

The Raddock Bay Trading House

Proudly Present Their

# Almanac of the Known World

A Precise and Pertinent Illustrated manuscript in which we present a cornucopia of accurate and useful information about the Known World of value to merchant and traveller alike.

Now includes first hand accounts of the lands  
beyond the Maelstrom.

Place of publishing  
Stratix Volery, Alkyon





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# ALKYON

It is said that all the wonders of the world are to be found beneath the gleaming spires of the Alkonian cities. The Alkonians are renowned as a nation of merchants and famed as a rich and prosperous people. There are those who think that this means that the streets are paved with gold, that wine flows from the mountain springs or that meat and fish will grow on trees, as if the Alkonians grew rich merely by having the good fortune to be born here. In truth, Alkyon is not a land blessed with abundant mineral wealth but hard work and diligence. Its citizens are adept in the manufacture and design of all manner of goods and it is from this craftsmanship and honest toil that the wealth of the Alkonians has been gleaned.

The cornerstone of Alkonian life is the volery, an institution that foreigners tend to misconstrue as being guilds by another name. A volery specializes in one or more spheres of endeavour: banking, engineering, providing soldiers, actors, musicians and countless others. As with a guild, membership of a volery is usually for life and it is extremely rare for someone to leave their volery. Each volery is led by a single archon who is supported by an array of senior members. The structure of the voleries is ancient and dates back hundreds of years. It has proved so successful that almost all of the trading houses have adopted it, perhaps because some of them began their life as Alkonian voleries.

In Alkyon, the practice of hereditary monarchs is viewed as being one step away from rule by brute force. The land is governed by a plutarch with a body of advisers. The plutarch and his advisers are selected every two years in a complex form of auction in which attendees first purchase votes, that are then cast as they choose for the different positions. In practice this means that the plutarch and his advisers are almost always drawn from amongst the wealthiest and most successful voleries. The voting process, like so many aspects of Alkonian society, can be bought and sold by those wishing to invest the money in influencing such things.

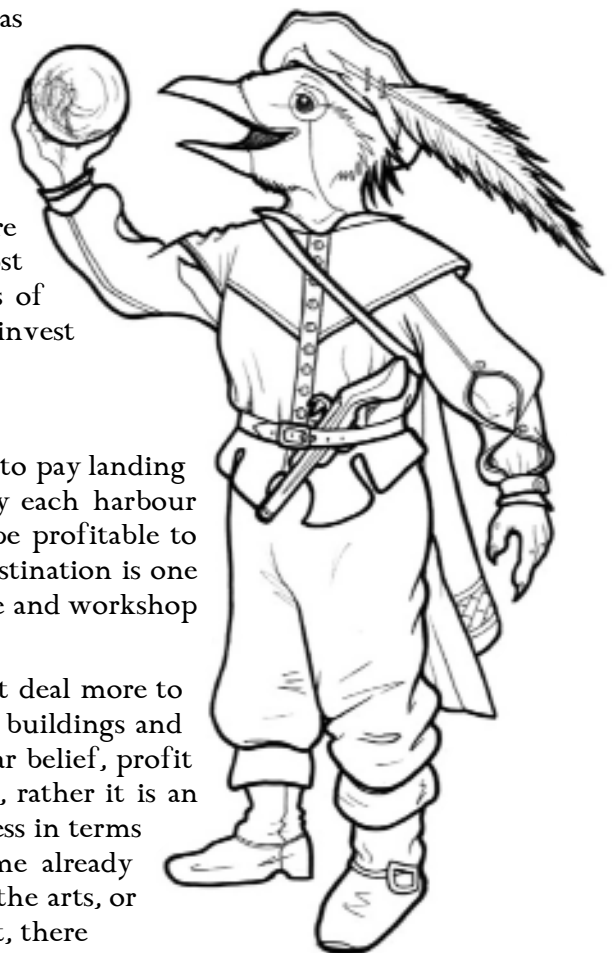
## FIRST MEETING

Upon mooring at an Alkonian harbour you will be required to pay landing fees to the harbour authorities. The landing fees are set by each harbour master, so if you feel you are paying over the odds it can be profitable to keep sailing to another port. From the port your probable destination is one of the great white gleaming buildings that will serve as home and workshop for the members of a volery.

If, however, you are not a merchant then there is still a great deal more to experience and see. Their cities are well known for their tall buildings and impressive works of art and architecture. Contrary to popular belief, profit is not the sole thing that drives Alkonians to work so hard, rather it is an enduring need to prove themselves. Most measure their success in terms of profit accrued for themselves and their volery, but some already wealthy notables have sought martial prowess, patronage of the arts, or even sartorial elegance as their personal pinnacle. As a result, there is always something new to experience, be it a fine brandy, a new play, or a day at the races.

Foreigners are much inclined to comment that loyalty to a volery runs deeper than loyalty to the state. In this, as in so many things, they are much mistaken. The prosperous avian will discover that well-placed loyalty is derived from the state and from the volery, not given up to them.

— Amelia Bhur, "The Prosperous Life"



SANDA PACH, ERLATZ VOLERY

No nation in history has ever benefited from protracted warfare. Only when the prosperous individual is thoroughly acquainted with the destruction of war can they hope to make profit from it. The purpose of warfare is not to slay the enemy as is often supposed but to destroy their prosperity.

— Amelia Bhur, "The Prosperous Life"

To motivate the individual to seek a prosperous life, true prosperity must be three things. Tangible, achievable and durable. Wealth that is hidden in vaults is not tangible. Wealth that is frittered and wastefully spent is not durable. Wealth that is kept from an avian because he is born poor or uneducated is not achievable.

— Amelia Bhur, "The Prosperous Life"

The pursuit of excellence is what drives the Alkonian people in all things. Alkonian society, whilst appearing fluid to the point of anarchy to an outsider, is lawful and ordered to those who are born here. There is a great deal of competition between voleries, as well as within them and this produces inevitable political machinations, although violence is almost unknown. There is a subtle, ever-changing, hierarchy that follows each act of accomplishment, but any Alkonian that brings something truly unique to the society can be assured of lasting distinction.

## Fashion

Alkonians tend to dress in finery and robes indicating their status and wealth. Dark colours are preferred as they better highlight subtle braiding and embroidery. Alkyon is a cold country and their traditional heavy robes, with the weight of the material hanging from the shoulder, are the standard garment. In recent times, fashions have changed and young successful Alkonians are opting for a heavy shirt with a stylish coat over it. Cloaks are always popular with those who have to go abroad in bad weather but cannot afford a carriage. High collars and large ruffs are never out of fashion in Alkonian high society.

The prosperity of people determines the prosperity of the state and thus is the foremost concern of any right minded plutarch. Those who seek to enrich the state at the expense of its people would consume their own flesh to keep their hunger at bay.

— Amelia Bhur, "The Prosperous Life"

## Religion

Unsurprisingly, the Merchant is the primary religion here, and there are massive churches raised in His name in every town and city in Alkyon. Khalid Mhaines is the current Preceptor, the head of the Church of the Merchant in Alkyon, which gives him command of great wealth and resources. It is said in Alkyon that the Preceptor wields as much power as the Plutarch, if not more, since Khalid Mhaines only has to justify his actions to God.

The Teacher is also popular and His shrines can be found in many voleries. The other Gods are less favoured, even amongst the voleries that dedicate themselves to work as mercenaries, devotees of the Merchant and even the Teacher are still more numerous than the followers of the Smith. Still, the Alkonians are unlikely to take offence at any particular act of piety.

Without the knowledge of a thing it is impossible to assay its worth. Once you know everything about an item then you can know the value of a thing. Thus the worth of all things can be considered to be the ultimate knowledge, the final truth that can be learned.

— Amelia Bhur, "The Prosperous Life"

## Trade

According to the official law, any transaction above the trading threshold must be conducted in Alkonian Gold and Silver Ducatto. A few of the larger voleries have their own money changer, but many Alkonians are happy to carry out an exchange in any currency, provided of course, that they believe they can make some additional profit by it.

Iron ingots, bolts of wool, bales of flax and every other bulk commodity sells well in Alkyon, the voleries have an almost insatiable desire for such things. It is unwise to bring worked goods to Alkyon unless they are the product of some particularly notable artisans. Adventurous traders will seek to find fine Flembic wines, Rukh jewellery or exotic works of art, which can fetch a fabulous price from the wealthier members of a volery if you can find the right buyer.

In many parts, Alkonian auctions are common when selling goods. Here the seller simply names a price and then gradually reduces this until a prospective buyer makes a bid, at which point the item is sold. If the price falls too low then the vendor may withdraw the lot. Alkonian law imposes harsh penalties upon those who bid but are unable to pay, often an offender may find his goods seized and sold to cover the debt.

# AMUN-SA

Amun-Sa is one of the oldest civilizations of the Known World and the wemics who live here pride themselves on their long tradition of culture and learning. Architecture has long been a pivotal part of the great heritage of Amun-Sa and the land is home to thousands of extraordinary buildings. The people of Amun-Sa

are devout and pious and they have raised great monuments to the Gods, massive statues which rise hundreds of feet from the sandy desert floor. Along their borders there are vast stone fortifications designed to deter attacks from the Mayans. In the First City, there are stunning hanging gardens cunningly wrought to frame the beauty of the king's palace. Only the mightiest of the temples to the Gods that adorn the land can match the palace for wonder and magnificence.

The king of Amun-Sa rules the land with the able support of the many learned priests that live here. Every religion is well represented in Amun-Sa and many of the populace make devotions at every nearby temple on holy days. The priests help to administer the smooth running of the land, acting as judges, regional governors and bureaucrats. Respect for the priesthood means that few begrudge them their role in collecting taxes and tithes.

The priests of the Smith, who is known in Amun-Sa as the Soldier, also control the elite military strength of Amun-Sa, the awesome fighting might of the mameluks. These wemic slaves are bought as children from traders and taught the religious doctrine of the Soldier as well as fighting techniques. They are trained to fight with the clavate, an extremely heavy mace which requires massive upper body strength to use effectively. Although they are few in number the mameluks are renowned for their awesome discipline and loyalty.

## FIRST MEETING

To preserve the purity of their culture, foreigners in Amun-Sa are restricted to special areas of the cities that are designated for their use. You are likely to be directed towards the foreign quarter as soon as you arrive and you should follow the directions carefully. It is possible to get a permit from one of the temples to leave the merchant district but, unless you are a religious pilgrim, they can be difficult to obtain. If you are planning to stay long, you will need to find an Amun-Sa native who can lease you a residence, as only natives are permitted to buy land.

At the centre of the merchant district in every city there is a thriving bazaar where almost anything can be bought for a price. There is no universally accepted currency and the local merchants have an uncanny knack for realising when you are not familiar with local prices, so it is essential to be wary when buying or selling here. Fortunately, if you do purchase something from the locals, then you can be confident that the vendor will be genuine. This is partly due to the basic honesty of the people of Amun-Sa and partly due to the strict vigilance of the priests in maintaining honest trade in the market place.

## FASHION

The great heat of the deserts ensures that anyone who spends much time in Amun-Sa soon adopts the local garb; a loose fitting robe (often white with a decorated hem) tied with a simple belt and topped off with a headdress. The headdress provides protection against the sun and should match the robe where possible. The common exception is the mameluks, who in spite of the heat, wear leather armour. There is a growing trend amongst the more cosmopolitan inhabitants of the kingdom to wear a tunic shirt and breeches topped off with a fez or more traditional headgear.



jESHA TELLESH  
A MAMELUK CAPTAIN



## RELIGION

All the Gods are well served by their own priesthoods in Amun-Sa. However, the fact that the priests of the Soldier administer and lead the mameluk armies that serve as the backbone of the nation's fighting capabilities gives them considerable influence. Nhairtoun is the head of the priesthood of the Soldier in Amun-Sa and commands the loyalty of many priests of the Smith in foreign lands.

Amun-Sa is not precisely a theocracy, the king rules the twin thrones of Amun-Sa and is answerable to no-one but the Gods. Whilst the king continues to enjoy the patronage of the Gods, the priests act as his servants and advisors, ensuring the honest and fair running of the land. The current monarch is King Adities the Third. Amun-Sa no longer allows women to ascend the throne.

Strict religious observance is required of everyone whilst in Amun-Sa. There are priests of the five Gods in every town and city of Amun-Sa and everyone in the land observes the holy days and festivals. The penalties for those who break doctrine are severe. Those whose beliefs deviate from the worship of the five Gods as they are prescribed by the priests of Amun-Sa are strongly advised to be very discrete in their attitudes whilst visiting the most pious of the lands of the Known World.

## Trade

Amun-Sa has no currency of its own. Instead you will need to come to an arrangement with a specific merchant for the value he will place on your coin. More enterprising merchants are now beginning to trade in the Rimici Capell letters of credit, but may charge a high price for taking them.

Amun-Sa has excellent slave markets and slaves fetch a reasonable price here. In particular, very young wemics are eagerly purchased by the priests of the Soldier to be trained as mameluks. In recent times, the king has ordered the formation of levied militias for defence of the border from renewed Mayan attacks, and a shortage of skilled smiths capable of making weapons means that even crude metalwork like Gnoll weaponry can be sold for a good price. Darkpowder weapons are almost unknown in these lands and whilst you might sell one or two as a novelty they are not seen as effective weapons of war.

Ornaments, decorative fabrics, and pottery all sell well, as do exotic foodstuffs. It is possible to purchase the clavate, the heavy metal mace wielded by the mameluks but they require a great deal of training to use effectively and most of the trade is in ornamental ones for sale as curios. A good telescope can usually be had in Amun-Sa for a reasonable price as the science of astronomy is considered well by the priests.

*Amun-Sa is the mirror of the heavens, reflecting the divine order of the true sky. As the light of the moon shines upon the desert floor illuminating every grain of sand equally, so the law of the King falls equally upon every wemic in Amun-Sa. As the moon is surrounded by a thousand stars guiding his path so the King is guided by his priests. Those who seek to change this ancient order, seek to deny the order of heaven. They do not set themselves against the King, they set themselves against the truth of the Gods.*

*The prosperity that we enjoy; the buildings that we have raised; the victories we have won; everything that we have accomplished. These things were delivered to us because we respect the laws the Gods have decreed for us. These heretics deny the order of heaven; they talk of the past because they desire to wander the desert as our ancestors did, before we ever received the gifts of heaven to the virtuous. Their path leads not to truth but to poverty and ruin.*

*Those who plead with us to stare at the sun, would have us all become as blind as they.*

— Nhairtoun, Speech to the Mameluk Host

# BANTUSTAN

Bantustan, is named in honour of the Gnoll's first Supreme Chieftain. However most folk simply think of it as the land of the Gnolls. It seems likely that the Gnolls are mokosh people although few of them look kindly on being compared to the Kamakuran or the Merisusi. The Supreme

Chieftain appoints a number of tribal chieftains from amongst his prominent supporters to act as generals, admirals, advisors and regional governors. Gnoll law tends to be extremely complex and is often expensive to administer, however a merchant who is appreciative and understanding of the financial burden of arranging suitable permits will usually find a Gnoll prepared to deal with the matter for them.

Gnolls tend to be quite free with their hospitality, but it is wise to be cautious when accepting a meal from them. By tradition, Gnolls eat the flesh of most other beings, a practice which some can find distinctly unnerving. However, if you ask politely you should receive a portion of horse, goat or cat. Whatever the meat, Gnoll cuisine is an acquired taste, often highly spiced and strongly flavoured. Decayed meat is considered to be a special delicacy and Gnolls like to serve a portion with most meals.

## First meeting

The Gnoll lands are harsh and unforgiving, droughts are common, and it would be difficult to describe the ground as fertile. As a result, Gnolls have to be pragmatic to survive in the harsh surroundings. Those who judge the Gnolls by their reputation often wrongly assume they are as uncivilized as they are ruthless. There may be few famous Gnoll poets or playwrights but a wealthy Gnoll captain is every bit as adroit at trading as any Alkonian merchant. If you wish to make a positive impression it is worth being polite to any Gnoll you meet but take care not to appear overly deferential. It is always best to negotiate from a position of strength and the more visible you can make your strength the better. It is prudent to avoid appearing threatening, however, as this will be received very badly.

### Recruits Wanted

We are now accepting new recruits for the 4th infantry regiment, the Murabi Pistoleers. Many of you will have come from distant villages where the old ways still hold sway or perhaps from the cities where we like to think of ourselves as a little bit more civilized. However, once you accept the uniform of a Murabi Pistoleer all you need to do is obey orders and salute your superiors and you will do well.

It is no secret that Bantustan has the finest infantry in the known world. It is well known enough that years of warfare and conflict have hardened our neighbours to our presence. The Tritoni hide in their jungles to the west and have little left worth conquering, whilst the humans to the north rely on cavalry, fortifications and muskets to keep us contained.

But we are not contained! Passage on a ship to the New World awaits those brave enough to take up the challenge. Unlike the conquests of the recent past where fearful nations have banded together against us, in this instance the call to arms has been issued by the priests of the Teacher. We the nation of Bantustan have free reign to conquer this new land without outside interference. The natives have little in the way of formal military and no darkpowder weaponry. This means that each and every one of you has the chance for conquest and glory in the service of the Gnoll people.

To back you up we will be establishing a colony and every Gnoll who can talk or trade or build will be there to provide you with logistical support. I cannot tell you what dangers you will face but I know that the path to victory will lie in not allowing the enemy time to think and plan. If we keep them under relentless pressure then we will be victorious.

Join up today and we will march to the coast to board our transports! Those who succeed can expect to receive medals, those who triumph can expect to have medals named after them. Glory awaits you in the New World when you join the Murabi Pistoleers.

(Uniform supplied, own pistol required).

Most Gnolls will avoid a confrontation unless they are confident of victory. Gnolls swiftly learn to use imaginative approaches in competitive situations where the outcome is in doubt. A famous example of Gnoll ingenuity involved a Rukh captain who bet a local chieftain a hundred and twenty Millenese Florins that his ship could beat the tribe's fastest warrior round the headland. The chieftain took his wager for the morning. At dawn, the captain's vessel which had previously appeared to be sea worthy began to list heavily having developed three holes below the water line.

## Fashion

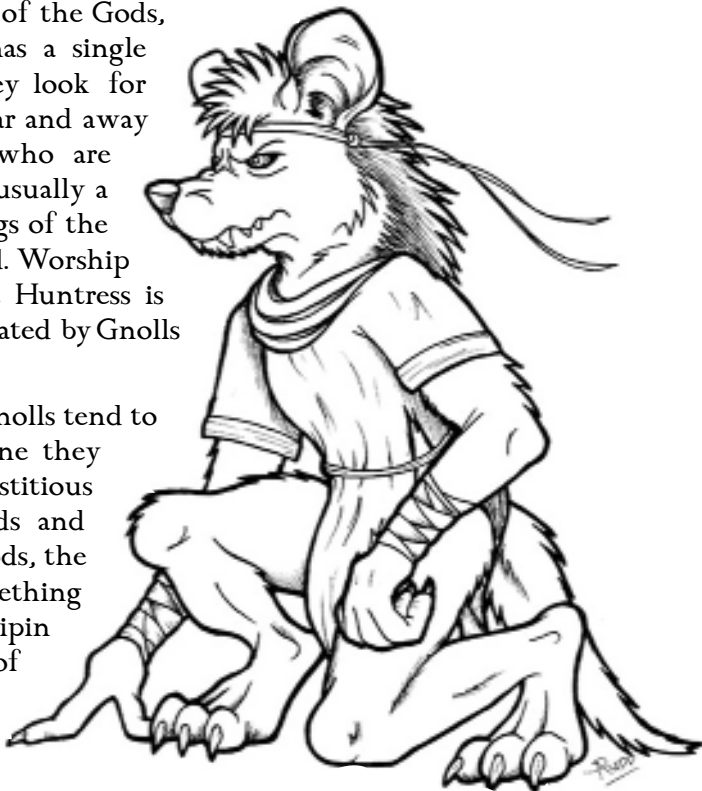
Many Gnoll soldiers are very proud of their brightly coloured military uniforms, choosing to wear them for all social occasions. These uniforms vary depending upon which tribal regiment they are part of, but brilliant hues are favoured, especially yellows, reds and greens with large gold epaulettes. For those Gnolls that can afford them a hat is the essential fashion accessory. Some care must be taken in choosing a hat, since it is considered exceptionally rude to be seen wearing a larger, more impressive looking hat than someone more senior in rank than yourself. Hats of any size make excellent presents, especially when decorated with gold or silver brocade. The old traditional tribal garbs of furs and leathers are still worn by many scouts and shamans but they are considered extremely rustic by most.



## Religion

Although most Gnolls are suitably respectful of the Gods, they are rarely devout. Each tribe usually has a single priest, that is called the ipin, to whom they look for spiritual guidance. Worship of the Smith is far and away the most common faith amongst Gnolls who are fiercely dedicated to their tribe. The ipin is usually a devotee of the Smith. Respect for the teachings of the Teacher and the Weaver are fairly widespread. Worship of the Merchant is rare but worship of the Huntress is almost unknown. The Huntress is not appreciated by Gnolls familiar with the tenets of Her faith.

Regardless of their personal devotion, most Gnolls tend to exhibit a distinct nervousness around anyone they consider close to the Gods. They are very superstitious about incurring the displeasure of the Gods and many think that the closer you are to the Gods, the more likely they are to notice if you do something wrong. Consequently they prefer to avoid the ipin altogether. If you openly wear a symbol of religious dedication you risk a similar association. You might get the better of a single deal by such a means, but in the long run they are far more likely to simply avoid doing business with you.



DAG, SCOUT OF THE BORDER LANCES

## Trade

Gnolls mint no coinage of their own, but the Freiboden Florin is accepted across most of the Murland continent. In the interior you may have to resort to barter, but Gnoll tribes that have met traders before will invariably accept Florins. In some cases, other coins may also be accepted and some Gnoll tribes will even take Rimici Capell letters of credit, although they demand a high premium for them.

Gnolls prize good quality ironworking, especially any pieces of novel manufacture of engineering. Be warned though that whilst local methods of manufacture are often crude they are usually very effective. For months, traders bringing Alkonian pistols across the Sharamoor Sea sold them to Gnoll tribes at a premium. Within a year, many tribes were manufacturing their own and very quickly the entire market collapsed. Rare pigment will always sell well in Gnoll lands, they are fond of adorning themselves with paint and the surrounding prairies yield only a few pale colours. Gnolls love bright hues and heavy fabrics and the soldiers of most tribes have their own distinctive uniforms. Surgeons implements are also prized, Gnolls have a flair for surgery, born of a fascination for the anatomy of most creatures. Salted fish sells well in some tribes.

Tritoni and Freiboden villagers are frequently taken as plunder when Gnolls attack their neighbours, so there is a ready market to purchase slaves. Gnolls produce large amounts of low grade iron ore which can be acquired cheaply but it is rarely profitable to move the ore very far. Gnoll weapons, although crude, can be effective and can raise a decent profit from those prepared to purchase such items, notably the Mayans and Amun-Sa.

Bear in mind that your reputation as a merchant will quickly spread amongst tribes in an area, particularly if you do not deal honestly. The most notorious incident in recent times involved a dracoscion powder dealer called Jarn. He had barely set foot on the Gnoll mainland before he was set upon, dismembered and devoured. Upon investigation by the authorities it transpired that Jarn had sold three score shots of darkpowder to a neighbouring tribe the year before. He swore an oath on the Smith, witnessed by the ipin, that they had all been flame tested the day before. As it turned out not a single one fired. There was no attempt to conceal the death, the Gnolls were totally sanguine about the affair. He crossed a neighbouring tribe so they lynched and ate him. The Gnoll authorities concluded that no further action was required, a salutary lesson to anyone thinking to make a profit at the expense of the Gnoll people.

# FIDELIA

Fidelia is famously the seat of the Hierophant, the leader of the Church of the Teacher. From the great domed city of Yugorsk, the Hierophant interprets the will of the Teacher for His devotees throughout the Known World. When the need arises for decrees to be issued, then the Yugorskian paladins and the fanatical wild men of Fidelia can be relied upon to ensure obedience to the Teacher's laws.

The Hierophant is the sole authority in Yugorsk and much of southern Fidelia lies under the complete control of his clergy. Away from the warm coastal waters, however, the fertile land gives way to endless miles of inhospitable forest. Here the ground is covered in snow for much of the year, in some parts the snow never melts and only the hardest are able to survive. This part of Fidelia is home to the tribes of wild men that are ruled by a secretive queen who lives deep in the hinterland. These tribes consider their queen to be the earthly incarnation of the Teacher and as such she is sacred to them. No man or woman not born to the tribes has ever laid eyes upon her and lived.

United by their belief in the Teacher, the people of Fidelia have often ventured forth from their isle to take His laws to the world. This has given them a fearsome and troublesome reputation with their neighbours who have not always chosen to follow the will of the Teacher as closely as they might. There have been no crusades during the rule of the current Hierophant however, and more and more visitors have come to the shores of the sacred island. There they discover that, despite the fearsome reputation of the wild men for bloodthirsty savagery in battle, Yugorsk and the surrounding land is the lawful home of wise scholars, mendicant priests and hard working merchants.

## FIRST MEETING

Few folk who visit Fidelia have reason to venture far from Yugorsk. The great city port is always busy with ships bringing goods from across Fidelia to the capital to trade. Yugorsk is famed as a centre of learning, there are vast rooms full of books in the some of the largest temples. Merchants and scholars are not the only visitors to Yugorsk; many pious followers of the Teacher come here at least once in their life to prove their devotion through the arduous and dangerous pilgrimage to the sacred city.

Some travellers do visit the hinterland. From the reports of those that have returned, we know the Fidelian tribesmen who live there lead a nomadic existence, driving their herds of vursk across arid tundra and through dense forest. Everything the tribes have they get from the vursk. The walls of their large circular tents which are assembled each night are made from vursk hair, matted and crushed together to make a thick felt. Even the bones and sinews of these prized creatures are not wasted by the wild men.

## FASHION

The wild men from the hinterland tend to wear as much leather and fur as possible during the long cold winters. In summer, they shed their furs in favour of tight-fitting, woollen vests and overgarments. They disdain bright colours and decorations and prefer their clothing unadorned except perhaps for some religious symbol.

*there are more devils in the heavens then there are stars in the sky. But just as one star must always shine more brightly than the remainder so it is that one devil is to be feared more than any other. sheult is the greatest of the devils and he desires power more than any other thing.*

*one day in the depths of winter, sheult came upon a fisherman who was old and so close to death that he could feel the air turning to ice in his lungs. the devil crept to the side of the man and whispering in his ears, he told him that he would stop the turn of time if the man would let him inside his soul. desperate for another hour of life the man agreed and so sheult took the man's soul at the very moment that time came to claim him.*

*at first none knew what had transpired and it seemed as if nothing more than the soul of an old fisherman had been lost. But the devil sheult had trapped time itself within the man's soul and now he carried the future with him. with no future the land was trapped in the grip of winter snows.*

*fedel set out to confront the sheult and make him give back the future. he came upon the devil whilst he was feasting in his home in the frozen north. fedel tried to creep up on the devil, but sheult saw his arrival in the future and was waiting for him. realising that he could not defeat the demon whilst he was armed and ready fedel claimed that he come to request a day of warmth so he could seduce the daughter of the gurse king. sheult scorned fedel's request claiming that he would never release a single day of the future until all living beings accepted him as their king.*

Yugorsk tends to be much warmer throughout the year, and folk here adopt lighter clothing with many preferring a basic military uniform or a priestly robe. Green and blue are always popular colours particularly for robes or coats worn over white shirts or undergarments. Many women from Yugorsk tend to cover their hair and few people wear jewellery which is regarded as being a vain practice of the impious.

## RELIGION

The Teacher is the official religion of Fidelia. Worship of the other Gods is technically permitted but is rarely practiced openly. The Hierophant is the voice of the Teacher and his word is law in Yugorsk and the surrounding area. Walking the streets of Yugorsk, almost every one of them dominated by a great church

fedel shrugged as if it were of no concern and turning he took care to walk towards the sun through the black fir trees saying that since the gurse king's daughter was the most beautiful woman in the world the demon was welcome to the rest of it. sheolt was overcome with jealousy and desiring to see this mortal woman he tried to shadow fedel through the forests. But the devil's breath froze in the cold north wind and was carried passed fedel who could tell he was being followed.

fedel came upon the gurse king's daughter washing linen by a cold mountain stream. knowing that the demon was watching he seduced the girl by telling her that the heavens desired them to be joined as this was the longest day of winter when such things were ordained to happen. at this the girl willingly took off her clothes and the two crawled into a grail bush to cover themselves and keep warm while fedel took the maiden.

the thick leaves of the bush covered them and sheolt desiring to see more crept closer, until fedel could see the reflection of the demon in the girls eyes. so engrossed was the demon in watching their union that he forgot to see what the future held. fedel hearing the sound of the snow melting knew the moment was come and he struck sheolt down with an expertly thrown axe which he had concealed about his person.

sheolt's blood ran out staining the ground and mixing with the maiden's blood. fedel set the old fisherman's soul free restoring the future and driving the winter away. as he did so a tiny bush sprang up, whose leaves were split in three and covered in fine green hairs and whose branches bore dark rust coloured berries. fedel told the girl that the berries were poisonous but that they contained the future within their juice.

or temple to the Teacher, it is possible to imagine that the people of Fidelia acknowledge the existence of no other God. In truth, the Hierophant has always made it clear that respect for the worship of all the Gods is part of the Teacher's laws, and small shrines can be found by those who seek them out.

The situation is somewhat different in the interior. The tribesmen are ruled by a queen whom they consider to be the earthly embodiment of the Teacher. However they do not worship their queen, that veneration is reserved for the Hunter, who they call Fedel. The teachings of Fedel are passed on in hundreds of different tales and legends which are never written down but painstakingly memorised by the young children of every tribe. Those who have studied these tales claim that there are great truths hidden in them. According to legend these tales are passed down by the queen whilst in religious trances that are brought on by the use of sacred herbs.

## Trade

Yugorsk is an important trade city and barges carrying salted fish, firs and wood ply the waters of the bay, exchanging their cargoes for precious metals, weapons, grain and all manner of manufactured goods from the rest of the world. Fidelia supplies thick coats of vursk hair, dried timber and salted meat and fish in great abundance to neighbouring lands. In return she buys iron ore and more precious metals as Fidelia has no working mines. Despite this, the smiths of Yugorsk are well known for their metal work, particularly the suits of plate which are used to armour the warriors in the Hierophant's armies.

The Hierophant's paladins patrol the streets of Yugorsk and the surrounding towns and cities night and day. As a result, a man or woman may walk safely, no matter how much wealth they carry. In fact it is claimed that if you place a gold coin on the floor of the market place in central Yugorsk then it will still be there the next morning. Fidelia is truly the home of the rule of law.

The Kamakuran Kyat and the Flembic Mark are always accepted in Fidelia. Rimici Capell letters of credit are not accepted however, as the previous Hierophant ruled that to issue currency was the province of rulers and kings, and so they were forbidden.

# FLAMBARD

Flambard is an ancient kingdom in the Northern seas. Much respected by all of its neighbours, it has long been a bastion of civilization and good practice. The Flembic kings show the kind of wisdom that only results from an ancient and wise tradition in leadership. The king seldom interferes directly

in the affairs of his people, rather responsibility resides with a plethora of powerful noble men and women who either hold high offices or else run monopolies for the Crown. They in turn appoint their own staff of professional and well-educated advisors and servants to conduct their day to day affairs leaving the nobility and the gentry free to pursue their own interests.

In theory, the borders of Flambard extend to cover great swathes of farmland across the north of the continent of Sentoris. Although the farmlands are profitable and important in their own way, they are entirely unremarkable and of little interest to a gentleman or gentlewoman. The mountainous island of Ter, home to Terino, the largest city in the Known World, is what most people imagine when they think of Flambard. And so they should, for this astonishing island is the birthplace of elegance and nobility. To live on Terino is to live a life inspired by the very idea of style. Here the gentlemen and ladies effortlessly embody every well-bred man's desire to dress, act and speak with eloquence and sophistication. To some tastes they go too far, the latest fashion for great swathes of lace in shirt cuffs and necks for ladies as well as gentlemen may seem dandified to some, but fashion always begins in Flambard and it never stops there long.

Sadly, great wealth always seems to attract envious and greedy individuals. The slums of Terino, known as the Lower City in polite society, are home to the incurably recidivist and are entirely without redeeming features.

## FIRST MEETING

It is uncivil in the extreme to be seen conducting mercantile business in public, so visiting merchants are advised to make the acquaintance of a local notable and seek an invitation to one of the gentles' clubs or wits' salons. Between them, the gentles' clubs offer every conceivable kind of entertainment and indulgence for a man or woman of sophisticated and complex tastes. Membership of one's club is part and parcel of nobility, and one's choice of club (and a club's choice in one) is as much a testament to social standing as any other could be. Noted clubs such as Langars and Bites are old, even ancient, and their dark oak-panelled walls have seen many matters of great import discussed and fortunes made or destroyed in a single night.

The wits' salons, most notably di Racines, are more cultured, offering a place of social discourse, literary discussion, and philosophical debate. These are places where the intellect is glorified, where wit and repartee are the weapons of choice. Due to the nature of some of the combatants, the wits' salons are more often a far more dangerous choice for an evening out than the gentles' clubs.

## FASHION

In Flambard it is almost as important to follow fashion as it is not to be seen to be following fashion. Whilst the majority of the population from the Lower City cannot afford the heights of fashion and wear simple tunics and trousers, amongst the wealthy elite a cavalcade of powdered wigs, elegantly embroidered doublets and corsetry is the norm. It is common for both gentlemen and gentlewomen to powder their faces and apply 'beauty spots'. Current fashion is with the embroidered frock coat, although an impressive military uniform is still a popular choice amongst the rakish. Anything that embodies good taste whilst demanding the eye's attention will be well received in Flembic society.

## RELIGION

Katerine di Capell, a notorious Flembic wit, once claimed that dressing well was the only genuinely held devotion in Flambard. Apparently it might not get you into heaven but it will get you an invitation to the king's chambers which is almost as good and a lot more immediate. This irreverence notwithstanding, the nobility of Flambard hold the faith of both the Teacher and the Smith in good esteem. There are several massive churches in Terino, some so tall they rival the Teacher's cathedral in neighbouring Yugorsk.

Worship of the Merchant is encouraged amongst those for whom hard work is important. Priests of the Huntress and the Weaver have little to offer the sophisticated people of Flambard, and as the lower classes have better things to occupy their minds with, devotees of these faiths are advised to keep their opinions to themselves when in polite society.

In my experience, it is a truth that whatever is worth doing at all, is worth doing well; and nothing can be done well without attention: I therefore carry the necessity of attention down to the lowest things, even to dancing and dress. Custom has made dancing sometimes necessary for a young man; therefore mind it while you learn it that you may learn to do it well, and not be ridiculous, though in a ridiculous act. Dress is of the same nature; you must dress; therefore attend to it; not in order to rival or to excel a fop in it, but in order to avoid singularity, and consequently ridicule. Take great care always to be dressed like the reasonable people of your own age, in the place where you are; whose dress is never spoken of one way or another, as either too negligent or too much studied.

Virtue and learning, like gold, have their intrinsic value but if they are not polished, they certainly lose a great deal of their lustre; and even polished brass will pass upon more people than rough gold. What number of sins does the cheerful, easy good-breeding of the Garters frequently cover?

However frivolous a company may be, still, while you are among them, do not show them, by your inattention, that you think them so; but rather take their tone, and conform in some degree to their weakness, instead of manifesting your contempt for them. There is nothing that people bear more impatiently, or forgive less, than contempt; and an injury is much sooner forgotten than an insult.

Many young people adopt pleasures, for which they have not the least taste, only because they are called by that name. They often mistake so totally, as to imagine that debauchery is pleasure. The true pleasures of a gentleman are those of the table, but within the bound of moderation; good company, that is to say, people of merit; moderate play, which amuses, without any interested views; and sprightly gallant conversations with women of fashion and sense. The real pleasures of a gentleman occasion neither sickness, shame, nor repentance. Whatever exceeds them becomes low vice, brutal passion, debauchery, and insanity of mind; all of which, far from giving satisfaction, bring on dishonour and disgrace.

I hope you employ your whole time, which few people do; and that you put every moment to profit of some kind or other. I call company, walking, riding, employing one's time, and, upon proper occasions, very usefully; but what I cannot forgive in anybody is sauntering, and doing nothing at all, with a thing so precious as time, and so irrecoverable when lost.

I here subjoin a list of all those necessary, ornamental accomplishments (without which, no man living can either please, or rise in, the world) which only require your care and attention to possess.

To speak elegantly, without which nobody will hear you with pleasure, and consequently you will speak to very little purpose.

An agreeable and distinct elocution; without which nobody will hear you with patience: this everybody may acquire, who is not born with some imperfection in the organs of speech.

A distinguished politeness of manners and address; which common sense, observation, good company, and imitation, will infallibly give you if you will accept it.

A genteel carriage and graceful motions, with the air of a man of fashion: a good dancing-master, with some care on your part, and some imitation of those who excel, will soon bring this about.

To be extremely clean in your person, and perfectly well dressed, according to the fashion, be that what it will: Your negligence of your dress while you were a schoolboy was pardonable, but would not be so now.

Upon the whole, take it for granted that, without these accomplishments, all you know, and all you can do, will avail you very little.

— Sir Rostrum Haddock, 'Noble Deportment'

## Trade

There are more serfs than farmland in Flambard so there is little market here for working slaves. However an unusual Gnoll domestic or a Tritoni gladiatrix is very saleable as an oddity. Grain and wool are the most likely cargoes to buy from Flambard as they are produced in massive quantities from the fertile farmland and brought to Terino by ship. A fine rapier or a accurate pistol, not some squalid Gnoll item, but one suitable for a lady or gentlemen to use in a duel, will always find a ready buyer here.

Fashion is the trade of Flambard. Staines is the oldest established tailor in Terino and in recent years their frock coats have demanded a king's ransom. Lace is very popular at the moment but the well dressed Flembic lady or gentleman is always looking to the future. Fine fabrics, expensive dyes, scents and perfumes, rare jewellery are all bought and sold in the well-to-do streets of Flambard.

No matter the inducement, under no circumstances should you consider the slums of the Lower City. The place is infested with pickpockets, cutpurses, drabs and knockers. In fact, everyone who lives there is some kind of criminal. The latest habit of the so-called Garters, young men and women of breeding who paint their faces white and arm themselves for a night out hunting in the slums, is deplorable. Furthermore, it has undoubtedly led to the recent outrages of highwaymen, commoners who rob gentlewomen's coaches on the broad boulevards of the Upper City.

Flambard mints its own money and the Mark is the accepted way of doing business here. Letters of credit issued by Rimici Capell are popular with nobles who do not wish to be seen carrying money.

# FREIBODEN

The Freiboden League (formerly the Golden Nation of Mill'en) has recently enjoyed the many benefits of a popular uprising. This revolution has seen the venal and corrupt aristocracy swept away, to be replaced by an enlightened republic ably led by the educated minds of the League of Free Merchants. Although reactionary sympathisers

and collaborators of the old regime are still active, within the loyal towns and cities of the Freiboden League the rule of law is now firmly in place and trade is beginning to return to normal.

The Freiboden League has always been a land of learning and civilization. The home of several universities and establishments of study and experimentation, the League leads the world in developing new thinking. The countryside is rich and temperate and is famed for its food, although travellers are advised to avoid the sausages.

## FIRST MEETING

As a result of recent legal developments, foreigners are now only permitted to trade with a member of the Free Merchants. This useful ruling ensures that whoever you are dealing with will have a full and certain knowledge of any new laws, allowing you to deal confidently and ensuring that you get a fair price for your goods. Unfortunately there is a habit in some parts of preying on unwary visitor, therefore it is vital to ascertain that anyone you deal with is a fully licensed Free Merchant.

Free Merchants are hardworking and industrious men who disdain the trappings of the decadent and idle aristocracies of other lands. Whilst it is fine to dress well, it does not do to be overdressed, and undue displays of pomp or privilege may cause offence. Weapons are frowned upon and generally only the Pietkrieg, who now serve as soldiers and constables in the cities, usually go armed.

## FASHION

In former times, styles amongst the nobility tended to the elaborate and impressive, to a point where they rivalled the tastes of the Flembic high-born. Since the revolution, ostentatious garb has come to be seen as a gesture of support for the ousted majeste and is frowned upon. Current tastes run to the smartly dressed but understated. Thus the average Freiboden merchant will wear a simple tailored doublet or coat, with similar boots and trousers. Most of the Pietkrieg have a plain but smart uniform consisting of a greatcoat, jacket, shirt, trousers and high boots.

## RELIGION

It is wise to be discreet about certain religious affiliations whilst in the territories of the Freiboden League as the role played by some churches during the recent revolution mean that offence can be unwittingly caused. The Majeste was a prominent devotee of the Teacher and that church wielded considerable power before the revolution. Some of the Teacher's clergy were outspoken in their criticism of the revolution when it occurred. Despite their arrest and execution, considerable stigma remains attached to their devotees in the eyes of the current establishment.

Worship of the Merchant is widespread amongst the Free Merchants and anyone who holds to His tenets should find themselves well received. Priests of the Huntress were active in promoting the revolution and there are now churches to the Huntress in most towns. The largest cities all have at least a shrine to the Weaver and anyone who wishes to make an offering or speak to a priest of that faith should be able to find one with little problem.

## TRADE

Due to acts of sabotage by royalists and counterrevolutionaries, some areas of the Freiboden League are currently suffering from major shortages of basic goods and foodstuffs. This means that excellent prices are available for such items. However, in the last year members of several trading houses have been found guilty and fined heavily for deliberate profiteering. Consequently it is wise to make sure that the prices you charge for your goods are considered fair and reasonable by the Free Merchant you are dealing with.

Until recently, the Freiboden League was the only source of reliable muskets in the Known World. These extraordinary darkpowder weapons are capable of unhorsing a rider at a hundred paces in the hands of a marksman and are in great demand throughout the world. However, trade in both muskets and pistols is now prohibited under the Defence of the League Act and you will need to plan accordingly. Nevertheless, the League remains the single largest market for darkpowder, and barrels stamped with a respected device always fetch an excellent price. All transactions must be carried out using the League Florin as it is illegal to conduct trade in any other form of currency.

# The National Chronicle

## MILL-EN DYNASTY FALLS TO BLOODY REVOLUTION

The peaceful nation of Mill-en, bastion of civilisation on Murland has been caught in the grip of a bloody revolution.

The Magese Empire, built last year and numbered by its monumental and illustrious architects, has been the first to appear. Philippe, the first of the New World. The empire was built in the heart of the continent and its borders were the most advanced in the world. Already, the first of the world's first universities and the first of the world's first hospitals were founded in the New World.

At first, the revolution was only a small group of men, but they grew and they grew and they grew. They were the first of the world's first revolutionaries and they were the first of the world's first revolutionaries.

The revolution began in the New World, in the first of the world's first universities and hospitals. It was the first of the world's first revolutionaries and it was the first of the world's first revolutionaries.

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### RIMICAPPELL CLOSES ALL HOUSES

The Rimicappell District has confirmed that it is closing all public houses in Mill-en in response to the current crisis. An application for the Rimicappell District has confirmed that it is closing all public houses in Mill-en in response to the current crisis. An application for the Rimicappell District has confirmed that it is closing all public houses in Mill-en in response to the current crisis.

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### ACADEMICS DECLARE FOR THE REDUCTION

The academic reduction began with students in the first of the world's first universities and hospitals. It was the first of the world's first revolutionaries and it was the first of the world's first revolutionaries.

**FULL STORY INSIDE**

# KAMAKURA

The flourishing lands of Kamakura are ruled by Shogun Haihuto Tontsa who is ably served by many loyal daimyo and bushi. The land is split into several large provinces or districts each ruled over by a single mokosh clan headed by a daimyo. Within a district the daimyo has total

authority and laws vary widely from one district to another. The daimyo will apportion his lands between the lesser clans which are allied to him, with the mokosh of these clans acting as bushi to ensure the wishes of the daimyo are carried out.

In practice, much of the tedious work of daily administration is carried out by the clan's human retainers. Most bushi maintain a large household of human retainers who are responsible for the affairs of the household, leaving the bushi free to dedicate their time to higher pursuits; the study of warfare, poetry and flower arranging. Kamakura is renowned for its fabulous flower gardens but some visitors may find the poetry a little esoteric at first.

## First Meeting

Always make sure you have the permission of the regional daimyo before you enter an area. This can usually be obtained by speaking to a retainer of a bushi from one of the clans on the borders of a region. Remember that the actual laws vary widely between districts and that visitors are better advised to try to study the principles which underlie most laws in Kamakura. The people of Kamakura place

heavy emphasis on the role of honour and duty and this underpins much of their society. Foreigners are not expected to know the laws, but they are expected to comport themselves with honour.

Most work is likely to be carried out in cooperation with the human retainers of a bushi household. You are very unlikely to meet the bushi himself unless the matter is of extreme importance. If you are called to a meeting with a bushi, bear in mind that the Kamakura mokosh are very sensitive to perceived slights. Do not bring a gift unless you have been specifically advised by one of the bushi's retainers on what would be appropriate. Do not make any complimentary remarks about the bushi's estate or household or any hospitality you receive. In Kamakura it is considered rude to draw attention to the effort made to receive a guest. Avoid attempts at humour.

## Fashion

Simplicity is the underlying ethos behind most Kamakuran clothing. The basic clothing is the kimono, a loose fitting garment consisting of a layered silk tunic and trousers. More ornate versions of this garment are worn by the bushi and members of the shogun's court. Overly elaborate garments are regarded as vanity and considered to be designed to conceal the flaws of the person. Bushi and high ranking retainers will

always wear a kimono marked with the symbol of their clan and dyed in their clan's colours. Human retainers wear white robes where they cannot afford their clan's dyes. Part of their warrior ethic demands that the bushi be ready to face battle at any time so many bushi wear full battle armour and carry their weapons whenever they leave their home. Human retainers are forbidden to use metal weapons or armour and usually wear a hardened leather cuirass and carry a spear when preparing for war.

*Daimyo - Obey the will of the gods perfectly. Become the seed that reaches for the light.*

*The districts that you govern are dictated by the will of the Gods. Make each law that you pass bring honour to your forebears and honour to your clan. Make it so that all who are brought before you for judgement know that they will receive it fairly without regard for favour or relation. Do not tax too greatly lest poor men starve, nor too leniently lest men grow idle. Make the stillness of your garden reflect the majesty of the heavens.*

*Bushi - Obey your daimyo perfectly. Become the leaf that floats upon the wind.*

*The tachi is the soul of the warrior, if it is not kept pure it will fracture in battle. All bushi must ensure that their blade is kept honed and free from blemish and that the hilt is kept bound and dry. Tooth and claw are the heart of the warrior, without them your blood will not flow. Do not disgrace the gifts of the Gods by allowing them to become unclean. The yumi is the sight of the warrior. String and unstring the yumi every day lest your sight fail you when you need it most.*

*Keep your household in good order. It is best for a bushi to have good retainers. Money is something that one can borrow from others, but a good man cannot suddenly be come by. Show dignity, restraint and stillness: your retainers will learn these things from you.*



## Religion

Respect for the Gods and their followers is an integral part of Kamakuran society. All the faiths are represented here and most mokosh choose to personally dedicate themselves to the God revered by their clan. No Kamakuran would even consider being disrespectful to a priest and you would do well to adopt a similar position of respect whilst there. Many bushi will kill a person simply for laying hands upon a holy or learned man.

Temples and shrines are commonplace and all are welcome within. You will usually find them decorated with all manner of resplendent blooms. It is widely believed in Kamakura that flowers are the earthly blessing of the Gods and as such are sacred. Only a priest or bushi may cut a flower in bloom and most of them choose to maintain large abundant flower gardens to show their devotion.

Retainer - Obey your bushi perfectly. Become the flower that opens to the rain.

Seek to carry out the will of the bushi so swiftly that a task is completed before it is named. A loyal servant does only as his master tells him but a valued retainer needs no instruction to serve. Seek to accomplish more by doing less.

Do not put the blade of knife to the throat of the flower. Only one who can match the stillness of the bloom can take its life without dishonouring it.

Do not carry a weapon of war. Your bushi is your protection, your loyalty is your armour.

Foreigner - Give obeisance to all. Become the bee that travels unseen but brings new life.

Carry yourself with honour. When you walk in the Realm of Flowers you travel through the garden of heaven.

Say more by speaking less. Bring profit as your gift if you wish to find wealth.

## Trade

Due to a recent ruling by the shogun, all trade in darkpowder and darkpowder weaponry is now forbidden in Kamakura. Under no account should you bring any darkpowder weapons to the Realm of Flowers, not even for your own protection. Possession of darkpowder is judged to be intention to commit murder by many daimyo.

Weapons and armour always sell well in Kamakura, but bear in mind that metal armour and weapons

(meaning mail, plate and swords) are the sole preserve of the bushi. They are happy for merchants to carry arms for trade, but there is little purpose bringing anything of this kind unless it is of the very finest quality. The weapons and armour of a bushi are of extraordinary importance and most will go to great lengths to procure the finest arms available. You will not find a market for inferior merchandise anywhere in Kamakura.

However all bushi maintain large standing forces of human soldiery. These will be equipped with cuirboulli, spears, axes and hardened staves. There is a ready market for any items of this kind throughout the land.

Delicate paintings, unusual flower seeds and bulbs, exotic pigments and dyes, and intricate jewellery are always popular in Kamakura.

Kamakura produces many high quality goods which are in great demand elsewhere including silk, paper, spices and hand painted porcelain. Large quantities of rice are produced especially for export.

The Kyat is the official currency of the realm, but most bushi maintain massive farms on their estates and their retainers will offer payment in surplus foodstuff where common coinage cannot be agreed.



KITSABUTU, BUSHI OF THE MALASHANTA CLAN

# MALATHIA

Malathia is not a wealthy nation. The mountainous land provides reasonable pasture for flocks of sheep and goats but there are few areas fertile enough to produce a good harvest. The great mountain range that forms the Malathian border contains deposits of iron and copper but only small amounts of silver and

none of the gold and gems to be found in other parts. The rocky shoreline contains few natural harbours and most trading vessels, fearing piracy, look to pass by the Malathian coast with as much speed as possible. It is sometimes said that the Malathians live here because no one else wants this land.

Despite, or perhaps because of this, the Malathian people have made their fierce independence and bold spirit their most prized possession. The Malathian folk combine the best qualities of the people of all lands, the adventurous daring of the Rukhi, the style and civility of the Flembic nobility, the warrior spirit of the Fidelians and the bold determination to emerge triumphant that marks the Mayan dragons. Nowhere does this defiance of fear express itself better than upon the open sea. Malathian ships and Malathian sailors are the undisputed masters of the waves. When storms grow so fierce that Merisusi vessels run for shelter, Malathian captains pile on extra sail.

The clan is the basic structure of the Malathian people. There are more than fifty different clans that own land in Malathia according to the royal counts held at Nordon. Most clans keep flocks of sheep, goats and cattle which graze the lush wet grass that covers the Malathian mountain sides. An old Malathian saying claims that tradition is cut from the stone of the mountains and will endure just as long. Perhaps as a result, the traditional practices of raiding and thieving from neighbouring clan's herds continues. In Malathia though, wealth is not measured in acres of farmland or hunting grounds but in the number of ocean going

vessels a clan owns. Most of these vessels are fishing ships, whalers or cargo vessels, but many clans hold to ancient Malathian traditions and do keep at least one pirate vessel amongst their fleet.

Piracy is illegal in Malathia and King Charles has done his very best to control the practice but the clans fiercely guard their independence and there are limits to what can be achieved.

## FIRST MEETING

Although the capital Nordon is by no means the biggest harbour, it can truthfully claim to be the busiest sea port in the Known World. Every manner of ship draws up berth here at some time. Battle barges tie up alongside slave ships and raptors. Scores of taverns line the waterfront where the seafarer can find hospitality, a place to sell a cargo or hire a crew. The king's bondsmen patrol the harbour walls, keeping the peace and making sure nothing is loaded or unloaded without King Charles receiving his due.

*Clansman you have wandered  
but your heart is called to home,  
To the mountains of Malathia  
which once you sought to roam,  
Where the fire is always warm  
and the food is always filling  
And where every man is welcome  
and every girl is willing*

*You left these lands a stranger  
travelling in a foreign boat  
You ended up a soldier  
dressed in another nation's coat  
But you didn't like their orders  
and you didn't like their food  
Your heart was in Malathia  
with the girl that you once wooed*

*So you cast aside your uniform  
and signed up with a ship  
To sail across the Sharamoor  
it seemed such a daring trip  
But the captain was a fool  
and the first mate always pissed  
Oh to be back in Malathia  
with all that you still missed*

*When hellish winds caught the ship  
you knew that it was cursed  
So you jumped overboard and  
left the crew to face the worst  
The water froze you to the bone  
and the waves washed overhead  
If you were in Malathia,  
you'd be dry and warm in bed.*

*You were picked up by a freebooter  
and agreed to be their cook  
You learned to board a vessel  
and you learnt to trade in Rukhi  
When the captain's hour had come,  
you were first to seize the chance  
As if this were Malathia,  
and his ship a girl you took to dance.*

*You lead that crew for seven years,  
plundering ships of every flag  
Till your purse was full of gold  
and your pouch was full of shag  
Till you couldn't put to land  
cause your face and name were known  
But you're welcome in Malathia  
this is every pirate's home.*

*So you sailed west one last time  
and in to dock at Nordon  
You gave the King half your loot  
and he gave you half a pardon  
You set out to find your clansmen  
to show them all your health  
You'd come back to Malathia,  
as a man of fame and wealth*

*So clansman you've returned  
to the land that gave you birth  
To the mountains of Malathia  
where we know what you're worth  
Where the fire is always warm  
and the food is always filling  
And where every man is welcome  
and every girl is willing.*

TRADITIONAL

There are few ports that can rival Nordon, but if you can find a pilot to help you navigate the treacherous waters of a clan's harbour, you will find their hospitality no less welcoming and their merchants no less eager for trade. Malathians consider it rude to pry into another man's affairs. Being the victims of an unwarranted degree of fear and prejudice they make an effort to judge each man by the face he presents to them. In stark contrast to its reputation, Malathia is a friendly and tolerant land, and more than once it has served as a temporary home to those individuals who have incurred the wrath of foreign powers.

## Fashion

In the lowlands of Malathia, where the people consider themselves seafarers, the kilt has almost universally disappeared to be replaced with breeches, a fine overcoat, and high boots; complemented by a good hat. The highland clans still preserve the ancestral kilts, a mid length woollen skirt, often plain but sometimes woven with a pattern running through. Stout boots and warm socks protect the legs and complement the kilt. In either case a fine flaxen or silk shirt with cuffs and collar is the basis of either garment with a cutlass and baldric slung over the top. In the highlands, young women still make two shirts for their dowry and even a plain girl can catch a good man if she can sew a good fitting shirt. Although great rivalry exists between Malathia and Flambard, in recent times the frockcoat has won favour in Nordon.

## Religion

Malathia is not a devout land and there are no great churches or cathedrals, even in Nordon. Malathians have little time for priests or shows of piety; most prefer to keep their beliefs to themselves. No God is without a shrine there though, and most clansmen are God-fearing folk at heart. Passionate followers of the Huntress and the Smith can usually count on a warm welcome in most clan holdings, so long as they do not seek to proselytise. The Weaver is popular across Malathia, as is the Merchant to a lesser extent.

The situation is more precarious for followers of the Teacher. Three times in the last century Malathia has been the subject of a Fidelian crusade and there is little love for the Teacher in these parts. Whilst the king's law protects any traveller it is unwise to rely on this in the highlands which are far from his reach. Symbols of the Teacher are best worn beneath your robes if you have cause to walk the mountains of Malathia.

## Trade

The Malathian reputation means that no nation will allow a vessel carrying a Malathian flag into their harbour and none dare to put a ship bearing their own flag into Nordon. As a result, all the great trading houses and many of the smaller ones maintain large and prosperous offices here. All manner of cargoes turn up here and anything that is bought and sold somewhere can be had for a price in Nordon, or in one of the many clan harbours that are dotted all along the coastline. Although there is great antipathy towards the Kamakurans and Flembic people, both the Mark and the Kyat are accepted here. Attempts by the Malathian king to introduce a Malathian currency have always failed to win the crucial support of the highland clans.

Barrels of salted fish, dried fruit and meat and good quality hides and fleeces are produced for sale by Malathia. Ships, though, are the one great Malathian export. Nordon contains dozens of shipyards and half the vessels produced by Malathian shipwrights are sold to trading houses. Ultimately, trade itself is the life blood of Malathia and Nordon is its heart. Even slaves are bought and sold in great numbers here although there is little market for them in Malathia.

In recent years the pistol has become a favoured weapon amongst Malathian highlanders and seafarers alike. Entire barrels of darkpowder are unloaded on the docks and sold by Alkonian auction from bonded warehouses. Despite the recent legal ruling in Freiboden, muskets still come up for sale in Malathia and always trade hands for a high price.

*Experienced seamen and crew wanted. In accordance with the royal decree from King Charles, a colony is to be founded in the New World. This colony will be well appointed and subsidised from the royal coffers but shipping must be put in place to supply it.*

*Therefore if you have ever been (or have ever wanted to be) part of a ships crew then please apply to the 'Rainbow' the three masted corsair in the eastern dock, or find myself, Captain Edwards, most often in the Jack o' Cups gentlemen's drinking establishment in Widden street.*

*Rates of compensation as are follows:*

<i>Able Seamen (seafarer)</i>	<i>2P<sub>f</sub> per month</i>
<i>Seamen (highlander)</i>	<i>1P<sub>f</sub> per month</i>
<i>Rigger</i>	<i>3P<sub>f</sub> per month</i>
<i>Navigator</i>	<i>5P<sub>f</sub> per week</i>
<i>Musketeer (with musket)</i>	<i>5P<sub>f</sub> per week</i>
<i>Pistoleer</i>	<i>8P<sub>f</sub> per month</i>
<i>Ballista crew</i>	<i>6P<sub>f</sub> per month</i>
<i>Cook</i>	<i>To be arranged</i>
<i>Carpenter</i>	<i>5P<sub>f</sub> per month</i>
<i>Shipwright</i>	<i>3P<sub>f</sub> per week</i>
<i>Cabin boy</i>	<i>5P<sub>f</sub> per sailing</i>

# MAYA

It is difficult to clearly demarcate the Mayan borders as the right of Maya to many of her border territories has been fiercely contested by her three neighbours for decades. There have been frequent border clashes in recent years many of which have spiralled into full-scale wars, as Alkyon, Amun-Sa or Flambard have tried to take advantage of internal disputes within Maya to seize more territory. The most recent conflict with the nation of

Flambard ended just four years ago. The borders remain heavily patrolled on all sides and it can be difficult for honest merchants and travellers to pass them.

The heart of Maya is Sarakhan, the great City of Wyrms. This massive city is a testament to the power and majesty of the draconic rulers of Maya; there are huge palaces built entirely of marble, inlaid with miles of gold filigree. With few exceptions, all the most powerful dragons in Maya maintain palaces, villas or estates in or around Sarakhan. Though there are many other wealthy towns and cities in other lands, all are but pale shadows of the glory of the City of Wyrms.

For all its wealth and power, Maya can be a confusing land for visitors. There is no provincial lord or sovereign of any kind, for no dragon would acknowledge the right of another being to command them. What governance Maya possesses is in the hands of those dragons who command the respect or fear of others in sufficient depth to be able to draw upon their resources for purposes of their own. Politics is inseparable from everyday life in Maya and the twisted web of influence and alliances shifts each time the sun rises. Councils of dragons are formed to accomplish great works, such as establishing new settlements, raising armies or most recently founding a colony.

## FIRST MEETING

No dragon of status is without an entourage of trusted dracoscions, human beings who long ago traded their mortality for a lifetime in service to their draconic masters. All dracoscions are unswervingly loyal to the dragon they serve who can usually be identified by the colour of their scales, which they share with the dragon that made them, in a process called blooding. Most simple dealings involving a dragon's estate will be handled by the dracoscions, but matters of importance will usually entail a meeting with the master of the brood.

Dragons prefer an entirely sedentary existence and the ability to travel unaided is regarded as being overrated and highly undignified. To travel in anything less than a litter or palanquin is beneath a creature of stature. Unless you have exceptionally resplendent quarters to receive guests, you should expect most meetings to take place at a dragon's estates. The majority of dragons expect any visitors they receive to show appropriate respect at the very least, however most have little time for subservience, flattery or feigned humility.

## FASHION

Dragons consider that the only people who carry themselves are those who are forced to do so. The palanquin is regarded as the basis of good taste, especially when cushioned and covered with silk curtains, but in recent times, horse drawn carriages have gained favour amongst younger dragons. Some dragons do wear clothing of a sort, but it is considered a very mortal thing to do by many.

Dracoscion clothing sometimes shows a hint of their origins, there are even some who were once from Malathia and still wear the kilt. Most, however, abandon their origins and adopt stylised armour or ornate robes. These are often chosen to compliment the colour of the dracoscion's scales. Politics and the appearance of power is never far from most dragons' considerations and their entourage will be arrayed in uniform to emphasize their size and power. In any case the finest materials, the most expensive dyes, and the most brilliant embroidery available are employed.



SHARDA OPAILLE, WITH DRACOSCION

*A dozen times and more the kinsmen of my land have asked me the same question. Why would any mortal man choose to become a dracoscion?*

*A dozen legends surround this ancient practice, some accurate, some as fanciful as a child's tale. Dragons may indeed breathe fire, but they do not create dracoscions from the heat of their flames. The truth is simple: the power, the majesty, the vitality of a dragon's life flows in his blood. Those who imbibe sufficient quantity of a dragon's blood will shed their mortality with their skin and rise to meet the new dawn as a dracoscion.*

*A great deal more than skin and hair are lost in this transformation. When a man or woman no longer feels the growing shadow of infirmity, how can he not be changed? When he no longer stands in the ranks of the mortal but is as unaging and undying as the dragon that blooded him, then the world must perforce seem very different.*

*Feelings of affection and consideration towards those not so fortunate nor so brave as to embrace a future without dotage are also withered. Not as is claimed by the twisted power of the dragons blood but by the light of simple truth. Those who have chosen to live an eternal life cannot be made to stand by feelings for those whose grasp of life remains fleeting.*

*The idea of eternity of servitude to a dragon may seem like perpetual bondage to those who refuse to understand it. Are you not all in service to someone? Are you not all the subjects of kings and queens? And are those self same monarchs not also in service to their people? With only a handful of years as your lot you must choose carefully who you give your loyalty to.*

*For myself I choose life. I choose to live forever and in that choice I am freed of all other choices. What matter to me what being I serve, for if I retain but a fraction of my time for myself then I am still wealthier and more free than any mortal man or woman who has ever died. What matter how my hours are weighed? If a moment in every hundred is mine to command I have more time to make my own than any mortal man who will ever be born.*

*We do not choose to become dracoscions because we choose to serve. Service is the price we pay for freedom to live. This is why we are hated and despised. Not for the loves that we have left behind, not for the loyalties that we have discarded, but jealousy for the future we have embraced.*

— Thomas Danaille, dracoscion of the Kaelesh Brood

## RELIGION

Temples and shrines to the Gods are very uncommon in Maya. Whilst a few dragons openly revere one of the five Gods, most do not and many have little or no time for matters of faith. Whatever their views they rarely treat priests or holy men with any more respect than they do any other mortal. In the rare case that a dragon is a devotee, then such attitudes are likely to be shared by all the members of the dragon's brood.

## Trade

The great wealth of the dragons of Maya is produced by vast armies of slaves who toil in the mines or work the lowland farms. Slavery is the traditional fate that befalls those who incur the displeasure of a powerful dragon and few of those who are captured in battle against the Mayan armies are ever held to ransom. Sarakhan has the largest slave market in the Known World, beings from every land are for sale here for a price.

Arms also fetch a good price in Maya, as vast numbers are purchased to equip the dragons' retinues. Almost any weapon, no matter the quality or workmanship can be sold in Maya, but gilded or ornate examples of the weaponsmith's art fetch an especially high price. Pistols are gaining popularity in some towns and cities in Maya, but the traditional weapons of choice for a dracoscion are the sword and spear with both commanding especially good prices.

Dragons are infamous for their love of gold, but in fact any rare and beautiful item will find a willing buyer in Maya. Hand-painted porcelain from Kamakura, Rukhi filigree and jewellery, Flemish tapestries and embroidery, gentle perfumes and scents from the lands of the Tritoni. Dragons seek out the finest things to surround themselves with and those that deal honestly with them will be paid accordingly. The dragons of Maya mint no coins of their own, preferring instead to deal in a mutually agreed currency.

# MERISUSI

According to the most ancient tales, the Merisusi people were once separate nations that were united after a series of great battles between the two peoples. Today both mokosh and avian can be found throughout the Merisusi lands. Their heritage is still reflected in their peculiar twin monarchy. The Merisusi are ruled by the Sea Wolf King, Heyhund, and the Cormorant Queen, Giersuse.

Both crowns are hereditary and their rule lasts only as long as both endure. When either of the monarchs dies, Heyhund's eldest male heir will ceremonially wed Giersuse's eldest daughter and they will ascend the throne. Polygamy is the norm for wealthy Merisusi of both genders and is essential to ensure the continuation of the royal lines. The avian nobility each swear undying loyalty to the Cormorant Queen and their mokosh counterparts swear to serve the Sea Wolf King.

## FIRST MEETING

Although the Merisusi have a fearsome reputation, their land is one of the most welcoming to strangers of any in the Known World. To the Merisusi the tradition of gestfrihet, the granting of hospitality to those who ask, is a mark of nobility and honour. As a result they will offer food and shelter to any who request it, so long as they depart by morning light. This is well, for much of the Merisusi lands are bitter cold for much of the year and few honest men go abroad in a Merisusi winter storm.

The Merisusi judge a person by their worth as warrior, craftsman or bard. They have little time for traders, the craft of the merchant is considered unfitting for a person of sound mind and body. However, smiths, jewellers, shipwrights and other craftsmen who produce significant work gain great esteem amongst the Merisusi, no matter what their lineage. Those who claim words as their art or can recite the great epics of Merisusi history are treated better still. Merisusi women fight as eagerly as their male counterparts, with the mokosh favouring heavy bladed axes whilst avians prefer the bow.

All of the major Merisusi settlements are ports situated on the edge of their mountainous lands. Each port, even if it is little more than a village on the waterfront, is the seat of a Merisusi noble family and will always include a feasting hall. Feasting is at the heart of Merisusi life and every noble maintains a great hall purely for that purpose. The Merisusi regard it as the highest compliment to be invited to a noble's feast.

## FASHION

There is little discernible difference in dress between avian and mokosh Merisusi. Woollen tunics and leggings, practical boots and warm cloaks are common. These are often decorated with stitching in elegant knot work designs. A mailed shirt or hauberk is considered the sign of a warrior. The long bladed knife, once the preserve of the avian people is now favoured by all and is carried in preference to the axe or the bow when not facing battle. Merisusi nobles wear much the same garments as the members of their war band, though some wear mail of double thickness. Only the helm is considered a fitting garment to decorate, whether hardened leather or beaten metal they are often ornate and sometimes even gilded.

## RELIGION

As a people, the Merisusi are devout and reverential towards all the Gods and their earthly followers. Most Merisusi regard their lifestyle as a reflection of the God's wishes for them and they eagerly seek the opportunity to prove themselves in life and thus earn the right to join the Gods afterwards. Despite this there are few priests amongst their number; the Merisusi see little worth in great ornamented churches or cathedrals. Even in the largest cities few Merisusi require anything more ornamental than a shrine.

The Smith is one of the favoured faiths amongst the Merisusi, but the Huntress also has many devotees here. The Weaver, whom the Merisusi call the Midwife, is also popular. The Merchant does have some followers but He is referred to as the Fisherman, possibly due to the widespread contempt for merchants. The Teacher is poorly regarded in Merisusi and it is unwise to extol the tenets of that faith too publicly here.

## TRADE

The Merisusi are amongst the best shipwrights of the Known World and even the proa, their smallest common ship, is capable of travelling the most dangerous waters in virtually any weather. The larger raptors are arguably the most dangerous sea going vessel produced anywhere. Both require a fabulous price from the merchant looking to acquire an ocean going vessel, in part because of their inherent worth and in part because of the Merisusi contempt for dealing with merchants and middle men.

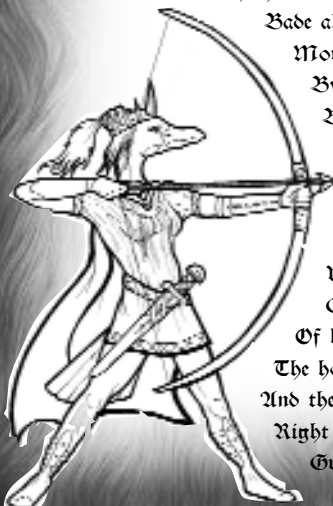
Despite their strong warrior tradition, the Merisusi do not trade much for weapons. Very few mokosh warriors use anything other than the axe, either paired with a shield or a second axe, or else so large that it must be wielded in both hands. Tritoni war bows do sell well in Merisusi ports as do well made mail vests and hauberks. The Merisusi raiding tradition means that they often acquire jewellery, weapons and armour and these can often be bought cheaply. Both men and women are excellent weavers and they produce very strong nets which they use to catch great shoals of fish which are then salted and sold.

Excerpt from the Epic of Gorthor and Erielle · In which Erielle the Cormorant Queen shares gestfrihet, the traditional Merisusi display of hospitality, with Gorthor King of the Sea Wolves, on the eve of the battle that saw their two nations united.

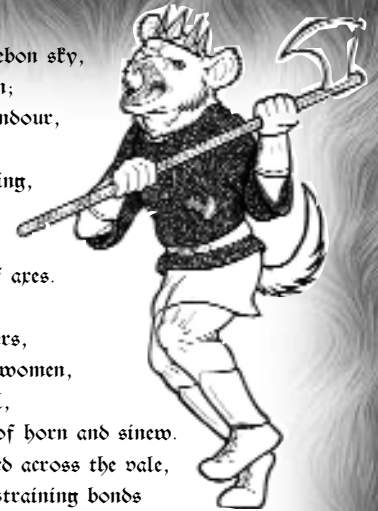
**W**hat day Gorthor called for feasting for the full night;  
 That hours before battle be spent in revelry unbounded.  
 A hundred barrels untapped and full twice as many boats;  
 Were seasoned, spit and roasted in great Gorthor's hall.  
 The raucous power of the Sea Wolves' King rose so loud;  
 That the music of the waves were dimmed though outside;  
 Winds blew foul and cursed men to fall neath their wroth.  
 And Gorthor called out to the gods to demand his enemies;  
 Taste the bounty that their lands had delivered up to his hand.  
 And the gods hearing Gorthor's proud boast answered thus;  
 Bringing the Cormorant Queen and a full hundred maidens;  
 To Gorthor's hall whence their arrival caused terrible commotion.  
 Gorthor's wolves seized axe and spear in hand and turned face;  
 Toward the arrows flight, happy to face death yet never;  
 Scorned to be diminished as men with backs bared to their foe.  
 Eye of bird and bear fiercely smote the Sea Wolves' King;  
 Awaiting only words of death spoken to loosen their slaughter.  
 Rain lashed the feathers of the Queen, yet stood unbending;  
 Though the wind was as strong as from Maelstrom blown.  
 And Gorthor spoke to the twinned war hosts speaking;  
 "Great are the deeds of the Cormorant Queen, many are the foes,  
 that walk no longer the mountains of this land, having thought  
 to face her bows in battle. Welcome then in this hall of feasting,  
 Gestfrihet, to friend and foe who wander this hellish night."  
 Still yet neither axe nor spear was cast down and no maiden;  
 Of the queen lowered a bow, both war hosts biding for an answer.  
 But Erielle answered Gorthor's offer with envenomed scorn;  
 And haught derision crying "Sail, Sea Thief, to the lands;  
 and bounty of the Cormorant Queen. Right are the bards;  
 who warn of the Sea Thief's manners, for he begins my feast;  
 before I am seated. Still, minded am I of the Gods' warning;  
 by those who refuse to host with what has been given to them.  
 So then do I offer you gestfrihet, on this fearful night  
 which seems Maelstrom spawned and likely brings you to my lands."  
 Teeth ground at teeth, alike to the two wheels of a rich miller;  
 Many looked to the fledglings' bows to see which might fly first.  
 But Gorthor looked upon the Cormorant Queen, robed in mail;  
 Cunningly wrought to perfectly embrace her womanly form;  
 And though she was not of his get still he desired of her body.  
 So then he stood, and put aside his throne, taking instead;  
 The place of Morglear, Captain of the Sea Wolves;  
 Who by tradition of his strength was seated rightmost.  
 Erielle winged across the hall, claiming the throne;

Of the Sea Wolves and seating thus  
 Bade all sit around her.

Morglear, determined not to be undone,  
 By his mighty king,  
 Bade the war host move down,  
 The order, that the maidens;  
 Might also share the honour  
 Of the Cormorant Queen.  
 Then at last spear and axe,  
 Were cast aside and bear,  
 Gave room to bird that the feast  
 Of honour be shared  
 The hosts of the Cormorant  
 And the Sea Wolf feasted;  
 Right long into the morning,  
 Greatly pleasing the Gods.



**G**olden sun bleeds into ebon sky,  
 Finding Gorthor's men;  
 Arrayed in battle splendour,  
 And readied for the fight.  
 Dawn's savage touch glimmering,  
 From golden helms,  
 A thousand spear points,  
 Raised aloft amidst a wall of axes.  
 Across the hills broken face,  
 Stood five full wing of archers,  
 The crest lined with men and women,  
 Clad in silvered shirts of mail,  
 Each in hand clutched a bow of horn and sinew.  
 Then dread cry of war is heard across the vale,  
 Sea Wolves unleashed from straining bonds  
 By Gorthor's shout, rage across the hillside, to rend Cormorant flesh.  
 Cormorant bows sing, the arrows fall on Sea Wolf men,  
 Blackened crows with beaks of steel peck at eyes and throat.  
 For grievous cost, Gorthor's warriors claim the middle ground,  
 Only to see the wings take flight seeking ever higher vantage  
 From whence to fire their bows upon brave Gorthor's host.  
 But in the last the peak is gained and Cormorant blood;  
 Now runs down the face, so deep it drowns the valley.  
 Lightning flies from Erielle's bow, striking Morglear  
 Full to the face, white bone smashed by oaken shaft.  
 Gorthor's deadly axe, in size a brother to the Sea Wolf King  
 Descends full swing, cleaving bow and bone in twain.  
 Arm sheared from shoulder the Cormorant Queen staggers  
 But will not fall or flee, by will of Gods she stands still.  
 Gorthor raises axe aloft, strikes the Queen the death blow  
 And roars his conquest, triumphant thunder across the land.  
 Shattered Cormorant spirit, lies dying with their queen;  
 But lo, one Cormorant stands not yet afeared by loss.  
 Aviriel, twice named sister cousin of the fallen queen;  
 Raising fated bow, looses arrow towards the Sea Wolf King.  
 Unerring flies the deadly dart, oak and steel born aloft,  
 To puncture mail and flesh alike, the tailors needle rends  
 the cloth of Gorthor's mighty chest, casts his bowels adrift.  
 Two mighty warriors lie slain, the pride of nations dying;  
 And in loss the Gods themselves are moved to tears,  
 falling from thunderous clouds to wash the hillside clean.  
 Now all eyes are turned to mark, the Valkyrja comes;  
 from skies descended to bloody lands below to claim  
 At last the souls whose place was long set at the final feast.  
 So Cormorant and Sea Wolf were brothers to the witness;  
 Of a pair of maidens each to mark, the twin monarchs slain.  
 Seeing then the Gods measure the honour of each people;  
 And finding never one the greater than the other;  
 They wearied of the battle and left crimson mount behind.  
 In Gorthor's hall that night they feasted well the darkness  
 And drunk as one the triumph of a thousand heroes slain.  
 As the Gods saw fit to cherish them, a pyre of wood was raised  
 King and Queen laid out together, surrounded by their arms,  
 And as lovers bound in battle they were given to the flame.





# Rukh

The Rukhi are an avian people whose plumage is almost as bright and colourful as their clothes. They are a flamboyant people who love to recount fables and legends from their history, or of their own doing where possible. The Rukhi are not dishonest as is sometimes thought, it is merely that an exciting story is more valuable than an accurate one. True love and high adventure make the best stories, but cunning merchants, witty poets and great

swordsmen are common themes.

Most of the land considered to be Rukh is a vast inhospitable desert. Navigating the trackless sands is very difficult and finding sources of food and water even more so. Along the banks of rivers, by the coast and near oases, the barren sand gives way to tall palm trees and the ground is green and full of life. Modern Rukh is really a series of caliphates, vast sprawling cities built on the rivers or the coast and in some cases even on the banks of the larger oases. Some Rukhi still cling to their old lifestyle, travelling the sandy deserts from one oasis to the next, pitching their colourful silk tents each night, but most have abandoned their nomadic existence in favour of the wealth and beauty of the cities.

Agdabar is the seat of the current satrap, Mushtaq na Hib, the splendid seventy first ruler of the Rukhi nation. The line of the satrap is not hereditary, when the satrap dies the caliphs meet to choose his or her successor. In theory the caliphs can pick anyone and Rukhi fables are replete with stories of valiant orphans plucked from obscurity and poverty to become satrap for their wisdom and courage. Although the Rukhi are infamous as adventurers and traders, the caliphs have few military aspirations and usually pick one of their number who promises low taxes and peaceful relations with their neighbours.

## First Meeting

The great winds, that make entering the inlet port of Agdabar impossible at any time except for the hours of dawn and dusk, are caused by the great heat that the deserts soak up during the day and release at night, according to the guides. The fact that it is at these times of day that the city looks most deserving of its title of the 'Bright Jewel of the Desert' is a happy coincidence. We recommend hiring a guide in advance through our local trade house. The fellows that swarm upon those visitors looking a little lost as they disembark upon the dockside are extremely talented at making a living.

It is an old Rukhi tradition to present their finest story of their greatest accomplishment when introducing themselves to someone important for the first time. The Rukhi judge each other not so much by the content of these tall boasts but by the grandeur, panache and eloquence with which they are delivered. Physical aggression is contemptuously regarded as lacking in dignity. Perhaps due to the oppressive heat of the region, it is relatively rare for warriors to be heavily armoured. Instead, they favour more flowing and acrobatic styles of combat, slashing weapons with curved blades are the norm.

Many years ago, in the time of your forefathers, there was a merchant named Hyad who sailed on a tall ship made of silvery wood. In the many years he had been a merchant, he had sailed every sea and met peoples who were considered to be legends amongst his brethren. As a loyal subject of the satrap, but an even more devout follower of the Merchant, he was never one to let an opportunity for honest profit pass him by. One day he was unloading a shipment of figs in the kingdom of Amun-Sa when he was approached by a raggedly dressed man. Because charity is false, he raised his stick to beat the unsavoury fellow. However, the man stood up and said,

"Stranger, I am not here to beg but to trade. What would you ask for a handful of those figs?"

Hyad replied that these were the finest honeyed figs, destined for a banquet at the royal palace, and as such he doubted that such a shabby fellow could even afford one. At this, the strange man reached inside his rags and brought out an unusual treasure. In his hand he held a gold encrusted pearl that was the size of a large grape and covered with gold work of the finest quality. Hyad was at once captivated by the beauty of this pearl. He quickly agreed to give the man an entire basket of figs in exchange for the pearl.

The pearl remained in Hyad's possession for years as he kept looking for a place or a people that might provide him with a worthy price. He sailed to the Kamakura who told him that such a pearl would be best used as a gift to the shogun. He offered it to

the Malathians, but they claimed not to have the gold to buy such a treasure. In Alkyon they offered to dispose of it at auction but he new this to be unwise. Thus, as the years went by, he sailed on and on trading cargo after cargo but nowhere could he sell the pearl. Eventually Hyad realized that he was getting old and so he undertook to take one last journey to the dangerous land of Maya to see if a dragon would be rich enough to afford such a prize.

Now, in those days, the ports of the Maya were even more dangerous than they are today. They were not above impounding passing merchant ships and taking their crews as slaves. Thus, with a trembling foot, Hyad stepped forth from his beloved ship with only his wits and a stout oaken staff to protect him. With chest puffed out he strode confidently into a building bearing the sign of the Merchant. He was greeted by a dracoscion who goaded him for thinking that an empty cargo vessel would contain anything of use to the Mayans.

Hyad explained to the man that his business lay with those who were of sufficient intellect to appreciate it and he could do no business with one so unworthy. Then, leaving the stunned dracoscion, he went to seek lodging in the most expensive dockside tavern. In the tavern, an increasing pile of golden ducatto convinced the innkeeper to offer him his finest room. That evening he ate nothing but the rarest food, and slept in the softest bed, but in the morning he made sure to tell the hotelier that the sheets were rough, the décor was garish and the wine was corked. During his tirade, one of the servants of a great wrym overheard and came to



## Fashion

Folk from Rukh have a more relaxed dress code than many other people. The male avians prefer a loose fitting waistcoat, baggy pantaloons, and clogs or sandals. The only reason for a shirt is if you can acquire one which is more magnificent than your own chest plumage. Long flowing robes are also popular, if they are brightly coloured, or illuminated with gold or silver embroidery. Women adopt a similar style, but sometimes wear a dress or skirt rather than pantaloons and never wear clogs. Turbans and head dresses are common but veils are an eternal Rukhi favourite. Women wear them diaphanous, men less so, but in either case they are felt to convey mystery and allure to the wearer. On overland journeys, it is common to wear encompassing desert robes for protection against the sand and the bitterly cold nights.

## Religion

Every religion is common in Rukh, but the people have a particular love for the Weaver. They have little time for monastic or proselytising priests however; they believe that those who are genuinely devout in the service of the Gods should prove their faith by example. Respect in Rukhi society is acquired through accomplishment or at least the tales of such.

Most caliphs wish their lands to enjoy the favour of the Gods, so every God has at least one temple in all but the smallest of cities. Temples of the Merchant and the Teacher are often favoured by the caliphs, but the Weaver is the most popular faith amongst the common people. If the Church of the Weaver has a single leader, it is undoubtedly Almandra the Veiled Warrior, a near legendary figure who lives in Makhand, the largest port in Rukh. According to common belief, Almandra was the first seafarer to return from the New World and many claim this is but the smallest of Almandra's astonishing accomplishments.

## Trade

In all the Known World there is no better place to buy jewellery. Rukhi craftsmen are acknowledged as the finest gem cutters and it is claimed that the satrap once sent a dozen perfectly gilded lilies to his favourite concubine. When the massive Kandax diamond was discovered in the deep mines of Maya, it was escorted by a pair of warships across the world so that it could be cut by the satrap's own jewellers. The Rukhi adore jewellery and no other people in the world can match their skill with precious metals and gem stones.

Jewellery is not the only thing to buy and sell in Rukh. Spices and intoxicants are popular here and perfumes and scents sell well. Kamakuran silk can fetch its weight in gold leaf, and fine cloth and cured meats are always in demand by the desert tribes. These are best sold to local traders and let them deal with the difficult task of bartering with the tribes and transporting the goods across the harsh sands.

Hospitality and entertainment are a vital part of trade and life in general in Rukh. Poetry, plays and fine stories can be sold for more than the price of a meal, if you can get an audience at a rich merchants public feast. Be warned though, that the streets are filled with wordsmiths who dream of presenting their work to a caliph.

Hyad. Not waiting for the usual diplomatic niceties, Hyad immediately pressed the dracoscion with the question.

"Does your master intend to stay in this flea ridden hovel?"

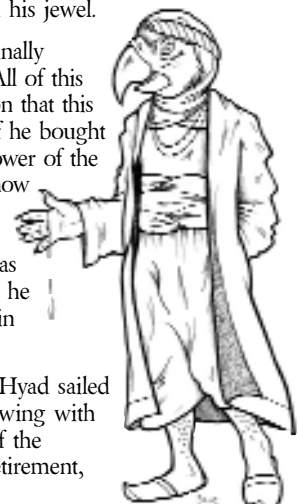
Somewhat stunned, the dracoscion mentioned that this was reputed to be the best inn in town. Allowing no time for further debate, Hyad immediately mentioned that, if the inhabitants of Maya lacked sufficient civilization to recognise a good inn, they stood no chance of appreciating his fine wares and went to leave. On the way to the dock he was approached by another dracoscion who indicated that his master was a great collector of curiosities and antiques and therefore would be most interested in arranging a meeting. Hiding his excitement, Hyad dismissively mentioned that he would come for an evening of civilized entertainment and if the circumstance was right, he would discuss the trade.

That evening, he was escorted to a sumptuous villa; the entertainment and food was unlike anything he had eaten before but to maintain his pretence and his sobriety he ate and drank lightly. Eventually, toward the early hours of the morning, he was summoned into the presence of the dragon. Now, to those of you who have never met a dragon, I can tell you that it is a frightening sight. This fellow was about thirty feet long and glistened with scales the colour of polished topaz. He eyed Hyad up and if he was surprised in any way he did not show it. Hyad began by

apologizing for entering the presence of such a scholastic individual. Curious at this the dragon asked why this was relevant. Hyad replied that those who are of a scholastic mind do not have a need for the purely material and, moreover, to distract such a scholastic mind from the pursuit of the spiritual risked offending the Gods, hence he had decided not to show the dragon his jewel.

After much negotiation, the dragon finally persuaded Hyad to reveal the pearl. All of this recalcitrance had convinced the dragon that this valuable treasure would only be his if he bought quickly. Surely the only reason a follower of the Merchant would be so reluctant to show his wares were if he intended to obtain a better offer from another dragon. Thus, as soon as the pearl was shown in all of its glittering elegance, he immediately offered a king's ransom in golden bars for the jewel.

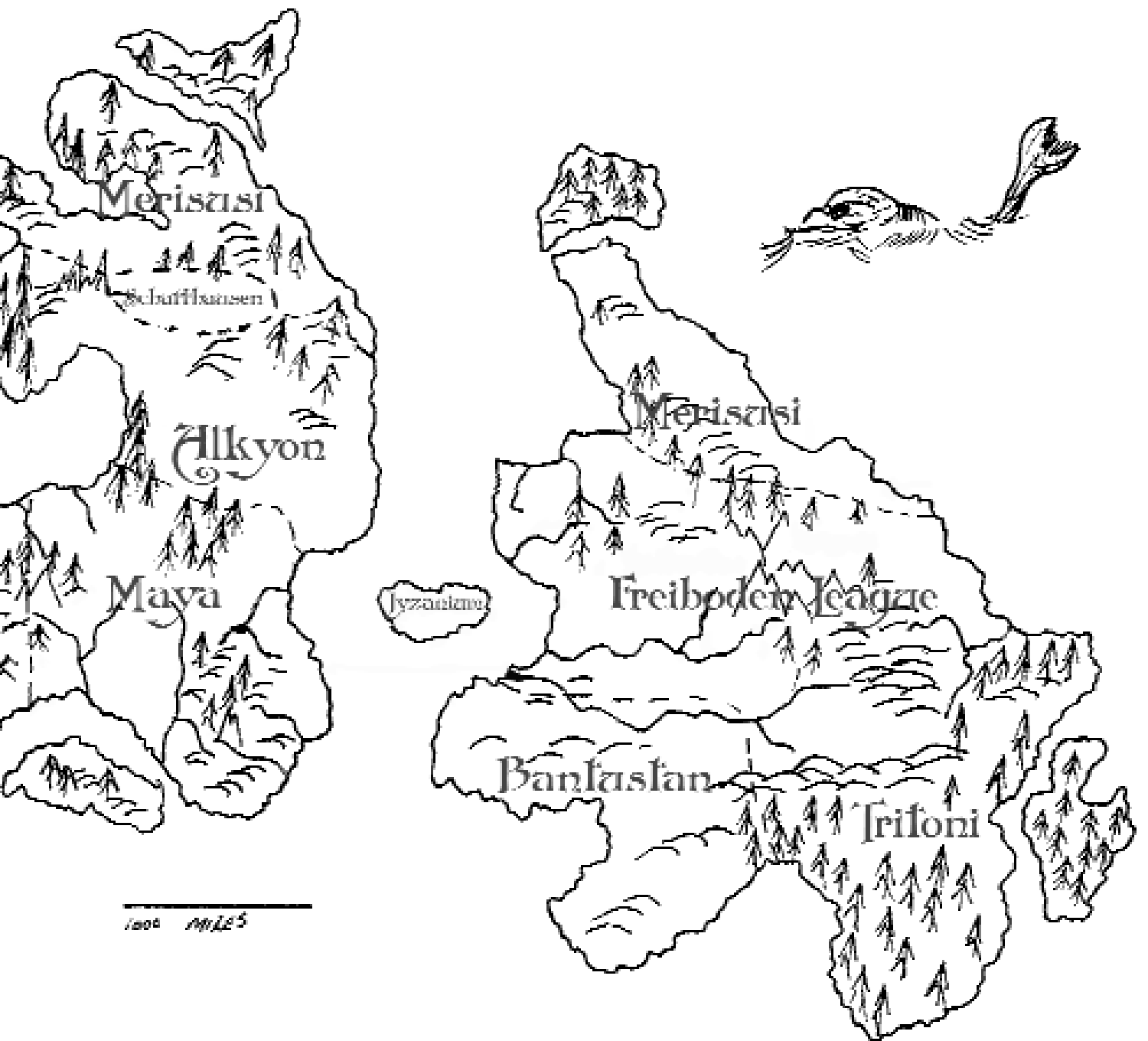
With his final transaction complete, Hyad sailed back to Rukh with his vessel overflowing with gold. He celebrated the generosity of the Merchant by living out a glorious retirement, attended by a thousand harem girls.



RADAUL, RUKHI TRADER

# ATLAS OF THE KNOWN WORLD





# Tritoni

The wemic people occupying the south-east of Murland are known to themselves and others as the Tritoni. The vast jungle they inhabit is less a nation and more of a grand alliance of tribes, not ruled but led by a queen. Many visitors find the Tritoni tradition of leadership strange. Tritoni tribes are exclusively led by females; the male warriors and hunters of a tribe are divided amongst the females in prides.

The more males a female has in her pride, the more status she accrues.

There is little structured government. Instead of a formalised statute of laws, the Tritoni maintain a series of traditional greetings and etiquette that encompass rules to be followed when members of different tribes meet. There are seasonal gatherings of the bajari (tribal leaders) who meet to discuss issues concerning the nation as a whole. The queen oversees this process acting as a figurehead for any decisions made by the tribes.

If you wish to do any significant business with the Tritoni nation as a whole, then attending this meeting is a must. It is only when attending one of these meetings that you realise exactly how close-knit the Tritoni tribes are. You will need to be sponsored by a friendly bajari to be allowed to speak. It is uncommon for folk who are not Tritoni to address the gatherings, but only women are ever permitted to speak.

Day 13 - Dugraf Port, Millen.

*According to legend, the warrior women of the Tritoni queen permit no man who steps foot in their land to leave. I was relieved to discover the truth to be a little less fanciful. I bought passage on the Swift, a small Sacuza proa run by an Alkonian lady captain called Annasta. She was taking iron ingots, arrowheads and spear tips to exchange for furs, dyes and other exotic bounties from the Tritoni forests. Like the Gnolls, the Tritoni mint no coins of their own and Captain Annasta intended to pay for her goods with a combination of barter and Mill-en Florins.*

— Ranulf Tain, "Savage Journeys"

Day 27 - Hanbuya Inlet, Rakah Coast.

*In deference to Captain Annasta's requests I will make little mention of our journey. Suffice to say that after a harrowing trip around the Cape of Broken Souls we dropped anchor in an inlet on the Rakah coast. Captain Annasta, her first mate, three nervous looking guards, and myself then put to shore in a small rowing boat to meet with Kadiya, chief of the Hanbuya tribe.*

*There were a dozen members of the Hanbuya waiting to meet us, sunning themselves on the sandy beach. Several deals were struck in quick succession but when the Captain announced her interest in purchasing two Tritoni war bows, the whole business clearly became more serious.*

*Finally Captain Annasta managed to convince Kadiya to part with two bows, in exchange for what must have been nearly their weight in Mill-en Florins. The two weapons were handed over wrapped in delicate silk skins. With that accomplished, I enquired about passage across the Tritoni lands from our hosts.*

*I shall not repeat all of what occurred then, much of it was very demeaning. It took me a while to convince Kadiya that I was attempting to purchase passage; she seemed determined to misconstrue the negotiations as an attempt by Captain Annasta to sell me to the Hanbuya. When I explained somewhat indignantly that I was not a slave, this produced raucous laughter from the Hanbuya. Apparently Kadiya didn't want to buy a slave from Captain Annasta.*

*Eventually we agreed a price and, somewhat apprehensively, I collected my belongings from the boat and headed inland with the Tritoni.*

— Ranulf Tain, "Savage Journeys"

## First Meeting

Upon first meeting a Tritoni tribe there are several invaluable pieces of advice. Firstly, assess the tribe you are meeting with. Look carefully to see if they have imported or high quality goods. If so they are likely to be familiar with foreigners and you should be able to trade normally. It is entirely possible in these cases that you may find yourself negotiating with a Stellen, one of the males trusted to handle minor negotiations and deals. For important matters you will always find yourself dealing with a prominent woman of the tribe, if not the bajari herself.

If you are negotiating with a tribe from the interior, bear in mind that most are unused to the idea of speaking to a male as a person of authority. In such cases it may be wise to either negotiate through a female in your party or ensure that your chosen negotiator is sufficiently attended with retainers that his social status is obvious. Never under any circumstances should a lone male enter into negotiations with a Tritoni tribe. He will likely fail to impress them, however if he does manage to represent himself well, he is just as likely to find himself captured and inducted into the pride of the bajari or one of her sisters.

## Fashion

The Tritoni prefer wearing furs and leather. Embroidered cloth is seen as an unnecessary imported luxury, since good clothing is made from local hides, and money is reserved for more important purchases. Although jewellery of copper, bronze and silver is common, the Tritoni seem to place little value on the worth of individual pieces. The Tritoni regard themselves as a pragmatic people, and you are unlikely to find bright cloth or showy braiding on anything other than captured garments.

Day 29 - Hanbuya Lands, Rakah Coast

*We are half way through a long journey by foot to the home of the Hanbuya tribe. The Tritoni are famous for the savage fury of their amazons in battle, so I was surprised to discover that their men folk also fight. Indeed, much of the labour of hunting which fills their time is done by the men, with the women overseeing the hunt and directing their males, rather than taking part.*

*As chief of the tribe, Kadiya keeps seven males. I have struck up a friendship with Kal, the youngest, and managed to convince him to tell me a little about the Hanbuya. He explained that Kadiya was in her prime as chief of the Hanbuya and since her hunting was going well she was looking to acquire another male for her pride. Being part of Kadiya's pride was definitely a position of considerable worth as far as Kal was concerned. On more than one occasion he tried to explain to me how foolish I had been to stop Captain Amasta selling me to his chief.*

— Ranulf Tain, "Savage Journeys"

## RELIGION

The most common devotion amongst the Tritoni is the Huntress who they call Bubastis. Tritoni settlements consist of large clearings dotted with the small wooden huts where they spend their time when not out hunting. The hut of the tribal shaman will also serve as a shrine where the warriors and hunters go to make their devotions.

Other beliefs are tolerated by most Tritoni, although it is unwise to preach too openly. Most Tritoni regard faiths other than that of Bubastis as lesser beliefs. Although they do not take offence, it is still unwise to press the issue without invitation. It is possible to find members of other faiths amongst the Tritoni. After Bubastis, the Weaver is the most popular faith, but there are few Tritoni who revere the Smith or the Merchant.

The Orkhon is the shaman to the queen, and is effectively the highest ranking priestess of Bubastis in the land. She wields considerable influence outside Tritoni lands, as well as within them and few would dispute her claim to speak for the Huntress.

## Trade

The Tritoni have no currency as such, but they will trade in coins with a high gold or silver content. Barter can often be the easiest form of trade, although most tribes will accept the Freiboden Florin. It is unheard of for a Tritoni tribe to accept a Rimici Capell letter of credit under any circumstance, apparently they do not consider that that Trading House can be relied upon to make good their promises.

The Tritoni produce fine furs, rare silks, dyes and other exotic bounties from their lush forest habitats. However what they are famous for is producing superbly well crafted bows. These elegant weapons are much sought after throughout the Known World. Tritoni archers using these weapons have proved themselves a match for the ranks of the Freiboden Pietkrieg armed with muskets on more than one occasion. The traditional Tritoni war bow is crafted for a specific warrior, the poundage is adjusted to exactly

match her draw strength. But fierce demand (particularly from the Kamakura) has created a spate of cheaper imitations.

Iron for making hunting knives and arrow points sells well to every tribe and most metal worked goods fetch a good price. The Tritoni people do not practice any form of slavery, most regard the practice as beneath contempt. They see little worth in individuals who do not hunt and provide for themselves, only the young, the crippled or the old do not hunt for themselves in a Tritoni tribe.



KAL, HANBUYA WARRIOR

Day 31 - Hanbuya Bohio, Rakah Coast

*Today we finally arrived at their Bohio, a massive clearing in the forest, where the trees had been felled and the land cleared to form an open plaza. The Tritoni live in large, round, wooden houses constructed on the open ground with dozens of extraordinarily lifelike statues scattered between them. In the evening one of Kadiya's males prepared a meal, some kind of heavily-spiced meat broth and I was allowed to eat with her and the pride. Once dark fell, we were all evicted from the hut so that the women could enter and discuss Hanbuya business.*

*We used this opportunity to gather round the central fireplace. Here the men told stories, sang, danced and drank until they were called to a woman's hut. I was boisterously welcomed into this community with a skin of fierce liquor they called Yaya, apparently anyone who can drink a mouthful without choking is old enough to be called a man and to join the other men in celebration around the fire. From them I was able to learn much about the Tritoni way of life.*

*When hunting, a female Tritoni takes only her males with her. She will lead them for days with the males checking out trails and spoor. Those trusted to give accurate reports from such forays are particularly prized. When they locate prey, the pride will fan out and use their bows and spears to bring the game down. Usually the kill is left to the males, but on ceremonial and religious occasions the female will assault the prey individually with spear, her males ensuring only that the prey cannot escape. Apparently similar tactics are used in warfare, the bajari directing the females who then lead their males into battle.*

— Ranulf Tain, "Savage Journeys"

# Minor Nations

## Free Islands

The Free Islands are one of the most mysterious and dangerous places to travel to in the entire Known World. Located at the very edge of the Maelstrom, the close proximity of those swirling energies combine with dangerous uncharted reefs and currents to make this archipelago remaining beyond the reach of civilization. According to legend, the Free Islands are the home of pirates and brigands, murderers and monsters, and little else.

The truth is little better than the legends. Every malcontent, heretic and fugitive from justice eventually seems to end up in the Free Islands. You will find all races here, including dracoscions and even dragons. The Free Islands are home to many infamous individuals such as Wugh the Gnoll Pirate, who is said to nail enemies to the front of his vessel, or Viktor the Bearded, a Malathian heretic who is rumoured to burn those whom he claims are cursed by the Gods. Beneath these unlikely tales of unlikeable individuals is a string of islands inhabited by people seeking to make an honest living in a land of their own.

When sailing to the Free Islands it is imperative to take someone who has gone before, to act as a local guide. Travel to a well-known port such as Blind Cove or Midden Point, and then seek further maps and a pilot who knows the waters. Just attempting to sail into the first friendly-looking port and unloading a cargo is asking for trouble. People who have been forced to live in such a perilous location do not do so because they like the view. Some ports have something which resembles an authority; they may even go so far as to have laws. The wise merchant or traveller is advised not to place their trust in such; force of arms remains the best source of legitimacy in the Free Islands.

There are so many diverse peoples living in the Free Islands that every cut of garment, from the heavy Merisusi furs and leathers to the flowing Ruhki pantaloons and the Flembic frockcoat, are to be found here. People wear what they can obtain, and fashions are as likely driven by the latest cargo to find its way to an island as to any individual taste. Weapons are carried openly in most settlements, although this has very little to do with fashion.

Most people keep their beliefs to themselves in these parts and the nature of the land does little to endorse an honest or pious life. Nonetheless the Weaver is well thought of by a few in the Free Islands, and on occasion Her symbol can be enough to get you a bed and a meal. What the Free Islands does have is freedom, it is a haven for those with

unusual beliefs. The only persecution you are likely to suffer is from thieves and muggers and they care for a man's belongings not his soul. As a result, there are several small groups with passionately held beliefs and distinctive doctrines based in the Free Islands.

If you trade here you will find that the locals are willing to pay well for most basic products. Many fine things can be bought in the Free Islands, Ruhki jewellery, Malathian ships, Flembic embroidered silks, gold and silver plates from Amun-Sa and slaves of every ilk. Merchants are advised to exercise extreme caution when disposing of items purchased here. There is a reason why everything here is cheap and it usually has something to do with the dubious tales that accompany the sale. There are no rules for successful trade in the Free Islands. Entire settlements can disappear overnight, looted and razed by slavers. Nowhere in the Known World is the opportunity for profit so high and the risk of loss so close.

## Wanted

For acts of piracy on the high seas, conspiracy to commit piracy, kidnapping, murder and theft. The sailor known as Captain Red James.



For his capture the Reward of 50 Freiboden Florins has been posted by the Raddock Bay Trading House. Let all who pursue this sailor know that he is disowned by every nation of the Known World and has neither ally nor port of favour. He was last seen in the Free Islands commanding a modified ketch known as the Red Harpoon. The return of this ship will warrant an additional reward of 300 Freiboden Florins.

# Gerosos

Gerosos is a confederation of cities who have only recently come together as one nation. The wemic city, Froki, the human city, Lirin, and the mokosh city, Podes, are each large and strong, and dominate wide tracts of land in Gerosos. A new free city, funded equally by the three as the residence of the Magister of Gerosos, is currently under construction in the centre of what is now considered Gerosos. The land around the cities is mainly arable, though there are mines in the hills.

In former times each of the three cities maintained their own armies, supported by mercenaries and aid from allies in times of need. Nestled between Flambard and Amun-Sa, all three cities have repulsed attacks from both nations, due in no small part to the skill and daring of their generals. Gerosan soldiers are well disciplined and capable of executing the complex manoeuvres demanded by their commanders. Until recently progress in science and knowledge has been focussed on weapons of war, and each city has sponsored one or more academies to such research. The newly appointed Magister has made it clear that Gerosos must widen its interests if it is to survive, and has established a powerful Commission on Knowledge which has wide reaching powers to co-opt individuals, research and materials in accordance with a rumoured grand plan.

The discovery of the New World has done much to improve the situation in Gerosos. Spare resources are far too focused on the construction of their new city to support involvement in the new land. However, the opportunities presented have shifted the attentions of powerful neighbours elsewhere. As the new city nears completion it remains to be seen if the Gerosos will begin to look beyond its borders as her rivals have done.

# Lyzanium

Lyzanium was the centre of the once great empire of Renius that has long since passed its heyday. Today Lyzanium controls only the island that the city is built on, and with few resources to directly oppose more powerful neighbours it keeps as neutral as it can. The island is in the Sharamoor Sea, half way between Sentoris and Murland. This strategic position gives Lyzanium great importance in the control of shipping and trade between the two continents. It also gives Lyzanium a cosmopolitan population; the city is home to avians, mokosh, wemics and humans in equal numbers.

The survival of Lyzanium as an independent state is perpetuated by the agility of its politicians and diplomats. Whilst most of the surrounding nations would love to conquer the island and seize its harbours, none can tolerate the thought of the island falling to another. Skillful persuasion has meant that Mayan and Gnoll fleets that have set sail for Lyzanium have found their way blocked by Alkonian, Freiboden or Merisusi vessels. Lyzanium is a haven for trade with low taxes which has also helped them gather support from the trade houses.

Decades ago, Lyzanium was a bastion of learned philosophical thought. The only inheritance that remains of that era is the majestic architecture. A city of spires, towers and domes dominating the sky line over its grand ancient walls, its people prize drama, theatre, music and poetry. The mines that once made the island wealthy are long since played out, and the state no longer possesses the means to support great expeditions or found new colonies. The only silver left in Lyzanium is on their tongues.

# Schaffhausen

Schaffhausen is a small nation of avians in the mountains between Merisusi and Alkyon. It has been conjectured that the Ascendancy of Schaffhausen had its origins as a mining town in the long vanished empire of Renius. If so, it is possible that its mountainous location allowed its survival after that empire collapsed. Schaffhausen is made up of three districts, or cantons: Unterwalden, Nidwalden and Obwalden. The Ascendancy is geographically small and militarily weak, but it makes up for its shortcomings with wealth. The mines of the Unterwalden canton have remained productive for over fifteen centuries.

That the Ascendancy has maintained its stability for so long is due to an ingrained respect for age which often seems bizarre to outsiders. Schaffhausen is governed by a council of elders known as the Diet of Obwalden which is comprised of any resident of Schaffhausen in good standing who has reached the venerable age of eighty-eight. When the Diet is in session (from just after noon until just before sunset every other day) the balconies of this ancient building are occupied by the red-robed councillors of the Diet, all seated in precise order of age ascending to the narrow top balcony which is the preserve of the eldest, known to the outside world as the "Ascendant of Schaffhausen." The current Ascendant is the 109 year old Arnhest Winkelreid who has held the office for two years and four months at the time of writing.

Schaffhausen pays its armies of foreign workers and mercenaries well, and even the slaves who work in the very depths of the mines are comparatively well treated: with age comes wisdom and the Diet knows that it cannot allow serious unrest to develop in the Unterwalden. It is rare for agitators to emerge and still rarer for them to escape the attention of certain departments in the Nidwaldenrung for long. The Diet has also long been aware of the covetous glances of certain of its neighbouring states – the next few years will see the completion of the massive fortifications begun during the four year rule of the 31st Ascendant some fifty years ago.

The importance of longevity in the Ascendancy has resulted in a culture which is regarded by others as being risk averse. They appear to take interest only in matters that directly pertain to the stability and security of the Ascendancy. In truth the people of Schaffhausen are cautious and meticulous, the benefits of a gerontocracy which are denied to those nations ruled by kings and queens seeking to build reputations and empires.

# The True Faiths

There are five faiths that are accepted by civilized beings in all lands. In former times, primitive and superstitious beings worshipped idols and spirits that they believed to be Gods, but in these enlightened times such practices are abandoned and forgotten. Even today, heresies are not unknown, there are zealous priests that have sought to deny the validity of the other faiths, there are hermits and fanatics who claim to be prophets of some unknown faith and there are even those who deny all faith. The majority of civilised people accept the truth faiths and many are pious enough to become devotees of the Gods that give them succour.

In some lands the Gods are known by different names. The Huntress is called Bubastis by the Tritoni, while the priests of Amun·Sa know the Smith as the Soldier. Some educated philosophers believe that the names by which we know the Gods are mortal labels given to convey the practices and beliefs demanded by the God, rather than the Gods true name. That the Gods are the same, but known by different names, has been established beyond doubt by several notable incidents, the most famous nearly two centuries after it occurred, remains the Dupraid Heresy, when the high priest of the Soldier in Amun·Sa successfully excommunicated seven priests of the Smith in Flambard.

As a result, each of the five faiths now has a single church, based in temples and cathedrals across the Known World. The congregations of the Smith, the Teacher and the Merchant, tend to reflect their Gods' desires for discipline and order. The high priest of the faith is often involved in appointing priests to positions in other lands and funds are held by the church to raise cathedrals and temples in foreign lands. The Huntress and the Weaver have less organized churches and some independence from the will of more senior priests in other lands is common.

Though the five faiths disagree on many things, they all agree which days are sacred. The summer and winter solstice and the spring and autumn equinox have always been kept as holy days by many folk in



many lands. There are many more accounts of miracles on these days than at any other times, and the appearance of eidolons bearing messages and blessings from the Gods usually takes place on one or more of these four days. It is common for priests of every faith to bring the faithful from many lands together on these days and it is considered impious and ungodly to engage in violence or warfare at such times.

No mortal being can hear the voice of a God and live, so the Gods created their servants, the eidolons to bring their words and their blessings to us. They are known by different names in different lands, such as angels, celestials, cherub, seraph and valkyrja. These immortal beings have served the Gods since time began. Some however have chosen to refuse the will of the Gods and have turned to their own selfish ends. Like the loyal eidolons, these foul beings are known by many names, daeva, demon, devil, putana and tokoloshe. They seek mortal souls to carry off to hell and herald from the New World. Despite superstition they cannot claim your soul unless you talk to them.

Gmil, SERVANT OF THE TEACHER

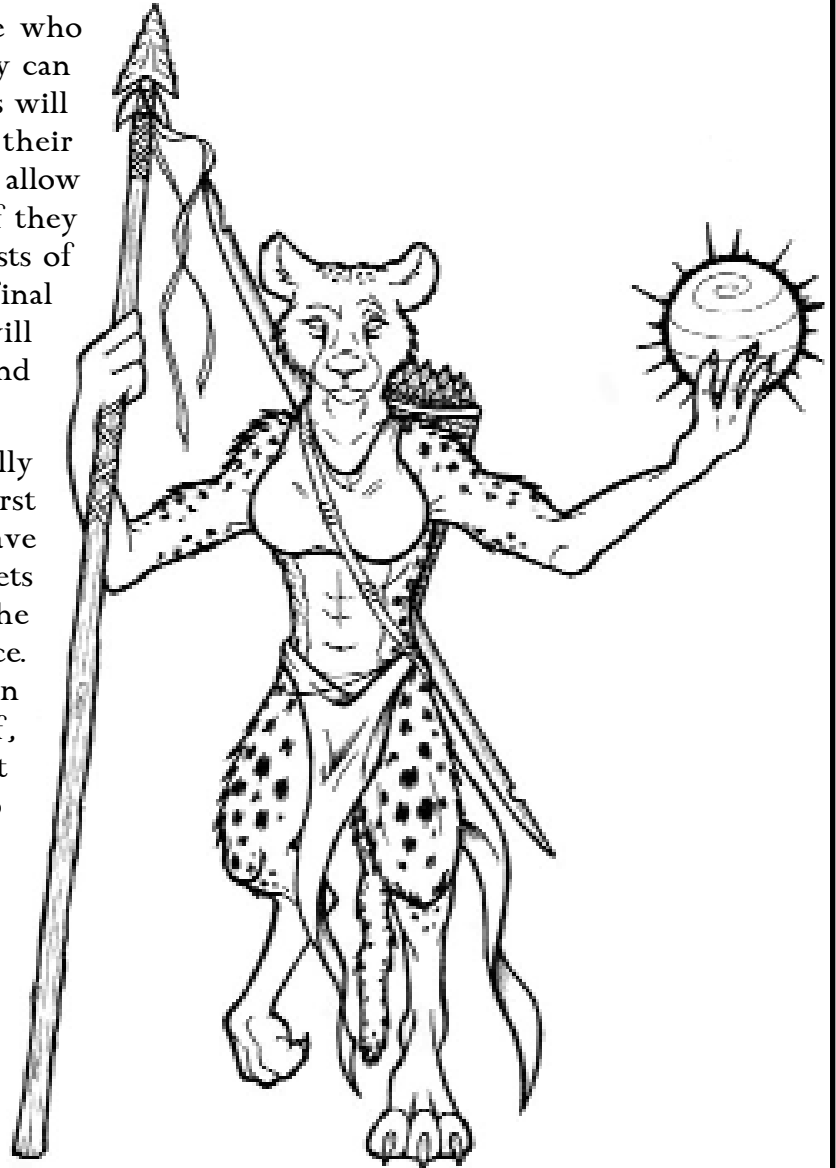


# The huntress

The Huntress is the goddess of justice and vengeance; She sends aid to all those who have been truly wronged so that they can seek justice. Followers of the Huntress will support the judicial systems of their homeland, but the devout will not allow themselves to be constrained by laws if they can no longer deliver justice. The priests of the Huntress teach that when the final injustice has been avenged, She will descend from heaven to the world and injustice will be banished forever.

The followers of the Huntress usually fall into three categories. The first wander the land seeking those who have been wronged, teaching them Her tenets and trying to help them find the strength of purpose to claim justice. Others might settle where corruption and injustice has established itself, hoping to build a following amongst the populace that is strong enough to overthrow the tyranny. On rare occasions, some priests of the Huntress accept a position as part of the established order, providing leadership or acting as judges in disputes and conflicts.

Worship of the Huntress is strongest amongst the Tritoni, who refer to Her as Bubastis, and Her church is based there. Lira Kayan is the Orkhon of Bubastis amongst the Tritoni and accepted as high priestess of the Huntress by most devotees in other lands. Her Church is one of the less organized; belief in the Huntress tends to be a very personal thing. Personal it may be, but it is always passionate, and more zealous than many. The Church of the Huntress may not have the standing armies or great wealth of other faiths but only a few have ever dared to refuse the Orkhon passage to pursue quarry in their lands.



LIRA KAYAN, ORKHON OF BUBASTIS

## The commandments of the huntress

All living beings have the right to justice.

The desire for vengeance is the heart of a just society.

An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life.

Take neither one hair more nor one hair less than is your just entitlement.

Mercy is neither kind nor just. A sin that goes unpunished is an injustice that can never be set right.

# The Merchant

The Merchant teaches His followers the value of aspiration and hard work. It is a common misapprehension that they prize wealth. In actuality, His followers value success in all fields of endeavour. The Merchant is often portrayed as a tiny bird carrying a vast branch with which to make a nest. It is however true that many of the followers of the Merchant are merchants, traders or craftsmen. The devotees of the Merchant know that hardship is the price that must be paid to justify the trappings of success without guilt. Those who have faced hardship, and been defeated by it, do not deserve to reap the benefits of the success that has eluded them. The priests of the Merchant believe that if everyone strives to accomplish everything they are capable of then all hardship and evil will be banished from the world; while if everyone ceases to work and strive, then the world will fall into idleness and ruin.



HAI LORORE, PRIEST OF THE MERCHANT IN ANXIN-SA

the vast resources of the Church throughout Alkyon at his disposal, he is one of the wealthiest people alive. In recent years, worship of the Merchant has increased dramatically in Freiboden and there are suggestions that the faithful in Alkyon may have had an involvement in events there.

While there are few followers amongst the poor and impoverished there are even less amongst those born to power and wealth. It is almost a truism, however, that wherever you find ambitious and hard-working individuals you find followers of the Merchant. Some soldiers follow the Merchant, and His priests tell stories of children born as slaves who earned their manumission by following His teachings. Churches to the Merchant usually own land, or concessions from which they draw their wealth, and such holdings are always worked hard. If some followers are ostentatious with their wealth, building great houses and other monuments to their success, it is because the trappings of success must be celebrated openly so that they can inspire others and not be preserved to pass on to heirs.

Perhaps unsurprisingly the centre of worship of the Merchant is in Alkyon. Almost every volery contains a shrine to the Merchant. Khalid Mhaines is the High Preceptor of the faith and, with

## The Commandments of the Merchant

Work hard and accomplish everything you are capable of.

Do not steal or cheat, the right to achievement cannot be taken from another.

Charity is false. The right to achievement cannot be given to another.

Celebrate success that has been hard won.

Disdain success that has not been earned by honest toil.

# The Smith

Followers of the Smith believe that service to the community is the highest good. They urge everyone to set aside their own personal agendas and feelings, and strive to work for the common good. His priests state that to come together to form communities is the destiny of all thinking beings, and His followers are pledged to strengthen and defend the village, town or city in which they live. The anvil and the hearth are symbols of the Smith, but so also are the sword and shield, in many temples He is often depicted in His aspect as the Soldier. Followers of the Smith include builders, carpenters and architects in addition to smiths and soldiers. The pious believe that when a community is not under threat, His followers must spend their time improving the community so that it grows stronger. They must, however, be vigilant, for threats to the community must be dealt with as quickly as possible.

According to the ancient scripture of the Smith, eventually one community will develop to the point where all members give unstintingly to it. This land will be so strong that it will conquer all others, at which point it will conquer heaven itself. Followers of the Smith tend to be static although the Church encourages its lower ranking members to travel widely, to see how things are done in other societies, so that these lessons can be applied to the home community. Priests of the Smith are trusted members of the community, although astute leaders know that their loyalty is to the community as a whole and not to the dynastic rulers who lead them. Several rulers have come to face the wrath of the priesthood of the Smith by ineptly managing their communities.

Worship of the Smith is strong in every land that maintains an army of any kind, but it is particularly powerful in Amun'Sa where the priesthood lead the mameluks: an army of elite warriors raised as slave soldiers from childhood. Nhairtoun is the leader of the mameluks and the priests of the Smith, who they call the Soldier in Amun'Sa. He does not possess the temporal power of the

Hierophant of Fidelia, being loyal to the king of Amun'Sa, but he is still exceptionally powerful and devotees of the Smith in other lands acknowledge his pre-eminence.



RALK, GNOLL IPIN OF THE SMITH

## The Commandments of the Smith

The community is greater than any individual, strive to increase its strength.

Threats against the community must be faced and eliminated.

It is the will of the Smith that the strongest communities conquer the weakest.

The weak destroy what they could control; the strong expropriate what they cannot conquer.

# The Teacher

Followers of the Teacher claim that the purpose of life is to seek worldly perfection by pursuing an orderly, scholastic life. Central to their entire belief is the goal to make the world a more ordered and civilized place. Those who strive to accomplish this are placed highly in the Teacher's court when they join Him in the afterlife. Followers of the Teacher tend to be scholars, philosophers, teachers, lawmakers, even soldiers. The Teacher gave the gift of writing to the peoples of the earth and in many shrines He is depicted as a white robed scholar with a scroll. With writing comes law and learning; the two things that separate the civilized from the barbarian. A scroll with a quill and the sun are often symbols used to denote the Teacher.

Followers of the Teacher believe that once a perfect harmony of order is established on the earth then the world will become one with the heavens. The devoted either try to determine the natural laws that govern the world or more often seek to write and impose the laws that bring order to the cities and kingdoms of the world. The Church of the Teacher is extremely active in the New World. They have used their influence to encourage the foundation of colonies in the New World to convert the heathens. The more scholastic branches of the religion are convinced that understanding the new continent will be vital to understanding the laws of nature.

The Church of the Teacher is the most organized and arguably the most powerful church in the Known World. Fidelia is the undisputed centre of worship of the Teacher and many devotees make a pilgrimage here at some point in their life. The Hierophant rules Fidelia as well as acting as the head of the Church. The Yugorskian paladins supported by hordes of wild Fidelian tribesmen serve the will of the Hierophant helping to maintain order in Fidelia and abroad.



ELA MAKAI,  
PRIESTESS OF THE TEACHER IN KAMAKURA

## The Commandments of the Teacher

Leave the world a more ordered place on your last day, than it was on your first.

Seek to perfect and uphold the written law.

Use reasoning and learning to enlighten yourself and others.

Do not let personal feelings cloud your judgement.

To doubt your judgement is to doubt the worth of the law you judge by and the learning you judge with.

# The Weaver

The Weaver teaches the value of thought, planning and imaginative thinking. Although Her followers prize philosophy, poetry and art they hold that the highest application of imaginative forethought is in solving the problems that face individuals and communities. The loom is a common symbol of the Weaver but in some lands She is also called the Midwife and sometimes the Lover. Whilst artists, poets and playwrights worship the Weaver, Her followers are drawn from every aspect of life. Anyone who tries to find imaginative solutions to the problems they face is likely to pay at least lip service to Her. Her devotees believe that there are no problems that cannot be solved, merely solutions that have not yet been discovered.

The Weaver promises Her followers that eventually all the problems of the world will be resolved. Many followers are wanderers, challenging themselves to find fresh ways to do things each day. Their disdain for tradition and custom can make them unpopular in more parochial areas. However there are dozens of artists, poets and sculptors in towns and cities who acknowledge no law but the words of the Lover. The refusal of the priests of the Weaver to acknowledge the primacy of the law has led to them being banned in some areas, but just as often you find devotees acting as advisers to powerful lords, generals and wealthy merchants. The refusal to accept that any situation is irretrievable can make the devoted almost as useful as they can be infuriating.

Worship of the Weaver is common place in every land but there are few organized churches in many parts. Of all people the Rukhi keep Her tenets closest to their hearts and it is here that Her worship is strongest. Makhand, the largest Rukhi port, contains the Marble Eye, a massive, domed temple built of white stone, to venerate the Weaver. What leadership the Rukhi exert over the Church emerges from here, under the aegis of a near legendary figure called Almandra the Veiled Warrior.



ARAX, MERISUSI PRIEST OF THE MIDWIFE

## The Commandments of the Weaver

Chains bind the body, laws bind the mind, nothing contains the imagination.

Insight cuts deeper and easier than a knife.

Do not strive to accomplish something you can achieve with a moments thought.

Custom and tradition are the refuge of the fool.

Respect is earned through accomplishment, it does not accrue from longevity and impending dotage.

# TRADING HOUSES

There are some who claim that if the great powers of the Known World were able to trust each other, they might trade freely amongst themselves. Be that as it may, after centuries of conflict and wars there are now few prepared to trust a merchant who openly flies the flag of another land. As a result, the independent trading houses have grown in prominence. Honest in their dealings with all men, yet beholden to none, they handle all the trade that crosses borders and travels the open seas.

In theory, there are more than five trading houses; every land contains a proliferation of small independent establishments too numerous to mention here. But there are only five houses that have offices in every land and which are capable of handling cargo of any size or value. It is these five venerable institutions that folk commonly think of when they talk about the trading houses. Such is the common picture.

The astute merchant knows the truth, that whilst the five trading houses will all willingly handle any cargo they can see a profit in, each has inevitably developed its own area of expertise. In some cases this has been to the detriment of their ability to provide the very highest quality of service in other areas of their business.

All five of the major trading houses operate on a structure similar to the Alkonian volery. They are run by an archon, but this individual does not own the trading house in any real sense. Rather they are offered the position of leadership by the senior members of the house. These advisers are often older members who have made their fortunes and, having accumulated sufficient monies that they no longer need to work, they invest their wealth in the house. Thus the good and profitable running of the house is in their best interests. This is why they are trusted to select the archon. Most archons receive advice and assistance from the house advisers and will report regularly to them on progress and profits. It is rare but not unknown for an archon to be removed if disastrous investments have been made.

Each trading house has individual operations in every land, based around their offices and warehouses, that are usually kept together where possible. In some lands a trading house will maintain offices in every major town and city, in others they will restrict their offices to the nation's capital. Under normal circumstances, any member of the nation who meets the criteria set by an individual trading house may join. If they are successful in their application they will usually take up a position at the nearest office as most members prefer to remain in their own lands. Some though will take advantage of the opportunities for profit offered by the trading house and will take up residence with the house's operations in another land, where local customs make this possible. The archon will appoint a head for the operations in each land, who then appoints people to run the operations in individual towns and cities.

Exact rates vary between trading houses, but most tax their members one fifth of their profit on each deal conducted. This fifth is often viewed with contempt by those who choose not to join a house, but in practice it pays for the many benefits that members experience and the profits of house members are invariably superior to local craftsmen plying the same trade. Access to foreign trade alone provides better profits than most craftsmen operating locally can achieve. The support, preferential loans and protection offered by the backing of a major trading house is also significant. Precise tax rates vary as archons often impose discretionary rates on activities where the house is seeking to expand their operations.



WYRSIX, ARCHON OF MALIRIKA,  
INDEPENDENT TRADING HOUSE

# Raddock Bay

Of the five trading houses this is the largest and the most successful, due in no small part to its hard work and determination to provide every customer in every land with the finest quality goods at the lowest possible prices. Raddock Bay uses only the very fastest Alkonian sailing vessels to transport cargo, which means far fewer losses to pirates than many other trading houses suffer. This ensures that they are able to undercut their competition. Alone amongst the five trading houses, Raddock Bay has been able to avoid specialising in one area of business, developing pre-eminence and excellence in every field of endeavour.

The swift ships of the trading house mean that they are able to move cargoes of slaves across the waters with less wastage from disease than all the other houses experience. As a result of this they are able to offer the very finest quality of slaves at prices that other trading houses have always found impossible to match. Raddock Bay are able to procure slaves of any age and any race that are always in the very best of health.

The Raddock Bay trading house has continued to provide backing for academic works, supporting universities in many lands including Freiboden and Alkyon. This commitment to working with the finest minds of our generation has ensured that the house is always up-to-date with the very latest developments in every field of endeavour. Raddock Bay was one of the first houses to supply darkpowder weaponry and the powder the house supplies is always provided in stamped and sealed drums to guarantee the quality of its contents.

Raddock Bay maintain offices in every land but keeps a central office in Bedorfin in Alkyon. The archon of the Raddock Bay trading house, is a young avian who is famous for his wit and panache as well as his shrewd acumen. Under his astute leadership, Raddock Bay have continued to react swiftly to the latest developments, being one of the first trading houses to realise the potential for exploitation presented by the New World.



**SURAT, RADDOCK BAY ARCHON**

## Bakhana

The Gnoll people are not noted for their skills as traders and negotiators so the presence of a trading house within their lands often comes as a surprise to many. However, the Bakhana tendency to become involved in most ongoing conflicts with little apparent concern for any appearance of neutrality may make this less surprising. The fact that many of their members are Gnolls and that they have a huge standing contract with the Supreme Chieftain of the Gnolls explains their unusual choice of location.

Bakhana maintains a vast standing force of mercenary soldiers which they make available to the highest bidder during conflicts. Although there are no substantiated accounts of Bakhana forces turning their coats during a battle it may well have happened at some time. There are even some suggestions that the house might be implicated in helping to start such conflicts, although they have always firmly rebutted such allegations. The house also provide military training and equipment for the standing armies of several nations.



DAGG, BAKHANA MERCENARY

## Greenfield Shores

Greenfield Shores is primarily located in Alkyon where their archon divides his time between running the house and involvement in Alkonian politics. There was even a suggestion that the archon might attempt to become the next Plutarch although these were firmly denied by the house. Possibly due to this strong involvement in Alkonian affairs of state they were one of the last trading houses to send representatives to the New World.

In theory Greenfield Shores can provide almost any service; but in practice, they have tended to specialize in low risk areas that other trading houses consider too minor to bother with. They do run many excellent taverns and roadside inns as well as providing fine food, livestock, exotic fruit, fortified wines and the like to countless more prestigious establishments. As greengrocers, the reputation of Greenfield Shores is unmatched.

As part of their particular field of expertise, Greenfield Shores have extensive supplies of many intoxicating and addictive substances. Any suggestion that some of these goods are bound for lands where they are not legal has always been flatly denied by the house.



## Rimici Capell

The Rimici Capell trading house is based in Flambard, where they enjoy excellent connections with the nobility of that land. Although they have attempted to provide a full trading house service for their clients, their small fleet and lack of larger cargo vessels has led them to focus on banking and money handling. Traditionally, they have been seen as pre-eminent in this sphere and attempts by other trading houses to issue their own letters of credit have enjoyed few successes.

In recent years, however, the trading house has suffered a number of pressing problems. Events in Freiboden where they were implicated in tacit support for the royalists have forced them to close several offices there. Furthermore, the previous Hierophant of Fidelia declared their letters of credit to be against the will of the Teacher. It is not yet clear how much impact these setbacks have had on their ability to provide for their clients' wishes.

In addition to banking facilities and issuing letters of credit, Rimici Capell also provide loans, money changing facilities and insurance for shipping.

## Sacuzza

The Sacuzza are based in Nordon in Malathia, where they own nearly a third of the shipyards in that great port. From here they produce many of the swift and sturdy ocean-going vessels that the house has come to be associated with. They supply ships of every construction to any who will purchase them, a habit which has raised many questions when pirate vessels of the finest Malathian and Merisusi manufacture have attacked innocent trading ships. Although the Sacuzza trading house deny any involvement with pirates, their choice of home and inability to explain where else the pirates obtain their vessels from means that intelligent men have their suspicions.

In addition to buying and selling ships, the Sacuzza move passengers and cargo for those willing to pay their fees. They also maintain shipyards and dry dock facilities to repair ships damaged at sea. Despite the massive investments required to keep such places open, Sacuzza insist that they are still able to provide the complete range of services expected of one of the trading houses.



ANALIS PHIRASH,  
HEAD OF SACUZZA OPERATIONS IN MAJA

In addition to banking facilities and issuing letters of credit, Rimici Capell also provide loans, money changing facilities and insurance for shipping.

# APPENDICES

## Appendix A - Currencies

### Alkonian Ducatto

The Ducatto is minted by the Ducatto Volery in the north of Alkyon. Originally gold and silver pieces, the coins are now cast from base metal but the implacable reputation of the mint has maintained their value. There are 128 Silver Ducatto in every Gold Ducatto. Almost anyone in Sentoris will accept the Ducatto, as will many Gnolls.

### Flembic Mark

The Flembic Mark is an old currency whose pedigree, untarnished for centuries, has suffered problems in recent times due to pernicious and unfounded rumours. The Mark is divided into 12 Schilling and each Schilling into 20 Pfeck. The Flembic Mark is widely accepted in Sentoris and occasionally in Malathia.

### Freiboden Florin

Formerly the Mill'en Florin, the Freiboden Florin was recently re-minted and many of the old coins are now no longer legal tender in Freiboden. This has caused some competitive issues for this currency which is not nearly as popular as it once was. It is still accepted in some parts of Merisusi and by the Gnolls and the Tritoni but elsewhere it is commonly refused. There are 8 Guilder to the Florin and 15 Bushel to the Guilder.

### Kamakuran Kyat

The Kyat is the official currency of Kamakura, although it is also used extensively in Rukh and occasionally in Malathia, Fidelia and Amun-Sa. Most bushi and daimyo in Kamakura will refuse to accept any trade unless it is conducted in Kyat. It is rare to find the Kyat in use elsewhere. The Kyat is divided into the Riel, there are 81 Riel in each Kyat. The Riel used to be linked to the value of a hundredweight of rice but this tradition has long since declined and the relationship is now nominal.

### Rimici Capell Letters of Credit

The Rimici Capell trading house has a long history of successful banking operations. As a result they have been able to produce the most commonly accepted letters of credit. Letters of credit are written by the head of a Rimici Capell house on the basis of the depth and currency of the deposits you have with them. When the letter of credit is given to you, then you will be required to sign for it on the reverse of the letter. Most letters of credit are dated and cannot be redeemed before the date.

To make a payment to another trading house or individual you give the letter of credit to that person, and if they choose to accept it, they write their name on the reverse under your own. In theory the individual to whom you give the letter of credit could in turn pass it on, but the value and perceived integrity of a letter of credit often diminishes as the list of names grows. When the letter of credit is presented at a Rimici Capell house the face value will be redeemed from the accounts of the original name on the letter. This process can take some time, depending on how far the letter has travelled in its lifetime.

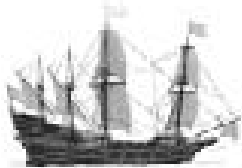
## Appendix B - Weights And Measures

Length		Area	
12 inches	= 1 foot	144 sq. inches	= 1 square foot
3 feet	= 1 yard	9 sq. feet	= 1 square yard
22 yards	= 1 chain	4840 sq. yards	= 1 acre
10 chains	= 1 furlong	640 acres	= 1 square mile
8 furlongs	= 1 mile		
Weight		Volume	
20 grains	= 1 scruple	20 minims	= 1 fl.scruple
3 scruples	= 1 drachm	3 fl.scruples	= 1 fl.drachm
15 drachms	= 1 ounce	8 fl.drachms	= 1 fl.ounce
16 ounces	= 1 pound	20 fl.ounces	= 1 pint
14 pounds	= 1 stone	8 pints	= 1 gallon
8 stones	= 1 hundredweight	4 gallons	= 1 hogshead
20 hundredweight	= 1 ton	54 hogsheads	= 1 tun

# Appendix C - SHIPPING

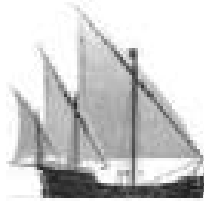
## Alkonian Barter Ship

The Alkonian barter ship is one of the finest vessels a merchant captain could wish to command. The luxurious officers' quarters and staterooms are complemented by an adequate cargo hold and a robust design that can still provide a fair turn of speed in all but the most treacherous seas. The province of wealthy merchants, it is rare to find two of these ships that are exactly alike.



## Mayan Slave Ship

These vessels are built by the Mayans but are commonly available in most shipyards across the world. They can carry a fair amount of cargo but their handling in poor weather leaves much to be desired. A common choice for many poor traders, they tend to be sold on as soon as the captain can afford a better vessel. Their low speed and large cargo capacity make them favoured piracy targets and so they tend to avoid dangerous waters.



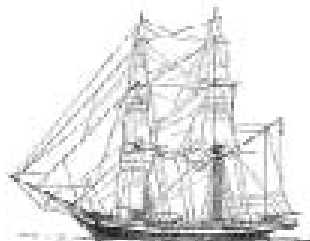
## Dhow

This ship hails from the Southern waters between Rukh and Amun'Sa. Apparent in the design is the need to move cargoes along coastal and river trade routes. Rigged with triangular sails the dhow can make headway against the wind although it often has difficulty in hostile sea conditions. The dhow is a common trade vessel in all waters and is especially favoured by avian merchants. A version of this vessel is also used as a raiding ship by the tribesmen of Fidelia, although these vessels are adapted to the harsher climate of the northern seas.



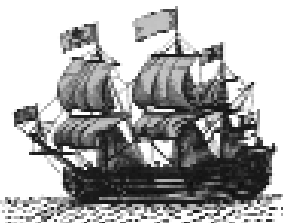
## Malathian Corsair

Although designed as a naval vessel, the Malathian corsair carries minimum armaments. However, the speed of the corsair has made it a popular vessel amongst merchants (when they can obtain one) and militarily the vessel has been used to launch lightning raids on enemy shipping. The corsair does not carry as much cargo as other ships of its size, but few vessels on the seas are capable of catching one.



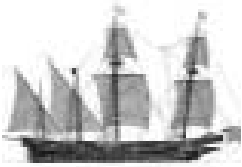
## Malathian Man-o-war

The man'o-war is an excellent all-round vessel capable of carrying a reasonable cargo at speed whilst defending itself against attack. The design heralds from Malathia, however the idea of having a prestigious flagship has caught on amongst many of the nations of the Known World. There are even rumours of an independent man'o-war operating out of the Free Islands.



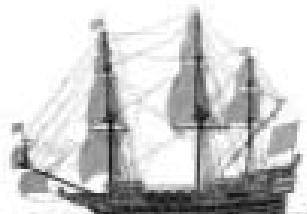
## Flembic Galleass

The backbone of the Flembic naval strength, the galleass is designed to be swift and deadly. Despite its reputation for being somewhat fragile when up against heavy seas or opposing warships, the ship's excellent speed allows it to pick and choose the battles it fights.



## Merisusi Proa

The proa is little more than a platform for carrying siege weapons. Surprisingly fast, the vessel tends to be slightly top-heavy in a strong swell, and somewhat fragile when facing similarly armed warships. However the armament is generally more than enough to intimidate or sink most targets.



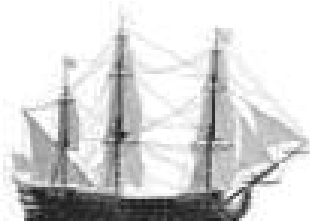
## Freiboden Whaler

The Freiboden whaler is a ketch-rigged ship that was originally designed for whaling and fishing. With excellent all weather capability, a large cargo capacity, and a good speed, this ship has been used for all manner of mercantile commerce.



## Merisusi Raptor

The raptor is designed, created and exclusively built by the Merisusi. It has too deep a draught to sail into shallow waters but the raptor is not designed for this. It is built to carry sufficient armaments to ensure it can destroy any hostile vessel foolish enough to close with it.



## Gnoll Battle Barge

These warships are the scourge of the eastern seas. A simplified Malathian design, the battle barge is designed to move Gnoll warriors to and from battle with a combination of sail and oars. With little armament the crew tends to rely on boarding actions. An excellent vessel against smaller trade vessels, the battle barge is outmatched when facing more heavily armed warships.



## Rukh Calleon

This well rigged ship is a model of simplicity. Although it lacks the luxurious cabin space of the barter ship it makes up for this with a combination of speed and unprecedented cargo capacity. Built as a way of transporting valuable bulk cargoes across the dangerous waters near Rukh, this vessel is unsurpassed as a merchant ship.



# Appendix D - Contrabando

There are some goods the trading of which is strictly controlled or even prohibited in some lands. Many of these are addictive and dangerous herbal concoctions but this is not true in all cases. Whilst restrictions on legitimate, profitable trade are to be deplored in all cases, nonetheless the upstanding merchant will do well to carefully consider the following cargoes and their possible destinations to ensure that he does not run foul of the establishment.

## Actinian Venom

Actinia are small sea anemones found in the shallow waters of eastern Murland. The venom causes the skin to pale if the anemone is stepped on, but also induces a mild euphoric sensation. Of little use for many years, it has now been discovered that the venom can be mixed into a cream, which if applied to the skin with a pad of needles reduces facial lines and wrinkles and pales the skin for a time as well as producing a feeling of euphoria. The cream has become very popular in Flambard but trade has been prohibited after several notorious murders were carried out by the Garters whilst wearing creams made from actinian venom. It does not appear to be addictive.

## Agenta

Agenta is a relaxant which was originally discovered by Thomas Huber, emeritus professor of medicine at the University of Saren in Freiboden. It completely relaxes the muscles for a brief period when swallowed resulting in near paralysis which is accompanied by a tremendous sense of calm and wellbeing which can last for an hour or more. The substance became recreationally popular amongst the aristocracy of that land but was banned after the revolution. Overuse of agenta can lead to addiction and withdrawal symptoms include aggression, inability to concentrate and shortness of temper as well as cravings. The long term effects are unknown. Agenta is illegal in Freiboden but its use persists amongst those with the money to afford it.

## Brandyblend

Brandyblend is a powder made by grinding bark from the tinama tree that grows in Fidelia. It acts as a mild stimulant when mixed with drinks but also purifies dirty water making it potable. Connoisseurs say that it improves the flavour of wines and spirits. Brandyblend is highly toxic to dragons and dracoscions and folk who travel there have suffered for carrying it to that land. Brandyblend is not known to be addictive and the Fidelians who use it extensively seem to enjoy good health into old age.

## Catamite

This stimulant is made from natural products from the Murland jungles where it is very popular amongst male Tritoni. Most use it as a dark coloured hard boiled sweet which is sucked to release its effects. Within a few minutes the individual will experience a heady feeling of great confidence and physical exuberance as well as increased strength and endurance. This drug is highly addictive and withdrawal produces nausea, vomiting and dizziness. Long term use is known to cause premature ageing. Possession of catamite is illegal in Alkyon, Amun'Sa, Fidelia, Flambard, Freiboden and Kamakura. Sale of the substance is illegal in Malathia.

## Flame

This spicy liquid gives near total pain resistance, allowing the drinker to continue with wounds that would drop a lesser man. It greatly enhances endurance and can delay fatigue. Unfortunately, side effects include a strong increase in the aggressiveness of the imbibor. It is popular in Merisusi lands where it is produced from local fauna. It is addictive if taken frequently and withdrawal symptoms include internal bleeding which in extreme cases can result in death. Long term use causes loss of feeling in all extremities and has been associated with melancholia and brain disease. Possession of flame is illegal in Fidelia, Flambard, Freiboden, and Kamakura and Rukh. Possession requires a license in Alkyon, Amun'Sa and Malathia.

## Geum

This peculiar and noxious plant grows only in Fidelia where it is occasionally sold by unscrupulous tribesmen. Geum is a particularly lethal poison, considerably more deadly than swamp fever or gilded berries. Anyone who ingests the juice from the leaves will experience agonizing colic which will last for an hour or more. This is followed by overwhelming lethargy leading to hallucinations and eventually death. Very few people have ever survived geum poisoning and it is illegal in Alkyon, Amun'Sa, Fidelia, Flambard, Freiboden, Kamakura and Rukh.

## Gilded Berries

These golden yellow berries grow on the katsalutsa bush, a small plant which is difficult to cultivate and grow but can be found wild in the mountains of Kamakura. The plant is notable because if the berries are dried and powdered they form a lethal concoction which can be added to almost any food or drink. Gilded berry poisoning can be cured if a powerful emetic is immediately administered but otherwise the effects are usually fatal. Violent and painful muscle spasms set in an hour after the berry has been administered. The symptoms become more severe until asphyxiation results after several hours. Gilded berries are illegal in Alkyon, Amun'Sa, Bantustan, Fidelia, Flambard, Freiboden, Kamakura, Malathia, Merisusi, Rukh and Tritoni lands.

## Mellifluent Rhind

The mellifluent rhind is an exotic bush which takes great care and attention to cultivate. It is grown by some priests and bushi in Kamakura. The tiny yellow fruit are tough and inedible but if the rhind is dried and then burned as an incense it produces strange hallucinatory visions accompanied by unearthly singing which provide great insight into deep worldly mysteries. It is addictive if taken too regularly and withdrawal can cause chronic cravings and nausea. Long term use does not appear to have any effects. Sale of the rhind is illegal in Amun'Sa, Malathia, Fidelia and Flambard.

## Oco Powder

The most powerful intoxicant known, this cheap narcotic takes the form of blue crystals that are crushed and then inhaled. They can be smoked or eaten as well. When taken the drug causes the user to fall into a semi-conscious state for a few minutes, followed by an overwhelming euphoric state which can last for hours depending on the quality. Oco powder is extremely addictive and withdrawal symptoms include bouts of psychosis, narcolepsy, dipsomania and violent aggression interspaced with chronic muscle pains. Long term use impairs eyesight and causes paranoia, schizophrenia and brittle bones. Oco powder is produced and sold by a handful of the nomadic tribes in Rukh and possession is illegal in Alkyon, Bantustan, Fidelia, Flambard, Freiboden, Kamakura, Malathia, Merisusi and Rukh.

## Phulkari

Phulkari is made from the red berries of a small bush which grows in the forests of Maya. The juice of the berries is bitter and tart. They are poisonous, inducing vomiting and nausea, in most people but dragons and most dracoscions can keep them down. The berry induces sleepiness during which the user experiences revelatory dreams. Phulkari is addictive if overused; withdrawal symptoms includes nightmares and chronic insomnia leading to fatigue and exhaustion. Long term users tend to suffer excessive shedding of their scales and in some instances loss of teeth and horns. Phulkari is illegal in Alkyon, Amun'Sa, Fidelia and Flambard.

## Rantsin

Rantsin is a stimulant which is popular in Flambard, Malathia and Rukh. It is was produced eight years ago by the Rantsin Volery in Alkyon and was popular there until it was realized that it caused women to produce undersized eggs. Rantsin can be produced as a gum which is chewed or a powder which is inhaled. It makes the user feel vibrant and sharpens concentration and focus. Rantsin is addictive and withdrawal symptoms include lethargy and cravings. Long term use appears to cause premature moulting and may lead to excessive hair loss. It is illegal to sell rantsin to an Alkonian and the substance has now been banned in Rukh after the Satrap's favourite concubine lost two eggs.

## Religious Icons

Until recently there has been a thriving trade in religious icons of the Teacher based around Yugorsk in Fidelia. A large number of these were fakes and the practice was banned under a previous Hierophant. Only authorized priests of the Teacher are allowed to sell religious icons and paraphernalia in Fidelia. Similar laws are in place in Amun'Sa where the priests of the Merchant control the production and sale of religious symbols.

## Seraph Tear

This priests of the Soldier in Amun'Sa protect the secret of the creation of this viscous liquid. If ingested it produces an odd effect where the imbiber feels no guilt. It does not interfere with other cognitive processes, and the effects fade after a few days. The priesthood restrict the liquid for use in religious ceremonies but small quantities find their way to market. It does not appear to be addictive, but long term effects are known to include the 'trembles', a subtle but involuntary shaking of the limbs. It is illegal to purchase seraph tear in Amun'Sa unless you are a native priest of the Soldier.

## Slavery

Honest trade in slaves is permitted in all civilized lands, although licenses for slaves are required in Flambard and Kamakura. The Tritoni do not provide any legal support or protection for merchants trading in slaves in their lands.

## Swamp Fever

This deadly black sticky liquid is made by the Tritoni women from sap drawn from a tree which grows only in their lands. The liquid is entirely inedible, but when the Tritoni go to war against the Gnolls, they coat their arrow heads with it. If a victim is hit by a Tritoni arrow but survives the wound, the poison from the arrow enters the blood stream. It causes a rising fever, leading to incapacitation, delusions and eventually death within days. Swamp fever is illegal in Alkyon, Amun'Sa, Bantustan, Fidelia, Flambard, Freiboden, Kamakura, Merisusi and Rukh.

## Vineweed Berry

Vineweed grows wild across the warmer regions of Sentoris. This mild painkiller is a common cure for headaches and nausea. It is not known to be addictive and there are no known side effects. Vineweed berries are illegal in Rukh.

## Vineweed Root

Made from the same source as vineweed berries, the root is a much stronger analgesic that can be pressed into open wounds and is often used medically to allay the pain of surgery. It has the capacity to take the edge off injuries and keep a man standing when he would otherwise pass out. Frequent use is known to be addictive and withdrawal symptoms include chronic tinnitus and fatigue. Mild tinnitus can result from long term use. Vineweed root is illegal in Rukh.

## Weaponry

A number of types and manufacture of weapons are forbidden in some lands. The secrets of the manufacture of muskets are closely guarded by the Freiboden merchants and it is illegal to sell a musket there since the Defence of the League Act.

In Kamakura only bushi may carry a sword or use metal weapons and armour. Aspiring merchants are permitted to sell these items, but not to carry them openly. Darkpowder and all darkpowder weapons are completely forbidden in Kamakura by decree of the shogun and anyone carrying powder or weaponry faces summary execution.

A permit issued by the government is required to own a pistol or musket in Flambard. The bow and crossbow are also illegal in Flambard without a special permit to authorize an individual to use one for hunting.

# Appendix E - heraldry & devices



ALKyon



AMUN-SA



BANTUSTAN



FIDELIA



FLAMBARð



FREIBODEN



KAMAKURA



MALATHIA



MAJA



MERISUSI



RUKh



the huntress



the merchant



the smith



the teacher



the weaver



BAKHADA



GREENFIELD SHORES



RADDOCK BAY



RIMICI CAPELL



SACUZA

# Appendix F - The New World

This account of the New World has been painstakingly compiled from the reports and descriptions provided by captains, merchants and brave pioneers who have returned from the other side of the Maelstrom. Whilst much that is contained herein must seem incredible and some of it may disturb the sensibilities of our more delicate readers we have presented the facts as they are now revealed to us, rather than censor the more terrible details of the vile beliefs and practices of the more foul inhabitants of the New World.

Thus we must make reference to the many difficulties faced by these brave new settlers. There are no horses in the New World and none have yet survived the passage through the Maelstrom, which illustrates how hard these individuals are having to work to build a life there. At the request of the Hierophant of Fidelia we have made no mention of the blasphemous power called magic which has been found in this New World.

## Geography

The geography of the new land seems not dissimilar to our own civilized world. At present no great deserts such as are to be found in Rukh and Amun-Sa have been discovered. Nor is there anywhere such cold and bitter temperatures that the land is covered in deep drifts of snow like the mountains of Alkyon or the Merisusi lowlands. Rather the land is given to equal measure of sun and rain, like Freiboden, Flambard or Malathia. To reflect the uncivilized nature of this new frontier the climate is as contrary as its people, being hot and dry in winter and cold and wet in summer. Much of the land discovered thus far is unclaimed and uncultivated, covered in long lush grass, but away from the coast there are wide forests filled with massive trees and mountains as tall as any we have known.

## Resources

The New World contains many astounding discoveries which will present spectacular opportunities to the enterprising individual with the courage and the wherewithal to exploit them. The land itself is the most obvious. The extents of this New World have not yet been discovered and hundreds of miles of open land lie uncultivated and unclaimed. The brave settlers who occupy this fertile ground will surely end up wealthy men. Such men will not become mere farmers; the New World is rich with astonishing discoveries and the crops that grow there will surely make the fame and fortune of any who can raise them.

Tobacco is the most famous of these, this marvellous plant has many medicinal properties, easing the breathing and ensuring long life and good health for any that use it. When burnt, the fine vapours relax and stimulate, a practice long familiar with the natives of the New World. Similar benefits are to be had from the wondrous sylladan, a bitter inedible plant, but the natives have discovered that the juice provides protection from all manner of diseases if bathed in. Tea, the latest medicinal to be discovered can be brewed into a gentle drink whose taste has proved popular and is being credited with providing relief from fevers.

The jape, a tart and bitter green fruit, grows wild on every bush in the New World. The wines produced by fermenting this inedible fruit are extraordinary and are certain to find a ready market anywhere in the Known World. An equally wondrous though less intoxicating beverage can be prepared from the beans of the cocoa plant. It has proved so popular in Rukh that some claim it may supplant coffee as the favoured drink there. Sugar cane was well received at the court of the Flembic king, a sure sign that it will soon be popular throughout that land.

Good taste requires us to make only passing reference to the licentious properties of pepperroot, but they are certain to ensure it makes its own market. Gossamer is lighter and stronger than silk, and grows faster than flax. It has proved extraordinarily popular in Kamakura and will doubtless catch on in other lands. The seed of the Anise, a tiny fragile plant, has been found to revitalize the skin of the old when made into a cream. All of these wonderful crops are simply waiting for beings of skill and careful prosecution to create a buoyant new market.

The fertile ground is not the only source of wealth the New World contains. The seas teem with life, not just fish, but huge schools of whales of a size and majesty never seen in the seas of the Known World. The forests are built from trees so tall that they dwarf even the tallest oak or pine. The wood is hard and dense and will surely be in great demand in Malathia for building ships. There is also a wild animal, akin to our horses but with a single beautiful white horn on its head. The natives call it a unicorn and consider its horn more beautiful and valuable than gold.

Most valuable of all are the extensive deposits of precious gems and metals that fill the mountains of the New World. Silver and gold are so plentiful in the New World that even the most impoverished savage can afford to bedeck themselves in jewellery. Diamonds, rubies, emeralds and sapphires the size of a bird's egg are uncovered daily.

Most extraordinary of all, the strange forces of magic which permeate the New World allow men to produce incredibly precious gemstones from the very air itself.

## Inhabitants

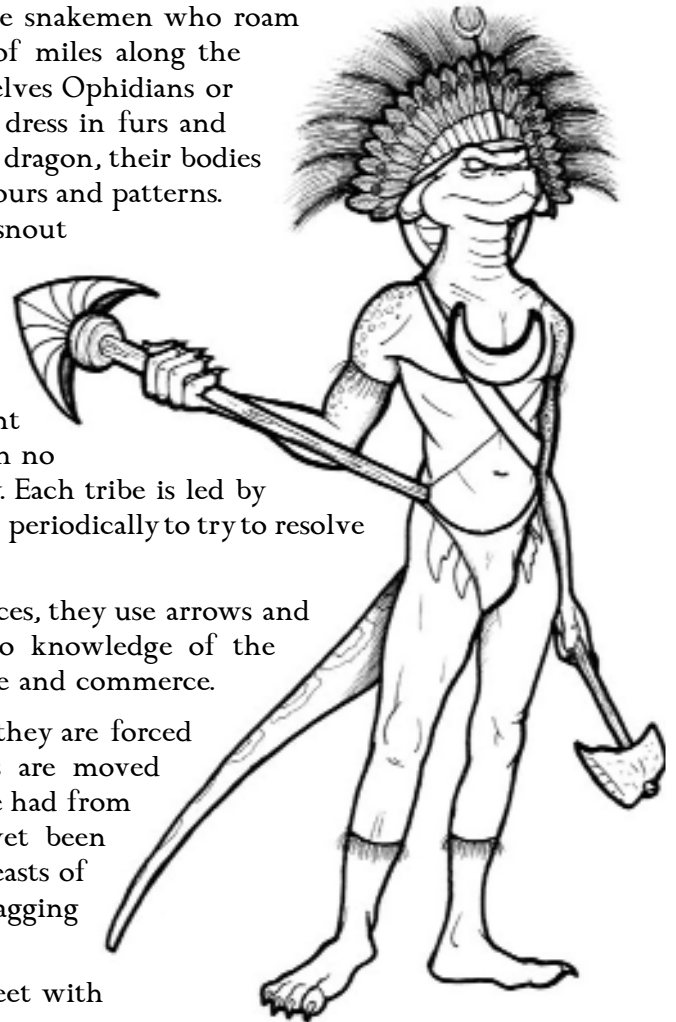
The first race of creatures encountered were the strange snakemen who roam over the uncultivated lands that stretch for hundreds of miles along the coastline of the New World. These creatures call themselves Ophidians or Onontakha. They stand as tall as any civilized being but dress in furs and hides that they take from the creatures they hunt. Like a dragon, their bodies are covered in fine scales, though theirs are of various colours and patterns. Their faces resemble those of snakes, with a protruding snout and two prominent fangs, somewhat like a mokosh. Despite their appearance they definitely possess some form of rudimentary intelligence as they are capable of speech.

The Ophidians appear to be split into countless different tribes each claiming ownership of vast tracts of land with no more evidence to justify each claim than simple ancestry. Each tribe is led by an elder who is appointed by the priests. These elders meet periodically to try to resolve some of the perpetual conflicts between the tribes.

These tribes are possessed of the most inadequate resources, they use arrows and wooden spears tipped with flint to hunt and have no knowledge of the practices of civilized people such as farming, architecture and commerce.

Due to their inability to work stone and wood properly they are forced to live in tents rather than build houses. These tents are moved whenever the tribe has exhausted the supply of food to be had from hunting around their current camp. No horses have yet been found in the New World, and the Onontakha have no beasts of burden so they are forced to move everything by hand, dragging their tents and belongings on a simple travois.

Attempts to civilize the Onontakha seem doomed to meet with failure for they are arrogant and disdainful towards all the benefits of civilization. Despite this they are clearly eager enough to trade meat, furs and land in exchange for worked metal goods. They have no knowledge of currency and are solely reliant on barter for trade.



SIRI KASHA,  
"CHIEF" OF THE ATORARHO

My response, bird of Rukh, is that you are not possessed of even half the cleverness that you lay claim to. You proudly boast that your people have long since abandoned a life beneath pole and bark and hide, in favour of these homes of stone and wood that you insist contain so much comfort, even though you admit yourself that you can no longer remember how long or how well this life once comforted your people. And you are so filled with the righteousness of this way that you expend your breath to persuade us to give up our tents in favour of these houses of stone and of wood which are so great in size that they tower over the trees we stand beneath. So be it! I do not dispute that given time and effort one of us might raise such a building if we laboured long at it. But, bird of Rukh, since you are so filled with the wisdom of your Gods why is it you cannot state to what purpose would the Onontakha, who stand as do you, a mere five to six feet in height, put a house of fifty to sixty feet?

Please explain, bird of Rukh, how it can be that you who have travelled far from home, from wives, from children, are truly the enlightened and we the savage? You expect us to believe that you who have risked the storms and tempests of the Maelstrom to come to a strange and barbarous country, the poorest and least fortunate of the world, come from such a paradise as you claim? Surely you would be fools indeed to abandon all that you have for so little.

— Siri Kasha, "Chief" of the Atorarho



The snakemen are not the only inhabitants of this New World. They share the land with their ancient enemies, tribes or hives of insects. These beings are horrific to look upon having bodies covered in chitinous plates that resemble nothing more than a huge insect. Most stand erect on two legs, and have two arms, but each tribe is different, not just in markings but in shape and form and there are claims of tribes with four arms or more. Some have vivid yellow and black markings across their carapaces, others are brown, red or black in colour. Some have faceted eyes over protruding mandibles and a few even have wings although there are no accounts of any that can fly. Like the Onontakha they can speak and make good appearance of intelligence.

These hives are known by a bewildering array of names, Azarch, Myrmidons, Solarians and Tlaxti. Each hive is ruled by a giant queen attended by an army of drones. Every member of the hive looks identical in every way as they are all the offspring of the one queen who they will fight to the death to protect. According to the Onontakha, wars are common place between the different tribes.

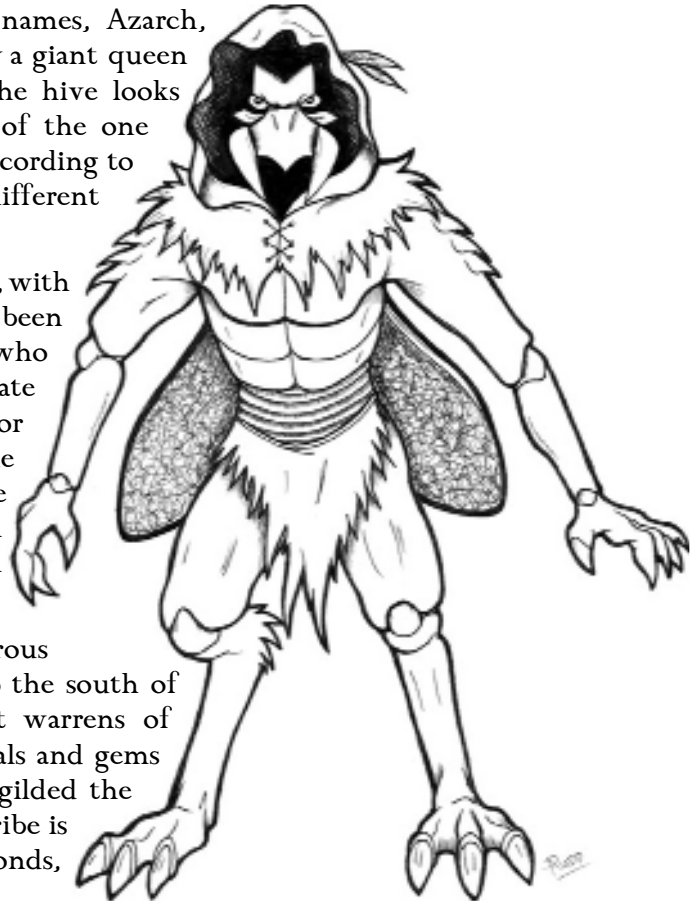
These tribes are allied into grim parodies of kingdoms, with the Tlaxti the most powerful that have thus far been encountered. The Onontakha hate and fear the Tlaxti who attack all neighbouring lands for captives. The fortunate ones are taken as slaves to work in the Tlaxti mines or their fields, the unfortunate ones are sacrificed in vile rituals to the Tlaxti queens to allow them to perpetuate their evil race. The priests who conduct these evil rituals rule over the other Tlaxti drones, leading them in battle.

Fortunately some tribes are less hostile than the monstrous Tlaxti. The Azarch live in the hills and mountains to the south of the Onontakha lands where they hollow out great warrens of tunnels. These mountains are rich with precious metals and gems and the Azarch have so much gold that they have gilded the walls of the tunnels they occupy. The queen of each tribe is said to lie upon a bed fashioned entirely from diamonds, rubies and emeralds.

Many of the insect tribes are better equipped than the Onontakha, using metal weapons and tools. They also use large four-legged creatures, akin to the oxen traditional in Amun-Sa and Maya as beasts of burden. The Azarch in particular are keen traders and seem interested to learn what they can of civilization.

## Idols

Because of their lack of civilization, knowledge of the true Gods is unknown in the New World and so the inhabitants practice some form of primitive shamanism. They worship a pantheon of animals, ascribing mystical powers and characters to each animal. These animal totems demand living sacrifices from their worshippers in secret rites performed during darkness. Victims are bound to dark altars so that their still beating hearts can be cut from their chests and a libation made from their blood. Anyone who witness one of these rites who is not a follower of the same totem animal as the priests is hunted down and slain.



PATIK, AZARCH PRIEST OF THE BASILISK

These ships of which you speak, sound even more miraculous than you claim them to be. And you say that these are but the least things of which your civilization is capable. Truly you must be blessed by the Basilisk Himself if a construction of wood and weave allows you to walk upon the water.

How is that these things do not fall below the surface, or are not smash wave and wind? Is it by the faith of your God that this house of wood caned apart by the ride upon the sea as a swan does? Or is there some magic of its making that lets it defy the will of the heavens and the pull of the waves? Surely it cannot be as you claim, that it is the wood itself that bears its own weight like a young myrmidon learning to swim might do. We too make all manner of things from wood and it is well known to us that wood will always sink when in water. Surely there must be some secret art that your craftsmen have discovered that makes this not so?

Do you have one of these ships about your person that we might see its construction?

— Patik, Azarch 'priest' of the Basilisk

The priests of these perverted religions are viewed with such fear by their fellows that none will speak of their acts to outsiders. The priests are happy to proselytize their foul beliefs to any who will listen and from them we have discovered that there are essentially five creatures that they view as gods. Some animals are more popular amongst the Ophidians than the Myrmidons, but there are priests of all of these foul faiths in every tribe and hive in the New World.

## The Ant

The priests of this foul being prize strength and despise weakness of any kind. The young, the old and the infirm are all liable to be sacrificed to sate the murderous desires of the Ant. The followers believe that if the being is not appeased then it will enter the world and destroy all living things. The only way to preserve life for the few is to ensure that the wrath of the Ant is averted by destroying the things it despises. The priests revel in the bloody destruction required to fulfil the unholy desires of their totem and they are treated with fear and horror by all. The followers of the Ant may be quiescent for years at a time to lure their enemies into a false sense of security, but once they see a weakness in their foes they attack remorselessly, seeking to wipe them out to a man.

## The Basilisk

The basilisk is a small lizard native to the New World that by some magic of its own can run upon water. The superstitious natives who have no boats or anything like them believe that the basilisk has invisible wings like a bat's which allow it to walk on the surface of the water. Thus the Basilisk is always portrayed as a winged lizard, and consequently it bears an uncanny resemblance to a dragon. As a result there have been several incidents in which Mayan dragons have been taken for their god by the natives.

The priests of the Basilisk believe in absolute obedience to the will of their elders or queens who they view as chosen by the Basilisk. They claim that only through total loyalty to the whims of their rulers can their tribe possibly hope to be strong enough to survive. Those who disobey the edicts of the elder are ruthlessly punished by the priests of the Basilisk.

## The Coyote

The mercurial coyote is another native animal, a large feral dog-like creature that is so unpredictable that it will even attack members of its own pack if it is hungry. The priests of the Coyote have made a virtue of this disloyalty by calling for people to attack their own friends and allies. They delight in war and conflict and cannot abide the idea that another community, people or even individual might possess some advantage that they lack. Thus they encourage their followers to ensure that no person or people can ever draw benefit from their position by urging ceaseless attack against anyone who has achieved some gain. True followers of the Coyote will apparently attack anyone and seek to bring everyone down to the level of the lowest amongst them.

## The Jaguar

The Jaguar delights in carnage and slaughter and will kill other creatures just for the pleasure of it, leaving the carcasses of the slaughtered in trees as bloody trophies. The priests of the Jaguar draw inspiration from these murderous acts, revelling in such indulgence. They claim that to engage in any act that gives pleasure is a sacred act to the Jaguar which will even kill its own young if the mood takes it. They savour every depraved and base act and their rituals include epicurean and sexual orgies as well as indulgence in every manner of intoxicating substances. This spirit is worshiped by the Azarch and the Tlaxti, but a similar depraved being, called the Cougar, is revered by the Onontakha.

## The Serpent

The meretricious priests of this foul creature seem reasonable and congenial at first but this is simply a ruse to conceal their deceitful nature. They model their creed on the deceptive nature of the Serpent and so claim that lies and treachery are the only truth of the world and that only those beings who live by such philosophies can hope to survive. The priests consider an artfully constructed lie to be a thing of beauty, they prize guile and cunning the way good men value truth and honesty. Beyond their love of treachery and foul play it is impossible to tell what these priests really believe in for they are all sworn never to speak a word of truth. Worship of this idol is widespread amongst the Onontakha, who call it the Raven.

## The Awakened Races

In addition to the strange creatures that live in the New World, a number of beings have appeared that seem to have been created in some way by the magical powers that permeate the land. These creations have been called the Awakened Races by scholars, although many dispute if they are truly alive at all, and possess a mortal soul, or are perhaps some magical creation, a parody of true life. The natives of the New World thus far encountered claim to have no knowledge of these creations, and the beings themselves seem ignorant of their purpose or sire.

Unlike the natives, these creatures cannot talk, although many have been taught an imitation of speech. They seem like Rukhi parrots, able to recite words and phrases although they learn quicker and acquire more phrases than those humorous birds. Nonetheless they do have some form of rudimentary intelligence and can be taught simple things such as ploughing, fighting or carrying heavy weights. Some are providing good service to the bold explorers and colonists who have set sail for the New World but the majority appear to be yet another hazard that those intrepid fellows must face.

There are a number of distinct creatures that have been identified thus far. The first are the golems, the large stone statues that have come to life. The natives lack the civilization to produce art, but several of the colonists who have settled in the New World had sculpted statues from the nearby stone. Several, although not all, of these statues have since animated by some unseen force and begun to move through their own volition. Some of them have been destroyed, as they ran amok, but others were captured and put to use while one or two of the largest escaped.

Great swathes of the New World are covered in dense forests of tall trees. A tiny handful of the smallest of these trees have been affected in some way that causes them to move with a life of their own. These strange tree spirits have been called dryads by the explorers who discovered them. They seem to be no more or less intelligent than the golems, and can be taught a few child-like phrases. They do not appear to be dangerous in any way.

The land of the New World is so rich with precious gems that they can form overnight, like dew. Some of these valuable stones are more than they seem though, and if left unattended they grow in size and shape until they resemble some vast terrifying puppet. Like the golems and the dryads, these dolls are capable of movement of their own. They are called facets after the faceted gems set into their foreheads.

Golems, dryads and facets are not the only danger faced by the courageous traveller who visits the New World. Foul magic has been used to give a shadow of existence to the bodies of the slain. Good people are murdered so that their souls can be chained with magic and forced to serve evil goals.

All of this has been at the behest of the demons, eidolons that have defied the will of the Gods and seek to destroy the souls of men and women who remain true. The New World is the home of these terrible creatures, which can change their shapes to steal the appearance of mortal beings. The soul symbol, the mark of an eidolon's soul upon his brow, still burns the flesh of these foul creatures and also marks their creation, the undead.

These devils seek the souls of mortals to carry off to hell. Pious men and women shun them, for they have no power over you if you do not talk to them. Those who put their faith in the Gods will surely prove victorious in battle against these treacherous servants.



PARAGOLE THE DEMON

