of De Clare

Richard de Clare is Count of Foret and head of the De Clare family. He is the second richest count in Kustria, after Robert de Glanville, and holds the largest fief in the realm. The Counts of Foret have been competing with the De la Leplain for the throne of Kustria since its foundation. The founding father of the house, Jerome de Clare, held the highest noble title when Heuleuse de la Leplain took power and hence was the one with the best claim to the throne. The De Clare can best be described as fundamentalist Rokari. After the introduction of freedom of religion by Susdial the Pious, they have tried several times to bring the Rokari Inquisition to Kustria. The De Clare support the Bishop of Kustria, Thurstan.

The House of De Plois

The De Plois family rules the County of Kuret in the western part of Kustria. This county contains the Tournament Fief of the King of Kustria, the income of which can only be used for the Tournament.

The current count is Pascal de Plois. He has governed the county for almost 30 years and is one of the most loyal vassals of the royal house of De Chevalier. His son and heir is Osbert de Plois, who is married to the daughter of the House of Beulan which has fallen from grace. Pascal sees this as a great stain on the honour of his House, but his son has always refused to banish his wife. However, twenty years ago when the entire Beulan family was taken into custody, Pascal himself also opposed the incarceration of his daughter-in-law.

Another famous member of the house is Morwyn de Plois, Pascal's younger brother, who holds the title of Champion of Kustria since four years. Most of the De Plois have converted to the Linealist Hrestoli Church. They have already announced that they are planning to found the first Hrestoli monastery in Kustria.

The House of De Glanville

The old family of De Glanville has always been accused of being no more than a bunch of peddlers. The family does own several trading houses in the city and is engaged in money lending and changing. As a result, the entire navy is financed by this family. In addition they own 24 merchant ships, which trade all across Lake Felster. Due to their international trade relations, the family also has the most contact with other states in the region. For generations, the royal house owes the De Glanville for financing the yearly tournament. It is therefore unsurprising that Count Robert, the head of the family, holds the position of Chamberlain at the court.

Recently the family was accused of co-conspiring the murder attempt by the Baron de Beulan, as Count Robert was the brother-in-law of the Baron. However, none of the accusations could be proven. The son of the count, Turan de Glanville, has accused the king in open court of trying to use the situation to rid himself of his creditors. The family De Glanville can best be described as open-minded Rokari. However, there has never been a De Glanville who was particularly known for his piety.

The West's Worst Magi Awards - by Michael O'Brien

Selected by apprentice sorcerers across the West as the masters they'd least like to be apprenticed to:

1. Magnotoglist the Eternal, Stygian wizard of Ralios:

...after labouring for him for many years, Etzil the Gormless discovered his master was merely an illusion of extremely long duration.

2. Amorous Freddi Lush, Galvosti magus of Daran:

...whose selection criteria for new apprentices is biased toward their physical beauty; unfortunately, during his casting couch 'interviews', he tends to use the Tap spell to prolong his vigour.

3. Archdeacon Lumbargo of Karia:

...whose menagerie of familiars includes a wraith, a ghoul, a hellion and several walktapi, none of whom are house-trained...

4. Lady Magus Vivian Morte, Chalana's Hospital, Perfe:

...whose apprentices draw lots for the honour of being the next corpse upon which she forlornly makes another attempt to sorcerously duplicate the Resurrect spell.

5. Cool Froodie Dude, the surf-master of Pithdaros

...who loved the beach so much he created his familiar from a grain of sand. Unfortunately he lost it, and now his wide-eyed apprentices scour the Seshnelan coast looking for it with Mystic Vision spells of tortuous duration and intensity.

6. Kilwin the Skint, wandering wizard of Mortasor:

...who shrinks his apprentices to save on food costs.

7. The Drooling Magus of Nochet:

...who when creating his pussy cat familiar became a dribbling idiot after inadvertently gifting it with too much of his INT. Now, the familiar is off to see the world, and his apprentices are left to care for a mental vegetable...

... and there was always Zzabur, who never taught any of his apprentices Skin of Life...

Fencing Schools

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If there's anywhere in Glorantha where war is a pastime and the use of weapons a form of art, West Ralios is the place.

In Safelster weapon masters can be found in all cities and most towns. Although training in all kind of weapons is available, the sword is still the dominant weapon. After all, every knight has to own a sword.

However the last fifty years have seen a more comfortable weapon take its place among the urban knight caste and the many rich "farmers" with hard-won rights. That weapon is the rapier. Light, elegant and requiring more skill than strength, it has quickly become the weapon of choice for the fashion conscious. In a surprisingly short time, several fencing schools have sprung up to teach the proper use and abuse of the rapier.

Schools are formed when a self-proclaimed master decides to teach their secret techniques to the world. Those who can show a good string of victories (on the part of the pupils, not necessarily the master) progress to be imitated by others, the greatest compliment in fencing circles. Some masters even go so far as to publish "treatises", most describing improbable situations and even more improbable "perfect" parries.

The first to appear in chronological order was the Azilos style, although similar styles are taught all around the Felster region. This technique features the use of another object (usually a dagger, but other masters recommend a heavy cloak, a small shield or even a lantern) in the left hand to parry blows and sometimes for a surprise strike. It begins to be old fashioned and it is quite hard to learn, requiring mastery in two weapons.

The Tinaros style came next. Tinarians have always favoured long swords, so they developed long rapiers (some more than four feet long) to make a devastating lunge out of reach of the enemy. Their extra-long weapons keep the enemy away while they wait for an opening. It is mostly a reflexive technique, and if the lunge fails the fencer is lost, so it is not very popular. Masters of it, however, are highly feared, although less aggressive than other fencing fans.

The most recent innovation is the Kustrian style, so called because it appeared in Kustria, although its first teacher was a converted Orlanthe from Otkorion. It uses footwork and "deviating the enemy blade to where we want it to be", with emphasis on feints and dodges. With much fighting space it is very successful, but it fails in close quarters. It uses a shortened version of the Tinarian lunge, much less risky and with a better recovery.

There are some other obscure styles, as the Colian crouch (where you crouch to expose minimum body area), but these do not usually survive their creator.

Nowadays duels are becoming a spectator sport in the Felster lake region, with bystanders commenting on moves, styles and footwork. The presence of skilled healers makes most arranged duels deathless, but many people are killed in impromptu duels.

Some Lunar nobles have recently imported so-called Ralian fencing masters, and young fops in the Empire have begun to use expressions as "the Agrippa defence" or "Esteve's secret inescapable lunge".

What has really made the rapier a competitive weapon are bucket hilts and swept hilts. The parry is made with the hilt, which is much stronger than the blade. Only iron and specially treated bronze (a trade secret of the weaponsmith guilds) have enough tensile strength to make rapiers, and dwarven (Nida) and Three Eye Blue's are considered the best blades. Rural knights and most mercenaries mock the urbanites, calling their rapiers "toothpicks", but more than one has been killed with a rapier through the heart.

The Azilos style is standard two-weapon fighting as detailed in the RQIII rules. The Main Gauche and the Buckler are in the list of normal weapons. A cloak can be loose (treat as a net if weighted) or covering the left arm (treat as 4 points of additional armour on the hand for parry purposes). A lantern has 4 AP, and a special attack or parry success (if lighted) forces the opponent to test POWx5 (POWx1 if criticalled) or be blinded for 1D3 rounds.

The Tinarian style requires an extra-long rapier. This and the lunge makes the range of a swordsman close to four meters. The Tinarian has the option to use his rapier as a SR0 weapon (it is usually a SR1, and uses standard closing rules). He cannot parry or dodge, but his skill is considered to be twice his Tinarian fencing skill or twice his rapier attack (the lower of the two).

The Kustrian style gives the fencer a choice. If attacked before striking, the fencer can roll against their Kustrian fencing skill. If successful, the fencer may choose to either dodge or parry the attack if the roll is lower than their Parry or Dodge skill respectively. This replaces a normal attack.

All fencing skills are knowledge skills that cannot be increased with experience (similar to Martial Arts). Many more than these are possible, but play balance should be kept in mind.

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has been into roleplaying since 1981 and playing RQ since 1986. He has played virtually every RPG known to man, and maintains that Glorantha/RQ is the best. In addition to several articles in Spanish fanzines, he co-wrote the Cyberpunk 2020 supplement Eurosource Plus.

Game Info: (RQIII)

Bucket hilt rapiers have 2AP more than the primitive rapier shown in the rules. The hilt also allows punching as a SR3 weapon (damage 1D3+1), useful in close quarters.

THE BORISTI CHURCH

BY INGO TSCHINKE

translated by Helge Reuter
with additional material by Peter Maranci

Until now, the religions of western Genertela have not been deeply explored in Tradetalk. Yet the West, the "mind of Glorantha", is a major centre of Gloranthan lore. In recognition of this, Tradetalk presents articles on the divers Churches of the West. This issue features the Boristi Church; upcoming issues will focus on other major Western religions. For those who can't wait to read more on the subject, the RQ Society is still offering the Player's book for the free-form LARP "Rise of Ralios". It includes condensed views of well-known authors on the history of Malkionism and many other interesting details about life in the West.



THE MALKIONI

The western region of Genertela is dominated by the religion of the Invisible God and his prophet, Malkion. All followers of the different churches and sects of the religion call themselves Malkioni. The most prominent Malkioni sects are the Rokari in Seshnela and Ralios, and the Hrestoli in Loskalm and at the Castle Coast. But there are also a great many small sects and heresies, all part of a history full of change and differing development. The early history of Ralios encompassed widely differing religious trends. In the first age the region was shaped by Nysalor's Golden Empire, which was destroyed by the hero Arkat. Under Arkat's influence the Dark Empire dominated the region. During the second age, the God Learners controlled much of the West. In the third age the frequent attempts of Seshnela and the Rokari Churches' crusades changed the region. The goal of the Rokari crusades was to wipe out heretical groups in the area.

Notable among the sects of modern-day Ralios are the Boristi, most hated and most mystic of them all. Their enemies have nicknamed the Borosti "squids" because of their use of chaos in certain rituals. Though their sect is small in numbers and considered by most Malkioni to be a serious heresy, the Boristi are of a great interest to the gamemaster in search of strange people to baffle his/her players with. Their lack of a strict central authority and their low level of organisation makes the Borosti versatile opponents and/or partners for players.

HISTORY

The Holy Church of Borist was founded by the holy monk Quantan van deen Borist during the Gbaji wars. He realised that the minions of the Devil, who is also known as Gbaji, were trying to seduce the people of Ralios into following demonic heresies. To combat this evil he founded the Holy Order of Borist. Among his followers was a knight from the West named Arkat, one of the great heroes of the age. It was Arkat who revealed the secret of the evil minions to Borist: the secret called Enlightenment. Enlightenment made it easier for warriors to combat chaos, by allowing them to comprehend the secret nature of demons. But the Enlightened also bore the risk of falling prey to the dark side. In realisation of this danger, van deen Borist developed the ceremony of cleansing.

The ceremony protects all members of the Borist church from the snares of the Devil and against all taint of sin. Boristi who succumb to strange gods or false prophets may not receive the cleansing, and thus are barred from the salvation of Solace and damned to eternal doom. Van deen Borist also taught a ritual to tap the life power of chaotic beings. This allowed Borosti to destroy chaotic creatures, converting what little good they had within them into pure, useful energy. The Boristi ritual gave enemies of chaos the strength needed to destroy Gbaji.

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Since that time, Boristi fighters against Chaos have opposed the spread of the teachings of Gbaji throughout Ralios. Chaos still abounds in the West, and the Boristi believe that those who have not undergone their ceremony of cleansing remain a potential breeding ground of chaotic infestation.

In time, Arkat defected from the Borist Church to follow the ways of heathen barbarians. Before he left, he promised Quantan van deen Borist that he would try to rally the barbarians to destroy the Devil. But ultimately Arkat became a traitor and demon in the fight against chaos. When the war was over, Arkat returned to Ralios and founded the demonic Dark Empire. Only a few saw him for what he now was: an avatar of Gbaji the Devil.

The Holy Borist Church was forced to withdraw to the far east of Ralios, where their Order continued their battle against chaos. Minions of chaos continued to strive to destroy the Boristi. But the Boristi kept their secrets to themselves and refused to be seduced or forced away from their path to salvation. Aware of the Devil's continued existence, they maintained constant vigilance against his servants. To this day, the Boristi are certain of the Devil's return and prepare against the day that he will try to take revenge on all those who have opposed him, especially the Boristi.

When the God Learners came to Ralios the Boristi enlisted their help in the battle against the demonic Dark Empire. The wizards assisted in destroying the heathen Orlanthi, but their hunger for knowledge destroyed them in the end; before long, the God Learners became servants of the Devil themselves. The Boristi sensed the betrayal of the God Learners and founded the Secret Register of the Boristi. Only a member of the register could partake in the innermost secrets of the Boristi. The Secret Register soon was feared by the God Learners. Cowards at heart, the God Learners loathed open battle and discouraged direct action by their Boristi allies. As a result, the Holy Church of the Boristi had to dispatch their fighters on covert missions to kill their enemies in secret. Thus the Order of Boristi Assassins was founded.



THEOLOGY

There is only one God, He who is called the Invisible God, and Malkion and Hrestol are His prophets. There are no other gods save Him. The Devil exists in and around all beings in the world. Only those who submit themselves to the Ceremony of Cleansing by the priests of Borist are free of Chaos. Their sins are forgiven and they shall attain Solace. It is the holy goal of our Church to destroy chaos and the Devil. To this end, we have several tools:

1. The Holy Order of the Knights of Borist

Those are the pre-eminent fighters against chaos. They do not suffer the fear and confusion caused by chaos. It is their task to defend the Holy Church against all infidels amongst the Malkioni.

2. The Holy Order of Assassins of Borist

It is their task to fight in covert actions the hidden demons who go about their business amongst ordinary men. They destroy the Holy Church's secret enemies wherever they may hide.

3. The Holy Priests of Borist

The priests of Borist cleanse the common people of sin and demonic influences. They drain the life power of the Devil and his spawn, and cast back the sins of the Devil upon himself so that the people may be free of sin.

We follow the law of Malkion because we do not destroy that which we love: only our enemies. We know that Tapping is a just way of destroying creatures of chaos and the enemies of the Holy Church of Borist, who are minions of the Devil.

"...ultimately Arkat became a traitor and a demon in the fight against chaos. When the war was over, Arkat returned to Ralios and founded the demonic Dark Empire. Only a few saw him for what he now was: an avatar of Gbaji the Devil."

We believe in the existence of the four castes: peasant, knight, priest and lord. Every soul is born into his caste. To attempt to leave one's caste is a violation of Malkion's rule. Only Holy Men may partake in a change of caste. The enemy of the Invisible God is called the Devil, also known as Gbaji the deceiver and tyrant. He leads a demonic host of depraved chaos-gods. Chaos is wicked and constantly strives to destroy faith in the Invisible God. Arkat the deceiver was one of Gbaji's demons who will eventually return with his master the Devil. We shall destroy him then. Throughout time there are always some who are too weak to resist chaos and fall prey to the snares of the Devil. They are cleansed of their sins by the Holy Fire of Borist.

Womenfolk are weak-willed and feeble-bodied in comparison to men. It is the responsibility of men to look after women and to provide for them. Women may never do the work of a knight or a priest lest their souls be seriously harmed.



HIERARCHY

The Great Master of the Holy Church of Borist in Borin is the Church Leader. He has the power to nominate Great Knights and Master Assassins of the Church and to remove them if they break the law of the Holy Church. The priests of the Church are his helpers who assist him in providing peace and salvation for the souls of the faithful.

Important Saints

Malkion the Prophet

It was Malkion who brought the word of the Invisible God to the people. He showed them the way to survive the Great Darkness. He taught them the law and how the people had to live in four different castes.

Hrestol the Prophet

This prophet revealed to all how the Brithini erred in their rigid interpretation of Malkion's law. His deeds of self-sacrifice demonstrated to all how to achieve eternal salvation through Solace in Glory. He is also revered for teaching the concepts of honour and knighthood.

St. Quantan van deen Borist

The Holy Founder of the Borist Church whose teachings and regulations are fundamental to the faith. He brought the Ceremony of Cleansing to free the faithful from sin and chaos. He taught the people to Tap the depraved creatures of chaos to destroy them. He is a glorious example for all Boristi, the exemplar of all virtues.

St. Rediale of Borin

He was a Great Knight of the Holy Church of Borist who proved that chaos had no means to withstand the vigour of the Knights of Borist. He killed scores of chaotic things during the Gbaji wars and founded the realm of Borin.

Attitudes Toward Other Sects

Rokari

This church has turned its back on the concepts of freedom and peace for all peoples. They deny the existence of the lower gods and the chaotic host of the Devil, thus felling prey to sin themselves. They try to destroy the Boristi with their tool, the demonic inquisition.

FAVOURSED SORCERY

Apprentice Bonding, Mystic Vision, Neutralise Magic, Sense Chaos, Skin of Life, Spell Resistance, Spirit Resistance, Stupefaction, Tap (Characteristic), Worship Invisible God

COMMON SORCERY

Create Familiar, Damage Boosting, Damage Resistance, Diminish STR, Enhance STR, Holdfast, Magic Point Matrix Enchantment, Palsy, Protective Circle, (Sense) Projection, Sense Gold, Sense Magic, Spell Matrix Enchantment

FORBIDDEN SORCERY

Create Basilisk, Create Vampire, Immortality, Shapechange, Animate Corpse, Animate Skeleton, Dominate Divine Magic Spell Spirit, Dominate Ghost

Hrestoli

The Hrestoli break the law of Malkion because they preach the abolishment of the castes. They doubt the existence of Gbaji/Arkat the Devil. This makes them blind of the corruption which Chaos brings among them. They will be consumed by Chaos if they do not swiftly correct their errors.

Galvosti

This Church is most closely related to ours, but they avoid contact with us, tricked by the lies of demons who say that we are evil. But there has always been a peaceful coexistence between our Church and the Church of Nomia.

The Henotheistic Church of Azilos

The Count of Azilos is the head of this "church". He claims to be an heir of Arkat. He thereby proclaims himself the offspring of a demon! His "church" is evil and must be destroyed.

The Henotheistic Church of Otkorion

This church promotes heresy by claiming that Orlanth, one of the lower gods, was the Invisible God himself. These Henotheists are not true Malkioni but followers of the lower gods, who spread heretical follies.

The Stygian Church of Naskorion

This church reveres Arkat the deceiver as a saint. They claim Arkat had founded their church after his return, thus denying his demonic nature. This sect is the Devil's spawn and must be obliterated!

The portrait of the Church of Boristi as it is given above is somewhat idealised: it is how the Church presents itself to the lower ranks of its followers. Many priests and wizards know that their Church has had to undergo many changes which ensured the survival of that Church yet at the same time corrupted its fabric. Therefore, we supply this comment on the Church of Boristi as it might be given by a priest who knows about his Church's historic difficulties:

The Church of Boristi is one of the most ancient in all of Ralios. We have always resisted our enemies, although this has forced us to undertake covert operations by the Secret Register of Boristi. This led to many problems in past centuries which we continue to confront the Church today.

The Church of Borist divided into a light side and a dark side. This was brought about by the decentralisation of the Church of St. Borist. Each Great Master in the different city states rules his followers as he sees it fit, rather than following a central authority. Long ago, before the God Learners came to Ralios there was a central authority for the Boristi, but the advent of the God Learners ended that office. Since then, two different interpretations of St. Borist's religion have come into existence. The goals of the two sects are basically the same but the adherents of the dark side use chaos for purposes of their own. The worst example are the chaos monks who delight in spreading chaos and mutation all over the world, thus forcing new devotees into their ranks.

It is true that all priests of Borist use chaos creatures to purge themselves of the chaos they accumulate in cleansing others. Over time it has become acceptable to give a newly-created chaos monster to believers as a sacrifice to be destroyed. This ceremony strengthens the faith of the congregation and proves the destructive power latent in every Boristi.

The hierarchy of the Church of Borist is somewhat fragmented, with individual deacons, chaplains and priests acting independently. Yet still we gain adherents. Every man longs to face his creator free from sin. The Ceremony of Cleansing makes it possible to lead a life of sin and yet to be freed of taint by the court priest in a simple ritual. This enables many priests to gain influence with the nobility, who are then encouraged to join our struggle against Arkat and Gbaji. I accept these methods and think them helpful.

The accumulation of sinful energies taken from worshipers poses a great threat to the individual priest. In Borin, on several occasions it has happened that a priest accumulates too much of these energies and falls prey to the dark side of Illumination or, even worse, became a chaos monster himself. Those who fight against Gbaji will always be playing with fire. Many warped and warped Things who were once good Boristi priests still live in the vaults under castle Borin. This terrible doom has resulted in the nickname given to us by our enemies: "squids".

The other sects of Malkionism despise us because of our contacts with chaos. They do not know that in fact we are the ones who protect the world from the threat of chaos. We have heard many prophecies in recent years, hinting at the return of Arkat to destroy Ralios. Many religions hope to rise to power by joining Gbaji, but we will stop them.

Death to Arkat!

Solace of the Body

was the secret Malkion taught in his New Laws. This enabled people to use the resources of the world to obtain liberation from their troubles. Regardless of the flaws and follies of the world, it was possible for those who obeyed the Laws of Malkion to obtain perfect preservation and protection after their physical demise, in the spiritual haven of Solace in Glory. Solace of the Body taught that there is more to existence than this one life; that a man who lives in accordance with righteousness will not perish utterly from this world.

Excerpt from History of Malkionism by Nick Brooke (in Tales #13 and The World's Greatest Tournament).



SORCERY SPELLS OF THE BORISTI

Special Sect Sorcery Spells:

Ceremony of Cleansing

Touch, Passive, Temporal

This spell is one of the oldest and most important magics of the Boristi. It enables each Priest to cleanse a member of his own race of all sins through a special form of confession, which results in the loss of POW and characteristics. To complete this ritual successfully, the believer submits himself willingly to his priest. As the worshipper is cleansed, the burden of sin passes to the casting priest. Thus this spell is potentially very dangerous for the caster.

The process is quite painful and from the worshipper's point of view feels much like Tapping (if they've been unlucky enough to have had that experience). However, the sensation of pain lessens with repeated Cleansings over the years. Since worshipers must undergo this ceremony at least once a year to prevent sins from accumulating, they eventually develop a tolerance for the pain. The process is more difficult for outsiders who have not been raised in the faith from an early age. Victims of the Chaos Monks or people initiating into the Boristi Church late in life are (usually) deeply tainted by sin. Their first cleansing is likely to be massive, and consequently extremely painful.

Sins are measured in *sin units* in terms of this spell. An ordinary peasant of the Church of Borist will accumulate one sin unit over the duration of one year; a soldier two to three sin units while a broo will burden himself with 10 to 20 sin units in the same amount of time. A typical Malkioni will gain one to three sin units per year. Learning divine chaotic magic or joining a cult of chaos adds a sizeable number of sin units, of course.

Sin units have no visible effect under normal circumstances. They are comparable to an aura that surrounds the sinner, which can only be perceived by a Boristi priest who uses the *Sin Sight* spell. Under special circumstances the sin aura may become activated, at which point it may give the sinner a chaos feature. Thus sin poses a great threat to Boristi priests, who by accumulating the sins of their flock burden their souls with a great weight of sin. A priest who Cleanses 100 simple peasants is contaminated with an amount of sin greater than the score of five broos! Such an accumulation of sin would put a priest at high risk of mutating into a hideous chaos monster. This doom can only be prevented by transferring accumulated sins into other creatures with the *Transference* spell (see below). In dire straits some wizards use *Transference* to turn their familiars into chaos monsters to rid themselves of sin, if they have no other target.

Each three points of Intensity used allows the priest to cleanse the target of 1d6 sin units. Sin units are removed from the worshiper at a regular pace throughout the duration of the spell. The casting priest may use *Duration* to extend the time of the spell, which lessens the pain felt by the target and decreases the risk to both priest and believer.

In the course of the ceremony, the cleansed person loses one point of fatigue, one magic point, and one general hit point per sin unit. If a person aged 40 is cleansed for the first time of all his sins in a single ceremony, he would almost certainly die as a result, with all of his energies absorbed by the officiating priest. To prevent death, the cleansing ceremony is done in stages, repeatedly over the course of several days. By cleansing a sinful thing of chaos within the minimum 10 minutes, the priest can ensure the simultaneous destruction and salvation of the victim/delivered thing. Thus salvation from a Boristi perspective can seem like cruel death to others.

Cleansing and *Transference* spells create abnormal currents and concentrations of corruption. These unusual manipulations make Chaotic taint a possible side-effect. Apart from using these spells, the normal accumulation of sin units do not cause Chaotic corruption in non-Boristi - in other words, non-Boristi who do evil, even great evil, do not generally become Chaotic as a result.

Note: Cleansing cannot completely remove the taint of Chaos from a Chaotic being. The being may die from the weight of sins removed, but in any case Cleansing cannot eliminate Chaotic features or the essential taint of Chaos.

This spell was conceived by Peter Metcalfe, Sandy Petersen and Ingo Tschinke

Neutralise Poison

Touch, Instant

For spell information see *Gods of Glorantha*, pg 48.

Sin Sight

Ranged, Active, Temporal

This spell allows Boristi priests to view the sin aura of living things. A single point of Intensity allows the priest to perceive the presence of unCleansed sin in a living thing, and to know if the being has ever undergone the Ceremony of Cleansing. At five points of Intensity the priest may discern the number of sin units possessed by viewed beings to within plus or minus five points. At ten points of Intensity the exact number of sin units are revealed, as well as the amount of time that has passed since the creature's last Cleansing (if any). At ten points of Intensity the casting priest is also aware if a viewed Boristi is lying to him.

Ritual of Transference

Touch, Active, Temporal

This sorcery spell is used by Boristi priests to transfer the sins he has collected from his devotees via Cleansing into a living thing. The target can be a chaotic creature or a normal animal, and may attempt to resist. In that case the casting priest must overcome the target's MP with a resistance roll.

Each three points of Intensity used in the spell allow the transfer of 100 sin units from the priest to the victim. At least three points of Intensity must be used. The priest may choose to transfer less than 100 sin units, ranging from 1 - 99, but three points of Intensity are still required.

The sudden accumulation of sins makes the target creature vulnerable to corruption by Chaos. When the target's sin total exceeds its current POW x 100, it must roll its POW x 5 or gain a chaotic feature. As each additional multiple of its POW x 100 is reached, another roll must be made at with a decreasing chance of success. For example, when accumulated sin units reach a total of two hundred times the POW of the target the necessary roll to avoid corruption is POW x 4, at three hundred times POW the chance is POW x 3, etc. When the creature's sin total reaches its POW x 600 it's chance to avoid corruption is POW x 1. Any additional increase in sin units immediately requires another roll.

Note: a priest who gains one or more chaotic features through an accumulation of sins (or by any other means) cannot Cleanse himself of the taint of Chaos and the chaotic feature(s). Even if all sins are removed, the taint and features remain.

The process is unpleasant, and the target creature is likely to resent it. As a result, Boristi tend to cast this spell only on small animals such as frogs, toads, chickens, or lizards. Some prefer to transfer sins into creatures which are already chaotic but not overwhelmingly dangerous, such as a small gorp. If the target becomes chaotic some Boristi choose to kill it after the ritual of transference is complete. Others make further use of the creature, offering it as a chaotic 'enemy' which can be sacrificed by devotees. The creature may also be Tapped normally. The Guild of Chaos Monks use this spell to corrupt persons or cattle, notably during the riots in Tiskos in 1618 - 1619. Most Boristi do not cast this spell on intelligent non-chaotic beings in stricter accordance to the Laws of Malkion.

FELSTER LAKE

Home and Watery Grave of the Fleets of Ralios

by Jörg Baumgartner

The great lake at the core of Safelster has always been of critical importance for the merchants and rulers of civilised Ralios. Here the art of Naval War has a long tradition, and has seen much practice except in the rare times of a unified Safelster. Most important counties of Ralios lie upon the shore of Lake Felster, as do many of their capitals.

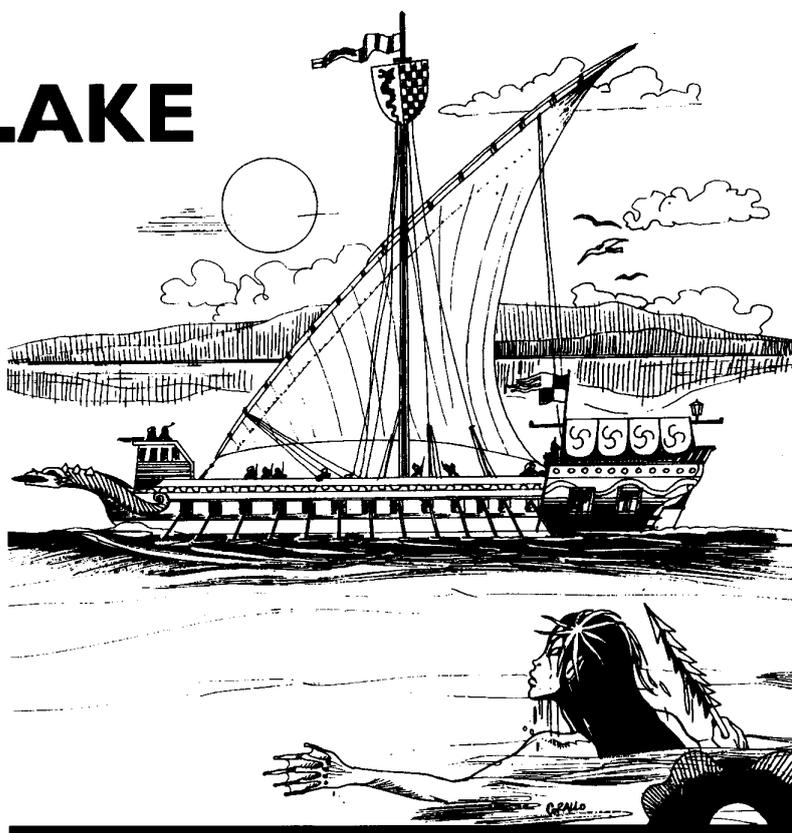
The lake itself is over 200 km long. The width varies, between 28 km (from the south cape of Sentanos to the Tiskos shore) to 80 km (from the bay of Azilos to Tortun), with an average of 50 km. Visibility depends very much on the weather, but even on clear days a ship may ply the waves without sight of any shore. Waves are usually weak, less than half a meter. Navigation is done by the sun, the Red Moon, and coastal features.

The coast forms vary from rocky cliffs, some with treacherous underwater spikes, to marshy flatlands, or loam cliffs behind flat beaches full of hidden debris. Shoals are a danger, especially at the river mouths.

It takes a hard winter to freeze over the entire lake. Once frozen, however, the ice can last from early Dark Season well into late Storm Season. The Tanier current might remain open even then, but the Doskior and Helby currents keep waterways to Galin and Syran reliably open into the middle of Dark Season. There is an increased danger of drift ice throughout this time. Normal winters may see the shore regions freeze over around late Dark Season, but with the customary rise of the water level in early Storm season these sheets tend to break up and drift off, providing ice-free ports on the river mouths by Movement Week of Storm Season. In mild winters naval trade remains undisrupted, but this time is usually used by ship owners for maintenance anyway.

Lake Felster is inhabited by multitudes of seaweeds and seaweed-dwelling creatures, tended by tribes of Murthdryami. The centre of the lake is deep (some even claim bottomless), and the goddess of the lake demands respect for her goodwill towards the human neighbours.

Fishing in the lake is quite satisfactory and provides a basic staple to the diet of the Safelstran cities. Carps, catfish and eels are the main catches, supplemented by an almost lobster-sized variety of the river crab which can be trapped (or traded) in Murthdryami algae forests on the upper slopes of the lake bottom. Adventurous fisherfolk sometimes fish with 400 m long lines in the lower waters of the central lake. The stygian creatures which can be caught there look hideous, but often prove worth the effort - if not for food, then for lamp-oil and magical ingredients.



PILOTS' GUIDE TO LAKE FELSTER:

Watercraft

The vast majority of Felster ships fits this general description: A sleek hull, with rowers benches extending sideways, holding a single deck of oars manned by one to five men each (depending on size, design, and purpose), stabilised by sword-like ridge along the length of the keel. Even trader vessels are built for speed, usually the only hope against hostile forces. All ships have castles fore and aft, often with additional turrets for spell-casting. Military ships generally have a ram, not underwater, but on level with the rowers' benches. The craft are shell-built, with clinker straking from split (not sawed) trunks fitted to form, then stabilised by the skeleton fit into the shell. The planks are tarred with several layers of pitch to hold off the inevitable boreworm attacks which limit the life expectancy of a lake craft to about 25 years, even with careful maintenance. Some shipyards use metal plating for more durability, but the metal rarely survives more than five years of immersion. An exception are the royal Galin barges which use gold for plating. Because of this fact, they are very coveted, and can move on the lake only heavily escorted. Still, of four such vessels only two are still in the possession of Galin. One has been taken by the Estali, and another now serves as state barge for the Duchess of Tortun.

Jörg Baumgartner has been a roleplayer for 12 years, into RQ for 8 years, and into Glorantha for 6 years—but those last six have been the best of the bunch. He was the one-time editor of the German magazine *Free INT*, is an associate editor of *Tradetalk*, and is a holder of the famed *Yellow Flag* for excessive verbosity on the *Glorantha Digest*. His web-page can be found at <http://www.toppoint.del/~joel/homegl.html>

Vessel Types

The (typical) single mast bears a single lateen-rigged sail which allows sailing on a straight course even east to west, against the predominantly south-western wind. Coastal features make sailing near land tricky, so the sails are mainly used on the open lake. Above the rig the mast bears an oversized shield showing its allegiance. This ship design is the heritage of the God Learners, and imitates the general vessels of the Jrusteli. Since the Closing, such vessels have not been used elsewhere.

Fishing vessels are similar in form, though of lesser size and sophistication. Usually they are spread dug-outs outfitted with one or two rows of planking and a few ribs for stabilisation. Most rely solely on paddles or oars for propulsion.

Typical naval combat encounters are between single ships, most frequently a freebooter or war-galley against a merchant galley. Large-scale conflicts may involve whole war-fleets supplemented by merchant galleys or mercenary allies, such as the battle between the last Count of Jorglaban and his Tinaros fleet against the fleet of Partania - in which the Count drowned.

Major powers on the Lake:

Kustria

Kustria has only one major port, below the royal castle. This port is unusual in providing several areas which can hold up to three galleys each, which are walled separately and include barracks. These are tournament bays, part of the general design for the tournaments, which provide attending counts and dukes with a safe place for their barges. The bays date back to the rule of Ulianus III. The Kustrian port controls the outlet of Lake Felster, and is visited by flat-bottomed river craft suitable to cross the Sodal Marsh from Orenoar, Tanisor, Dangim and Uron. Political tensions keep Lower Tanier River trade low-volume, although some merchants ply the marsh canals to Lake Bakaleel (aka Bakan Lake) and Orenoar to cater to the constant demand for iron armaments and raw iron from Old Seshnela. The Kustrian fleet of six large war-galleys is described elsewhere this issue. There are four shipyards which mostly do repair work.

Minor Lake Powers:

The People's Republic of Wexten fields one communally commanded 90-foot war-galley, which rarely leaves their port. Raymondo du Harm, called the Lake-Wolf, is a famous mercenary captain whose galley has turned the tide of many a battle by using a vicious ramming spur to inject oil into target vessels.

Naval tactics on Lake Felster are quite sophisticated, featuring many Jrusteli-devised manoeuvres. These include bow-to-bow ramming, a sheering rake through the rowers' banks, well-balanced catapult/ballistae fire and magical firepower, grappling manoeuvres from both broadside and with drop-bridges from the forecastle to the aft, etc.

Azilos

The city of Azilos is quite unimportant as a market, although the import of foreign goods provides fair profits for traders. Native products are rather dull. Agricultural surplus still sells, often as provisions for the numerous mercenary bands. Three shipyards are available.

Tiskos

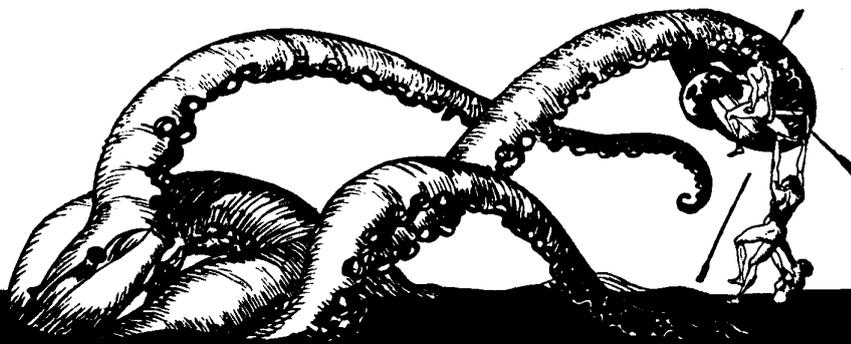
Still recovering from the Chaos Monk campaigns, Tiskos is a centre of import. Four shipyards offer services.

Estali

The city of Estali is situated at the mouth of the lake's only major southern inlet, opposite Tiskos-held lands. The port itself lies about five kilometres upriver from the river mouth. One of the main industries of Estali is ship-building, with lots of high quality timber shipped down from the Tarinwood year-round. During the last few years, the Estali navy has campaigned for supremacy on the lake under its self-styled Admiral of Felster Lake. Prizes from numerous minor engagements and daring raids into the far reaches of the Lake have helped to gather finances for the ever-growing fleet. Lately the Admiral has begun to give out letters of marque to condottieri or enterprising merchant houses as well. Most other lake fleets have come to dread the Estali banner, increasing the chance of a broad alliance against Estali ambitions (a rare event—alliances in the region are uncommon). Traders interested in transporting Manirian goods through Pralorela often pay for the "protection" of the Estali navy. Tarinwood timber is popular throughout the lake cities for its quality. Thanks to a ready supply of prime timber the port of Estali offers 12 shipyards, most of which are occupied with maintenance and repair-work on the 15 war-galleys of the Estali navy.

Galin

Controlling the trade on Helby River, Galin is the other main port for goods travelling to Maniria through Pralorela. In proud Galanini tradition, Galin's vessels are ornamented with gold plating and horse-head designs. The Galin navy is feared for its special fire-magic. These, and the recent alliance with Kustria, are the main reason why the port has not been cut off by the Estali navy. Five shipyards are available.





the port, reserved for the ducal navy, is two smaller, similar exits which lead respectively into the lake and the main section. It lies adjacent to the city's citadel, and houses most of the shipyards. Both ports are separated from the city by walls, with guarded gates. They are legally subject to the count's and guilds' port authorities, and provide inns, entertainment and basic services to common sailors who are usually not welcome inside the city. Eight shipyards provide the necessary facilities

to remove planks, replace boreworm-infested planks, and repair damaged rigs, as well as constructing new vessels both for trading and military uses. At the busiest times the city shipyards might outfit six new vessels per season,

but typically turn out only one or two, spending most of their effort on repairs and maintenance. Thanks to the Doskior River, Syran offers a rich variety of both civilised and barbarian goods. Even troll-made specialities are traded in Naskorion. The locally produced speciality is glassware.

Tortun

The capital of Sentanos is a less impressive port than Syran. It serves as the fleet HQ nonetheless due to the uncomfortable proximity of Tinaros, whose leaderless barons raid onto the lake as often as on land or against each other. The port has only two shipyards, which are mostly occupied with repairs for the Sentanos fleet.

The only current through the lake of notable strength is the Tanier current, which flows from the upper Tanier River to the lake outlet, along the Kustrian coast. There is a steady, but slow current from east to west, caused by the Doskior and Helby Rivers. This increases in Storm and Sea Seasons when snow-melt and spring rains swell the rivers.

Syran

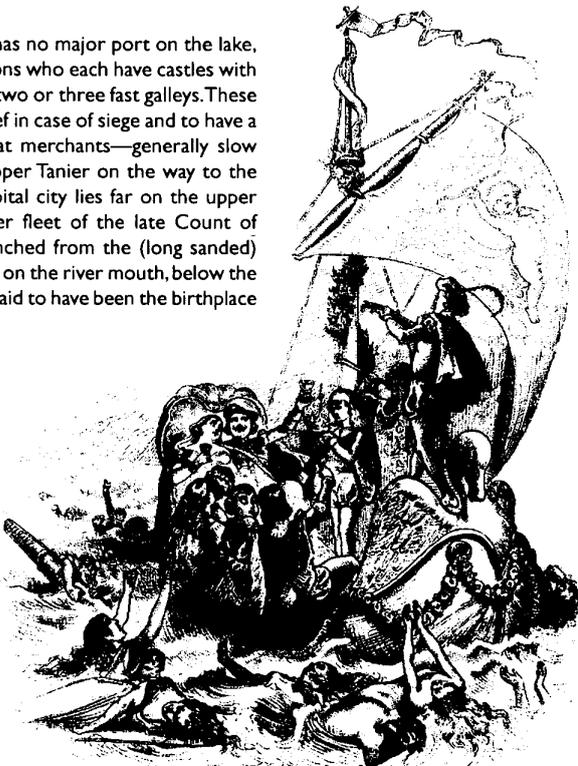
Situated at the mouth of the Doskior River, Syran controls much of the upriver trade into Naskorion, Delela, and the troll-infested far east of Ralios. Light and flat-bottomed rivercraft ply the Doskior, but rarely brave the open lake—not so much for fear of natural hazards but for the knowledge that the sleeker galleys plying the lake can outrun them easily, which makes their chances of arriving at their destination with their cargo rather slim. The Merchant Guild of Syran has priority rights to purchase any goods travelling down the Doskior. Sentries and patrol boats along the semi-permanent pontoon bridge which spans the Doskior from middle Sea Season to early Dark Season make sure that no craft fails to register with the river port officials. River traders carrying goods destined elsewhere often unload such cargo up to two days of travel upriver from Syran. Local barons profit from this smuggling activity by rounding up the offenders and claiming the contraband (an activity also endorsed by the Guild), or by taking tolls.

The River Port is situated along a bend in the river, just upriver from the pontoon bridge. The Lake Port of Syran is a different matter. Separated from the Doskior mouth by an artificially extended peninsula, it has avoided the fate of so many riverside ports: sanding up. The port walls surround an area two kilometres long and up to one kilometre wide. The main entrance is flanked by ballistae-armed castles which can fix a huge bronze chain between them to close the port. A separate section of

Tinaros

This leaderless county has no major port on the lake, but there are three barons who each have castles with small ports suitable for two or three fast galleys. These are used to provide relief in case of siege and to have a base for raids against fat merchants—generally slow river boats from the upper Tanier on the way to the port of Kustria. The capital city lies far on the upper Tanier River. The former fleet of the late Count of Jorglaban had been launched from the (long sanded) abandoned port directly on the river mouth, below the haunted castle which is said to have been the birthplace of Argin Terror.

THE KING'S LAST FOLLY



CHAOSIUM NEWS

Glorantha Con IV

What a blast. You lot are good people. Seminars were a kick, the mini-LARPs went well, the MegaCorp commandants brought wonderful products to complement their personalities, and from what I could tell, most everyone was having at least as much fun as I was. As several others have commented, the best part of going to the convention was meeting members of the Gloranthan tribe. That's what makes this next anecdote a bit sweeter: when I mention Glorantha Con to editors at other game companies, they flinch — for many other gaming companies, the notion of a convention run and populated by their most zealous fans sounds like a deep circle of Hell. Hah!

Digest Process

The Glorantha Digest is being administered by a Chaosium employee at present. Two other Chaosium employees read or skim the Glorantha Digest regularly. I'm one of the two skim-readers; I skim it whenever I can, but don't presently have time to read everything. I'm unlikely to respond to a large number of posts, but I'll respond when I can and occasionally chime in with longer updates. Thanks to all of you for making the Glorantha Digest such a good read.

ROB HEINSOO

is the Glorantha editor at Chaosium. Previously he worked on the Shadowfist! Feng Shui games for Daedalus. His current e-mail address is BiturianV@aol.com. With the arrival of Chaosium's new server, that will change to RobMH@chaosium.com

What Never Was

If you've read *MIG: The Meints Index to Glorantha*, you'll have seen the hilarious "What Never Was" text boxes scattered throughout the book. Rick went through old Chaosium publications, press releases, and convention announcements to find around 15 splendid cases of Upcoming Product Announcements that passed directly into mythology instead of publishing history.

We intend to avoid adding more products to Rick's dream library of Never-Was Glorantha stuff. Until new products are on the actual Chaosium or Stratelibri publishing and shipping schedule, these updates will focus upon what we are working on at Chaosium rather than on hypothetical product schedules.

NEW SERVER COMING

Chaosium is waiting for the phone company to install the lines that will make the Chaosium server possible. When our ISDN line is installed, we're going to be setting up an official Gloranthan clearing-house on the Chaosium server. Services will probably include archives of the mailing lists, access to some out of print material, regular updates, and new forums for people with particular Gloranthan interests.

Follow-up on Publishing Plans

We're in the process of putting together a Gloranthan publishing effort that will include new miniatures games, new boardgames, Gloranthan fiction, a new RPG, and Gloranthan sourcebooks. We're still working on the early stages of this process. All of the above-mentioned products and lines are being worked on, at some level, by various people, but none of them are on our solid publishing schedule at this time. The schedule is in flux, partly because of increasing perspective on the preparatory steps we need to take before launching new lines, and partly because of Acts of Wakboth such as the military drafting of the Glorantha editor at our Italian sister-company, Stratelibri.

We know that overly optimistic assessments of our publishing schedule raised everyone's expectations back in '96. We also know that what the majority of Glorantha fans want most is a new RPG. We're aiming to deliver on expectations, but we now know that the process is going to take longer than our core fans would like it to. We're also aware that the order in which products end up being released probably won't match many of our fans' ideal schedules. Happily, Chaosium presently occupies a secure time-space-financial bubble. We have some time to develop the Glorantha lines properly rather than needing to publish-or-perish. When we do publish new lines of Glorantha products, we'll have our marketing and publishing gears operating in synch to make sure that they have every chance of financial success (ensuring continuing publication) as well as aesthetic success.

THE HERO WARS BOARDGAME

will be published first by Stratelibri in Europe. We'll publish it later in the United States. I don't have an estimated publishing date for the first game in the series, but I have seen its likely cover, which is a tasty reinterpretation of the foursome (Harrek, Gunda, Red Emperor, Jar-eel) pictured on the first AH cover for Dragon Pass.

What Chaosium Has Working On

Greg's efforts in 1997 have focused on detailing the history, regiments and culture of the Lunar army. The material he's putting together will form a big part of the basic background for upcoming products.

Meanwhile, I've been designing a new boardgame system tentatively titled **Battles in Glorantha**. This game springs from Stratelibri's desire to introduce Glorantha to its European market. Instead of simply reprinting the **Dragon Pass** and **Nomad Gods** wargames, we have designed a new boardgame system for simpler and faster 2-player or multi-player games.

The first game, **The Hero Wars: Battles in Glorantha**, is coming along very quickly, partly because it uses the battalia, maps, and themes originally established by **White Bear & Red Moon**. Playtests have all gone smoothly, including a 4-player scenario Eric Rowe and I ran at Glorantha Con. Two player games usually take an hour, 4 player games can take a lot longer, but not the 7+ hours you'd need to finish a game of **Dragon Pass**. Design work is a couple of days from being done, then we'll send the game to Stratelibri for development and final playtesting.

The boardgames provide quick and playable access to Gloranthan conflicts which have been mostly out of gaming range. In the new system, it's no problem to pit Sir Ethilrist and His Black Horse Troop against the Lunars, or to send Cragspider and her troops up against the Dragonewts. Purists needn't worry, Sartar vs. Lunar scenarios are still the staple of the **Dragon Pass** battles. Multi-player games work team-style or every-side-for-themselves, which helps with the **Nomad Gods** side of the design equation.

Yours in Issaries,

ROB HEINSOO

Chaosium's Glorantha Editor

"The boardgames provide quick and playable access to Gloranthan conflicts which have been mostly out of gaming range. In the new system, it's no problem to pit Sir Ethilrist and His Black Horse Troop against the Lunars, or to send Cragspider and her troops up against the Dragonewts."

THE GUILD OF CHAOS MONKS

BY PETER METCALFE

According to outsiders, the Guild of Chaos Monks is a band of madmen that peddle assassinations, sickness, mutilation and spoilage for the glory of their secret god. They are known to have risen in the aftermath of the Chaos Wars that ravaged Ralios and have proved impossible to eradicate. They are strongest in Tiskos, which has suffered a horrific uprising of these psychotics. All lawful folk fear the carnage that will entail if they revolt again.

The truth, however, is more disturbing. The Chaos Monks are a splinter faction of the Borist Church. They believe, as do their spiritual brothers that One can not enter Solace without being Shriven of the Chaos that taints all existance. Accordingly in their eyes, all those who are unshriven do not achieve Solace but are damned to remain in the material world upon death.

The Chaos Monks however know the Secrets of Martyrdom. This is a spiritual discipline whereby one can enter Solace irrespective of the taint of Chaos. But this discipline is hard and only can be achieved after years of study and prayer. Those Guild members who have not perfected this status are known as Novices and are subject to the orders of the Monks. A Novice may not Shrive but acts as an agent of the Monks who cannot go forth in lawful society without being set upon.

A Monk may Shrive and does. He does not shrive his novices but unwilling victims who are brought to him by his novices. These innocent victims who are made pure by the Shriving Spell are then slain. This ensures that they cannot become further corrupted and so they are ensured of Solace. Thus the Monks act with Good intentions.

The Monks do not use the acquired chaos to make horrors but keep it within themselves so that it will no longer corrupt the world but be eliminated when the Monk dies. Thus their bodies mutate and their minds warp as they save more and more souls. The Monks do not fear this end for they are martyrs and will achieve Solace.

Accordingly they will have reduced the Chaos in the world when they die and those who are unshriven will have a better chance of reaching Solace.

In the final stages of their life, the mind of the monk is warped to such an extent that he often forgets his original purpose and visits additional destruction on those he seeks to save. As both he and his victims will still attain Solace, this is not seen as a calamity by the Guild. Thus when the Monk is discovered by lawful authorities and executed, he dies with a victory prayer to the Invisible God upon what remains of his lips...

THE RESTLESS DEAD

AN ADVENTURE FOR ELCRIC!

BY SHANNON APPEL



Shannon Appel

is an editor at *Chaosium*, and is the long-time publisher of the *Chaosium Digest* electronic fanzine. He has written professionally for *RuneQuest*, *Call of Cthulhu*, *Nephilim*, and *Ars Magica*. He is a co-author of *The Broken Council* LARP.

This short adventure is intended as an interlude for an ongoing Elric! campaign. It begins when the players stop for the night at the Dark Root Inn. This inn may be located in any fairly civilized town of at least average size. A town in one of the more lawful Young Kingdoms would be the most appropriate.

This interlude makes use of many spells and creatures found in the Bronze Grimoire. References to that supplement are denoted with a "TBC".

SYNOPSIS

The plot of this adventure centers around a ghost which initially possesses one of the PCs at the Dark Root Inn. As time goes on, he will continue to harass the PCs until they are forced to return to the Dark Root Inn to investigate the mystery. Upon returning to the Dark Root Inn, the PCs will discover that each of the inhabitants of the Dark Root has embraced their own doom: Klaren Brewmaster, the inn keeper and patriarch, uses dark arts to achieve his success, yearly planting corpses beneath his Dark Root Tree to ensure that his Dark Root Ale will continue to be the best in the land; Neva Raveneye, his wife, has taken Artle Brightspear, a local guard, as a lover and plots Klaren's murder; Frago Lackwit, their son, has fully embraced the dark arts of necromancy, daily communing with the dead. After discovering many false leads, the PCs will eventually learn that their ghost was one of Alfin's most recent victims. A confrontation, followed by the ghost's release is the most likely result.

STAYING AT THE DARK ROOT INN

When the players arrive at the Dark Root Inn, they should be in the best of spirits. The Inn is renowned in the area for a bitter ale that it produces, and the players have probably heard tales of it for days. They will not be disappointed, for the Dark Root Ale is indeed one of the best made in all the Young Kingdoms. The players will also find the accommodations of the Dark Room Inn quite acceptable. There are plenty of empty rooms, and the prices are quite reasonable.

While enjoying ale and a meal, before retiring for the night, the players will likely encounter the Inn's three residents: Klaren Brewmaster, the Inn's owner, and the bartender; Neva, his wife, and the Inn's cook; and Frago Lackwit, Klaren's only son, and quite nearly an indentured servant. See APPENDIX I, below, for full information on all of these characters.

Allow the PCs to interact with the inhabitants of the inn, but nothing of special note should occur during the evening, and the players will be able to head off to their accommodations with no problem.

The Possession

Unknown to the other inhabitants of the Inn, for months their residence has been haunted by the ghost of Narl, a beggar who Frago kidnapped and slew as part of his experiments of darkest necromancy. Narl's ghost is cursed to wander these halls until his body is given a proper burial, and Frago is slain, in just vengeance. Several times, Narl's ghost has possessed patrons of the inn while they slept, but he was too confused to do anything useful. When the PCs sleep in the Dark Root Inn, Narl's ghost will recognise within them the strength he needs to be freed.

Dark Root Inn Prices

Dark Root Ale: 2 bp
Jar of Ale: 15 bp

Inn Floor:
3 bp per day

Private Room:
30 bp per day

Other food & drink
is available as per
Elric! pg. 42.



After the PCs have all fallen asleep, Narl will try to possess them in turn (in an utterly random order), until he is successful with one. A ghost may possess a sleeping target if he succeeds in a POW vs. POW attack. Don't let the players know what is going on. Simply ask for their POWs, and make an attack. On a failure, the ghost will move on to another target (although the target will wake with nightmares, as is noted below). On a success, Narl's ghost will take temporary control of the target for its POW in minutes (14). Once the ghost has possessed a PC, it will exit the room (mumbling any necessary excuses to awake PCs) and head towards the cellar, to search for his body. Though Narl does not know it, his body is actually buried beneath the Dark Root Tree in the rear of the inn, and thus he will be unsuccessful. As his control of the PC's body weakens, Narl will become enraged, and begin throwing light objects about the cellar in a fury. Again, the player should be told of none of this, as he is still asleep, the ghost submerging his personality.

When the 14 minutes have expired, Narl's ghost will finally lose its grip on the PC's body, and the PC will return to consciousness. Read him the following at this time:

Your last memories are of slowly drifting to sleep in the darkness of your rooms. However, when you are suddenly jerked awake, you are somewhere else entirely. You seem to be in some manner of earthen room: perhaps a basement, a cellar, or a manmade cave. Along the walls of the room, you see huge barrels. The smell of fermented liquor hangs heavy. All about you is wooden debris.

It looks like the remains of chairs, crates, and even a small table. They seem to have been purposefully smashed to bits. Nearly straight in front of you is a flight of wooden stairs which lead upwards. Just as you start to collect your wits, you hear a door slam open at the top of the stairs, and heavy footsteps begin racing towards you.

In mere seconds, Klaren Brewmaster will burst into the cellar, a large club in his hands. The PC may very well try to hide before Klaren arrives, but unless they manage something truly impressive (e.g., a spell of invisibility), Klaren will find them, as the cellar isn't that big, and Klaren knows ever meter of it. When Klaren confronts the PC, he will begin shouting, screaming and waving his club around, demanding to know what the PC is doing (which the PC will no doubt think a very good question). When playing out this scene, keep in mind the following motivations:

- * Klaren doesn't want the bad word of mouth that would come from him hurting one of his own guests.

- * Klaren isn't happy with the damage, and will want repayment (about 250bp), unless the player manages to convince him that someone else did it.

- * Klaren is somewhat paranoid and is suspicious from the start that the player might be looking into Klaren's dark dealings.

If the PC manages to come up with a good story, and mollifies Klaren with apologies and payments, he will eventually calm down, and allow the PC to return to his room.

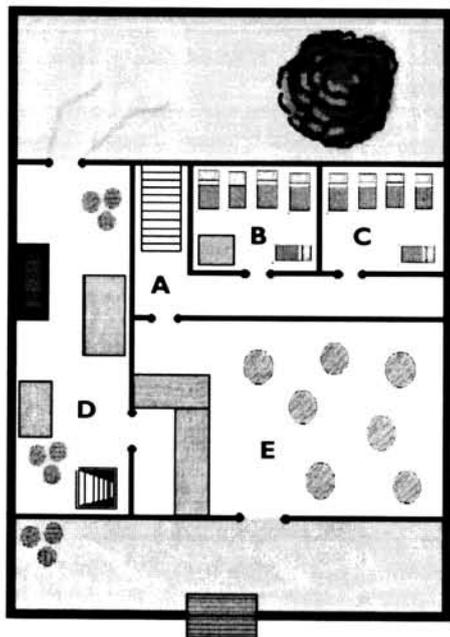
The Dreams

When the PCs all awaken (either in the morning, or because the formerly possessed PC wakes them up), read the following paragraph to those whom Narl tried to possess and failed:

During the night, you had a nightmare which woke you from your sleep with a shock. You were sitting near the side of a dirt road, shivering and cold due to the sparse clothes which covered your emaciated frame. As the dark rain slowly beat down upon you, chilling you even further, you watched multitudes of people walk by, all ignoring your pitiful cries for groats. When a shadow loomed over you, you looked up with hopeful eyes. Then, the smell of putrefaction settled upon you like a cloud. Gagging, you scuttled back a few feet. As the rancid-smelling figure stepped once more towards you, a ray of moonlight briefly illuminated the dark shadows of his hood. That was when you saw that decaying flesh hung from the creature's dead face, only partially covering the leering skull beneath. You were unable to even scream before the creature's fist descended upon your skull like a stone maul. That was when you awoke.

The Morning

In all likelihood, the PCs will wonder briefly about the strange happenings of the night, perhaps ask a few questions of the NPCs, and then move on. If so, proceed to *On the Road Again* section detailed later on in this adventure. If the PCs decide instead to stay in town and investigate the occurrences, proceed instead to *Return to the Dark Root Inn* section.



MAP NOTES

The ground floor of the inn fronts on a street. A small yard lies between the street and the inn. About 1/2 of the ground floor is taken up by the public room (E). A bar lies off to the left where drinks and foot are brought out. An entrance lies beyond to the kitchen. The kitchen (D) happens to be where the stairs down to the cellar are, as well as the exit to the back yard. There should also be pantries and stuff taking up space in the pantry. The Dark Root Tree is in the back yard. A second exit from the main room leads to a hallway. Stairs (A) just inside lead up while the hallway branches right, with doors opening into two large common rooms (B+C), where you can rent a cot for the night.

The Cellar is the same size as the ground floor. There are barrels and such in it. Behind one of the barrels is a concealed and alarmed door which leads to another room the same size as the cellar. This is Frago's lab.

The second floor is a little smaller than the ground floor. It has a couple of private rooms, Frago's room, which is the same size as the private rooms, and Klaren & Neva's room, which is a little bigger.



RETURN TO THE DARK

ROOT

In the end, the PCs will probably head back to the Dark Root. It should be obvious by this time that the ghost is being inexorably drawn to the Dark Root, and that he feels he must look for something in the area. Based on the nightmare that has plagued the possessed PC many times, the players should also realise that necromancy is involved (if Narl has always succeeded in his possessions, have the possessed PC experience the nightmare on the night he returns to the Dark Root).

The PCs may or may not be welcome back in the Dark Root, depending on what happened when Klaren confronted the possessed PC in the cellar. If the PC left on bad terms, he will now have to make his peace with Klaren.

Investigations

The PCs might do anything when they initiate their investigation of the Dark Root Inn. Noted below are the most likely techniques, and ideas on where to proceed with them. The game master will need to improvise in other situations, and should do so based upon the descriptions of the various NPCs.

Bar Room Babble

In the Dark Root Inn, the PCs are likely to question either the main NPCs, or other random drinkers. Information and attitudes are noted below.

Klaren will proclaim to know nothing about ghosts or murders. He honestly knows nothing about the murder that the players are interested in, but will be afraid that they actually know about his own necromantic arts. Afterward, Klaren will be much more suspicious and unfriendly towards the PCs.

Neva will be able to proclaim innocence of knowledge with an utterly pure heart. She really knows nothing about Frago's dark arts, and has little knowledge of Klaren's doings either.

Frago will play dumb, pretending not to understand the PC's questions. If questioned, though, the first tendrils of panic will start to close in on him.

Other Inn Visitors will be friendly toward the PCs if plied appropriately with food and ale. Allow the PCs one random rumor from the below list for each visitor they convince to talk with them:



ON THE ROAD AGAIN

Once on the road, the PCs will think to have left the madness of the Dark Root Inn behind. However, Narl's ghost has attached itself to the PC that it earlier possessed. Every night, it will try once more to possess the PC, and lead him back to the Inn.

The Nightly Possessions

Nightly, allow Narl's ghost to try possessing the PC once, via a POW vs. POW roll.

If the ghost fails in his possession, the PC will wake from a nightmare. Use the same nightmare as was described above. Feel free to vary, lengthen or shorten it every night, but at no point should it provide any stunning revelations. After awakening from the nightmare, the PC will be free of the ghost for the rest of the night.

If the ghost succeeds in his possession, he will try and lead the PC back to the Dark Root Inn. However, Narl's ghost really isn't all that coherent. Combined with the fact that he will have only POW (14) minutes to act each night, his actions will seem confused and hard to interpret.

Narl is most likely to simply walk straight towards the Dark Root Inn for 14 minutes. If he becomes desperate, he might threaten to kill his host if he is not taken back towards the Inn, or adopt some other insane tactic. Narl's ghost is unable to talk about its fate or its desire to return to the Dark Root Inn, because those things lie mostly forgotten... all it really understands is a desire to head in the direction that the Inn lies, and a need to look for something (his body).

Methods for dealing with the Ghost:

PCs may use other methods to try and rid themselves of Narl's Ghost. The Exorcism spell [TBG pg. 21] will banish it completely from the Young Kingdoms if they can determine the ghost's name. Lure Soul [TBG pg. 21] may be used to set it upon another. Spirit Barrier [TBG pg. 22] may be used to keep it temporarily away. These spells may be cast either by a PC or by another sorcerer whom they have convinced to help. Once the ghost is banished, or set upon another, the PCs may move on, never concerning themselves with poor Narl's plight again.

Dark Root Inn Rumors (D10)

1. Beggars have been disappearing from the town for months. (T)
2. Neva has many lovers in town. (T)
3. Klaren practices strange rituals on the shortest night of each year. (T)
4. Frago isn't always as dumb as he acts. (T)
5. Frago is not really Klaren's son. (F)
6. A Pan Tangian Sorcerer has a secret refuge in town. (somewhat T)
7. Don't go in the graveyard at night. Some-times, the dead walk there. (mostly T)
8. Ten years ago to this day, a Melnibonean wizard cursed the town, swearing the dead would never rest. (F)
9. The ghosts of Neva's murdered lovers haunt this inn. (F)
10. A sorcerer was once slain in this inn, and his ghost has haunted it ever since. (F with a T component)

People Watching

The PCs may decide to keep a close watch on the various NPCs.

Klaren feels occasional guilt over the people that he has interred beneath the Dark Root Tree. Every night, there is a 20% chance that he will head out to the Dark Root Tree after the close of business, and silently meditate there for a few minutes.

Neva visits her lover every few nights. On any night, there is a 25% chance that she will slip out of her bedroom after Klaren is asleep, and go visit him.

Frago frequently practices his necromantic arts. Every night, there is a 30% chance that he will slip down into the cellar, and from there to his laboratory (PCs will probably only see him go down to the cellar, and then find it empty). In addition, there is a 5% chance that he will head out to the graveyard for new material.

Searching the Inn

The PCs may decide to search various areas of the inn. This should be a very risky undertaking. Hide or Move Quietly rolls will almost definitely be needed. Even if they are successful, there is still between a 5% and 25% chance that one of the NPCs will return at an inopportune time (depending on when exactly the PCs do their investigations).

Klaren and Neva share the main bedroom. Klaren owns nothing of particular interest, other than 12 small bits of Dark Root, each naturally grown into the approximate form of a person. They are displayed along the sill of the room's single window. Neva has a set of love letters from a full score of admirers hidden in the bottom of her jewellery case. In

addition one of her perfume bottles actually contains Strychnine (POT 20 poison). Depending on where exactly the PCs say they are looking, Search rolls will reveal any of the above. If the PCs are actually going through Neva's perfume, a Potions roll will reveal the poison for what it is.

Frago lives in one of the inn's private rooms. It is all around quite messy. The only thing of interest is Frago's grimoire which contains full information on all the spells and runes he knows in a tiny Pan Tangian script (see Frago's stats for this listing of spells). The grimoire is stashed under Frago's bed, and has a Rune of Invisibility (TBG pg. 12-13) inscribed onto the cover. Because the book can not be seen, a critical Search roll is needed to find it.

The Cellar is the heart of the mystery. Concealed quite well behind one of the barrels is a secret door leading to Frago's private laboratory (a critical Search roll is needed to find it, unless the PCs manage to spy someone else actually enter). The door has carved upon it a Rune of Alarm (TBG pg. 10). If anyone but Frago touches the door, it will be set off, and three piercing screams will fill the cellar. Frago will immediately come running, leading to the Finale (below).



The Laboratory is quite spacious, easily the size of the outer cellar itself. It is likely that it was carved from the Earth at the same time the rest of the inn was built. Klaren does not know about it, and Frago only found it by accident, when he was playing in the cellar one day as a child.

In Frago's laboratory are the results of his experiments: 2 ghouls, 5 skeletons and 4 zombies. Various pieces of bodies lie about as well, including eyes, fingers, and other body parts. None of these are large enough to animate. A good amount of vivisection equipment lies about the room as well.

Note: there is a 30% chance that Frago will be in his laboratory shortly after everyone has gone to bed, on any night.

The Inn's Rear Yard is also of note, for that's where the Dark Root Tree is. 13 men are buried below it. 12 of them are the victim of Klaren's True Brew spell. The 13th is Narl, who was buried here by Frago when his experiments were complete. If PCs dig up the yard, they have a 25% chance of digging up a body for every hour spent digging. There is a 20% chance that Klaren visits the Tree on any night.

NEW SPELL

True Brew (2)

When this spell is cast upon a corpse (which must be no more than eight days old), it enchants the corpse with certain alchemical properties. When the corpse is buried thereafter, the essence of the deceased's soul will slowly seep out into the soil. Any nearby trees will suck up this rare nutrient through their roots, imbuing them with some of the essence of the deceased themselves. After a sufficient period (usually about a year), bits of these roots may be used to make a superb ale, definitely the best in the land. The effects of this spell last until the shortest day of the year, at which time the spell must be cast again, with a fresh corpse.

Searching the Town

The main places that the PCs may investigate:

The Cemetery is a fairly small place. There are only a few hundred graves. If the players search the graveyard, they will find that there are nearly a half-dozen graves that have been recently dug up. If the PCs dig up those grave themselves, they will find them to be entirely empty. There is a 5% chance that Frago visits the cemetery on any night.

Artle Brightspear's House might be investigated because of the fact that Neva occasionally visits it. If confronted, Artle will admit that he's Neva's lover, but he definitely won't let the PCs search his house without a fight. If they do search it, they will find nothing of note other than a few love letters from Neva, included one which alludes to them "being free after Klaren's passing".

FINALE

During the adventure, the PCs may find the dark secrets of either Neva or Klaren, confront them, and bring them to justice. Although these should be played out with full enthusiasm, neither of these events will free them from the ghost. For that to happen, an inevitable confrontation with Frago Lackwit must occur. This can occur when:

* the PCs find Frago's secret lair, accidentally set off the Alarm and bring him running

* the PCs harry Frago enough that he finally breaks down, shouting "You found me out! I slew the damned beggar, and he taught me much as he died! But, you will tell no one of this, for you are dead men!", before running down to his laboratory on his own.

As soon as he reaches his laboratory, Frago will command his creations to destroy the PCs. If able, he will stay back from the conflict himself. When things seem bad, Frago will cast his Army of the Dead spell, which will wake all 13 corpses which lie beneath the Dark Root Tree. A final orgy of destruction should occur before Frago is finally slain, and all the undead put down.

When all has become quiet, the air will lightly shimmer, and Narl's ghost will appear, a dim smile upon wrecked face. Pointing down towards Frago's body, he will say "He is the one that did this to me, as part of his wretched experiments", and pointing towards his own body, one of the creatures that rampaged through the inn, he will say "and that is what remains of me. Bury it with ceremony, and I will go on." And he will.

APPENDIX I: NPC'S

Klaren Brewmaster

Age 48, Owner of the Dark Root Inn

Klaren is a man that is looking into the face of his mortality. Fat and balding, drained of life by long years of practising the dark arts of Chaos, Klaren realizes that it will not be long before he goes to join his shadowy patrons. However, Klaren does not totally regret his choices, for his oaths to Chaos have brought renown to his inn and to his family, and he is sure that that renown will outlive him.

Though Klaren occasionally exchanges wry comments with his best known patrons, for the most part, he is dour and grim. Most people don't seem to mind. After all, they come to the Dark Root for the ale, not for the company.

If anyone brings accusations against Klaren, he will do anything to see those accusations quieted. He'll try and work within the law initially, asking the local guards to cart off anyone causing him trouble.

Usually, Klaren is a well-respected member of the community. If it is not, however, Klaren will resort to threats, bribery, and even murder to protect his family's name, for that is all he has left.

Klaren's Secret: Every Mid-Winter's night, Klaren incants the True Brew spell over a fresh corpse, and buries it under his Dark Root tree. This is what causes his ale to be so great.

Chaos 41, Balance 7, Law 13

**STR 10 CON 5 SIZ 12 INT 13
POW 17 DEX 9 APP 9 HP 9**

Damage Bonus: none

Weapons:

Brawl 71%, damage 1d3

Club 59%, damage 1d6 or 1d8

Wrestle 88%, damage sp.

Armor: none

Spells: Guile of Cran Liret (1-4) [TBG pg. 34], True Brew (2) [see box], Ward (3) [Elric! pg. 83]

Skills: Art (Tell Story) 58%, Bargain 84%, Craft (Brewer) 118%, Craft (Cook) 47%, Fast Talk 97%, Listen 81%, Scent/Taste 65%

Neva Raveneye

Age 36, Klaren's Wife, Cook at the Dark Root

When young, Neva had dreams of the power and wealth that would in time come to one possessing her guile and beauty. But, as she approached maturity, those dreams were shattered. She was married off to an innkeeper. Though he was well-off, and his renown spreading, she was forced to descend into a drudgery of cooking, cleaning, and child-rearing.

As Chaos drained Klaren's vitality, Neva began to look upon him with contempt. For years, she has taken other lovers, and waited for him to pass into other realms. Now, her impatience has grown, causing her to plot Klaren's death with her current lover, Artle Brightspear, a local soldier. When the time is right, Neva will poison Klaren, freeing herself.

Rune Writing

Certain of the sorcerers of the west have learned an art where they inscribe runes to gain specific effects. The technique is not too different from that used to make Enchantments, but is much more diverse. Each rune may be used to generate a variety of effects although a sorcerer must learn each effect separately. Each effect acts as a spell for Free INT purposes. A sorcerer has a percentage score in each rune. This skill is used to create any effect the sorcery knows in that rune. A rune takes a variable amount of

MP to inscribe. If a point of POW is also expended, the rune is permanent. Otherwise, it will fade away in 1D8 days.

Unless otherwise noted, a rune is clear and apparent. Any approaching Gloranthan will recognise it. However, most will not be aware of the rune-writing skill, and even those who are will not know what effect a rune is keyed to. For example, anyone approaching the door to Frago's lab will see a law rune emblazoned on the door.

If a rune is destroyed its magic will be lost. However, if appropriate, it will active one last time as it is destroyed.

Frago's grimoire has notes on two runes. It details the invisibility effect for the Illusion rune, and alarm effect for the Law rune.

Alarm (Law):

Costs 3 MP. The rune emits three piercing screams if the object it is cast upon is touched by anyone except the caster.

Invisibility (Illusion):

Costs 1 MP per SIZ. May only be cast on inanimate objects. Renders the object invisible. This rune is not visible.

When the PCs interact with Neva, they will find that her mature beauty masks a dark soul. She is petty, spiteful and cruel. If the PCs try and make small talk with Neva, she will at first be abrupt, and later plain rude. In the face of unwelcome advances, she has been known to get one of her suitors (and there are many) to beat the harasser to within an inch of his life.

If the players begin to investigate Neva, she will do whatever she can to make sure that her plans are not made public knowledge, be it by betrayal, seduction, or murder.

Neva's Secret: Neva meets with her secret lover every few nights. Also, she plots to murder her husband.

Chaos 17, Balance 2, Law 1

**STR 11 CON 12 SIZ 11 INT 17
POW 16 DEX 11 APP 18 HP 12**

Damage Bonus: none

Weapons:

Dagger 88%, damage 1d4+2

Armor: none

Spells: Ignorance From Sloratar (1-3) [TBG pg. 34], Visage of Arioch (1-3) [Elric! pg. 83]

Skills: Conceal Object 51%, Craft (Cook) 97%, Craft (Courtesan) 74%, Fast Talk 81%, Insight 60%, Listen 89%, Scent/Taste 88%, Young Kingdoms 21%

Frago Lackwit

Age 20, Son of Klaren and Neva, Necromancer
Frago would probably have grown up to be a perfectly sane and healthy young man if it were not for his father's dark predilections. One mid-winter's night, when Frago was still a boy, Klaren took him out to the Dark Root Tree, and introduced him to the ancient arts of necromancy that were at the heart of the family business. Frago was impressed, but he wanted more. As time passed, he began to consider his father's use of the arts of necromancy sophomoric, and he became determined to use the necromantic arts to their fullest potential.

His opportunity came when a Pan Tangian necromancer stopped at the Inn one night. Frago's first act of murder left him with a tome full of mysteries. Although he still considers himself a student, Frago has learned the dark arts well.

Many people consider Frago stupid. He is actually quite intelligent, able to understand the most intricate of incantations, but he has all the common sense of a Vilmirian fruit fly. Thus his reputation. Frago is also often a bit slow to answer questions or become aware of things. This is primarily because he is constantly deep in thought, examining beautiful equations of magic in his mind.

Frago has a tendency to panic. When the PCs get too close to his secrets, he'll do so, exposing himself for all to see when he calls up hordes of undead to slay his oppressors. This will likely be the finale of the adventure.

Frago's Secret: He's a necromancer. In addition, he has a secret laboratory under the Inn. Recently, he had one of his zombies kidnap Narl (a local beggar), and experimented on him. When Narl finally expired, Frago buried him beneath the Dark Root Tree.

Chaos 52, Balance 5, Law 7

**STR 11 CON 9 SIZ 11 INT 18
POW 18 DEX 7 APP 8 HP 10**

Damage Bonus: none

Weapons:

Dagger 37%, 1d4+2

Armor: none

Items: Brazier of Power (18 mp)*

Runes: Rune of Alarm (3) [TBG pg. 10], Rune of Invisibility (varies) [TBG pg. 12-13]

Spells: Animate Limb (2) [TBG pg. 20], Animate Skeleton (varies + 1 POW) [TBG pg. 20], Army of the Dead (variable) [TBG pg. 20], Brazier of Power* (4) [Elric! pg. 77], Necrology (4) [TBG pg. 21-22], Raise Zombie (varies + 1 POW) [TBG pg. 22], Speak with the Dead (2) [TBG pg. 22], Spirit Bind (8) [TBG pg. 22], Summon Ghoul (varies + 1 POW) [TBG pg. 22], True Brew [see legend]

*Although this spell notes that the Magic Points are available "when summoning", Frago can call upon them at any time, and usually will do so when casting "variable" spells.

Skills: Art (Torture) 21%, Conceal Object 52%, Craft (Bone) 38%, Craft (Skin) 41%, Hide 76%, Listen 43%, Scribe 43%, Unknown Kingdoms 10%, Young Kingdoms 21%

Strategy: When engaged in combat, Frago will try and have his constructs do all the work. He might help out by animating hacked off limbs, but is pretty worthless beyond that. When at wit's end, Frago will cast Army of the Dead. This will cause the 13 bodies which lay below the Dark Root Tree to rise, raising hell all about the inn.

Frago's Followers

Frago currently has these undead followers: 2 embodied ghouls [TBG pg 27-28], 5 skeletons [TBG pg 29] and 4 zombies [TBG pg 29]. See TBG for rules regarding these creatures. Specific stats are below.

Embodied Ghouls

	#1	#2
STR	10	10
CON	11	9
SIZ	13	13
INT	0	8
POW	16	23
DEX	16	5
HP	12	11

Damage Bonus: +0

Armor: none, but immune to major wounds, functional until at 0 HP.

Weapons:

Bite 40%, damage 1d8

Wrestle 30%, damage special

CON drain 1D3/round, automatic with touch

Skills: Appear Hungry 70%, Drool 30%, Search 50%

Skeletons

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5
STR	15	14	15	16	20
SIZ	16	17	15	19	17
DEX	10	14	14	7	10
HP	16	17	15	19	17

Damage Bonus: +1d4

Armor: None, but weapons do not impale or do critical damage

Weapons:

Broadsword 40%, damage 1d8+1+db

Skills: Leer 50%

Zombies

	#1	#2	#3	#4
STR	22	18	23	26
CON	21	21	16	27
SIZ	10	12	6	9
DEX	8	9	6	6
HP	16	17	11	18

Damage Bonus: +1d4

Armor: none, but impaling weapons do only one point of damage, and other do half rolled damage + spell damage

Weapons:

Large Club 20%, damage 1d8+db

Skills: Lurch 99%

Army of the Dead

(13 raised corpses)

HP 1d8 each

Armor: none, but impaling weapons do only one point of damage, and other do half rolled damage + spell damage

Weapons: (roll randomly)

1: Brawl 25%, damage 1d3

2: Butcher Knife 25%, damage 1d6

3: Claw 25%, damage 1d4+1

4: Fire Iron 25%, damage 1d8+1

5: Kindling Axe 15%, damage 1d6+1

6: Small Club 25%, damage 1d6

Narl's Ghost (INT 4, POW 14)

Narl was a beggar who Frago stole away and then experimented on until he died. His ghost has remained, but is not entirely sane. Narl's ghost will not be able to leave the Young Kingdoms until Frago is slain, and Narl's body has been given an appropriate burial, but Narl doesn't have it together enough to know this. He simply has a sense of being always drawn in the direction that the Dark Root Inn lies, and also a sense that he lost something there (his body, as it happens), and that he must find it.

When Narl appears at the end of the adventure, he will be a horrible sight. All of the marks of Frago's cruel vivisectioning tools will lie upon him, even in death.

Town Guards

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8
STR	12	12	10	13	15	16	12	13
CON	18	9	14	17	12	9	16	12
SIZ	10	17	10	14	18	17	16	13
INT	15	12	10	8	11	13	10	14
POW	15	3	8	10	13	5	12	6
DEX	11	12	12	12	11	11	13	7
APP	18	10	5	8	16	8	13	13
HP	14	13	12	16	15	13	16	13

(#1 is Artle Brightspear, Neva's lover)

Damage Bonus: +1d4

Armor: Leather & Rings (1d6+1)

Weapons:

Long Spear 55%, damage 1d10+1+db

Dirk 50%, damage 1d4+2+db

Skills: Drink 70%, Gamble 60%

APPENDIX 2: RESTLESS IN RALIOS

Elic! and RuneQuest are both BRP games. It should be easy to convert this adventure. The Dark Root Inn could be placed just at the edge of Safelster, near either Vesmonstran or the Eastern Wilds. It is the first tantalising hint of civilisation for the barbarians of those lands. Many visit it to bring the fabled Dark Root Ale back to their clans.

In addition, you will have to convert the skills and spells in this adventure.

Skill Conversion

Many skills already share names across the Elic! and RuneQuest game systems. The following should be considered equivalent:

Elic! Skill

Conceal Object
Insight
Move Quietly
Scent/Taste
Scribe
Unknown Kingdoms
Young Kingdoms

RQ Skill

Conceal
Human Lore
Sneak
Scan
Read/Write
Chaos Lore
Glorantha Lore

A number of other listed skills do not appear in RuneQuest, but their purpose should be easily determined.

Spell Conversion

Neva makes the occasional sacrifices to the gods, and thus she has been taught two spirit magic spells. Klaren has also learned a few spells from this socially acceptable source.

The spell of True Brew, a two point Spirit Magic spell, which otherwise acts exactly as described above, comes from a darker source, the cult of Vivamort which has dwelled in Ralios for ages. Arkat once put down the Vampire Kings, but that was only a minor victory. Today, they still live, waiting patiently while their power grows. Their missionaries occasionally pass through the lands of Ralios, looking for the weak to convert to their way. Klaren is one of the weak.

Frago has always been perceptive. Thus, when a Vivamort Priest rested for a night at the Dark Root Inn, he recognised him, and was able to slay him while he slept. The Priest's book detailed the art of rune-writing (see box) as well as a number of sorcerous spells of Vivamort.

Klaren's Spirit Magic: Detect Enemy, Protection, True Brew

Neva's Spirit Magic: Befuddle, Glamour

Frago's Spirit Magic: Second Sight, Spirit Screen, True Brew

Frago's Sorcery: Animate Limb 43%, Create Skeleton 27%, Create Zombie 29%, Raise Ghoul 17%

Frago's Runes: Alarm (Law 31%), Invisibility (Illusion 32%)

Most of Frago's sorcerous spells are not detailed here. The only one that will have any real effect on the conflict is Animate Limb. This animates one severed limb per casting. Hands attack at 50% and do 1D4 damage. Feet can attack at 25% and do 1D3 stomping damage. The spell requires an intensity equal to the SIZ of the limb (1 for each of the limbs lying about Frago's lab).

When everything begins to fall apart, the effects described above for the Army of the Dead spell should be considered Frago's DI to Vivamort. This costs him 1D10 POW.

Notes on Narl's Ghost

In RuneQuest, there are many spells that can be used to affect Narl's ghost. Second Sight will allow the caster to see it, while Spirit Screen will temporarily protect someone from it. A worshiper of Daka Fal, or a shaman might be able to rid a PC of Narl's ghost.

It should be noted that it is easier for Narl to possess a person than it would normally be the case for spirits in Glorantha. Chalk this up to Frago's strange experiments. It is balanced out by the fact the possession is very short term.

FUTURE

ADVENTURES

A few ideas for future adventures spawning from this one.

**Narl was actually a Nadsokorian plant who reported directly back to the Beggar-King. When He hears of Narl's disappearance and the strange things that happened afterwards, he may decide that he wants to talk with the PCs.*

**Pan Tangians are very jealous of the knowledge. If the PCs end up with Frago's book, they find that Pan Tangians are trying to hunt it down. Or, they may accidentally show it to the wrong people, and draw down the wrath of the Pan Tangians in that way.*

** If Neva or Klaren survived, they might plot against the people that slew their son.*

Jim Chapin

*His days as a game-player stretch back to Gettysburg with rulers. He is older than anyone counted in the TotRM poll of RQ players, and has raised two sons in the Glorantha faith. You may remember him as Theoblanc the Pious, a Rokari in the last running of the LARP **How the West was One.***

STRANGE BROO

By Jim Chapin



The Lunar pursuit from Elko was far stiffer than I expected. They followed me for days. Since being alone on the plains of Balazar was not to my liking, because the Lunars could see me from afar or from the air, and because I knew neither the tribes nor the predators of the area, I made for the foothills of the Rockwoods. I was tired, hungry, and could not free myself from a hacking cough.

It might not have been the right decision. On the fifth day, as I climbed the foothills near Ormsfang, I came unexpected upon a great troll. He was stronger and quicker than I, but I felled him with a lucky shot, unfortunately not before he had hurt me. I fell to the ground weary from my battle, weary and sore wounded, for my leg had been crushed by his mace, along with my shield arm and my side. I fell unconscious, lacking the magic points to heal myself fully, and hoping that nothing would come on me unaware.

I awoke to nightmare. The creature standing over me was large, larger than a normal broo, with four horns and tentacles around its mouth. In fact, it looked rather like the representations of Thed herself that I have seen.

I waved my sword at it from my half-sitting position, but it kept well beyond my reach.

My magic crystal was well nigh spent, but I essayed to cast the frighten spell that had failed against the troll. It seemed that I cast the spell successfully, but I might as usefully cast it into the void, for the broo did not react nor did the spell hit it.

The broo muttered to itself in some uncouth fashion, then cast at me, and depleted as I was both of physical and magical power, I lost consciousness again, with a stray thought running through my head: "why was the creature dressed in white?"

I awoke to find myself stripped of weapons and armor, and tied down. It took me a moment further to notice that I was no longer suffering the severe pain of my wounds. Then I noted that the troll was in a similar position, tied down beyond my reach, but apparently recovered equally from its wounds. I could see no sign of our captor.

I feared the worst, wondering whether the broo was going to eat me, infect me with some foul disease, sacrifice me in some vile rite, or, worst of all, rape me. I had had only a few dealings with the beasts, none of them profitable, and all dismal, and had heard many more tales of their awful habits.

When the troll awoke, it began to growl in a most fearsome manner, and did not respond to anything I said to it. Rather it spent its energies unsuccessfully trying to break its bonds.

Then the broo returned. Upon closer inspection, it looked as bad as I had feared. Even worse, it continued chanting in some sort of sing-song voice in a tongue which I had never heard. Strangely, however, it had no weapons, although it bore heavy armor, blackened except for an occasional gleam, but covered with a white garment of some kind. More remarkably, the garment was less dirty than I expected. Strangest of all, its horns were covered with some sort of wire basket, which would have looked silly had not the monster seemed so fearsome. Fearing disease, I shied away from it.

Ignoring me, it went straight to the troll. It cast a spell at it, and the troll fell into a stupor. Then, I was amazed to see that the broo lifted the troll easily, and walked away around the corner with it.

A few minutes later I heard deep troll growls and screams, and then silence fell.

Now I was convinced of my doom, and essayed to call upon Orlanth to free me. Unfortunately, the God ignored my desperate appeal, as he had done the only other time I had tried to ask his aid.

I rubbed myself raw and bleeding trying to escape my own bonds, but with no success. I was hungry and thirsty, and fell to coughing again, and then to unconsciousness.

I woke when I heard a horrid scream above me; the broo stood near, and suddenly bashed its head against the rock next to my body. I choked in fear, and then suddenly found the broo's hairy arm lifting up my head. I screamed and tried to writhe away, but the broo held me firm.

Then, to my amaze, it spoke clearly in trade talk, but in a totally different voice, sounding strangely high-pitched, like that of a human female "Lie still, and drink." I did not want to drink whatever foul substance the broo was giving me, but it grasped me in such a fashion that I had no choice. To my surprise, the drink seemed to be nothing more than mountain water, cool and delicious on my parched throat.

The creature suddenly spoke intelligibly once again: "You are possessed by a spirit of disease, I must rid you of it."

"YOU?!" I yelped in astonishment in the same tongue. "But you are a broo."

"I had noticed that," replied the creature with an unexpected turn of wit, in yet a third voice. But it said nothing more intelligible, falling once more into some sort of sing-song chant.

At this point I was totally bewildered, for the creature's fearsome appearance and crazed manner did not comport either with its activities or what it said.

I tried to talk to it once more in trade talk, but it simply said in its contralto voice, "Be quiet or I will sleep you once more, I must not be disturbed now."

The broo began to draw diagrams in the dust around me, chanting all the while.

When it had finished, it uttered another great cry, and fell silent for a few minutes. Then it began an even stranger activity, speaking rapidly to itself in a medley of languages and voices. As I listened, I caught a few phrases in tongues that I understood interspersed with phrases I did not understand, and streams of what sounded like gibberish. I cannot say that the few words I could make out gave me much comprehension of the subject of this strange debate: "Kill it, where is the gift? yes! the power of chaos within; the horn of attar, the white hand of the goddess, Do not attack with a weapon; ha! ; eat each victim's flesh; never hurt another! no!" and other such nonsense.

With no place better to rest my weary eyes, I studied my captor more closely. As broos went, it was not particularly disgusting in appearance, though it certainly appeared powerful. It stood slightly below my size, and as far as I could see, was indeed male. Its muscles bulged amazingly, explaining the strength that had enabled it to lift a great troll over its head. The tentacles around its mouth, as far as I could determine, served no particular function other than to render its appearance strange and alarming.

The wicker-wire arrangement on its head appeared to be a cage that prevented its horns from doing any damage. The blackening upon its armor, upon inspection, seemed to be tarnish upon some sort of gleaming metal. Now that I studied the garment that covered the armor, it could indeed be interpreted as the garb of a healer, and the lack of a weapon and even the strange head gear it was wearing might be considered a sign of the same profession.

I had no idea of the nature of the creature which now controlled my fate, or, rather, given its behavior, of its natures. Then, once more for no apparent reason, it fell into conversation in my own tongue, which I had not even known it could speak! Its words were clear and well-spoken, if seeming of a slightly different form of my tongue. After a while I realized that it sounded as if my grandfather had been speaking.

"We must wait for a while now for the spirit to appear. The worst of this life is that rarely is there one to talk to; it is lonely here, if beautiful."

"Who are you?" I asked, almost more puzzled by his invocation of beauty in these lonely and savage wastes than by anything else he had said or done.

"My name is Legion," he replied. It uttered grunts and growls in several other voices and tongues.

"How came you to this occupation?"

"Would you believe it, we have served three different masters in our life, but we must say that the White Goddess is more strait than either of Her horned predecessors."

"The White Goddess, is it true then, that you follow Chalana Arroy?"

"Yes, we do that."

"But how can that be?" I asked in some bewilderment.

"There is nothing in Her creed that forbids us to follow Her, is there?" it said with some asperity.

I forbore to point out that this was a chaos monster, and that as Lightbringers we were sworn to fight chaos. But I assumed that sensible conversation was better than insulting the creature or letting it gibber to itself. Instead I said "You are on a strange road, how came you to travel it?"

Then the creature began to tell me, in a disjointed fashion, the story of its life.

This was the tale told by the strange creature that held me captive. It was less intelligible than I am making it, for the broo interrupted itself and sometimes broke off for several minutes to mutter or growl to itself in a medley of voices. Sometimes it seemed to be speaking to me, sometimes debating with itself, and sometimes speaking aloud to the winds. Most of the tale was told by two voices, one a female voice, the other that of a cultivated, if villainous, creature:

"Stranger, I see by your markings that you belong to a cult which fights chaos. Like all your kind, I am sure you know little of the power of chaos, except that you fear it and wish to destroy it. That is so even if chaos is the creator of life, because you see it also as the destroyer of life."

"But there is no way to describe to you what chaos feels like. The power of chaos, translated into emotion, is both fearsome and wonderful. Know you aught of how Storm Bulls feel the presence of chaos?"

Cautiously I replied in the affirmative.

"Has it occurred to you that what they feel is how the creatures they seek feel themselves?"

Actually it had not, and I so replied.

"The Storm Bulls free themselves of the oppressiveness of those feelings by slaying without stint or respite, and so do many chaotic peoples themselves, most especially mine own breed. And even your own cult deals with its fears by exercising violence."

"Thus was I born in the swamps, one of the children of Thed. From the beginning I felt the power of chaos within me and upon me. And I felt the blessings of chaos more than its curses, for I was born stronger and smarter than all but the mightiest of my kind, with the power to avoid spells cast against me by spirits, and with these formidable horns upon my head." He gestured to the four horns growing out of his skull.

"Indeed, the only curse of chaos I felt was that which curses us all, a burning desire to destroy and hurt all I came upon, even myself. And, of course, my strength in potential was so great as to incite the fear and enmity of the more powerful of my kind, for we are a fickle race, ever hateful to each other, as the Horned Goddess decrees."

"The Goddess loves rape and raping equally, and her idea of gifts is anything that brings pain to others. Our species reproduces by rape, and sex for us means death to the unfortunate female or even male of any species who bears our children."

"I managed to survive by serving loyally, as loyally as I could, the strongest in every group I was in. But although I enjoyed the chaos and destruction we carried out on other races and even each other, I found that the mindlessness of Thed and her worshippers did not satisfy me. I did not know what I wanted; who among us does, but I hoped for some way in which I could use my powers of mind as well as of body."

"One day I met a broo, Linger, who was different from the rest of our kind. I could not tell how at first, save that he seemed cleaner and smarter than most of us. Then I came to realize that Linger actually wanted to talk about something more than the last raid or the next one. Linger had a view of the world that I had not heard before, and he seemed interested in me as something other than food or servant, for he spent many hours asking me questions."

"From him, for the first time, I heard of other Gods than Thed and Malia and the Gods of our enemies. I heard of the ogre God Cacodemon, the Scorpion God Bagog, of the Gods of change, Gorpog and Krjalk, the nameless underground God of the tunnels, and I heard of the Severed Gods, Tien and Atyar. Finally, I asked Linger how he knew so much, and he replied, I am illuminated, and that means that I can use the Gods instead of being their pawn."

"I was eager to learn more of this new power, but Linger told me that he had been trying to make me one of the illuminates, but so far with no success. It is not a change which can be planned for, Linger said, but one that happens, like all chaos, on its own whim."

The broo interrupted his story to ask me "What is the difference between chance and predestination?" I feared to reply, for now I thought the creature was illuminated himself, and I knew Riddles to be the Lunar way to corrupt the world. The creature laughed and said, "there is no difference, and if you understood that, you might become as I now am but was not then." I kept silent, for I knew that answering such questions or even thinking too much about them could blast my soul.

The broo continued his story: "Linger's efforts to illuminate me failed, but what I was most interested to learn from him was that there were cults that used intelligence and not just violence to reach their ends. The stories of the Severed God appealed to me, and he finally told me that he would bring me as a candidate to one of their underground temples."

"The test was difficult, but, strong as I was and am, I passed it easily. So began the second part of my life, as a servant of the Severed God Atyar. Know you aught of him?" he asked me. "No" I replied. "Perhaps you have heard of him here as Thanatar." That was a name I had heard, the cult of the head hunters, and one that inspired fear in me. I wondered if all the creature had done was to save me as a head for one of its vile rites, and if all his talk of healing had been simply a way to deceive me, as some of the chaos cults love to do, before it took my head.

The broo laughed and said, "No, I will not take your head. And even when I was a Doomed One, I would not have taken it, for I was of the cult of Atyar. I would have done even worse, and taken your mind and left you mindless."

"You must understand that for me Atyar was a far step above Thed, for this was a cult in which my intelligence could not only be valued, but it also opened a path to more knowledge."

"But understand, stranger, that every one of the jealous Gods lays some requirement upon its worshippers. Just as Thed requires mindless destruction, so Thanatar grants powerful gifts but lays great geases upon his followers. For me, the gift of stealth that I received was not repaid by the geas: I was told to eat the flesh of every victim of my mind-eating spells, and, more important, never to use a weapon again. This second geas would have been fatal for most, and for followers of most cults, but because of the powers I had to resist all but mine own spells and divine spells, and because of the strength of my body and my horns, I was capable of surviving even without weapons."

"Early in my experience with Atyar, I used his spell devour book to begin my education. Soon the world of writing was opened to me. Given my great powers, I advanced quickly in the cult. Unable to use weapons, I acquired the cult armor of silver, which tarnished as it always does for us." He gestured at his armor, whose nature I for the first time understood.

"And soon I was a firm enough ally of both the Horn of Atyar and the High Priest of Dark Truths that I was allowed to use the cult's mightiest spells. The mightiest spell of Atyar, my friend, is a spell which allows you to consume the mind of others. And it was that spell, in the end, which proved my doom."

"The use of such a spell requires a particular relationship with the captive, who must be prepared for several weeks. The ceremony itself can take place only upon five days of the year, and so those few enemies who know the Atyar cult or the combined cult of Thanatar know when the best time to attack us might be. Few do, however, for our underground temples are fearsome places for the uninitiated."

I noted that the creature had abandoned the past tense and was starting to refer to his relationship to the Atyar cult in the present tense. Needless to say, I was made uneasy by this change.

"But these spells are used rarely, for the captive must be someone with skills and spells and knowledge enough to be worth the trouble and the risk." "Risk?" I broke in. "Yes, not only do these spells take much time and preparation, but they are dangerous for the caster."

"So we must catch our targets alive, bring them home safely, carry out the proper rituals to prepare both caster and victim, in my case eat properly of the flesh of the victim, and then hope that the ritual is correctly performed."

"Three times did I carry out these rituals successfully against creatures that wanted to slay me. Once on a member of your windy cult, once on a troll of Zorak Zoran, once on a chaos-fighting Storm Bull. But it was the fourth that caused my troubles. It was a priestess of Chalana Arroy herself."

I groaned at the horror of it. The creature that was professing to heal me had itself slain a priestess of Chalana Arroy.

"Yes, gaining control of healing powers would have made me mighty in my cult for few creatures of chaos can heal. Or so I thought."

"But the woman was a problem from the beginning. She was fearless, even in the face of the awful fate that awaited her. You must know, stranger, that the rituals of Thanatar are designed at once to separate and to control the souls of others. While the devotees of Than do separate the heads from the bodies and lock the souls in their own heads, subject to the mastery of the one that slew them, those of Atyar leave the body intact, but a mindless thing, while taking the knowledge held by the victim directly into themselves."

"To carry out the process correctly one must inspire fear in the victim. It is that fear which feeds the God and makes the soul vulnerable to separation from its own God and to our taking. All the long rites we carry out are designed to prepare both the soul of the victim and of the operator for this dreadful task. I had carried out this task successfully against members of the great chaos-fighting cults, for in the very violence against us they had revealed the depths of their fears, fears that our ceremony drew upon successfully."

"But this woman was different." At this point the tale was interrupted, as the creature looked up suddenly and said, "the spirit is coming."

At this point, I looked around in bewilderment, for I could see nothing, and by now was uncertain whether I was about to be healed or drained. Soon I was to feel a sensation that I had never felt before ...

The broo that had called itself Legion had broken off its tale, saying "the spirit is coming."

I could see nothing, and was afraid of what the real purpose of this strange thing was. "Be still," the creature hissed, and seeing no alternative, I did not move or speak. The broo started chanting again, and suddenly I saw a ghostly form above me. Surprisingly, one look at it stripped me of my fears. It was obvious that whatever this spirit was, it was not evil: indeed it could be said to almost radiate health. At the same moment I became aware myself of just how unhealthy I was myself: I felt myself almost a thing of filth before this radiant spirit.

The priest (for so I now knew it be) said a few more words and the spirit entered me. It was a strange sensation; for as it entered I could feel the evil spirit within me struggling to retain its control. It is an odd thing to feel oneself not in possession of one's own body, and that is how I felt for the next few seconds. Then, with a mighty wrench, the spirit that had been in my body was forced out. It was literally ghastly, a grey man-shaped thing with

black holes for its eyes and mouth. The broo standing above me took a fetish from its sash, spoke a few more words, and the disease spirit disappeared into the strange object which it held. "We will deal with it later," he said.

"Your lungs are still weak from the disease," the broo said. "The spirit in you will stay a while longer, and we may be able to find a spell that will restore you fully." I began to reply, but it said abruptly, "sleep now, and we will feed you when you wake." He cast a spell again, and again I fell asleep.

When I woke, it was morning. I felt hungry, and I felt healthy. Only when one has been sick does one fully appreciate what it is to be healthy. Although my lungs were sore, I felt a glow which I had never felt before. I also felt an intense desire to relieve myself, something which I had not done since my capture.

I could see no sign of my captor/healer, although I called out. I was still bound, but did not struggle against the bonds, although the sores which I had inflicted on myself trying to escape earlier had disappeared.

Suddenly, the broo appeared once more. In its kind contralto voice it asked, "if we release you, will you swear not to attack us?" I was irresolute for a minute, wondering just what my obligations were to a thing of chaos that had killed Lightbringers, whether an oath to such a thing would hold, and what obligations I had to a creature that had just healed me. More practically, since I was without weapons, and in the presence of a creature that was invulnerable to my magic, I thought that I would be unable to do the creature harm in any event. Thinking in the end that the obligation could not be too onerous, I swore by the winds that I would not attack the broo unless it first assaulted me.

Thus the broo released me, telling me that it had brought some food. Ravenous as I was, I first went around the corner and relieved myself, then returned to see what food the creature had provided. I was not shocked to see that it consisted entirely of fish and nuts and other vegetables, for most of the Healers I knew did not eat meat. Since the creature had shown itself to be master of healing spirits, I no longer feared disease, and no hesitation in eating what it provided.

Whilst I was eating, I pondered how to secure my weapons and effects, most especially the item which I had successfully taken from Elkoi. I decided both for reasons of policy and of genuine interest, to get the creature, which seemed more calm today, to finish the tale of its life.

Strange as the broo was, it resembled most humans I have known in its willingness to talk about itself. After a brief query from me, it resumed its tale where it had left off.

"The Chalana Arroy priestess was not afraid. Indeed, near the end of the ceremony, as I cut the obligatory strip of flesh from her inner thigh, she gritted her teeth through the pain, looked me straight in the eye, and said to me: "in the end my mistress's will is greater than that of your severed master. She will overcome." I ate her flesh, as my geas required, then finished the mighty rituals."

