

# TIRIKÉLV

Role-playing in the  
Land of the Petal Throne



by Dave Morris

### *Acknowledgements*

I've enjoyed thousands of hours with friends in the world of Tékumel. I'd like to thank them all, but especially those who have played and helped to shape these rules, namely:

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Special thanks to Michael Watts for permission to use his illustration of the Temple of Hriháyal in Jakalla in the front matter and of the priest of Sárku and the Tinalíya for the cover of the print-on-demand edition.

### *Other material*

There's still no better top-level introduction to the world of Tékumel than [Empire of the Petal Throne](#).

But having read EPT you're going to want more. And that's why your next purchase should be the [Tékumel Sourcebook](#). Try to get the Different Worlds edition if you can, as the original Gamescience printing is a crime against typography, but the main thing is to get hold of it. Every page contains enough ideas to fuel a campaign.

My favourite history of Tsólyanu is [Deeds of the Ever-Glorious](#). It's a great read, packed with incidents and anecdotes that will add flavour to your characters' conversations. More history books should be written this way.

For a wealth of maps, characters, and other material visit [www.tekumel.com](http://www.tekumel.com).

You can find back issues of my and Steve Foster's fanzine *The Eye of All-Seeing Wonder* [here](#).

A smaller PDF of *Tirikélu* (just the rules, no maps or scenarios) can be found [here](#).

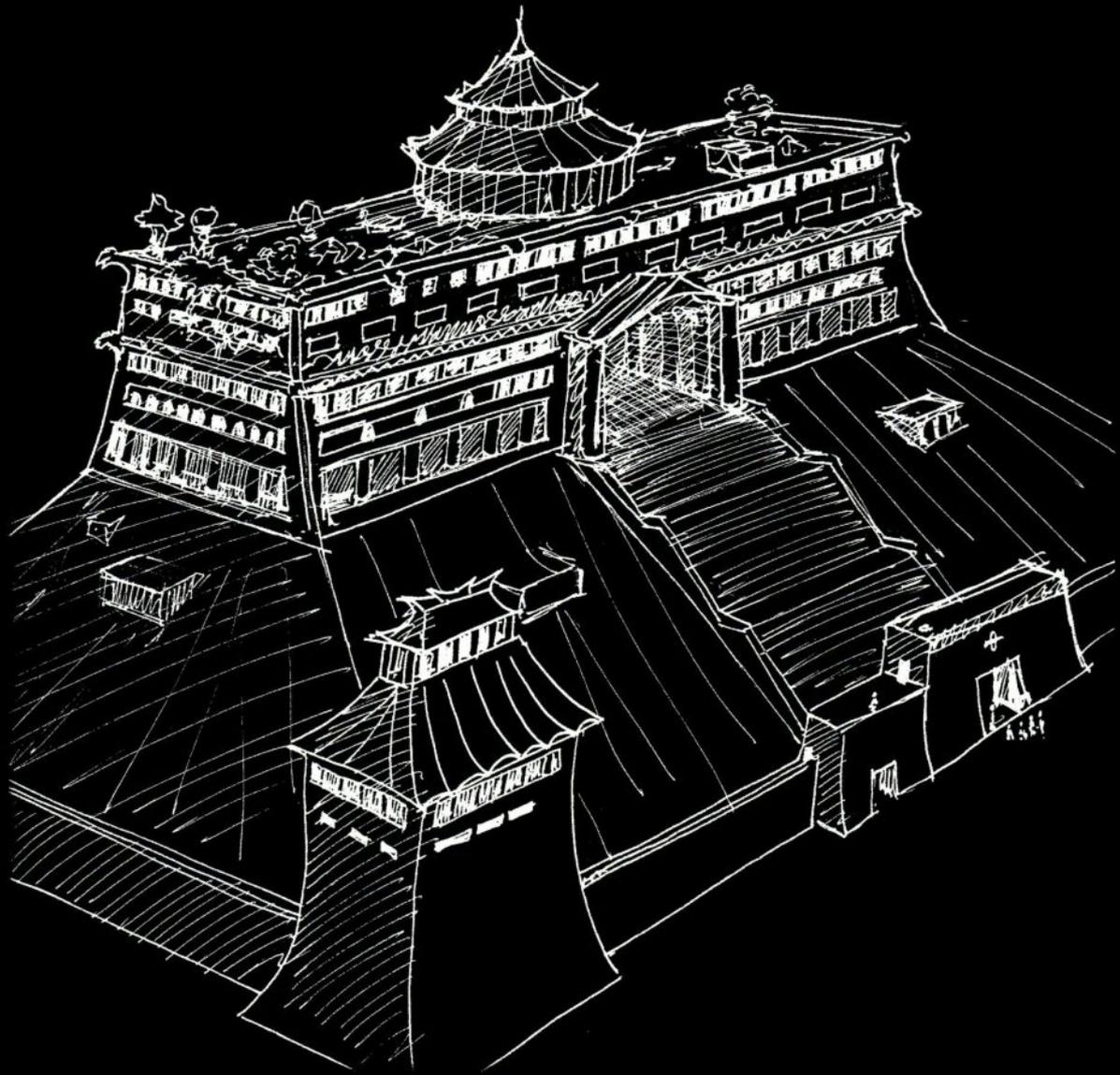
Detailed creature stats are to be found [here](#).

And you can get the *Tirikélu* character sheet [here](#).

Players are welcome to print these rules for personal use. There are numerous online printers. I recommend Lulu, and there is an explanation of how to set up the book on Lulu [here](#). Please note that if you print a copy of these rules, permission is *not* granted for resale. If you are offered a resold print copy of *Tirikélu*, please inform [me](#) and the [Tékumel Foundation](#).

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# Introduction

Corresponding with Professor Barker in the late 1970s and early '80s, I was treated to tantalizing glimpses of “the new *Empire of the Petal Throne*” he was writing. The original EPT had served its purpose for a while, but my group were moving beyond those D&D-inspired mechanics. This was the era of *RuneQuest* and *The Fantasy Trip*. We were hungry for a more authentic experience of Tékumel, so we would pass around the Professor's letters (he was always incredibly generous with his time) and pick endlessly over comments like this:

“We now have one roll to hit, one to get past the shield, one for damage (minus armour) and if one rolls 0 on a 10-sided die on this last roll, the a critical hit for more damage.”

Years passed. It was taking too long. I began constructing my own set of Tékumel rules from the fragmentary description in the Professor's letters, like reconstructing an unknown animal from just a few bones.

Finally “the new EPT” appeared. That was *Swords & Glory*. My group switched for a while, but it was the S&G Sourcebook that was getting dog-eared from use. The other book, the rules, appealed less. “HBS Factors” and “Healing G9s” gave the game a tabletop miniatures flavour rather too far from the freewheeling shared stories we were looking for.

And so I returned to my own rules and began to refine them into the game I had hoped *Swords & Glory* would be.

This was the early 1990s, so it seems a little early to talk of an Old School Revival (not a term I like anyway) but the aim was there. Simplify the system so that the rules didn't keep tripping up the play. Recapture the evocative magic of those early adventures by cross-pollinating EPT spells with ideas from *The Book of Ebon Bindings*. Make combat quick to use but more than just the endless dice-rolling of, say, *RuneQuest*.

I had two eureka moments. First, in a treatise by a duellist from the 17th century, I came across the concept of “safe fighting”. His contention was that a moderately skilled fighter could, by concentrating on defence, hold off a more skilled opponent who was dividing his attention between attack and defence. In *Tirikélu* that became the principle of full- and half-actions. It seemed almost too simple on paper, but in practice we found it allowed for rich tactical choices.

Also I wanted to avoid hit location and lots of book-keeping, but not simply to revert to the D&D sense of an amorphous pudding of hit points. So taking damage above a certain percentage of your hits can reduce your skill, and may require a check to stay conscious, but you don't need to keep a tally of how much damage each wound caused. It's all handled at the point the wound is taken.

Nowadays there are quite a few role-playing games where you make a detailed decision about what you're trying to do, then wade through pages of rules to find your chance of doing it. (*GURPS*, I'm looking at you.) *Tirikélu* works best if you keep it abstract till after you roll the dice. “He's going for a full attack.” “I'm going for a full parry.” Once you resolve that, you're free to put any narrative interpretation you like on the result. It flows faster that way and, with imaginative players, fights feel agreeably cinematic.

Well, here it is – as complete a version of *Tirikélu* as you're ever likely to see. I know, I know; it seems like there's a new Tékumel RPG every couple of years. Who needs yet another? But many people tell me that *Tirikélu* is their preferred choice, and you know what? It's mine too. And it is dedicated, as so much of my work is, to the genius, generosity and humanity of Professor M.A.R. Barker.

- Dave Morris

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For additional information, please visit [www.tekumelfoundation.org](http://www.tekumelfoundation.org).

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# [100] CHARACTER GENERATION

## [110] The attributes

A character is initially described by his or her scores in nine attributes which define the character's intrinsic physical and mental prowess. The scores for these attributes are decided by rolling dice. Attribute ranges for a human character are shown below. These ranges hold good for most races other than N'lüss. (If you want a N'lüss character, consult Section 161.)

No human character can have an attribute score below 1 or above 25, except as a result of special influences such as illness, poison or magic. An "average human" is defined as having a score of 11 in all nine attributes.

	<i>man</i>	<i>woman</i>	<i>bonus for maximum roll</i>
Strength	2D10	2D10-2	1D6-1
Stamina	2D10	2D10	none
Dexterity	2D10	2D10+1	none
Psychic Ability	2D10	2D10	1d3-1 ( <i>women only</i> )
Psychic Reservoir	2D10	2D10	none
Reasoning	2D10	2D10	none
Cleverness	2D10	2D10	none
Comeliness	2D10	2D10	none
Height	1D10+1D6+2	2D6+2	1D6-1
Build	1D10+1D6+2	2D6+2	1D6-1
Size	average of height and build		

**Strength:** The character's muscular power. A high Strength score indicates a character capable of lifting heavy loads, striking powerfully in combat, etc. Strength is the most important attribute if you plan to join an infantry legion.

**Stamina:** A measure of the character's constitution and general health. While a high Strength lets you carry heavy loads, you need high Stamina to let you do it over long periods of time. In the sense that Stamina indicates the character's threshold of discomfort, it also determines his resistance to injury, poison and disease.

**Dexterity:** Reflexes, coordination, agility and manual manipulation. An important attribute for anyone intending to join an archers' legion, as well as in many other professions.

**Psychic Ability:** The Chusétl, or unconscious mind. A measure of the character's natural aptitude for magic, and therefore the single most important attribute for sorcerers. Psychic Ability can also be used as an indicator of intuition and awareness.

**Psychic Reservoir:** The Pedhétl, or subconscious mind, which shows the character's capacity for magical energy. It may give a clue to the character's underlying personality - particularly his intensity and ambition, perhaps - but this will also depend on other factors. An introspective character with high mental attributes has his Pedhétl firmly under control: a quietly assured type. High Pedhétl coupled with low self-awareness may indicate someone who is tempestuous and unruly.

**Reasoning:** A measure of scholastic or algorithmic thought processes. The ability to memorise and manipulate data within the framework of an academic discipline. A high Reasoning combined with low Cleverness describes the archetypal absent minded scholar.

These character generation rules assume players who are familiar with Tékumel. You'll be creating respectable clan members of middle class status or higher.

*But my players are newbies.*

No problem. Start them using the "Just Off The Boat" campaign (page 103), which is a prequel to Professor Barker's opening scene in [Empire of the Petal Throne](#), where players arrive as barbarians in Jakállá harbour.

*My female player-characters want to use male stats.*

Fine. PCs are exceptional. Let them roll on whichever attribute column they like.

*Creating a character takes too long.*

Playing in a world like Tékumel, you'll want to know your character's personal history. It's part of the game — you could easily get a whole session out of the player-characters' formative years. But if you just prefer to dive in, you can roll a character and take a package of any skills you like.

*We don't like random rolls for attributes.*

Then you'll want to use the optional points-based character generation rules starting on page 87.

*What's with all the accents?*

Those just tell you where the stress goes in a word. For instance, "Tsolyánu" is pronounced "tsoul-YAH-noo".

### The eye of the beholder

Standards of beauty are fairly uniform within each of the Five Empires, though a character who travels abroad must adjust his effective Comeliness when dealing with foreigners; this reflects how well his features are admired or (more usually) disliked.

percentile roll	result
01-80	Foreigners do not like the look of the character; reduce his or her effective Comeliness by 1d4
81-95	The character's appearance is universally admired (or otherwise); no adjustment
96-00	The character's looks are more appealing to foreigners than to their own countrymen; adjust effective Comeliness up by 1d4

The adjustment is a necessary abstraction, of course. Not all foreigners need be identically disposed towards the character. Undoubtedly there are a few Tsolyáni noblemen who are aroused by the narrow eyes and plump saffron flesh of their Livyáni slave girls, and some Tsolyáni ladies who find a frisson in the muscular body of a N'lüss barbarian or the pomaded beard of a Salarvyáni merchant. As a general rule, however, the Tekumeláni concept of beauty is strongly tied in with the cultural norm. The people of the Five Empires tend towards xenophobia and conservatism, and can find no attraction in the unfamiliar or innovative.

**Cleverness:** Common sense, heuristic intelligence or native cunning. The ability to make incisive decisions, observe pragmatically, and think on one's feet. Amid the Tsolyáni nobility, the romantic ideal of a warrior fits someone with high Cleverness and low Reasoning.

**Comeliness:** Physical attractiveness in the eye of a Tsolyáni beholder. Tsolyáni complexions range from coppery brown to a golden tan, noses are aquiline or straight, hair is glossy black, fine and straight. Male beauty is muscular, square-jawed and hawk featured. Female beauty is slim but voluptuous with long black hair, triangular and piquant features, a retroussé nose and wide cheekbones. Curly or brown-streaked hair is unattractive and light-coloured eyes are a sign of inherent dishonesty. Blue eyes are particularly ugly and the sign of a curse from Avánthe. Albinos are repugnant, the subject of superstitious prejudice.

**Size:** This is not rolled directly, but derived from height and build. These could also be considered attributes, but in practice they are almost never needed in the game. The height and build rolls used to determine Size can be interpreted as real measurements (as indicated below). Record these on your Character Sheet if you like. They have no effect on the game rules, but they do help in visualising the character.

- character's height (in centimetres) = 125 + [4x Height]
- character's weight (in kilograms) = Size x 5.5

### [120] Derived characteristics

There are several factors that are not themselves rolled for, but are derived from a character's attributes. These are:

- the character's base MELEE value - derived from their Strength, Size, Cleverness and Dexterity,
- MISSILE value - based on Cleverness and Dexterity
- HIT POINTS - the average of Strength and Size,
- DAMAGE BONUS - also based on Strength and Size,
- and EVADE value - based on Strength, Size and Dexterity.

### [121] Combat ability

Although experience and weapons training do count in a fight, a character's attributes are also important. One has only to think of a N'lüss slave: a cubit taller and possibly twice as massive as a Tsolyáni, even untrained he could give most swordsmen a tough fight.

All characters have their fighting ability expressed as two combat values: Melee and Missile. For a totally untrained character, the overall combat values will just equal his base combat values. Characters with battle experience get to add to these base values by acquiring levels of Warrior, and/or various Weaponskills.

You can now derive your basic combat values from the attributes you have filled in on your Character Sheet.

STRENGTH	Melee	SIZE	Melee
01-04	1	01-04	1
05-08	2	05-08	2
09-12	3	09-12	2
13-15	4	13-15	3
16-18	5	16-18	4
19-21	6	19-21	5
22-24	7	22-24	6
each +3	(+1)	each +3	(+1)

CLEVERNESS	Melee	Missile
01-04	1	0
05-08	1	1
09-12	2	1
13-15	3	2
16-18	4	2
19-up	5	2

DEXTERITY	Melee	Missile
01-04	1	1
05-08	2	3
09-12	3	4
13-15	3	5
16-18	4	6
19-21	5	7
each +3	(+1)	(+1)

Total the contributions from each of your character's attributes to find his basic Melee and Missile values. For an average human character, the base combat values are

Melee 10    Missile 5

### [122] Damage bonus

The damage bonus is applied as a modifier to the damage scored with a blow. It is based on Strength + Size.

Strength+Size	Damage bonus
2-15	-1
16-25	0
26-30	+1
31-35	+2
36-45	+3
46-50	+4
Each +10	extra +1

The damage bonus (or penalty) only applies in melee. It has no effect on the damage inflicted by a missile such as an arrow or crossbow bolt.

### [123] Hit Points

A character's Hit Points score is the average of his Size and Strength, rounding up. Hit Points measure how much damage you are able to take. This is explained in the Combat section.

### [124] Evade

This is an indicator of the character's ability to dodge a blow. The Evade value is given by

$$\text{half} \times [\text{Strength} + \text{Dexterity} - \text{Size}]$$

rounding fractions up, as always. The Evade value for the average character as defined earlier is therefore 6. The highest possible Evade value (for a human) is 20. But the lowest possible value is 1, not 0 as the formula above would suggest. Even the weakest, slowest, and heaviest of characters should have some chance of getting out of the way of an attack.

The only way to increase the Evade score is to train up one's Strength or Dexterity. There is no skill to be learned in dodging attacks, and no way to get better other than by increasing the relevant attributes.

### [130] Character history

Player-characters in the *Tirikélu* game are native Tsolyáni, either from Jakálla or another major city. This assumes a certain familiarity with Tsolyáni culture that new players will not possess. *Empire of the Petal Throne* gives players an appropriate introduction to Tsolyánu by stating

### The rounding-up rule

Often in *Tirikélu* you will be asked to divide an attribute score, or to take the average of two attributes. The rule in such cases is simple: always round up in your character's favour.

### Interpreting the Character Sheet

So far we have filled in everything that indicates the character's own intrinsic abilities. The various skills (such as Warrior, Navigator and Demonologist) will flesh out the character still further, but at this point we know all the character's innate abilities. From this you may be starting to get a mental picture of your character. Is he large but slow? Depending on the Strength score, you could be visualising a huge lumbering ox of a man, or else a squat pudgy fellow whose brow is always damp with perspiration. Suppose it is the latter - he could still become a warrior, but perhaps good scores in Psychic Ability and Reasoning indicate a better future in the study of sorcery. Now we can see him in the kilt and silk over-robe of a lay priest, fat fingers laden with jadeite rings, as he peddles his philtres in the Jakallan marketplace. Or suppose your character is a woman - tall, strong and dextrous but with little psychic potential. Already she begins to take shape as a tough Aridáni fighter, accustomed to command but probably a little unimaginative. She might be set for a career in the army or as a professional duellist in the Hirilákte arena.

Just because the Character Sheet deals only with numbers and statistics is no reason your imagination stop there. You can think about every aspect of your character - his history, his mannerisms, how he looks, what he wears. Portraying this image to the other players is a part of the role-playing experience.

## Social Status

Status is a complex issue whose nuances cannot be quantified by rules. However, the most visible manifestations of status (what dais you sit on, etc) can indeed be quantified. Social Status gives a way of measuring this, and it derives from three basic factors:

- 1: Clan and lineage, and seniority within the clan.
- 2: Professional Circle (in a temple, legion or the bureaucracy).
- 3: Public honour and local renown (or infamy).

An individual's Social Status will lie in the range 1-30. This gives an accurate indication of where he would be seated at a grand banquet, how he would be addressed by someone acquainted with his provenance, etc. It does not provide any definite guide to his *influence* in society, which will be affected by others factors including inducements, public honours, contacts and patrons.

In circumstances where a person's exact lineage and provenance are not known, he is treated solely on the basis of clan – or office, if he is clearly of high rank in temple, legion or bureaucracy. The same applies in irregular social interactions. (This means that it is appropriate for someone of low lineage within a noble clan, say, to refuse a challenge from another of high lineage in a medium clan, even though the latter may technically have higher Social Status. Shámtla payments are awarded entirely on the basis of Social Status, however, and so the young noble in this example may find that his clan-elders would prefer him to take the duel!)

### [1] *Clan & Lineage*

A character's intrinsic base Social Status is based on clan and lineage:

	<b>LINEAGE</b> (low/medium/high)
<b>CLAN</b>	
very low	1/2/3
low	2/3/4
medium	2-3/4/5-6
high	3-5/6-9/10-12
noble	6-9/10-12/13-16

This is the Social Status that the character has as his automatic birthright. It is the Social Status he retains throughout his young adulthood unless he achieves higher status as a priest, soldier or bureaucrat. After the age of 25, characters will begin to hold somewhat more prestige and might increase their base Social Status by 10% or so. Failure to contribute to the clan will jeopardise this. Characters who are appointed clan-elders will have a Social Status up to 50%-100% higher

that all new player-characters are foreigners who have to find their way in a Tsolyáni society. It is strongly recommended that any player generating a character in these rules has first played in an EPT campaign.

The rest of this chapter is devoted to a review of the character's early life. This provides the character with skills and helps the player to begin examining his or her role. These procedures are quite detailed, however, and take some time to run through. If players prefer a fast introduction to the game then the referee can just assign initial skill-levels as he sees fit.

### [131] **Clan and lineage**

Tsolyánu is a stratified society which allows for little mixing between social classes. Characters from very different backgrounds would almost never become friends. Some walks of life, such as the army, do not segregate so rigidly. It would be possible for one player to take a young Heréksa (roughly "lieutenant") while the others played the infantrymen in his command. But while a degree of camaraderie with the ranks would be acceptable, ultimately the Heréksa is the one calling the shots. The situation requires the other player-characters to be subservient. Not all player groups are capable of sustaining game-reality with enough conviction to make this sort of scenario worthwhile.

The referee should decide on a social class for all the player characters. Some leeway is possible. The sidebar shows how a character's clan, family and career all combine to determine his social status. A group of characters with the same status need not have arrived at it in the same way. One of them might belong to a prosperous lineage in a medium clan, another to a less important lineage in a noble clan, while a third might be of peasant stock and owe his status to a brilliant career in the Civil Service.

Bear in mind that just because two characters have the same Social Status, it does not mean they are equal. Class in Tsolyánu is far too complex to be accurately expressed with just a single number. Jorúne hiMektésh, an elder of the Black Stone Clan, will still indicate a certain deference in speech and manner towards a scion of the noble Clan of Sea Blue, though their nominal status might be equivalent.

Player-characters can also be bonded by belonging to the same clan. Regardless of lineage, members of a clan give mutual trust, aid and comradeship. Characters of low lineage are "poor country cousins" who must be appropriately courteous to their more prestigious urban relatives, but this relationship is sufficiently close to be tenable by a group of good roleplayers.

### [132] **Temple**

Many clans traditionally favour one deity. For most people there is no real active choice in the matter; they just revere the deity that is customary for members of their clan. It is possible for a strong-willed character to go against the grain – a Vriddi might decide to worship Lady Avánthe, for example. This is not encouraged, and the character would inevitably forfeit some of the goodwill of his clan cousins. Other clans have no religious preferences, leaving the individual to decide his own temple, but even here family traditions play a part.

Player-characters do not all have to belong to the same sect. It helps if they do, but it is not obligatory. Religious belief is less important than good breeding, after all, and most Tsolyáni respect all their deities. Comrades may follow different Gods – as soldiers in non temple legions must do. They can even serve Gods of different "alignments", though they must be prepared to accept the intrigues and betrayals that can result if their respective temples come into conflict.

Beginning players often place great importance on the choice of deity. The typical Tsolyáni probably never gives serious thought to any sect other than the one he was brought up into, but for players the deities give an easy “hook” to Tékumel’s reality. Obviously the matter is of particular importance to would-be priests and sorcerers. Each God is associated with particular concepts which fit their doctrine. The Hliméklu (or Cohort) of a God is associated with the same concepts, but sometimes with a difference in emphasis. These concepts are summarised here, and discussed more fully in Section 1.610 of the Tékumel Source Book.

God	Cohort	Doctrinal interests & branches of sorcery
Hnálla	Drá	Stability, tranquility and light
Karakán	Chegárra	War, courage and glory
Thúmis	Keténgku	Communication, knowledge & medicine
Avánthe	Dilinála	Family & childbirth; crops & animals
Belkhánu	Qón	Departed souls; the Planes Beyond
Hrűü	Wurú	Disorder, darkness and cold
Vimúhla	Chiténg	Violence, destruction, fire, cruelty
Ksáruł	Grugánu	Sorcery, demonology, ancient science
Sárku	Durritlámish	Decay and death
Dlamélish	Hriháyal	Hedonism and eroticism

### [140] Initial Skills

Most people receive no formal education, beginning their apprenticeship into the clan profession at an early age. Literacy in Tsolyánu stands at around 10% and is the privilege of the wealthier classes, whose offspring will be taught either at a Sijakkán (Temple School) or by private tutor. Nobles often affect an aversion to academic knowledge in its more esoteric forms, so this is mainly the preserve of the upper-middle and high clans whose members comprise most of the senior ranks of the priesthood.

The following sections deal systematically with the character’s education in childhood and young adulthood. They take the character as far as age 20. This gives him levels in a range of skills - not enough to qualify yet as an expert, but certainly no amateur. An adventuresome life is a viable but still challenging proposition.

### [141] Childhood education

This covers what your character learned in his early life (before age 15). Education will either have been at a Temple School, or by private tutor, or in the form of apprenticeship to the clan profession. Depending on the type of education, the character will get levels in various skills. Also, some skills are closely bound into the culture and are acquired by everyone during their childhood. To reflect this, all native Tsolyáni have the following skill-levels according to their Social Status:

Etiquette	Social Status/2 +6
Historian	1
Theologian	1
Tsolyáni(spoken)	Social Status/2 +6

### Temple School

Attendance at a Temple School is possible if the character meets one of three requirements.

- (1) Reasoning is 13 or more, indicating aptitude for the priesthood.
- (2) Parent is a priest or high official (7th Circle or higher), entitling the child to free education.
- (3) Basic Social Status is 6 or more, allowing the family to pay for education.

This assumes the character grew up in a large city. In rural areas, opportunities for education are very much more limited.

than the base level. The supreme head of a very high lineage in a noble clan will therefore be of the 32nd social level: subordinate only to an Imperial Prince.

### [2] Hierarchical Circle

By advancing to high Circle as a priest, soldier or bureaucrat, a character is able to increase his Social Status also. (Thus a 15th Circle Ritual Priest will be treated as having exalted social standing even if he happens to be of lowly origin.) To determine whether this has any bearing on the character’s Social Status, apply the appropriate modifier from the list below to his professional Circle. If this leads to a higher Social Status than the base value given in [1] above, use the modified value from [2] instead.

PROFESSION	MODIFIER
Ritual Priest	x 1
Admin Priest	x 0.9
Scholar Priest	x 0.8
Warrior Priest	(as mdm infantry)
Lay-Priest I-VI	x 0.4
Lay-Priest VII-XII	x 0.6
Lay-Priest XII-XV	x 0.8
Lay-Priest XVI-up	x 1
Heavy Infantry*	x 1 to x 1.5**
Medium Infantry	x 0.9 to x 1.2**
Light Infantry	x 0.75
Sákbe guards, etc	x 0.5
Bureaucrat	x 1.0

\* Heavy infantry start at 2nd Circle.

\*\* Status varies according to legion.

In addition, a priest who holds actual office, rather than merely belonging to a Circle, adds +1 to +3 to his effective Social Status determined from professional rank. See Sourcebook 1.832.

Note that this only determines whether the character’s standing due to professional rank supercedes his standing due to clan and lineage. It has nothing to do with the character’s authority and status within his temple, etc. An 8th Circle priest of the Broken Bough Clan will expect a 2nd Circle priest to show due deference, even if the latter happens to be a scion of the Ssánmirin who outranks him socially.

### [3] Public display

A sumptuous lifestyle can “lend” status, affecting how the character is addressed by those unsure of his clan’s position. By adopting the dress and expenditure of a higher social rank, you can average your true Social Status with that you are emulating. Bear in mind that you need more than jewels and fine clothes to pass yourself off as a noble: elegant manners, a retinue of servants, and a liveried guard or two.

### Extra-curricular skills

Characters will also pick up skills during childhood that are not part of their formal education, as a result of day-today experience.

#### Foreign languages

A character whose home city is adjacent to or connected by Sákbe to a foreign border can acquire levels in the language of that country: roll 1D6 and subtract 1 per 100 Tسان distance along the Sákbe to the border. For the purposes of language acquisition, ports count as being directly adjacent to all countries connected along the coast.

#### Local knowledge

A character of Social Status 1-8 acquires levels of the City Lore skill equal to Cleverness/4. A character of Social Status 9 or more gains only 1 level of City Lore, but additionally rolls 1D3 for his or her High Society skill-level.

#### Outdoor skills

Characters will also gain expertise in athletic and survival skills appropriate to their locale. Around Fasiltum you would learn a little of Desert Survival; around Hekéllu, Mountaineering &/or Swimming, and so on. Roll 1D3+1 and divide the total among the skills you wish to acquire. (Bear in mind that Tirikélu provides for characters originating in urban areas. Rural characters would logically gain more levels in these outdoor skills, but fewer in languages and City Lore.)

<i>skill</i>	<i>levels gained</i>
Theologian	Reasoning/3
Literacy	5 + Reasoning/3
Calligrapher	Reasoning/3
Mathematician	Reasoning/3
Historian	Reasoning/3
<i>and either</i>	
Warrior	1 (war-temples only)
<i>or</i>	
Linguist (Modern)	1 (any temple)

### Private Tuition

A character's whose Social Status is 10 or more can have been educated at home. The subjects taught are usually much the same, though the parents may stipulate changes in the curriculum. Roll 2D10 and add the character's Reasoning. This is the number of levels that the character can split between the various skills listed here:

Astrologer	Artist/Sculptor	Bow
Calligrapher	Dancer	Geographer
Historian	Literacy	Mathematician
Musician	Poet	Strategist
Sword	Theologian	

No skill should be taken to more than 4th level at this stage. At least one level must be taken in Literacy. Since this allocation represents the choice made by the character's parents when he was a child, it is up to the referee and not the player.

### Clan apprenticeship

A character who cannot (or chooses not to) be educated at a Sijikkán or by private tutor will be apprenticed into the clan profession. Instead of skill-levels, the player gets 800 Improvement Points which he can use to purchase levels in the clan's main profession(s). Those clans with a military or gladiatorial tradition (such as Eye of Flame or Standing Reed) can indeed provide training in the Soldier, Warrior and Weapon skills.

### [142] Early adult life

This covers the character's skill acquisition between 15-19 years of age. Those suited to become priests or officials now embark on their "apprenticeship" in these careers, while militarily inclined young men (and Aridáni women) can enlist for a five-year term in a legion. Others return to their clans having completed basic education - either to work in the clan's profession or (if noble) to enjoy a life of leisure.

Unless a character is particularly incompetent in his career, he should rise eventually to the Circle that corresponds to his Social Status. After this, genuine merit (or personal wealth) is needed to secure further advancement. By age 20 the character will have reached a Circle equivalent to half his Social Status, rounding up. This applies equally to the Priesthood, the Military and the Civil Service.

### The Priesthood

The character can embark on more advanced training by fulfilling the conditions required to be initiated as a priest. It is very rare for anyone to retire from the priesthood - usually this would only be due to ill health, political disfavour or the pressure of clan interests. Since most priestly careers are very limiting on freedom, players who dislike a tight rein should opt for the relative latitude given to Lay-Priests. Otherwise you must expect only to go on adventures that are assigned by your superiors.

*Ritual Priests* must have Reasoning of 12 or more. The character gains the following skill-levels: Theologian +7, Linguist (Modern) +3, Historian +3, Linguist (Ancient) +3, Divination +3, Dancer +2, Poet +1,

Artist +1, Musician +1. If you meet the requirements to use magic (Chapter 6) you can substitute up to 4 levels of Ritual or Psychic Sorcerer for any skill-levels except Theologian. Worshipers of Dlamélish or Hriháyal may acquire up to 6 levels of Paramour in place of other skills.

*Scholar-Priests* must have Reasoning of 13 or more. The character gains the following skill-levels: Calligraphy +4, Linguist (Ancient) +6, Theologian +4, Historian +5. The character also gets 6 levels to apply to one of the following skills: Scholar, Sorcerer, Demonologist, Astrologer, Alchemist, Physician, Mathematician, Geographer, Geologist, Engineer Architect, Magical Lore or Botanist.

*Administrative Priests* must have either Reasoning of at least 9 or Social Status of at least 6. The following skill-levels are acquired: Administrator +6, Linguist (Modern) +4, Etiquette +4, Theologian +2, Orator +3, Poet +2, Calligraphy +2, Scribe +2, Intrigue +1.

*Lay-Priests* should have Reasoning of at least 12. The character acquires the same skill selection as a Ritual Priest or a Scholar-Priest (player's choice as to which).

*Warrior-Priests* need Strength and Stamina of at least 9. The character gets +1 to both these attributes, along with the following skill levels: Theologian +1, Soldier +1, Linguist (Modern) +1, Etiquette +2, Weaponskill (usually Sword) +5, secondary Weaponskill (usually Dagger) +3, Administration +1. (Certain temples impart the unarmed martial arts in place of a secondary Weaponskill - see Section 1.960 of the *Tékumel Source Book*.)

### The Military

Characters who went on to join a legion will just be completing their five-year enlistment period at age 20. During this time the character will have received basic training but is unlikely to have seen real action up until 2356 AS, when open war broke out between Tsolyánu and Yán Kór. Assuming the campaign starts in 2357 AS, characters can either re-enlist (in which case they will almost certainly be sent to fight in the north) or they can make use of their military training for personal gain by becoming a bodyguard, gladiator or adventurer.

*Heavy Infantry:* To join a heavy infantry legion, you should have Strength and Stamina of at least 13. (A character of Social Status 8 or higher will get preferential treatment, and can join as long as his Strength and Stamina are both at least 12.) The character gains +2 Strength and Stamina as well as the skills listed below.

*Medium Infantry:* The character must have Strength and Stamina of at least 12 (or 11 if he has Social Status 7+). He gets +1 on both attributes, plus the skill-levels listed.

*Light Infantry or Archers:* The character should have Stamina and Dexterity of at least 12 (11 if his Social Status is 5 or more) and gets +1 on both attributes. Other skill levels are as given.

After completing his first period of enlistment, the character will have these skill-levels:

Armourer +1	Physician +1	Soldier +6
Strategist +2	Warrior +1	
primary weapon skill +5		
secondary weapon skill +4		

The weapons learned are those used by the legion, a comprehensive listing of which is given in *The Armies of Tékumel* volume 1. Members of temple-run legions will be priestly Acolytes at least, and get +1 Theologian in place of one of the listed skill levels. Marines should be

### Off-duty learning

The process of “osmosis” by which characters acquire extra-curricular skills of course continues into early adult life. Those who join the army will very probably be posted to new locales, providing them with the opportunity to develop skills previously denied them. Bureaucrats too get the opportunity for travel, and even priests may be required to undertake journeys to distant (even foreign) climes. After determining the results of Section 142, therefore, you can acquire additional levels in such extra-curricular skills.

### Languages

Roll 1D6 and subtract 1 per 100 Tsan of Sákbé road between your location and the border. This is how many further skill-levels you get in the language of the neighbouring country. As before, ports count as adjacent to those countries sailing ships into them, as opportunities to meet and speak with foreigners abound. If you actually spend your early adult life in a foreign country, gain 1D6 + Cleverness/5 skill-levels in the language.

### Local knowledge

Add another level of City Lore. If you are a bureaucrat or have Social Status 9+, take no more City Lore but add 1D3 levels of High Society instead.

### Outdoor skills

Acquire 1D6 levels in skills appropriate to the region.

### The cost of living

There are six principal forms of expenditure by which characters will disburse their income.

*Essentials* comprise the basic requirements of clothing and food needed to maintain the character. The amount varies according to his position in society. The usual arrangement is that the character makes a contribution to his clan and then the clan provides what he needs. A character not resident at his clanhouse should increase these prices by 20%.

SOCIAL STATUS	MONTHLY EXPENSE
1-3	1D6+4 Káitars
4-5	1D10+10 Káitars
6	1D10+20 Káitars
each +1	additional 10 Káitars

*Inducements* are one-off presents, often cash, made to secure a specific service or favour. They are rarely made within the clan. Inducements range from a few Hlášh up to a month's salary or more. For a character in regular employment, inducements paid and received will typically balance out. In irregular circumstances (that promotion you want so badly) they should be gamed.

*Gifts* are presents given to cement or affirm one's relationship with kin and friends. They are often made within the clan. Usually gifts do not consist of cash but of items intended to appeal to the recipient: a Méshqu set for a friend, an epic poem for a favourite father, and so on. Characters should spend at least 10% of their monthly income on gifts. Reciprocity will naturally mean they receive gifts also: calculate the character's monthly expenditure on "un-gamed" gifts (ie to non-player characters) and assume he is given gifts totalling 51%-150% of that value.

*Tax* in Tsolyánu is 1% of income.

*Gambling* by its very nature rarely results in a gain. Characters should decide how much they are apportioning on wagers in a month, then roll 1D10: 1-8 = sum is lost; 9 = no gain or loss; 10 = jackpot of 1-6 times original stake.

*Luxuries* cover everything else, and will probably include arms & armour in the case of many player-characters. Prices are usually quoted in Káitars, but you are advised to use the Hlášh as the basic unit for day-to-day transactions (1 Káitar = 20 Hlášh), as there is a tendency for players to overspend when dealing in Káitars.

treated as medium infantry except that they replace 4 levels of the Soldier skill with Sailor instead.

Other military or paramilitary units include sappers, artillery, Sákbe road guards, tomb police, city militia and prison guards. These units lack glory and prestige, so most player-characters would not wish to join them. This depends on the players' campaign tastes, however. Interesting plot lines could still be woven around a group of market police, for instance, and the referee should have no difficulty assigning appropriate skills if these are needed.

### The Imperial Bureaucracy

The life of a bureaucrat need not be as tedious as it sounds. There are few opportunities for derring-do, admittedly, but it gives an ideal basis for a campaign that hinges on stratagems and intrigues.

Any literate character can become a bureaucrat. He or she will have acquired the following skill-levels before the campaign begins:

Administrator +6	Calligraphy +2	Etiquette +6
Intrigue+4	Linguist (Modern) +3	
Orator +2	Poet +2	Scribe +2

### The Clan

Characters who do not join one of the three institutions of Priesthood, Military or Imperial Bureaucracy continue to acquire skills at home with their clan. For most this means learning a profession that will benefit the clan, either by directly joining the clan's traditional occupation or by administrating the clan finances. Noble clans employ subservient clans for procedures such as accounting, and an idle member of such a clan can use his private income to sponsor a life of hunts, banquets and hobbies.

If your character belongs to a clan operating a profession, he gets +6 skill-levels in that profession. A noble character can spend these points on one or more "hobby" skills such as Antique Collector. Since duelling is part of the aristocratic image, it is also possible for the noble to spend some of these points to acquire levels of a Weapon skill - but not Warrior. (No more than 3 levels ought to be acquired at this stage, though, unless the character is supposed to be obsessive.) Private tuition in magic can also be arranged if the young noble has an aptitude for this.

### [150] Wealth and income

After running through the preceding sections, the character is now 20 years old, equipped with skills and almost ready to start play. It only remains to find out how much money he has managed to save up. This sum does not have to be in the form of cash - in fact it almost certainly would not be, since the Tsolyáni system of inter-clan favours means that currency is seldom used for large purchases. More probably it will take the form of armour, weaponry, fine clothes or books. The player should decide this after looking through the price lists given in subsequent chapters, but for now it will do just to record the sum on the Character Sheet as if it were cash.

### The career man

A character who joined one of the three "grand careers" (Priesthood, Army or Civil Service) should now know his Circle. By age 20, the character will have saved 50 Káitars per Circle attained. A character who has reached 5th Circle will have amassed savings of 250 Káitars, for instance.

### The clan professional

For a character who joined his clan profession, savings are based on the level obtained in the clan's professional skill. The character gets 30 Káitars per level. This means that a 9th level Shipbuilder, say, would start the game with 270 Káitars.

### The aristocrat

A character of noble clan whose Social Status is at least 10 will have a private income. Expressed as Káitars per month, this income amounts to 10 times the character's Social Status. The character will have managed to save no more than D100 Káitars, however, as largesse is important to the young aristocrat's way of life.

### [160] Other races and species

Some players prefer to play characters of other nations – or even nonhumans. Remember that although Tsolyánu is one of the most open of the Five Empires (in comparison to Livyánu, say) the people are distrustful of anything that is not familiar or well understood. Around the Chákas, a Pé Chói character mixing in human society is not an occasion for comment. In Jakálla, the character would be much more of a rarity and would have to expect some prejudice.

The rules covering background and initial skills (Section 130 onwards) are intended for urban Tsolyáni and no other character types. The dice rolls for attributes apply equally well to people of other nationalities, but if a player wants to be from another country then some of the background rules must be customised. Though childhood education is much the same throughout the Five Empires, the life of a young adult might be very different. The referee should be able to decide appropriate skills for foreigners based on the information in the *Tékumel Souce Book*.

The player who wants to take a N'lüss or a nonhuman is another matter. Even the basic attributes are different for these types, and usually they have some advantage over ordinary humans. *Tirikélu* is a role-playing game, not a competitive game. If players take exceptional character types, it ought to be because they find the role challenging. The referee should disallow any but the most experienced players from taking N'lüss or nonhuman characters.

### [161] N'lüss

N'lüss are powerful barbarians from the far northwest beyond Mu'ugalavya. They are the distant descendants of the Dragonlords and tend to worship Lord Vimúhla. They are honest, brave and honourable, but also coarse and unruly. Despite some people's prejudices, N'lüss are definitely human and can interbreed with other human races. However, they have been sufficiently isolated from the people of the Five Empires to retain their own unique characteristics. As a N'lüss character, you get the following modifiers to your attributes: Strength +3, Dexterity -1, Reasoning -4, Psychic Ability -2, Psychic Reservoir +1, Comeliness -3, Height +5, Build +4. Negative modifiers will not take an attribute below 1.

### [162] Ahoggyá

Ahoggyá come from coastal lowlands. They are powerful and fearless, but unappealing to humans because of their rudeness, rank odour and monstrous appearance. An Ahoggyá gets the following adjustments to attribute rolls: Strength +6, Stamina +2, Dexterity -2, Cleverness -1, Reasoning -3, Psychic Ability -3, Psychic Reservoir -2. Roll 1D6+3 for height and 3D6+6 for build. Size for an Ahoggyá is the sum of height and build, not the average; this difference is because they are not even approximately manlike. The four powerful legs allow rapid movement in any direction, giving a bonus of +5 to Evade.

### [163] Hláka

Furred flying creatures with flexible tails, Hláka are thought of as inquisitive, talkative, feckless and timid. Certainly they get nervous in roofed-over areas. Hláka take the following attribute adjustments: Strength -2 and Dexterity +2. Roll 1D6+3 for height and 1D6+3 for build.

### Example

We'll generate a character now to show how the process works. The first thing to do is roll the dice for his attributes, and fill these in on the Character Sheet. The values rolled are:

Strength 16	Stamina 11
Dexterity 15	Psychic Ability 17
Cleverness 15	Psychic Reservoir 11
Reasoning 11	Comeliness 13
Size 11 (height 165cm, weight 61kg)	

The character is strong, but his poor constitution could tell against him in a military career. His Psychic Ability is high, suggesting an interest in abstractions and the world of the imagination, but his Reasoning disqualifies him as a sorcerer. His derived characteristics are:

Melee = 13	Missile = 7
Evade = 10	Hit Points = 14 [3/5/8]

Next we consider his clan and lineage. The referee has decreed that player-characters should have a Social Status around 7-8. We'll make him a member of an average lineage in a high clan, the Clan of the Red Stone. Consulting with the referee gives the Diodásü family as a suitable lineage, and we decide on the personal name Tetkumé. The character is thus Tetkumé hiDiodásü of the Red Stone Clan. His name suggests he is a worshipper of Lord Vimúhla, since the *tekumé* is the ritual knife used by Vimúhla's priests, and in fact this is the traditional sect of the Red Stone Clan.

Straight away we can fill in the cultural skills which all characters acquire. Tetkumé gets the following levels: Etiquette 10, Historian 1, Theologian 1, Tsolyáni 10.

Tetkumé's childhood education is the next thing to consider. His family is not wealthy enough to give him a private education at the clanhouse, but they have enough to send him to an academy. Given the clan's preferences, a school is chosen that specifically caters to worshippers of Lord Vimúhla: the Hall of the Illumination of the Flame, in Pála Jakálla. By age 16, Tetkumé has acquired the following skills: Calligrapher 4, Historian 4, Literacy 9, Mathematician 4, Theologian 4, Warrior 1. His extra-curricular activities also provide him with certain additional skills that could stand him in good stead: Salarvyáni 2, City Lore 4 and Swimming 3.

Next we discover what Tetkumé did after leaving the academy up until age

20 (when the campaign starts). He rejects the possibility of being an Administrative Priest, and even though he could choose to be a Warrior Priest he decides against it. Despite his merely average Stamina, he does qualify for the medium infantry (the privilege of class) and duly enlists with the Legion of the Lord of Red Devastation, 18th Imperial Medium Infantry. Throughout the period of Tetkumé's enlistment, the legion spends most of its time in Khirgár. This allows him to acquire 2 levels of Milumanayáni, 1 further level of City Lore and (after some pleading with the referee) 1 level of Desert Survival by reason of the legion's Qadámi excursions into the arid fringes of Milumanayá.

At the end of his tenure his Strength and Stamina have both increased by 1 point and his total acquired skill levels are now:

Armourer 1, Calligrapher 4, City Lore 5, Desert Survival 1, Etiquette 10, Historian 5, Literacy 9, Mathematician 4, Milumanayáni 1, Physician 1, Salaryvnyáni 2, Soldier 6, Swimming 3, Tactician 2, Theologian 9, Tsolyáni 10, Twohanded Sword 5, Warrior 2. (The Legion of Red Devastation use no secondary weapon, so the referee has allowed Tetkumé's player to add the excess levels on to Theologian instead.)

As the campaign begins, Tetkumé has an overall Melee value (see Section 410) of 20 with the two-handed sword. Though he has no formal training in other weapons, his Warrior skill means that he can use them with a Melee value of 15. This makes him a very respectable fighter indeed. He is not much good with missile weapons, which he disdains. While in the legion he attained a Circle equivalent to half his Social Level. Checking with the sidebar on page five, and given the high prestige of Red Devastation, this means he reached IIIrd Circle ( $8 \times 0.5 = 4 = 3 \times 1.2$ , rounding up). He was a Tirrikámu, a commander of twenty men. His savings of 150 Káitars are taken in the form of personal armour and sword, plus clothing appropriate to his class.

If he were to sign on for another term in the legion, his obvious ability should eventually lead to Kási rank: commander of a cohort of four hundred men. But Tetkumé has had enough of army life for now. He feels that his Skein of Destiny has some great adventures in store. On a hunch (he has learnt to trust his intuition) Tetkumé heads for the Jakállan wharf, where he is fated to meet a group of like minded young men and women...

#### [164] Páchi Léi

Forest-dwelling creatures who are excellent climbers and hunters. They are friendly to Tsolyánu, and some Páchi Léi have risen to high positions in human society. For historical reasons they harbour a hatred of the Mu'ugalavyáni. A Páchi Léi character is subject to the following attribute modifiers: Dexterity +1; Psychic Reservoir +1. Roll 2D6+4 for both height and build.

#### [165] Pé Chói

The most human-like in outlook of all the nonhumans. Pé Chói are cultured, graceful and wise. They can make excellent duellists or skirmishers, but their delicate build makes them unsuitable as heavy infantry. If you want a Pé Chói character, adjust your attribute rolls as follows: Stamina -1, Dexterity +1, Psychic Ability +2, Psychic Reservoir +2, Height +6. Roll 2D6 for build.

#### [166] Pygmy Folk

Pygmy Folk are characterised as sly and cautious rather than timid. This race has a reputation for cruelty and venality which makes them distrusted by humans. A Pygmy Folk character gets the following attribute modifiers: Strength -2 and Dexterity +3. Height (usually around 70cm) and build are so far off the human scale that it is not worth rolling for them. Determine Size directly by a D3+1 roll.

#### [167] Shén

These creatures are harsh and warlike, disdaining the arts and sciences. Though respected fighters, they can become uncontrollably violent and their terrible strength makes them almost as dangerous to allies as to foes. A Shén character applies the following modifiers to its attribute rolls: Strength +6, Dexterity -2, Reasoning 4, Psychic Ability -2. Roll 3D6+10 for both height and build.

#### [168] Swamp Folk

A generally friendly species that has (perhaps unfairly) acquired a slight reputation for excessive caution. They are renowned throughout the Five Empires as great sailors and traders. A Swamp Folk character is rolled in the same way as for a human with the following exceptions: Stamina 2D10+1, Psychic Ability 1D6, and Psychic Reservoir 1D6+1. Swamp Folk appear slightly taller than humans, but this is due to the slender cranial crest and so the height roll is unchanged.

#### [169] Tinalíya

Another midget race, but generally better liked than the Pygmy Folk. Tinalíya are diligent, learned and peaceful. Their only real flaw is a tendency to be over-literal. A Tinalíya applies the following modifiers: Strength -3, Stamina +1, Dexterity +2, Cleverness +1, Reasoning +3, Psychic Ability +3, Psychic Reservoir +2. Height (average 65cm) and build are not determined; roll 1D3+1 for Size.



NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Lineage \_\_\_\_\_

Clan \_\_\_\_\_

Clan Status \_\_\_\_\_

Family Status \_\_\_\_\_

Family Wealth \_\_\_\_\_

Social Circle \_\_\_\_\_

Nationality \_\_\_\_\_

Home Town \_\_\_\_\_

Temple \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Profession \_\_\_\_\_

Circle \_\_\_\_\_

Education \_\_\_\_\_

Marital Status \_\_\_\_\_

Family \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Description \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

CURRENT WEALTH

INCOME

REGULAR OUTGOINGS

*Possessions:*

Encumbrance:

## [200] SKILLS

A character's chance to do various things is represented by his level in a range of skills. The skill of Armourer, for example, covers the construction, maintenance, and repair of weapons and armour. If you know nothing at all about such things then you are level 0 in the skill. By studying the skill you can advance to level 1 (the faintest smattering of armouring ability) right through to level 30 (representing one of the greatest artisans in all history). The levels break down roughly as follows:

### level 1-3: Yarsúr

A hobbyist's competence. The level at which a Tsolyáni aristocrat might maintain a skill (such as Armourer) which could come in useful but which is not entirely dignified.

### level 4-6: Tiyótl

The level suitable for an apprentice. An experienced adventurer would hopefully have a number of useful skills such as Armourer, Physician, Swimmer, etc, to at least this level.

### level 7-9: Msínu

Equivalent to a journeyman. If you hired a house priest, for instance, you might reasonably expect him to have this many levels in the Theologian skill.

### level 10-12: Gámra

A craftsman. This is a suitable level for someone who is fully competent in his profession and uses the skill on a day-to-day basis.

### level 13-15: Huáthu

Master-Craftsman.

### level 16-18: Huáthudali

High Master-Craftsman.

### level 19-21: Huáthudalisa

Senior Master-Craftsman.

### level 22-25: Huáthudalidalisa

A Grand Master of the skill. Someone who attains this level in a discipline will be one of the four or five greatest exponents of the skill throughout all Tsolyánu.

### level 26-up

The level appropriate to a truly outstanding person, a genius in his field. Famous wizards such as Subadím and Qiyór presumably had at least 30 levels in the Sorcerer skill. Hagárr, the legendary buccaneer of Paránta, must have had 30 levels in the Ship Captain skill. A player character who attains such lofty heights will have risen from his inauspicious beginning in Jakálla to be one of the greatest luminaries of the age!

## [210] Types of skill

Skills are divided into four categories according to how difficult it is to learn them. These four categories are:

Basic	50 Improvement Points per level
Simple	75 Improvement Points per level
Average	125 Improvement Points per level
Complex	200 Improvement Points per level

### A working wage

It is not possible to give a simple formula showing how much a character will be paid for using his skills. Certain skills are esteemed out of proportion to their difficulty, and therefore demand higher rates. Also, some jobs require "danger money". The table below is intended only as a rough guide. (For comparison with these figures, an unskilled labourer would be happy to receive 3-5 Káitars a month.)

### MONTHLY INCOME BY SKILL-LEVEL

	1-3	4-6	7-9	10-12
<i>semi-skilled</i>	10 K	15 K	20 K	30 K
<i>artisan</i>	15 K	30 K	45 K	65 K
<i>professional</i>	20 K	40 K	60 K	90 K

(Income increases by about 50% for every three further levels.)

Wages for the "grand professions" are:

### PRIESTHOOD & BUREAUCRACY

Circle	Monthly income
1st	10 Káitars
2nd	15 Káitars
3rd	20 Káitars
4th	30 Káitars
5th	50 Káitars
6th	70 Káitars
7th	90 Káitars
8th	110 Káitars
9th	150 Káitars
10th	200 Káitars
11th	300 Káitars
12th	500 Káitars

(Thereafter income increases exponentially, roughly doubling every three Circles.)

### ARMY

Rank	Monthly income
Changadéshta	15 Káitars
Kuruthúni	20 Káitars
Tirrikámu	30 Káitars
Heréksa	70 Káitars
Kási	200 Káitars
Molkár	500 Káitars
Dritlán	800 Káitars
Kérdu	2000 Káitars and up

The sidebar below and on the facing page categorizes the skills according to complexity and lists each skill's governing attribute.

#### **BASIC skills**

Animal Husbandry	Cleverness
Baker	Cleverness
Basket Weaver	Cleverness
Boatbuilder	Cleverness
Bootmaker	Cleverness
Butcher	Cleverness
Carpenter	Cleverness
Cook	Cleverness
Farmer	Cleverness
Financier	Reasoning
Fisherman	Cleverness
Miller	Cleverness
Miner	Reasoning
Potter	Cleverness
Rope-&-net maker	Cleverness
Sailor	Cleverness
Slaver	Reasoning
Smith	Cleverness
Swimming	Cleverness
Tailor	Cleverness
Tanner	Cleverness
Weaving	Cleverness

#### **SIMPLE skills**

Acrobat	Cleverness
Animal/bird knowledge	Cleverness
Athlete	Cleverness
City Lore	Cleverness
Connoisseur	Reasoning
Dancer	Cleverness
Etiquette	Reasoning
Falconer	Cleverness
Fletcher	Cleverness
Forest Survival	Cleverness
Gaming	Reasoning
High Society	Cleverness
Interpreter (modern)	Reasoning
Literacy *	Reasoning
Merchant	Cleverness
Mason	Cleverness
Mountaineer	Cleverness
Paper/ink maker	Reasoning
Perfumer	Reasoning
Tracker	Cleverness
Winemaker	Reasoning

(\* "Basic" in the case of one's native language)

Players will soon find that most of the skills they want fall in the last category.

A character who has no levels in a skill must acquire double the usual number of Improvement Points to reach level 1 in the skill. If you have no levels of the Sorcerer skill (which is a Complex skill), you need 400 points to reach 1st level. You then progress normally in the skill - ie, 200 points per level in this case.

#### **[220] Improving skill-levels**

In order to increase your level in a skill you must acquire a certain number of Improvement Points in that skill. The number of points needed depends on the complexity of the skill - see Section 210. Once you have got enough Improvement Points, you advance one level in the skill (see Section 200). You then start saving up Improvement Points for the next level.

There are two ways to acquire Improvement Points. The first is by experience. That is, practical experience "in the field", awarded for overcoming a foe or otherwise using a skill effectively during an adventure. The other way to gain Improvement Points is by studying. This involves practice and training in the use of the skill, and will usually take place in between adventures.

#### **[221] The pen and the sword**

Cultural preconceptions tend to channel a individual's learning into specific skill-groupings. Additionally, personal preference encourages the archetypal dichotomy of academic versus practical skills: "men of deliberation" as opposed to "men of action". As a general rule, Tsolyáni nobles tend to affect an aristocratic disdain for scholarship, while the lower classes rarely get the opportunity for advanced education. Scholars will usually be of middle clan, therefore, leaving the high and low clans to make up the bulk of the soldiery.

Once the campaign begins, you must decide your character's preference. Will you concentrate on scholarly pursuits like Sorcery, or on acquiring practical (usually physical) skills such as Warrior? If you opt to be a scholar, you can continue to increase your Reasoning-based skills without limit, but skills based on Cleverness are limited to an upper level equal to your Cleverness/3. The reverse is true for characters with a practical inclination.

This does not affect skill-levels acquired prior to age 20 (ie, after completing Section 140). These abilities were gained before the character realised his vocation, and are not reduced if they exceed the foregoing limits.

#### **[230] Experience**

Improvement Points from experience are gained in the course of play. Points are gained every time a character makes a successful skill-check, with difficult rolls earning more Improvement Points. Say that the number the character must roll is N. The number of Improvement Points earned for a successful roll is then

$$\text{Improvement Points} = 20 \text{ minus } N$$

For example, take the case of an 8th level Ritual Sorcerer with a rating of +3 in the Fulguration phylum. He decides to cast a spell of this phylum, needing to roll 11 or less on 2D10 to cast the spell; if successful, this earns him 9 Improvement Points.

Points awarded for successful skill-checks can only be gained during the course of a game, and the referee must be satisfied that the activity represents a legitimate challenge to the character's ability. Specifically, it

must be a situation where failure (especially critical failure) will have some repercussion. You cannot just do a couple of cartwheels while going along the Sákbe and expect an increase in your Acrobat level. (But do the same cartwheels on the parapet of the Sákbe and that is another matter!)

When Improvement Points are awarded for defeating hostile beings, another system is used. This is because combat does not usually involve a direct use of skill-checks, and also because the peril to the character's own life intensifies the value of the experience.

A character who overcomes an opponent in melee can add the Improvement Points he gains to either his Warrior skill or to the appropriate weapon skill. A character who shoots an opponent gets points on his appropriate ranged weapon skill. The Improvement Points gained for a conflict are found by comparing the victor's skill-level with the Defeat Value of the loser. A being's Defeat Value is a number reflecting how tough an opponent it was.

**Melee** The victor takes his level in the Warrior skill or his skill in the weapon he was fighting with – whichever is higher. He then compares this to the loser's Melee value minus 10. The points can be added as the victor wishes to either Warrior or the weapon used.

**Missiles** The victor takes his skill in the missile weapon, reading the column that corresponds to the loser's armour protective rating. (For slaying a foe in heavy Chlén-hide armour, an archer would consult the "4-6" column on the table, because heavy Chlén hide plate has a defensive value of 5.) The Improvement Points gained are added to the missile weapon used.

#### IMPROVEMENT POINTS GAINED FOR EXPERIENCE

winner's level	loser's Defeat Value								
	0	1-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-16	17-20	21-24	25 up
1-3	10	20	30	50	80	120	170	230	300
4-6	8	10	15	25	40	80	120	175	250
7-9	5	8	10	15	25	35	75	120	175
10-12	4	5	8	10	15	25	35	75	120
13-15	3	4	5	8	10	15	25	35	75
16-18	2	3	4	5	8	10	15	25	35
19-21	1	2	3	4	5	8	10	15	25
22 up	1	1	2	2	4	4	5	8	15

\* melee: Defeat Value = Melee score minus 10  
 missile: Defeat Value = armour protective rating

#### [231] Dividing experience between several winners

When the battle is purely one-on-one, there is no problem in awarding Improvement Points. In cases where more than one character is involved in a victory, the referee first decides what proportion of the victory was due to each combatant and then awards them experience in that proportion.

**example** Suppose that Verúshan (who has 10 levels in the Warrior skill) and his companions Arésha and Dekkudál (both 5th level Warriors) jointly defeat Shómish Kagái (who has a Melee value of 25). For simplicity's sake, we will assume that all of them use one-handed swords and that their skill with this weapon is lower than their Warrior levels. The referee announces that Verúshan earned 70% of the victory, Arésha's contribution was 20% and Dekkudál's was 10%. This means that Verúshan gets 70% of the points that he would normally get for an opponent with Shómish's Melee value: 18 Improvement Points, which he can allot as he wishes to his Warrior and/or Longsword skills. Aresha

#### AVERAGE skills

Administrator	Reasoning
Apothecary	Reasoning
Architect	Reasoning
Armourer	Cleverness
Artist/Sculptor	Cleverness
Botanist	Reasoning
Calligraphy	Cleverness
Charáge (Wrestling)	Cleverness
Crossbowman	Cleverness
Cudgel/Club	Cleverness
Dagger	Cleverness
Desert Survival	Cleverness
Entertainer	Cleverness
Hunter	Cleverness
Jeweller-goldsmith	Cleverness
Lawyer	Reasoning
Linguist (ancient)	Reasoning
Magical Lore	Reasoning
Musician	Reasoning
Mineralogist	Reasoning
Official	Reasoning
Numismatist	Reasoning
Paramour	Cleverness
Poet	Reasoning
Soldier	Cleverness
Scribe-accountant	Reasoning
Shipbuilder	Cleverness
Ship Captain	Cleverness
Swamp Survival	Cleverness
Thief	Cleverness
Thrown weapon	Cleverness
Tomb Robber	Cleverness
Weaponmaker	Cleverness

#### COMPLEX skills

Archer	Cleverness
Assassin	Cleverness
Alchemist	Reasoning
Astrologer	Reasoning
Astronomer-Navigator	Reasoning
Dedarátl (Fisticuffs)	Cleverness
Engineer	Reasoning
Geographer	Reasoning
Geologist	Reasoning
Historian	Reasoning
Hu'ón (Kick Boxing)	Cleverness
Intrigue	Reasoning
Kichána	Cleverness
Longsword/Axe	Cleverness
Mathematician	Reasoning
Orator	Cleverness
Philosopher	Reasoning
Physician	Reasoning
Polearm	Cleverness
Psychic Sorcerer	Reasoning
Ritual Sorcerer	Reasoning
Scholar	Reasoning
Shamanistic Sorcerer	Reasoning
Shortsword	Cleverness
Spy	Cleverness
Tactics & Strategy	Reasoning
Survival	Cleverness
Theologian	Reasoning
Two-handed Sword/Axe	Cleverness
Warrior	Cleverness

### Practice makes perfect

Studying requires at least two hours set aside each day. A character who has a permanent job will have at most four hours' spare time each day, which means that he can only study two skills. However, if you are doing a full-time job then you can count your professional duties as equivalent to a self-taught studying session each day. If you are a priest, for example, you get the equivalent of one session studying the Theologian skill each day, and you can also use your time "after work" to study two other skills.

Characters who have no full-time employment can spend more time practising their skills each day. But there is a practical limit to how much one can absorb in a given time, and so it is never possible for a character to get more than four studying sessions each day.

### Increasing attributes

A regimen of training can be undertaken to increase Strength\*, Stamina, Dexterity or Psychic Ability. To do this you must set aside two hours a day (one "training slot") for a month. At the end of the month, add:

original score in attribute  
*plus* 4D6  
*minus* Psychic Reservoir score

(The 4D6 roll is a random factor indicating the amount of time you manage to free up during the month. Psychic Reservoir works against you, since "The Enemy Within" may find distractions that negate the value of the exercise program.)

Use the total as the basis for a regular 2D10 check, with a modifier of -2 for each point you are trying to raise the attribute above its original score:

*critical success* increases the attribute by 1.

*ordinary success* gives no increase, but adds a +1 modifier next time you attempt to increase the attribute.

*ordinary failure* applies a -1 modifier on your next attempt to increase the attribute.

*critical failure* "freezes" the attribute at its current score. Circle it on your Character Sheet to show that it cannot be increased.

(\*Build increases by 1 for every 2 points added to initial Strength.)

gets 20% of 80 points, which gives her 16 Improvement Points for her part in the victory. Dekkudal gets half that, which is 8 points.

### [232] Victories won using Eyes or magic items

An opponent who is slain by an Eye is not worth any Improvement Points, since it is the Eye that does the killing. The user only has to point it and press the stud. The same applies to magic items such as the Lightning Bringer or the Cup of Subadim.

There are also cases where an Eye, etc, does not directly overcome an opponent but is instrumental in achieving victory. The Eye of Non-Seeing turns its user invisible, and this makes it easier for him to defeat a foe in melee; the Eye of Being an Unimpeachable Shield Against Foes gives a tremendous defensive advantage; and so on. In such cases, reduce the Defeat Value of the loser by 3 for every Eye the winner used. Conversely, if the loser benefited from Eyes of his own, adjust his Defeat Value upwards.

### [240] Studying

Studying is the other way to gain Improvement Points in a skill. It takes place between adventures, when the character has time to practice and learn.

Your rate of progress through studying depends on three factors: your tutor's level (if you have a tutor), your own level, and your innate ability to learn. The last of these is represented by either your Reasoning or your Cleverness, depending on which is the governing attribute of the skill. Reasoning is the governing attribute in the case of skills with a theoretical or academic basis. Cleverness is the governing attribute for skills with a practical or physical basis.

At the end of each month spent in study, characters get to tally the Improvement Points they have earned. Subtract your level from your tutor's level. Double this, then add your score in the governing attribute of the skill (Cleverness or Reasoning, as explained above). The final total is the number of Improvement Points you gain that month.

**example** *Fávrenng is a soldier in the Squadrons of Tlanéno the Steersman. Engaging a tutor to instruct him in swordplay, Favrenng sets aside two hours a day for this. His tutor's level in Longsword is 15 and Fávrenng's is 7. Fávrenng has a Cleverness of 13. At the end of the month, he therefore gains 29 Improvement Points (8x2+13) in this skill. Fávrenng's duties also give him 13 Improvement Points per month to apply to his professional skill (usually Soldier, though a case can be made for spending some points on Sailor, Tactician, etc) and he gets enough spare time to study one other skill as well.*

A tutor must be of equal or higher level than the character he's training. At first it is fairly easy to find a tutor of higher level, as long as you have the money to hire him. As you become more skilled, tutors of greater ability get that much rarer - and more expensive.

It is possible to be self-taught. Once characters get to very high levels, this is really the only way other than experience to progress in a skill. In the case of self-teaching, the "tutor's" and the character's level are the same, so improvement is simply based on the Reasoning or Cleverness attribute. Access to good books on the subject may give a bonus.

### [250] How the skills are used

The basic mechanic throughout the *Tirikélu* rules is the skill check. A skill check is made by rolling 2D10. If the total is equal to or less than your level in the relevant skill, you have succeeded. If higher, you have failed. A roll of 2 is automatic success and a roll of 20 is automatic failure, whatever your skill level.

Modifiers are often applied to skill checks. "Make an Etiquette check at +10" means that you add 10 to your Etiquette skill level, and you must roll the total or less on 2D10 to succeed. A -5 skill check requires you to subtract 5 from your level before rolling, etc. Modifiers allow for tasks that are significantly easier or more difficult than the average, and generally range from +15 (the very simplest task for which a check would be needed) to -10 (a feat to challenge the greatest masters of the skill).

A skill check automatically fails (except on a roll of 2) if you have no levels in the appropriate skill. In other words, a character who is level 1 in some skill would succeed in a +5 check by rolling 6 or less on 2D10. A character with no levels in that skill would need, not a 5 or less, but a roll of 2 on 2D10.

### [251] Critical success and failure

Sometimes it is worth distinguishing a particularly resounding success - or an especially abysmal failure. Any time a character makes a successful skill check and rolls less than half the number required, this counts as a critical success. Likewise, a roll that exceeds 10 + half the needed score is a critical failure.

As an example, suppose that a player-character speaks to Prince Rereshqála at a banquet. The referee decides that an Etiquette skill check is required. If the character successfully makes the check, he has managed to conduct himself without making a faux pas. A critical success would indicate that his manners and bearing are exemplary; the prince is impressed, and this will have obvious benefits in the future. A failed Etiquette check would leave the character looking bumptious, but there would not normally be any other ill-effect. A critical failure could be much worse. This indicates that the character has committed some gross breach of decorum such as sitting down on the prince's dais or taking a drink before invited to. Given the Tsolyáni emphasis on proper behaviour, the consequences to the character's prestige, future promotion chances, etc, could be nothing short of disastrous.

The interpretation of critical success, ordinary success, ordinary failure and critical failure is often left to the referee and players. The keynotes of the game are improvisation and narrative. If a player can devise a particularly elegant interpretation of a critical success roll (or lessen the consequences of a critical failure) then the referee will hopefully incorporate this into his wider narrative. Returning to the example above, suppose the player gets a critical failure:

Referee: "You blunder horribly, using the same pronoun to address both Prince Rereshqála and the courtesan he is accompanied by. You've managed to simultaneously insult the prince and embarrass his companion..."

Player: "I immediately try to turn the blunder into a flattering allusion to Rereshqála's great-great-grandfather, Arshú'u, who married a one-time courtesan and of course later ascended to the Petal Throne."

In such a case the referee can only applaud the player's bravado - though he would presumably require the player to make a second check, this time based on the character's Etiquette and Historian skills, to see if the allusion is made with suitable adroitness.

### [252] When a skill check is made

Sometimes the need for a skill check is dictated by the rules - as when you must make a Demonology check to control a summoned demon, or a Physician check to treat a wounded companion. At other times a player may opt to make a skill check: an Antiques Connoisseur skill check to impress a visiting noble, perhaps, or a Paramour check to seduce another character. The aim is that players should have their characters act in accordance with the range of skills they possess. Very probably the

### Modifiers to skill checks

How difficult is a task? The answer to this question will determine the modifier that the referee will apply to the skill check required to accomplish the task. To some extent the modifier will depend on how the player portrays his actions (see Section 252). But the following will serve as a guideline:

<i>modifier</i>	<i>difficulty of task</i>
+15	VERY EASY: even a rank amateur can accomplish the task
+10	EASY: binding a cut, climbing a rope ladder, etc
+5	AVERAGE: this is the "default" level for a typical check
none	HARD: a professional has about a 50% chance with the task
-5	VERY HARD: remembering an obscure quotation, etc
-10	EXTREMELY DIFFICULT: even an adept will be challenged by the task
-15	SUPERHUMAN: a feat to challenge a past-master of the skill

### Criticals

The ranges for critical success and failure are as follows:

<i>req roll</i>	<i>crit success</i>	<i>crit failure</i>
2		12-20
3		12-20
4		13-20
5	2	13-20
6	2	14-20
7	2-3	14-20
8	2-3	15-20
9	2-4	15-20
10	2-4	16-20
11	2-5	16-20
12	2-5	17-20
13	2-6	17-20
14	2-6	18-20
15	2-7	18-20
16	2-7	19-20
17	2-8	19-20
18	2-8	20
19	2-9	20
20	2-9	
21	2-10	
22	2-10	
23	2-11	
<i>etc</i>		

## Climbing

Climbing ordinarily requires a Strength/Dexterity check. An average climb (check at +5) would be a rope or dangling tapestry.

In some cases, skills such as Acrobat, Mountaineer or Tomb Robber can be used instead of Strength/Dexterity. Bear in mind that what is a difficult task for one skill may be easy for another. To scale a sheer cliff face you would need to make either a -5 Strength/Dexterity check or a +5 Mountaineer check, for instance.

## Surpassing your limits

Exceptional feats can be attempted – exertions of strength and so forth. An exceptional feat must involve a short burst of effort (wrenching a fallen cart off your young son, making a titanic leap across a chasm, bending a bronze grille) and cannot be applied to prolonged activities. This means that exceptional feats will usually involve Strength or Dexterity checks (never Reasoning). The character attempting an exceptional feat must first make an unmodified Psychic Reservoir check. If successful, he is able to surpass his normal limits: add D6 to the relevant attribute for the purposes of this one exertion. If unsuccessful, his confidence wavers and he must reduce his attribute by D3 for the purposes of this check. Afterwards the attribute will return to its normal value. Note that the Psychic Reservoir check for an exceptional feat can only be attempted once for a given feat, immediately before the attribute check it is intended to affect.

way that a 12th level Musician chooses to deal with a situation will not be the same as the approach of somebody with many levels in the skill of Hunter, or Storyteller, or Demonologist, etc.

When assigning modifiers to a skill check, the referee will take into account the difficulty of the thing that the character is attempting. Also important is the way the player describes his character's actions. The check may be made at a significant bonus, or even given automatic success, if the referee is impressed by the ingenuity, elegance or daring of the scheme the player devises.

## [253] Attribute checks

As for skills, so for attributes. The range of skill-levels is purposely made to correlate to the range of possible attribute scores. That is, "very low" equates to 1-5 or so, "average" equates to the region of 9-13, and "very high" is equivalent to a skill-level or attribute of 17-up. This means that attribute checks can be made using the same 2D10 mechanic as for skill checks.

Dexterity checks are likely to be quite common in game sessions, whenever a character tries to climb a wall, sneak up on someone unseen, and so on. Strength checks apply when a character needs to make some physical exertion such as pushing a boulder aside, lifting a fallen statue off a companion, or forcing a grating out of weathered mortar. Cleverness checks will determine whether characters notice when something is amiss. Psychic Ability checks apply when they might sense a dimensional nexus point. Examples are listed in the sidebars, but the principle is universal and can (and should) be applied to innumerable game situations.

## [254] Averaging two skills

Two skills can be averaged for the purposes of a check. The boorish player-character who encountered Prince Rereshqála in Section 251 was about to make a Historian/Etiquette check when we last saw him. This is done simply by finding the average of your level in the two skills concerned, then making the check as normal. Often players will argue for two skills to be averaged because they know next to nothing about one of the skills involved. The referee must be convinced that the second skill has a bearing on the matter before allowing this.

## [255] Averaging a skill and an attribute

The principle of Section 254 can be extended to checks involving both a skill and an attribute. These are usually imposed by the referee on players when a character's attribute score might limit the extent to which he can use his skill. A character who tries to swim upstream against a powerful current could have to make a Swimmer/Strength check, for instance. A character attempting to scale a very high cliff face without pausing to rest would need to pass a Mountaineer/Stamina check. Trying to use a skill in some unusual and innovative way will often require averaging the skill with the character's Cleverness or Reasoning score. (So a sorcerer who wants to place a Doomkill so that it will cause a section of vaulting to collapse will have to make an Architect/Reasoning check... and score a hit with the spell, of course.)

## [256] Averaging two attributes

Checks involving two attributes occur less often, but they will still be needed from time to time. Often one of the two attributes will be Cleverness, as it may be important to see whether the character has the wit to act properly or make a snap judgement. One such example is when a character parries the touch of a sorcerer employing the Grey Hand spell; the character must make an Cleverness/Dexterity check to see if he thinks and acts quickly enough to drop the weapon he parried with before it conducts the spell into his body.

## [260] Competitive skill checks

Characters will sometimes need to make checks in competition with one another. Competitive checks might for example include such skills as Intrigue (politicking for position in court circles), Gaming (playing Dénden) and Paramour (vying for a lady's favour) among others. Sometimes an attribute is used as the basis for competitive checks - as when two characters lunge for a dropped weapon (Dexterity) or struggle for possession of an item (Strength).

Both characters involved should make the check using a modifier decided by the referee. If one succeeds and the other fails, the situation is resolved. If both fail, they attempt the check again (with an additional modifier of -1D10 if a critical failure). If both succeed with the check, the winner is the one who made the roll by the greater margin.

Modifiers will reflect the circumstances of the contest. All other things being equal, use the default modifier of +5. In some cases, however, circumstances will work to the benefit of one character and the detriment of the other. For instance, two generals meeting on open terrain with identical troops both need to make a +5 Strategist check. But if one general has more or better troops, or has the advantage of higher ground, his check will gain an additional bonus while his opponent's will take a penalty.

## [270] List of skills

For reasons of space, the only skills covered below are the ones that are likely to feature significantly in play.

**Acrobat** Use of this skill allows a character to perform some manoeuvres more quickly than normal. This applies notably to evading, turning round, and getting up from a prone position. A standard (+5) skill-check is typically required, though the referee may apply other modifiers according to circumstance, terrain, etc. Success allows the character to perform the action in half the usual time; critical success means that no time is taken, allowing the character to take another action (such as an attack) at the same time. A failed check means that the action takes the usual time to perform, while a critical failure means that the character wastes the round and accomplishes nothing. Acrobatics are not easy to use when wearing armour: apply a -1 modifier to the skill-check for each point of encumbrance above "Light".

**Administrator** Ability to organise and supervise a private, hieratic or clan-owned enterprise. At lower levels the skill entails day to-day management of staff. At higher levels it tends more towards the delegation of mundane responsibility, focussing instead on long term objectives. It is generally combined with at least a basic grasp of the enterprise involved: Agriculturalist, Armourer, Shipbuilder or whatever.

**Alchemist** Practical and theoretical knowledge of drugs, poisons, medicines, antidotes and aphrodisiacs. The compounds which the character is able to prepare will depend on the local availability of ingredients as well as on apparatus, time, and skill-level. This skill permits very little in the way of research or deviation from the hoary pharmacopia of the ancients. Although it confers no direct sorcerous ability, very advanced levels can give some competence at repairing Eyes and other technological devices.

**Archer** Use of a normal bow. Each level adds +1 to the user's Missile skill with this weapon.

**Artist** Proficiency in creating and appraising works in a given artistic field. The form of art studied must be specified (it could be painting, sculpture, engraving, tapestry, etc) and if several are studied then each counts as a separate skill.

## An exception to the rule

The skill check system is used in all areas of the game except one: combat, as represented by the skills of Warrior and the various weapon skills. These skills are detailed over the next three chapters. But why don't they use the same game mechanic as for other skills?

The reason is drama. Combat is inherently dramatic, usually involving moments of critical importance to the plot of an adventure. To resolve an entire melee on the basis of one skill check would be anticlimactic. Essentially, the rules of the next three chapters focus in great detail on what is actually going on during the course of a melee. This kind of detail is not necessary for more mundane skills like Tracker or Swimmer, and can be filled in by the players' imaginations and acting ability in the case of Etiquette, Paramour, Intrigue, etc.

You could change the rules around if you want. It is certainly conceivable that fights could be resolved by each player describing what he is trying to do and then making Warrior skill checks at whatever modifier the referee gives. It is also conceivable that groups who favoured a different slant to their games might develop more embellishment and detail into the Etiquette or Paramour skills. But the assumption in the *Tirikélu* rules as they stand is that players will be satisfied with one or two skill checks for most tasks, and will only demand the detail of each cut-and-thrust when embroiled in battle or spell-casting.

### Quiet as a cat

Hiding, moving silently and sneaking around without being seen are common adventure elements. These are all covered by a Stealth roll. The skills that can be used for stealth are: Assassin, Hunter, Spy, Thief or Tomb Robber. However, all characters have a "default" Stealth level equal to their Dexterity/3, which they can use if they lack enough levels of those skills.

Attempts at sneaking around involve a competitive Stealth vs Perception check. A character's Perception is equal to his Cleverness/3. Optionally, he can use instead his skill-level in Hunter, Soldier or Spy.

Average conditions for a stealth check are assumed to be equivalent to a moderately well-lit room possessing some furniture, pillars, etc, which could provide cover. In such circumstances, make a +5 competitive check of the sneaker's Stealth vs the target's Perception.

The +5 Perception check assumes that the target has some reason to suppose someone is sneaking around and is therefore alert. This would be the case for a guard who was expecting an assassin to try getting past him, for instance. If the target has less reason to be alert, the referee should reduce his Perception check bonus.

Different conditions will apply modifiers to the sneak's Stealth roll. The opposite modifiers apply to the target's Perception.

No cover	-5
Daylight	-3
Rain or fog	+3
Moonlight	+3
Darkness	+5

*example* Púrjinta is rifling the contents of a nobleman's coffers one night when the door opens. Púrjinta dives for cover behind some drapes just as a guard enters carrying a lantern. The base check will be Púrjinta's Spy skill vs the guard's Soldier skill (since these scores are higher than their Dexterity/3 and Cleverness/3 respectively). Normally both would be at +5, but the referee rules that the guard is only making a routine inspection of all the rooms in the palace and therefore reduces his modifier to +3. Additionally, since there is only the one lantern in the room the referee gives Púrjinta a further +2 to represent dim lighting and applies the reverse modifier (-2) to the guard. The overall result has Púrjinta making a Spy check at +7 vs the guard's Soldier check at +1.

**Assassin** The techniques involved in stalking and isolating a victim. Such techniques are only available to members of the assassin clans - a background which is unlikely to appeal to player characters because of the restrictions on free action. However, a character might conceivably be a former assassin from another country. The skill gives competence in a very specialised range of techniques including disguise, urban tracking, signalling, poisoning, and the use of traps. The specific weapons used by assassins (blowgun, garrote, etc) are not included under this skill and must be studied separately.

**Astrologer** Like sorcery, this skill is normally taught in the temple academies and there is only a 10% chance of finding a private tutor. It includes knowledge of the sun, planets and moons (Tékumel's pocket-cosmos contains no stars) and the ability to use an astrolabe, ephemerides, and other paraphernalia to construct horoscopes. This allows the astrologer to identify personality traits in a subject, compose synastric charts, give advice on auspicious times and enterprises, and so forth. (Actual prediction of the future is possible at higher levels, but only in an unspecific and imprecise sense: allow a 5 skill check for events of the following day, with an additional 1 per day after that.)

**Athlete** Skill at running, jumping and team sports such as Marotlán.

**Botanist** A successful +5 skill check will allow the character to identify plant-based poisons and their antidotes. An unmodified check is needed to concoct such poisons.

**Calligraphy** The ability to write in an elegant style. At higher levels the character will learn to adorn his manuscripts with embellishments and ornamental flourishes.

**Charáge** Wrestling, studied by professional Hirilákte gladiators and soldiers among others. Each level adds +1 to the user's Melee skill while fighting in this way.

**City Lore** Home knowledge of an urban locale: how to get around, where to go to get good deals, and so on. A character with many levels in this skill can be said to be "streetwise". A common use of the skill is in locating items the character needs. In the case of regular requirements (a steel sword, a building to rent, etc) in your home town this involves a standard +5 check. When searching for uncommon or illegal items, or in a city you are less familiar with, the skill-check will be more difficult.

**Connoisseur** A generic term covering a number of aristocratic hobbies. A Connoisseur is a person who collects and/or appreciates a type of thing purely for its aesthetic appeal. Each thing collected counts as a separate skill, and the player must specify the particular period or region of interest, if applicable. Examples include antique coins, furniture, arms & armour, books & manuscripts, statuary, jewellery, and fine wines.

**Crossbowman** Use of any crossbow. Each level adds +1 to the user's Missile skill when using a crossbow.

**Dagger** Use of the dagger. Each level adds +1 to the user's Melee skill while fighting with this weapon.

**Dedarátl** The Tsolyáni unarmed martial art studied by priests of Thúmis. The emphasis is on punching. Each level adds +1 to the user's Melee value while fighting with this technique.

**Demonologist** The study of the races that inhabit other Planes, including the mighty demon-rulers described in The Book of Ebon Bindings. Skill checks can be used to recognise the various demon-glyphs and to know the charms that will ward off a particular demon. At higher levels, the

character can attempt summonings. These are at a negative modifier (ranging from -1 for Chríya up to -15 in the case of Lord Origób) and often require several evocators working in unison. Critical failure is certain to result in doom, while critical success is the very minimum that will actually summon the demon in person. Also note that a high level of skill does not guarantee that the demon will be well disposed towards you.

**Entertainer** Characters must specialize in a particular form of entertainment. Acrobat, Dancer and Musician are all covered elsewhere. Other forms include: recital of the epics, juggling, storytelling, judging games of Tsahtén, sleight-of-hand, puppetry, and performance of dramas.

**Etiquette** Knowledge of how to behave appropriately, an important skill in the stratified and honour-conscious society of Tsolyánu. It includes familiarity with customs, honorifics and polite language. At higher levels the skill extends to the intricacies of courtly graces. Etiquette skill-checks are required in situations where the character is trying to impress someone (or to avoid insulting them). Modifiers vary according to the social circle involved: being polite to a stall-owner in the market requires a +5 check, but to impress a senior Imperial bureaucrat you might need to check at -5.

**Gaming** Skill in playing a board game such as Dénden or Daghórr. The character must choose a specific game, as the skill does not give competence in all games. Purely random games (Kévuk, Tsahtén, etc) can be studied, but in this case higher levels do not give any better chance of winning - merely the ability to discourse more knowledgeably about the game. Such a thing is, however, considered the mark of a gentleman.

**High Society** Knowledge of relationship, ranking and gossip in court circles. A +5 check is enough to remember details of the glitterati of one's home city or of the Imperial family. A critical success indicates a particularly juicy snippet that can then be used as a bonus to an Intrigue roll.

**Historian** Expertise in the known history of the world. For every four levels of the skill, the character can acquire more detailed knowledge of one particular period and locale. However, specialising in a period requires you to first learn the language of that period. (A character would need to know Engsvanyáli, for instance, before he could make a detailed study of the history of Éngsvan hla Gánga.) Successful uses of the Historian skill allow a character to recall historical events, identify artifacts, research the history of people and places, etc. A failed skill-check means that nothing is remembered, and critical failure indicates that what the character remembers is incorrect (the referee should misinform the player).

**Hunter** The arts of tracking and stalking, usually in forest areas. A +5 check allows the character to identify types and numbers of animals from their spoor and to track them to their lair. By itself the skill confers no expertise with weapons. A +5 Hunter check allows the character to trap sufficient game in a day to feed 1-3 people (cf Survival). A +5 check based on the average of Hunter and a weapon skill such as Crossbow yields enough food for 1-6 people.

**Hu'ón** The secret unarmed martial art of the priesthood of Ksáru, the emphasis being on kicks and leg-sweeps. Each level adds +1 to the user's Melee value while fighting with this technique.

**Intrigue** This is the skill of politics, usually used to advance one's own position or disadvantage a rival. For instance, two courtiers might make competitive Intrigue checks to vie over who should hold Prince Mridóbu's chumétl cup when he has an audience with the Lord Provost. Such a thing may seem trivial, but the effect on the two courtiers' status could be considerable!

## Puppet shows

Puppets (ketkéta) are about 15cm high, made of lacquered wood and horn, and ornamented with metal and coloured glass. They are directed by a team of puppeteers (ketketári) from one of two clans, the Clan of the Striding Incantation and the Clan of the Unseen Hands. Popular belief has it that the foremost practitioners of the art use magic to animate the puppets, but if so it must be rare and circumscribed by ritual use, because there are no authenticated accounts (despite plenty of folk stories) of puppets being employed for other uses such as spying.

As a puppet show is performed, a group of puppeteers chant in the background, with each person's chant representing one of the puppet's heartbeats. The puppet-master strikes a wooden pipe or brushes a harp while reciting the story. This supposedly involves some improvisation, as events in the story are held to be partly independent of the puppeteers' intent.

## Méshqu

These are patterned plaques which a Tsolyáni will hang outside his door to indicate his mood or state of health to callers. A dozen different Méshqu are used by the middle classes. Nobles display their greater refinement by using almost two hundred different Méshqu. A critically failed Etiquette check by the caller means he has misinterpreted the Méshqu, with potentially amusing or mortifying results.

**Kichána** Use of the quarterstaff in combat. Each level adds +1 to the character's Melee value when fighting with this weapon.

**Linguist** This is a generic term; the character must choose which languages he knows and record his levels in each separately. A character belonging to the upper echelons of the priesthood may study the appropriate "secret language" of his sect (eg the Tongue of the Priests of Ksáru).

**Literacy** Roughly one in ten Tsolyáni is able to read and write. Bear in mind that, since some 80% of the population live in rural areas without access to proper education, it is quite possible to find whole villages where no-one is able to read.

**Longsword** Use of the standard one-handed sword, mace or axe. Each level adds +1 to the user's Melee value while fighting with such a weapon.

**Magical Lore** A useful skill for the professional adventurer, this indicates familiarity with the effects that can be achieved by sorcery and technological devices. It implies no practical skill at sorcery, merely a knowledge of its capabilities. Practising sorcerers do not require this skill, as its scope is entirely subsumed within the body of knowledge conferred by the Ritual Sorcery and Psychic Sorcery skills.

**Musician** Musical knowledge appropriate to the individual's own society. (Study of the musical forms of another region or historical period would come under the Scholar skill.) Also measures the ability to play or sing well; the character can study one instrument for every five levels in this skill. Instruments include the Sílsin (flute), Sra'úr (lyre), Ténturen ("koto"), Zamshér (horn) and Tunkúl (gong).

**Orator** The ability to formulate impressive speeches. Skill checks are of course modified according to the audience's initial mood and opinion of the speaker. Comeliness also affects the chance of success, since the people of Tsolyánu admire someone who is good looking; allow a +1 for every two points of Comeliness above 11. A critical failure on the roll might require the character to beat a hasty retreat or risk a stoning!

**Paramour** The arts of seduction and love-making. An exponent can flatter, tease, cajole and charm a person of the appropriate sex into an erotic relationship. To see if the seduction works, the character makes a Comeliness/Paramour check. This is at a modifier (decided by the referee) representing the other person's attitude, cultural pressures, etc. Once the relationship is consummated, a successful Paramour skill check ensures full concupiscence.

**Physician** The treatment of wounds, fractures, venoms and disease. Skill checks are needed to stop a fallen comrade from bleeding to death, to identify an illness or poison so that a remedy can be prescribed, and to set broken bones. Failed checks (particularly critical failures) mean that the wrong diagnosis has been made - possibly with tragic consequences. Modifiers range from +10 for simple bandaging, through +5 or so for curing common ailments, all the way to -15 for attempts at treating "incurable" diseases like the Plague of the White Hand.

**Poet** The character can compose and recite verse. Such an ability is greatly admired, and there are innumerable cases (at least in fiction) of a stern judge reprieving a prisoner after being moved by the quality of his verse. An unmodified check also allows the character to recall abstruse sections of the great epics, which may contain elements of history or folklore.

**Polearm** Use of pole weapons such as the halberd and the glaive. Each level adds +1 to the user's Melee value while fighting with these weapons.

**Psychic Sorcerer** Knowledge of magical techniques and theories. As well as the practical use of magic this encompasses aids to concentration, meditation and memory techniques. Sorcerers must be literate and fulfil certain minimum attribute scores (see Chapter Six).

**Ritual Sorcerer** Knowledge of magical techniques and theories. As well as the practical use of magic this encompasses knowledge of ancient devices, the deeds of famous wizards, the history of sorcery, and other arcane lore. Sorcerers must be literate and fulfil certain minimum attribute scores (see Chapter Six).

**Scholar** A generic term encompassing a range of skills. These are specialised arts and sciences which are appropriate to the individual's culture but which have been omitted here. The details of a character's Scholar skill must be worked out between the player and the referee. Possibilities include knowledge of a secret language, the theology and myths of a foreign country, the techniques of High Cartography, the pastoral poetry of the Bednálljan period, the study of language sculptures, and any other recondite expertise a character might want to acquire.

**Scribe-Accountant** Skill at accountancy, record keeping, filing and copying. Useful to merchants and officials, among others. Note that this is not the same as Calligraphy.

**Shortsword** Use of the shortsword (or an axe or mace of equivalent size). Each level adds +1 to the user's Melee value while fighting with such a weapon.

**Soldier** Familiarity with army life. This covers discipline, basic arms maintenance, military procedures, formations, marching and drilling, and legion history. A common game-use of the skill is for identifying the uniform of another legion. It does not include expertise in personal combat, which is acquired through levels of Warrior and various weapon skills. Soldiers often have better morale than untrained individuals because they know how dangerous it is to turn and run. A character who is on the verge of panic because of some threat can make a Soldier check to stand firm. Modifiers will depend on the perceived danger.

**Spear** Use of the spear. Each level adds +1 to the user's Melee skill while fighting with this weapon.

**Spy** This skill is quite similar to Assassin, except that it is normally learned as part of a career in the espionage sections of the military. (Some spies are trained for special duties by a clan or temple.) It includes stealth (see sidebar, page 20), disguise, urban tracking, codes, forgery, escapology, lip-reading, memory techniques and deduction.

**Survival** Levels of the generic Survival skill can be added to levels of specific regional skills (Forest Survival, Desert Survival, Swamp Survival or Mountaineer) to see if the character can survive in an area. A successful +5 skill-check each day allows the character to find enough food and water to support 1-3 persons at subsistence level. (1-6 persons on a critical success.)

**Tactics & Strategy** Knowledge of the highly complex military formations, tactics and battle-plays used in the Five Empires.

**Theologian** Knowledge of the doctrines, myths and rituals pertaining to the gods. This focusses mainly on the particular deity the character worships, but includes other gods of the pantheon. In Tsolyánu it is the deities of Pavár's pantheon that are studied. The theology of other countries may differ.

**Thief** The Thief skill involves a facility for hiding, moving quietly (see sidebar, page 20), scaling walls, cutting purses, and picking locks. Professional thievery is not common in Tsolyánu since the penalties for theft are so severe. Organised crime involving more than a few individuals is unknown. Even so, thieves are found in the larger cities (the artistry of the thieves of Jakálla is proverbial) and playing a retired thief is a viable game-option. Characters would have to be from an exceptional background to acquire this skill in Tsolyánu - probably clanless or of very low status. There is a kind of robbers' clan in Salarvya, however (the Den of Profitable Joy), and travellers from Háida Pakála are also notoriously predacious.

**Tomb Robber** Like Thief, another uncommon skill - acquired professionally by families of tomb-robbers (often related to tomb builders or guards). Player-characters might consider learning a few levels of the skill if they have Underworld adventures in mind. It entails knowledge of several skills on a very basic level, including the ability to recognise architectural styles, evaluate ancient artifacts, and identify and disarm traps. Competency in these areas is never equal to that of a specialist Historian, etc. Tomb robbers also learn to climb precipitous rock walls and squeeze through narrow spaces. (Acquiring this skill inevitably opens the character up to the many superstitions of tomb lore; the referee is free to mislead the player with snippets of folk "wisdom".)

**Tracker** The ability to follow a trail in a non-urban environment. A standard (+5) check is enough to follow the trail of a small party up to a day after they have passed. Larger parties are easier to follow; an old trail (or one that has been covered by heavy rain, etc) is more difficult. Competitive checks (see Section 260) must be made if the party being followed also contains a Tracker who is covering his tracks.

**Two-handed Sword/Axe** Use of greatswords, battleaxes and flails requiring both hands. Each level adds +1 to the user's Melee value while fighting with such a weapon.

**Warrior** Described more fully in Chapter Four. The Warrior skill gives competence in a whole range of melee techniques, but not mastery of any specific weapon. It can be thought of as encompassing a range of manoeuvres, feints, "dirty tricks" and unexpected improvisations. There is nothing very honourable about using this skill to best a foe, and most upper-class Tsolyáni would avoid it. (Assassins and spies are an exception, finding it very useful to be able to kill with a scroll-case, candlestick or whatever else comes to hand.) The most common exponents are to be found among the gladiators of the Hirilákte, which is usually the only place where an average citizen could acquire such training.

## [300] WOUNDS AND HEALING

A character's Hit Points score measures his ability to take physical injury. Wounds are subtracted from the character's current Hit Points, and incapacitation results when Hit Points reach 0. Additionally, taking enough damage in a single wound can affect a character's ability to fight and may cause unconsciousness.

### [310] Taking injuries

Any damage that gets past a character's armour is subtracted from his current Hit Points score. Cumulative damage in the form of numerous blows will eventually cause unconsciousness or death. Additionally, any time a character takes more than a certain amount of damage from a single blow there will be other effects:

**FATAL WOUND** This is a single blow that inflicts 100% or more of the character's normal Hit Point total. The result is instant death.

**GRIEVOUS WOUND** Over half the character's normal Hit Point score in one blow. The character's Melee value is adjusted by -6. He must make a -3 Stamina check to avoid blacking out. There is one chance in six of serious lasting damage (see Section 330).

**HEAVY WOUND** A single blow for 35% or more of the character's normal Hit Points. Adjust the character's Melee value by -4. A +3 Stamina check is required to stay conscious.

**LIGHT WOUND** 20% or more of the character's normal Hit Points in one blow. Adjust the character's Melee value by -2.

Any blow doing less than 20% of the character's normal Hit Point score is assumed to be a minor cut or bruise. It still comes off his current Hit Points, but has no other effect.

### [311] Regaining consciousness

A character always falls unconscious when his current Hit Points are reduced to zero. A character below 0 Hit Points loses 1 HP per round and will certainly die unless given first aid or magical healing. Death occurs when the character's negative HP exceed half his Stamina.

A character who loses consciousness but still has positive (or zero) Hit Points makes an immediate unmodified Stamina check. Success means he recovers consciousness after 1-6 rounds, and if he was at 0 HP he recovers 1 point. If the check fails he loses 1 HP and remains unconscious, attempting the Stamina roll again every 1-20 rounds with a cumulative modifier of -1 each time.

### [312] First aid

A companion with the Physician skill can administer on-the-spot medical treatment to an unconscious character. This is quite straightforward, so the Physician's skill check is made with a +10 modifier. Success means that the character comes round (and regains 1 Hit Point if it was a critical success). Failure means that he stays unconscious (and loses 1 Hit Point if it was a critical failure). The Physician's skill check is made at the end of each minute (10 rounds) he spends administering first aid. Note that this skill check is made in addition to, not instead of, the unconscious character's Stamina check.

A successful Physician check on a character below 0 Hit Points stops any further Hit Point loss but does not restore the character to conscious-

### Wound Levels

Rather than work out the various percentages each time you take a wound, record the minimum damage for a Light, Heavy and Grievous wound in brackets next to your normal Hit Point score. For Tetkumé, who has 14 Hit Points, this would be written

14 [3/5/8]

So Tetkumé suffers a Light wound if he loses 3-4 Hit Points in one blow, a Heavy wound if he loses 5-7 Hit Points, and a Grievous wound if he loses 8-13 Hit Points all at once. 14 or more points in a single blow would kill him outright.

<i>Hit Points</i>	<i>Light/Heavy/Grievous</i>		
<b>3</b>	1	--	2
<b>4</b>	1	2	3
<b>5</b>	1	2	3-4
<b>6</b>	2	3	4-5
<b>7</b>	2	3	4-6
<b>8</b>	2	3-4	5-7
<b>9</b>	2-3	4	5-8
<b>10</b>	2-3	4-5	6-9
<b>11</b>	3	4-5	6-10
<b>12</b>	3-4	5-6	7-11
<b>13</b>	3-4	5-6	7-12
<b>14</b>	3-4	5-7	8-13
<b>15</b>	3-5	6-7	8-14
<b>16</b>	4-5	6-8	9-15
<b>17</b>	4-5	6-8	9-16
<b>18</b>	4-6	7-9	10-17
<b>19</b>	4-6	7-9	10-18
<b>20</b>	4-6	7-10	11-19
<b>21</b>	5-7	8-10	11-20
<b>22</b>	5-7	8-11	12-21
<b>23</b>	5-8	9-11	12-22
<b>24</b>	5-8	9-12	13-23
<b>25</b>	5-8	9-12	13-24

### Example

Looking at a fight and its aftermath will show how to apply the rules contained in this chapter.

Chargésh has 16 Hit Points and a Stamina of 12. During a battle he takes two wounds. The first is 4 points (a Light wound), which reduces Chargésh's Melee value by 2. The second, for 7 points (a Heavy wound), reduces his Melee value by a further 4 and also requires him to make a +3 Stamina check, which he fails. Chargésh blacks out.

He makes an immediate check to see if he comes round, but fails this roll as well and loses another Hit Point. It seems that he will soon die from loss of blood, but his comrade Ajúro rushes over and begins to bind Chargésh's wounds. Before Chargésh is due to make another Stamina check (which would now be at -1 because he failed the last one), Ajúro succeeds with his +10 Physician skill check and manages to bring his friend round. Chargésh's normal Melee value is 25, but the wounds he took reduce this to 19 for the time being. Nevertheless he manages to go on with the battle and returns to his tent without having taken any more wounds.

After two days Chargésh makes the first of his healing rolls. Normally this would require an unmodified Stamina check, but the presence of Jádhak, a Priest of Vimúhla with eight levels in the Physician skill, gives him a +4. Chargésh therefore needs to roll 16 or less on D20; he rolls 8, which is just good enough for a critical success, so Chargésh recovers 2 Hit Points (10% of 16, rounded up). His Melee value is now 20, but he hopes to avoid any strenuous action until he has had a little more rest. His next Stamina check in another two days will be made at +5 if Jádhak is still on hand, so Chargésh should be fully recovered and back leading his men within two weeks.

### Crippling wounds

If a character is maimed, roll 1D20 to find the location of the injury:

1-2	head
3-4	upper body
6-8	an arm
9-12	a hand
13-14	abdomen
15-20	a leg

Such injuries will typically cause a penalty of 1D6 to (for example) Dexterity, Missile Value, etc, in addition to a reduction in Comeliness.

ness straight away. He must wait for natural healing or sorcery to restore him to positive Hit Points. In the former case this can take days.

Once a wounded character has regained consciousness he does not need to make any further Stamina checks to stay on his feet unless and until he takes another Heavy or Grievous wound. Any combat penalties he had acquired remain as they were when he lost consciousness.

### [320] Recuperation

There are some spells and Eyes which can be used to restore lost Hit Points. A character who does not have access to these must rely on the natural healing process. Every two days he makes a Stamina check (unmodified at first). Any change in Hit Points is expressed as a percentage of the character's normal (unwounded) Hit Points score. If a doctor is on hand, his ministrations give a +1 modifier to the check for every two levels he has in the skill of Physician. The results of the Stamina check are interpreted as follows:

**critical success:** The character regains 10% of his normal Hit Point score (rounding fractions up) and makes the next Stamina check at +1

**success:** No Hit Points are regained, but there is a slight improvement in condition: the next Stamina check is made at +1

**failure:** No Hit Points are lost, but the character's condition begins to worsen: the next Stamina check is made at -1

**critical failure:** The character loses 10% of his normal Hit Points score (rounding fractions up) and makes the next Stamina check at -1

The modifiers given here are cumulative, so a character who failed the check three times would make the fourth (assuming he was still alive) at -3.

The Stamina checks will eventually end with the character either being reduced to negative Hit Points exceeding half his Stamina (in which case he is dead) or with his Hit Points fully restored to their normal score. Hit Points can never go above their normal score, and the only way to increase the normal score is to increase one's Strength by a regimen of training.

For the recovery rules to apply as given, the character must get complete rest, comfort and quiet. Travelling, strenuous activity, or an unhygienic environment will cause an additional Stamina check modifier of 4 or more.

### [321] Recovery of Melee Value

Once Hit Points are back to normal the character is completely healed and of course does not need to go on making Stamina checks. A character who wishes to go adventuring before his wounds are fully healed may still be suffering from some combat penalties. Melee scores lowered as a result of wounds recover at the rate of +1 for every 10% healing of the character's normal Hit Points. A character's Melee value is always returned to normal once he has completely healed.

### [330] Permanent injury

Any time you take a Grievous Wound there is a chance (indicated by a roll of "6" on D6) of sustaining a maiming injury. Examples include a severed limb, loss of an eye, or a broken neck. Hit Points can still be recovered with time, but the injury itself can only be treated by special magic (the Eye of Regeneration or the Restoration spell). Maiming injuries may inflict penalties on a character's mobility, fighting skill and so forth at the referee's option, and also entail the loss of 1D6 points from Comeliness, as the Tsolyáni abhor disfigurement.

## [400] COMBAT

Conflict is an integral part of most adventure stories. Its purpose in the game is twofold. Combat scenes are moments of natural climactic tension and also, by providing characters with an intimation of mortality, combat intensifies the excitement of the adventure.

The need to simulate the complex process of melee by means of rules requires that some abstract ideas are used. To simplify bookkeeping, for instance, the passage of time during a melee is divided into six-second combat rounds. Such abstract ideas mean that the rules for combat are lengthy, but this should not be taken to imply that combat is the dominant feature of the game. Many referees do not run action-oriented campaigns, while others prefer to resolve combat by a single dice roll or even nonrandomly, by the interweaving of narrative. The rules given here are not de rigueur for all occasions, then, but may be used in any battle where the outcome is both critical and uncertain.

### [410] Melee value

Every character has a Melee value. This is a measure of his ability to attack and parry in hand-to-hand combat.

The basic value for Melee is derived from the character's Strength, Size, Cleverness and Dexterity. (See Section 121.) Any human character who has no levels of the Warrior skill and no training in any weapon-group will have this basic value. For an average human character, the base Melee value is 10.

The overall Melee value for a trained fighter is given by

the base Melee value  
plus the character's Warrior level  
plus the character's level in the relevant Weapon skill

The last of these three factors means that the character's Melee value will vary according to the weapon they're fighting with.

### [420] Combat rounds & initiative

Combat is subdivided into combat rounds, each of which represents six seconds of game-time. Each round, combatants make their attacks (if they choose to attack) in descending order of initiative. Initiative is rolled for at the beginning of every round: each character rolls D20 and adds 1 per point of Dexterity over 10. The maximum possible initiative is 24, regardless of Dexterity.

### [421] Sequence of actions in a round

Combatants count down in order of initiative. When a character's initiative phase comes up he may perform an action, but is not obliged to. When phase 1 is reached, however, characters who have deferred from earlier in the round and are still eligible to act (ie they have not already used a full action - see Section 422) must do so now or lose their opportunity. Thus the referee will say, "Anyone at initiative 24, 23, 22...?" etc, and players interrupt when it comes to their turn. Important non player characters will have their own defined Dexterity scores, of course, but where a large hoard of opponents is involved (twenty Qól, for instance) the referee will find his job a lot easier if he just has all the Qól attack on the same initiative phase.

## Encumbrance

The maximum burden that a character can carry for any length of time is the sum of his Strength and Stamina. This is called his encumbrance limit. A character carrying more than his encumbrance limit suffers the following penalties for each point of encumbrance over the maximum:

- 1 from Melee
- 1 from Evade
- 1 from initiative
- 1 from all Stamina checks

Characters will generally be able to avoid exceeding their encumbrance limits. Even so, encumbrance has a limiting effect on mobility and even a moderately encumbered character will find that his armour, etc, slows him considerably. For convenience, five degrees of encumbrance are defined:

<i>encumbrance</i>	<i>definition</i>
Light	up to 50% of Strength
Moderate	up to 100% Strength
Heavy	up to the normal limit (=Strength + Stamina)
Overburdened	up to Strength plus twice Stamina
Extreme	up to double the normal encumbrance limit

These categories have the following effect on mobility (quoted in metres per six-second combat round):

	walk	run	sprint
Light	10	20	40
Moderate	8	15	—
Heavy	6	10	—
Overburdened	4	5	—
Extreme	2	—	—

Standard Chlen-hide items have the following encumbrance costs (for steel items, multiply by two):

leather armour	
light	0
medium	1
chainmail/scale	
light	2
medium	4
heavy	6
chlén-hide plate	
light	4
medium	8
heavy	10
small shield	2
medium shield	4
large shield	6
dagger/club	1
1-h weapon	2
2-h weapon	4
bow/crossbow	4
quiver (with 20 arrows)	2

Evade and Parry are responsive actions: they are made in response to someone else's attack. A character who wishes to attempt an Evade or Parry is not prevented from doing so just because his initiative phase has not yet been called. Such actions can be undertaken at any time so long as the character has not previously committed his full Melee value for the round. (He must also see the attack coming in order to defend himself, of course. A character who is taken unawares cannot Evade or Parry.)

## [422] Actions requiring one full round

A character can accomplish one of the following actions (at the same time moving up to 1m if he wishes) as his activity in any given round.

- Attack using full Melee value
- Parry using full Melee value \*
- Evade\*
- Cast a spell using full Cast Spell value (this includes aiming, if it is an aimed spell)
- Aim and fire an Eye
- Aim and shoot a bow, crossbow or sling
- Aim and throw a spear or other hand-hurled weapon
- Move one's full normal movement allowance
- Prepare a javelin ready to throw in the following combat round
- Reload a light crossbow or staff-sling ready for use the following round
- Take an item (eg, an Eye) from a belt-pouch for use next round (if attempted during melee this also requires a -5 Dexterity check to avoid dropping the item)
- Get up from a prone position
- Pick up a weapon lying by one's feet

\* Parrying and evading count as responsive actions. This means that they can be undertaken at any point in a round, in response to an attack by someone else. All other actions listed here cannot be performed before it is the character's turn to act in the round.

## [423] Actions taking less than a round

A character can combine any two of the following (and do nothing else) as his activity for a round.

- Attack using half normal Melee value
- Parry using half normal Melee value
- Cast a spell using half normal Cast Spell value (this includes aiming, if it is an aimed spell)
- Shoot an arrow, hurl a javelin, etc, without taking time to aim (ie, use half normal Missile value)
- Fire an "Eye" without aiming
- Ready an arrow or throwing dagger
- Unclip a sword from one's belt or draw it from a scabbard (belt-clips are more common than scabbards owing to the fanciful design of Tkumeláni swords)
- Move half normal movement allowance

When two of these "half-round" actions are combined, the first of the two actions takes place at the character's regular initiative phase and the other takes place on initiative phase 1. If you wished to move half your movement allowance to close with an enemy and then strike him (using half your Melee value in attack), you would start moving when it came to your normal turn to act and your attack would then come at the end of the round. Parrying is the only exception to this. This is because parrying is a "responsive" action, as explained above.

Note that there is no option for a character to make a "half round" evasion using half his Evade score. When you are trying to dodge a potentially fatal sword-thrust there are no half measures.

#### [424] Actions over several rounds

In melee, actions do not carry over from round to round. This means, for example, that you cannot run half your movement allowance and then carry over the remaining "half-value" action so as to make use of 150% of your Melee value in the following round.

A character using a projectile weapon (such as a bow) can carry over half-actions rather than having to shoot with only half his Missile value. This allows him to prepare an arrow in one round, then carry over the half-action remaining so as to shoot with his full Missile value in the next round, then prepare a second arrow at the end of that round which will be ready for shooting in the next round, and so on.

Under no circumstance can any character avail himself of more than 100% of his Melee, Missile or Evade values in a given round. These values describe the upper limit of the character's performance, and it is self-evident that his level of ability is not enhanced simply by delaying the moment at which he chooses to act.

#### [430] Resolving attacks & parries

When a character makes an attack, he rolls D20. If the roll is equal to or less than his Melee value, he has succeeded. His opponent then has the option to attempt to parry the blow by rolling D20 and scoring equal to or under the Melee value he's putting against the attack (see also Section 435). A roll of 1 on the D20 always indicates a successful attack/parry. A roll of 20 always indicates a failed attack/parry.

An exchange of attack and parry has four possible outcomes:

- **SUCCESSFUL ATTACK, UNSUCCESSFUL PARRY**  
The attacker's blow lands and does damage.
- **SUCCESSFUL ATTACK, SUCCESSFUL PARRY**  
Subtract defender's damage bonus from attacker's damage bonus; any residue gets through as damage.
- **UNSUCCESSFUL ATTACK, SUCCESSFUL PARRY**  
The defender can attempt an immediate riposte or an attempt to disarm. These are explained below.
- **UNSUCCESSFUL ATTACK, UNSUCCESSFUL PARRY**  
No result.

When you strike at an opponent, he must decide his parry option (full-value, half-value, or no parry) before you roll the attack. If two characters strike at one another simultaneously (ie, in the same initiative phase) then neither gets the chance to parry the other. Their Dexterity scores determine whose blow lands first.

#### [431] The effectiveness of a parry

As Section 430 shows, parries are not always fully effective. If a character manages to parry a successful attack made against him, he must compare his damage bonus with the attacker's. If the attacker is stronger, he may be able to push the defender's weapon back and still inflict a few points of damage. Generally this comparison will not need to be made if the combatants are armoured. There is only 5 points difference between the maximum and minimum human damage bonuses - and good armour can stop 5 points. But when one or both fighters lack armour, having the strength to push back a parry will make a difference. Also, some of the creatures of Tékumel are very powerful and have damage bonuses much greater than a man's. Parrying a blow from a massive Sérudla or metal-thewed Ru'ún does little good, and in those situations it is better to evade.

#### [432] The riposte

A successful parry against an unsuccessful attack allows the defender an immediate riposte. This does not cancel out the character's regular

#### **Q: What can I do in a round?**

**A:** You can perform one "full-action" or two "half actions".

#### **Q: When can I do it?**

**A:** Parry or Evade can be done at any time in the round. For any other action, you must wait till your initiative turn comes up. If you are performing two actions, the second happens at the end of the round.

## Fumbles

A roll of 20 when striking in combat is always a miss. Also, the character must follow it with a percentile check to see if he fumbles:

- 01-65** Subtract 5 from initiative next round.
- 66-70** Shield strap breaks, causing loss of shield; takes 1-10 minutes to fix after battle. If no shield, treat as roll of 01-65.
- 71-75** Armour buckle breaks; reduce armour absorption by 1 pt for rest of fight; takes 1-10 minutes to fix. If no armour worn, treat as roll of 66-70.
- 76-80** Drop weapon; takes one round to recover.
- 81-85** Weapon knocked 1-6 metres away in random direction.
- 86-90** Check for weapon breaking.
- 91-95** Fall over; takes one round to get up.
- 96-00** Accidentally hit comrade; hit self if no comrade is within reach. (Reroll this hit for chance of special result.)

attack for the round, if any. In order to succeed with the riposte, the character must roll D20 and score equal to or less than the number he rolled when making his parry. Success means that he rolls for damage just as he would when striking in the normal way.

A riposte cannot itself be parried. (If the character had not opened up his guard, the riposte would not have been possible in the first place.)

***example** Káshu is exploring the underworld beneath Jakállá in search of antiquities when he is set upon by an undead Shédra. The Shédra strikes first, having the higher initiative, and Káshu makes a parry against it using half his Melee value. The Shédra misses and Káshu rolls a 6 for his parry. This is good enough, even for someone of Káshu's limited skill, and since the Shédra's attack missed he is now able to make a riposte or disarm attempt. He decides on a riposte (he's not a good enough swordsman to try disarming it) and must roll 6 or less on D20 to succeed. He does this, rolling for damage in the usual way. Then, since it is his turn to act and he still has a half-action, he makes his regular attack (using the remaining half of his Melee value) for the round.*

### [433] Disarming a foe

A skilled fighter can try to disarm his opponent if he parries an attack which misses. Note that this circumstance permits a disarm or a riposte, not both.

To disarm someone, you must roll D20 and get equal to or less than your level in the weapon-skill you are using. (A character with 8 levels in Longsword skill has 8 chances in 20 of making a disarm when fighting with a sword, and so on.) If you were making a half value parry, you only use half your skill for this.

A successful disarm manoeuvre results in the opponent's weapon being flung D5 metres away in a random direction.

### [434] Multiple attacks and parries

Normally a character will only make one attack or one parry (or one of each at half-value) in a round. However, it is also possible to split the Melee value so as to make two half-value attacks or parries. When this option is used to make two attacks, the first comes in the character's initiative phase and the second comes at the end of the round.

Also note that only one parry attempt is possible against any given attack. The only time that a character can make two parries against the same attack is when fighting hlèpurdál style, with sword and dagger - see Section 480.

### [435] Attack Values above 20

An attack made with a Melee value above 20 reduces the chance of the opponent making his parry. Subtract the amount by which the attacker's Melee value exceeds 20 from the number needed for a successful parry.

***example** Tlángten has a Melee value of 26 in two handed sword. He is attacked by a Hli'ír, which has a Melee of 22 with its talons. The Hli'ír makes a full-value attack, against which Tlángten tries a half-value parry. Normally his half-value parry would succeed on a roll of 1-13 on 1D20, but the Hli'ír's high Attack score means that he needs to roll 11 or less.*

### [440] Evading

Sometimes a character might wish to dive out of the way of a blow, rather than try to parry it. Maybe he doesn't have a weapon, or maybe the creature he is facing is so strong that it would just sweep his parries aside. In any case, the attempt to evade precludes the character from making any attack or parry that round - and if he has already attacked or parried, he can't evade.

Evading is resolved just like attacking and parrying. You roll D20, and must score equal to or less than your Evade value to succeed. A successful evade means that the attacker's blow has missed completely.

**[441] Disengaging from combat by evading**

A successful evade gives you the option to move up to 3m from your opponent. You might do this if you were getting ready to retreat next round, for example. It also has the advantage that it precludes your opponent from making any follow-up attack that he might have otherwise got (Section 434).

**[442] Evade and riposte**

A character who successfully evades an unsuccessful attack can try for an immediate riposte. This represents a situation in which the attacker swings wide and the defender dodges past his guard to deliver a counterstrike. To make the riposte, the character rolls D20 and must score equal to or less than the number rolled when he evaded. (See Section 432.)

**[443] Evading closer to the opponent**

Another option when you successfully evade an unsuccessful attack is to initiate close combat with your opponent. (See Section 470.) To do this, you require a D20 roll equal to or less than the number you got when evading.

**[450] Damage**

When a character successfully strikes an opponent, he determines the damage he has done by rolling D10. The D10 roll (which will be modified according to the weapon used) is cross-referenced with his skill in the specific weapon-group. The number given is the total Hit Points inflicted by the blow. (Armour worn by the target reduces the damage taken - see Section 460.)

**MELEE DAMAGE TABLE**

D10 roll	level in appropriate weaponskill						
	0-4	5-7	8-10	11-13	14-16	17-19	20+
1	1	2	3	4	5	5	6
2	2	3	4	5	5	6	6
3	3	4	5	5	6	6	7
4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7
5	5	5	6	6	7	7	8
6	6	6	6	7	7	8	8
7	7	7	7	7	8	8	9
8	8	8	8	8	8	9	9
9	9	9	9	9	9	9	10
0	10	10	10	10	10	10	10

D10 roll modifiers:

fist -6	short one-handed -1
kick -5	spear -1
club -4	long one-handed 0
dagger -3	two-handed weapon +1

Note that if the character has a damage bonus, this is applied to the actual damage score that is read off the table, not to the D10 roll.

**[460] Armour**

Armour is your character's last line of defence. If he doesn't parry or evade an incoming blow then damage is rolled for as indicated in Section 450. The only thing that then stands between him and a nasty wound is the armour he is wearing.

**Q: How fast can I move?**

A: You must have been walking for half a round before beginning to run, and must have run for half a round before starting to sprint. (Movement rates are in the sidebar on page 28.)

When you are chasing another character over a short distance, a comparison of Evade scores will indicate which of you is faster. Over a long distance, competitive Stamina checks will be needed.

**Q: What about doing something else while moving?**

A: You can always move up to one metre while taking another action. Also, it is possible to combine readying a weapon with moving, but this requires a Dexterity check. Assuming you are in a well lit area on level ground, drawing a sword while walking will involve an average (+5) Dexterity check. Poor illumination, uneven terrain, or trying to move faster than a walk will all make the check harder. Critical failure on this check means you drop the weapon. Failure means you complete your move but don't get the weapon ready. Critical success can be taken to mean that you accomplish the draw with a flourish, but doesn't give any other bonus - although your opponent might be taken by surprise.

**Q: And can I attack "on the hoof"?**

A: A half-action Attack can be combined with charging at or past an opponent, if you succeed in an unmodified check based on the average of Dexterity and weapon skill. As before, uneven ground or poor lighting will make that more difficult. Critical success again gives no special bonus, other than making you look good. You're lucky if you hit at all!

<i>weapon</i>	<i>cost (Káitars)</i>
dagger	3
shortsword	5
spear	6
longsword	7
two-handed sword	11
halberd/poleaxe	14

<i>steel items</i>	<i>multiply cost by</i>
ordinary steel	x500
excellent steel	x1500
enchanted steel	x4000

<i>armour type</i>	<i>cost (Káitars)</i>
light leather	20
medium leather	40
light mail	30
medium mail	50
heavy mail	80
light plate	40
medium plate	75
heavy plate	150
<i>shields</i>	<i>cost (Káitars)</i>
small	5
medium	10
large	15
<i>steel items</i>	<i>multiply cost</i>
ordinary steel	x300
excellent steel	x600
enchanted steel	x1200

### Legion weapons

Characters who have served a term in the army will need to know the primary and secondary weapon used by their legion (see Section 142):

#### Heavy Infantry

The Omnipotent Azure Legion (sword, 2-h spear or composite bow); The First Legion of Ever-Present Glory (sword, 2-h spear or short bow); The Legion of Potent Destiny (sword, 2-h spear or composite bow); The Legion of Hnalla (halberd, longsword); The Legion of the Mighty Prince (pike, longsword or longbow); The Legion of the Portals of Death (longsword, 2-h spear); The Legion of Mirkitáni (pike, longsword or short bow); The Legion of the Givers of Sorrow (2-h spear, shortsword); The Legion of the Scales of Brown (pike, composite bow or 1-h axe); The Legion of Searing Flame (longsword, pike); The Legion of the Echoing Stone (2-h spear, short mace or longbow); The Legion of the Sweet Singers of Nakomé (2-h flail, shortsword); The Legion of Sérqu (shortsword, 1 h mace or 1-h morning star); The Legion of the Ruby Hand (2-h spear, sword and 1 level in short bow); The Legion of the Deep Purple Dark (2-h spear, sword or composite bow); The Legion of Héketth of Púrdimal (pike, longsword or bolas or longbow); The Legion of the Fishers of Death (halberd, shortsword or composite bow); The Legion of the Lord of Wisdom (pike, longsword or longbow); The Legion of Kurukáà (2-h spear, longsword or short bow); The Legion of Mighty Jakálla (pike, 1-h axe or short bow); The Phalanx of Heretlékka of Sokátis (2-h spear, longsword).

Armour works by absorbing some or all of the damage points that would otherwise get through to the wearer. Suppose Tlángten is struck a blow worth 9 points. He is wearing heavy Chlén-hide plate, which absorbs 5 points, so he loses only 4 Hit Points.

### ARMOUR PROTECTION VALUES

	light	medium	heavy
leather	1	2	
chainmail	2	3	4
Chlén-hide plate	3	4	5
ordinary steel*	5	6	7
excellent steel*	6	7	8
enchanted steel*	7	8	9

\* These absorption values are for steel plate. If chainmail or scale, use the row above - eg, enchanted steel chainmail has the same protective qualities as excellent steel plate.

The protection values given above assume the armour is hit with a weapon of Chlén-hide or ordinary steel. Against excellent steel weapons, reduce the protective rating of non-steel armour by 1. Against enchanted steel, reduce the protective rating by 2. This applies only to edged or stabbing weapons, not to crushing weapons such as maces.

### [461] Special hits

That isn't quite the whole story, as armour does not completely cover the body. Chlén-hide is light in comparison to metal, but the climate of Tsolyánu is for the most part hot and humid. The heaviest armour consists of helm, gorget collar, breast- and back-plates, vambraces, greaves and a mail kilt. This affords good protection, but there is necessarily some chance that a blow will land on a gap between two armour segments - or even on a body area not covered by armour. This is represented by the rules for special hits.

A character's chance of scoring a special hit is 1 for every 5 points (or fraction of 5) he puts into the Attack value. A special hit means that the value of any armour the defender is wearing is ignored. Shields have their normal chance of blocking a special hit. However, the shield will only give half its regular protective value (rounding up).

*Natural* armour (tough hide, scales, etc) still gives half its normal protection. Special hits are mainly useful against human or intelligent nonhuman opponents clad in armour.

If a special hit is parried, a check must be made to see if the parrying weapon breaks (see Section 464). If a breakage occurs, damage is rolled for the attack and this affects the defender in the normal way.

The required rolls for special and critical hits are tabulated below. The principle is easy to grasp, and there should be no need to refer to this table during play.

Attack value	special hit
1-5	1
6-10	1-2
11-15	1-3
16-20	1-4
21-25	1-5
etc	

### [462] Shields

A character with a shield effectively has an extra piece of armour. The only trouble is, it might not be in the right place to stop a blow. Assuming you are right-handed and therefore have your shield on your left arm, there is a chance (rolled for on D6) that the shield will get between you

and a blow if your opponent is in front or to your left. A blow that is struck from your rear or right will always get past the shield.

If the D6 roll indicates that you took the blow on your shield, add the shield's defensive value to the defensive value of any armour you are wearing.

#### SHIELDS

Small	roll 1-2 on D6 to block hit	absorbs 3 pts
Medium	roll 1-2 on D6 to block hit	absorbs 5 pts
Large	roll 1-3 on D6 to block hit	absorbs 6 pts

Each time a shield is hit for more than its current defensive value, its defensive value against further blows is reduced by one point. A steel shield will not be damaged by Chlén-hide weapons, however, but only by steel weaponry of equal or better quality.

#### [463] Damage to armour

A suit of armour is liable to take damage in any melee during which it is struck. This is determined after the battle by rolling percentile dice. A roll of 91-00 indicates a deterioration in the armour's defensive capacity. In this case, roll 1D3 to see how many points are lost from the armour's absorption value.

An armorer may be able to repair the damage. If the armour has lost only 1 or 2 from its absorption value, it can be repaired on the spot within about ten minutes (requiring respectively a +3 and a -3 on the skill success check), but more serious damage requires the armour to be taken to a workshop.

In the case of steel armour, it is usually a rivet or hinge that gives way rather than the armour itself being cracked. It is thus 50% likely that ordinary steel is not itself permanently damaged, 70% in the case of excellent steel, 90% in the case of enchanted steel.

#### [464] Weapons breakage

Weapons sometimes break in the middle of a fight – which is inconvenient, but fortunately it does not happen very often. All weapons have a Toughness rating depending on the weapon's type and the material from which it's made. A weapon which parries a special hit from another weapon of equal or greater Toughness will possibly break as a result. 2D10 are rolled, and if the score is higher than the weapon's Toughness then it snaps.

#### WEAPON TOUGHNESS RATINGS

weapon type	Chlén-hide	ordinary	excellent	enchanted
		steel	steel	steel
Dagger	12	14	16	17
quarterstaff*	12	13	14	15
Others	14	16	18	19

\* The quarterstaff is almost invariably banded with Chlén-hide or bronze. Toughness ratings are given for steel-shod staves only for the sake of completeness; player-characters could have such a thing specially made, but they are unlikely to come across one otherwise.

#### [470] Close combat

Close combat is a situation involving two characters actually in contact and grappling. It is the only situation in which the Wrestling skill can be used. The unarmed martial arts of Dedarátl (Fisticuffs) and Hu'ón (Kick Boxing) can be used in close combat, but unlike Wrestling can also be used in conventional melee.

#### Medium Infantry

The Phalanx of Lord Durritlámish (pole-axe, longsword); The Legion of Gúsha the Khirgári (2-h spear, longsword); The Legion of Lángsha of Jaikalór (2-h axe, dagger); The Battalions of the Seal of the Worm (2-h spear, longsword or 1-h mace or lt crossbow); The Legion of Mnáshu of Thri'il (2-h spear, longsword); The Golden Sunburst Legion (pike, longsword); The Cohorts of Lord Chegárra (longsword, dagger or composite bow); The Legion of the Clan of the Golden Sphere (2-h spear, shortsword); The Legion of the Night of Shadows (halberd, longsword); The Legion of the Lord of Red Devastation (2-h sword only); The Aridáni Legion of Lady Mriisa (women only: 2-h spear, longsword); The Legion of the Many-Legged Serpent (pike, longsword or lt crossbow); The Legion of the Storm of Fire (mdm crossbow or 1-h axe, dagger); The Forces of Ga'ánish of Katalál (halberd, 1-h mace); The Regiment of Ssiyór of Mrelú (2-h spear, longsword); The Legion of Defense Against Evil (pike, 1-h mace); The Armoured Vision of Death (poleaxe, 1-h warhammer or dagger); The Legion of Chulin the Foreigner (mercenaries: 1-h spear, longsword or longbow); The Legion of the Prince of the Blue Room (halberd, short axe or short bow); The Legion of Káikama of Béy Sü (2-h spear, longsword or short bow); The Battalions of Srúma of Vrá (pike, 1-h axe or short bow); The Legion of Mórusai the Chieftan (2-h spear, short axe); The Forces of Chái Miridai (halberd, 1-h flail)

#### Archers

The Regiment of the Clan of the Silver Lightning (longbow, shortsword); The Legion of the Peaks of Kraá (longbow, short mace); The Legion of the Clan of the Broken Bough (composite bow, shortsword); The Legion of Giriktéshmu (composite bow, short axe); The Legion of Eléchu of Usenánu (composite bow, shortsword or dagger); The Legion of the Crystalline Peak (composite bow, longsword)

#### Crossbowmen

The Regiment of the Knower of Spells (lt or mdm crossbow, longsword); The Legion of Glorious Destiny (mdm or hvy crossbow, longsword); The Legion of the Wind of Iron (mdm crossbow, shortsword); The Legion of the Citadel of Glory (hvy crossbow, 1-h flail); The Legion of Khariháya (lt or mdm crossbow, 1-h axe)

A character can try to close with an opponent at any time after the first round of melee. To do this he must make an Evade roll. (In this circumstance the roll is not taken to indicate a dodge, but instead gives a measure of his ability to manoeuvre quickly.) In order to avoid close combat, the opponent can try to Evade or Parry. This can have four possible outcomes:

<i>Attacker</i>	<i>Defender</i>	<i>result</i>
Evades	Evades	Defender forced back 1-3 metres
Evades	Parries	Attacker has the option of initiating close combat, but will take damage from the defender's weapon
Evades	fails Parry/Evade	Close combat occurs
fails Evade	Parries	Defender gets the chance to make a riposte
	or Evades	

Once in close combat, any character using a weapon longer than a dagger must drop it or halve his Melee value. Characters in close combat cannot Parry. They can Evade, but this does not indicate the character has broken away from his opponent. A Evade in close combat simply indicates you have twisted out of the way of a blow.

To break off close combat, you forego any other action for the round and attempt a Dexterity check using the difference between your Dexterity and your opponent's as a modifier. Success means you move 1-3 metres away.

#### **[471] A note about wrestling**

Use of the Charáge (Wrestling) skill requires a character to be in close combat. Armour is often ineffective against the locks and holds of this skill. As an addition to the rule given in Section 461, the chance of a special hit with Wrestling is equal to the attacker's Charáge skill level (or half his Charáge level if making a half-value attack). The regular 1 in 5 rule still applies if that gives a better chance of a special hit - ie, if the character does not have many levels in Charáge.

Wrestling does not employ the Melee Damage Table (Section 450). Instead, the damage done by a Wrestling attack is rolled on 1D10 minus 1D6 (down to a minimum of 1 point). Damage bonuses derived from the combatants' Size and Strength apply as usual.

#### **[472] The unarmed martial arts**

Fisticuffs and Kick Boxing can be used in normal melee. The techniques of Kick Boxing do not permit parries, but parrying is possible for someone using Fisticuffs. However, a successful unarmed parry against a successful weapon attack requires the martial artist to confirm the parry with an unmodified Fisticuffs/Dexterity check. If this fails he still takes damage from the attack. Vambraces (wrist guards) will give their usual protection, and many martial arts experts wear vambraces even if they have no other armour.

A successful unarmed attack against a weapon parry does not result in a comparison of damage bonuses. The attacker is assumed to have pulled his punch or kick at the last minute rather than risk potentially damaging contact with the defender's weapon.

#### **[480] Using two weapons**

Hlèpurdál fighting (using sword and dagger together) is a skill known to the Salarvyáni, who call it Arruché. As a skill it is quite distinct from the use of the two weapons independently. A warrior who develops the Arruché skill has two options for using it in a melee:

- He can make two attacks: one with each weapon. The first attack occurs on his regular initiative phase, the other at the end of the round – just as with a normal double attack. The difference is that the character gets his full base Melee value with both weapons and adds half his Melee bonuses (from Warrior and/or Arruché skills) to each.
- He can use the two weapons for a double parry – even making two parries against the same attack, which is not possible normally. Each parry is made with the character's base Melee value plus half his skill bonuses.

Hlèpurdál fighting has one drawback. It is not possible to utilise your full effective strength when manipulating two weapons at once. This results in the character's damage bonus being reduced two steps for the purpose of both attacks and parries. The style is thus not very useful against an armoured opponent, and is primarily a duellist's technique. (Some people would cite another drawback: the difficulty of finding a competent tutor to give instruction in this skill.)

Among aficionados of the Hirilákte arena, a good hlèpurdál duellist is much admired. Prestige may be gained from the elegance of one's style. This does mean that making use of any Warrior skill bonus sullies the purity of the technique. No rules are given to enforce this; it is simply a question of good form.

#### **[490] Shield attacks**

A character with a shield can use it to strike at an enemy, possibly knocking the enemy down. To do this the shield-user follows the same procedure as for initiating close combat. He forgoes his Attack/Parry for the round and instead attempts an Evade roll. The defender can try to Evade this. If he chooses instead to Parry and succeeds, the shield-user can opt to collide with him anyway. As with close combat, this results in the shield-user taking damage from the defender's weapon - but he automatically gets the protection of his shield as well as armour.

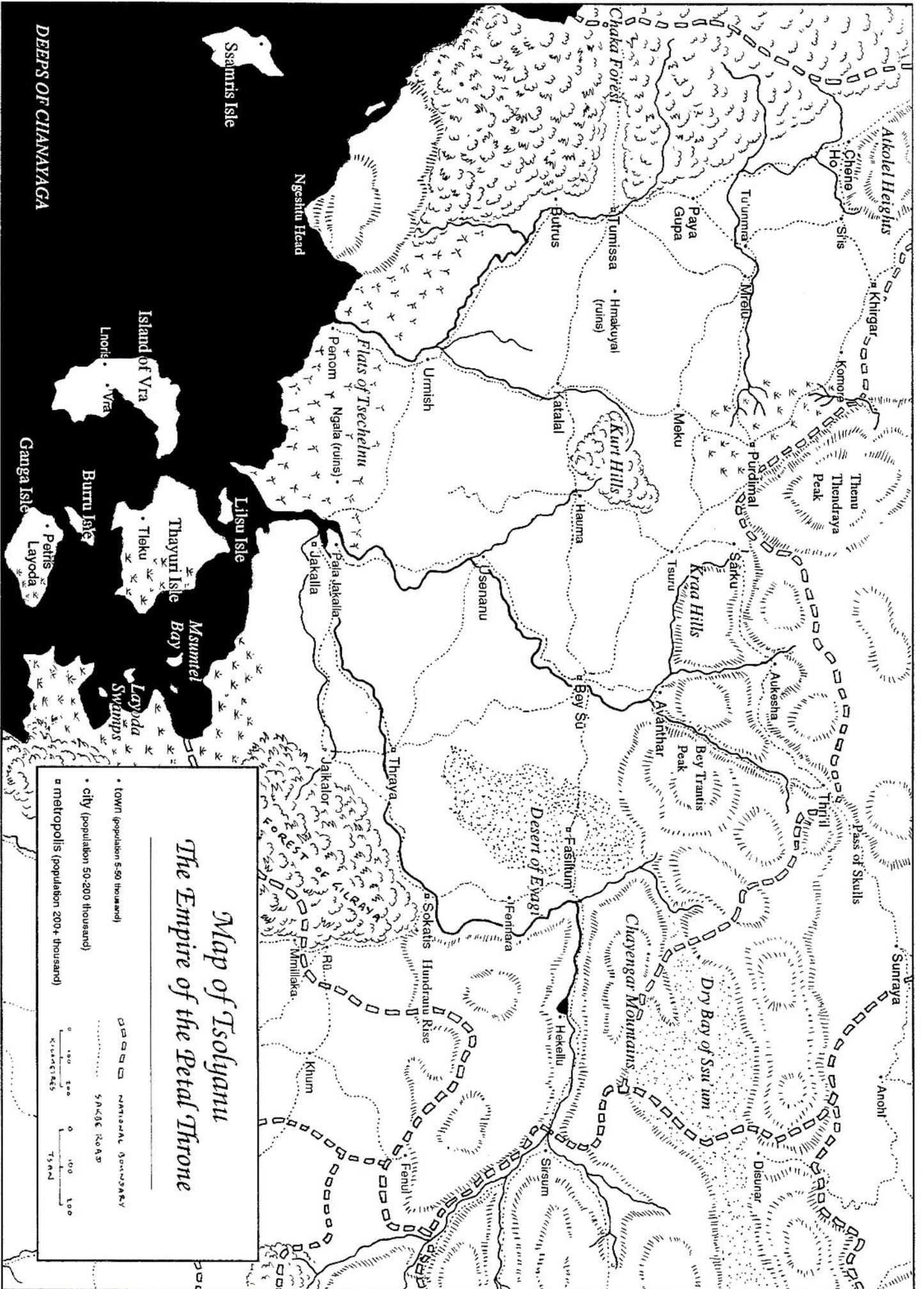
A failed attempt at a shield attack means that the character loses the benefit of his shield for the next round. (It may also allow the defender the chance of a riposte - see Section 432.)

If the shield attack succeeds, the attacker rolls 1D6 for damage and adds his damage bonus if any. The defender must make a Dexterity check, using the difference in their Size scores as a modifier, to avoid falling over. If he has the lower damage bonus he is also thrown back 1 to 3 metres.

#### **Taking it lying down**

The action of getting up from a prone position requires a full round, during which it is impossible to evade or parry attacks made on you. Characters therefore sometimes have no choice but to fight from the ground. Parries are made as usual, but the value of any attack from a prone position is automatically halved and damage for a successful hit is modified by -1.

As an alternative to fighting prone, a fallen character can rise to his knees in one round and to his feet in the next. These are half-value actions, so it is still possible to use half your Melee value in defence while doing so.



*Map of Tsoiyanu*  
*The Empire of the Petal Throne*

- TOWN (population 5-50 thousand)
  - CITY (population 50-200 thousand)
  - METROPOLIS (population 200+ thousand)
- NATIONAL BOUNDARY  
 SPOKE ROAD  
 0 100 200 300 400 500  
 0 100 200  
 KILOMETERS MILES

## [500] PROJECTILE WEAPONS

### [510] Missile value

Characters have a Missile value which is their chance of hitting with a projectile weapon. Your Missile value with a given weapon is equal to your base Missile value plus your skill level in the weapon used. There is no equivalent to the Warrior skill giving an across-the board bonus in all projectile weapons.

### [520] Resolution of missile shots

To hit with a missile weapon, the user rolls D20 and must score equal to or less than his Missile value. Various circumstances such as range or poor visibility result in the Missile value being adjusted:

#### MODIFIERS TO MISSILE VALUE

medium range	-5
long range	-10
target is dodging	cannot aim (halve Missile value)
moving target	-2
flying target	-1 (-3 if moving)
prone target	-3
poor visibility	-1 to -10
pitch darkness/invisible target	-10 and then halve Missile value
missile user is being shot at	-1
target slightly larger than a man	+1 to +3
very large target (eg, a Sro)	+4 to +6
small target	-1 to -5

### [521] Special hits

As in Melee, a special hit may occur which bypasses the target's armour. The chance of this is 1 for every 5 points in the adjusted Missile value. For example, a character with a Missile value of 16 shoots at a moving target at medium range. He hits on a roll of 1-9 and scores a special hit on a 1-2.

### [522] Splitting the Missile value

It is possible to split the Missile value so as to make a half-value shot. This is necessary if the missile-user wants to reload and shoot in the same round. Readying an arrow, sling bullet or throwing dagger takes half a round. Most other projectile weapons, including light crossbows and javelins, take a full round to prepare. Medium and heavy crossbows take even longer: 3 rounds for a medium crossbow, 5 rounds for a heavy.

### [523] Shooting into melee

When shooting into a group, the missile user cannot be sure he won't hit a friend. His chance of hitting a particular target is divided by the number of people in the melee, up to a maximum of five. If he rolls equal to or under his regular Missile value but over the reduced value, his target is determined randomly.

***example** Chaidéshu sees that his comrade Karúnaz, some distance away, is under attack from a Qól and two warrior-priests of Ksáru. Chaidéshu's Missile value with his longbow is 16. He shoots, needing a roll of 1-4 to hit the Qól. He gets a 12, so he has to roll randomly on D100 to see who the arrow hits. Each potential target has an equal (25% chance) of being hit. It is possible Chaidéshu might hit Karúnaz, but in fact the roll indicates that his arrow strikes the Qól after all.*

## Fumbles

A roll of 20 always misses the target, and the missile-user must follow it with a percentile dice roll to see if he has fumbled:

- 01-75** Subtract 5 from initiative next round
- 76-85** Drop weapon; takes one full round to pick up
- 86-90** Shot goes wild; possibility of hitting self or random target within 2m for half damage
- 91-93** Weapon suffers minor damage; requires ten minutes and +5 Fletcher\* skill check to repair
- 94-95** Weapon suffers major damage; repair takes ten minutes and an unmodified skill check
- 96-97** Weapon suffers extreme damage needing twenty minutes and -5 check to repair
- 98-00** Weapon breaks and field repairs cannot be attempted at all; the weapon must be completely overhauled with the proper tools, taking a day or more

(\* or other skill, as appropriate)

<i>weapon</i>	<i>cost (Káitars)</i>
self bow	6
longbow	12
composite bow	60
light crossbow	50
medium crossbow	70
heavy crossbow	90
sling	½
staff sling	2
dart	1
javelin	2
throwing dagger	5
arrows (20)	10
quarrels (30)	15
sling bullets (20)	5

<i>steel projectiles</i>	<i>multiply cost</i>
ordinary steel	x250
excellent steel	x500
enchanted steel	x1000

If a character shoots into a mass of targets and doesn't care who he hits, treat the group as an extra-large target (adding +4 or more to the Missile value) and then randomly determine which individual in the group receives any hit.

*example* Chaidéshu turns. Not far from where Karúnaz is struggling with the two warrior-priests, Rüdátokoi is having to contend with four Qól. Chaidéshu takes aim. Since Rüdátokoi is wearing steel armour he decides to shoot randomly into the melee. This increases his Missile value for the shot to 20. He rolls a 4: not just a hit, but a special hit. Unfortunately the subsequent D100 roll to determine who is hit indicates that the arrow has struck Rüdátokoi...

## [524] Dodging a missile

Thrown weapons can be evaded. The target must have his eyes on the attacker and be ready to jump aside. Other projectile weapons cannot be evaded, but it is possible they will strike the target's shield if he has one (see Section 462).

## [530] Projectile weapon specifics

The damage roll for a projectile weapon varies according to whether it is being used at short, medium or long range. These are arbitrary categories established for each weapon. (Note the difference from melee combat: the missile-user's skill level does not affect the damage score.)

### MISSILE DAMAGE TABLE

	<i>damage</i>			<i>range in metres</i>
	short	medium	long	short/medium/long
Self Bow	1D6+2	1D6+1	1D6	[30/75/90]
Longbow	1D10+1	1D10	1D6+1	[60/150/200]
Composite Bow	1D10+1	1D10+1	1D10	[75/150/225]
Light Crossbow	1D6+3	1D6+2	1D6+1	[40/100/160]
Medium Crossbow	1D6+4	1D6+3	1D6+2	[50/125/200]
Heavy Crossbow	2D6+1	2D6	2D6-1	[60/150/200]
Sling	1D6+1	1D6+1	1D6	[60/90/120]
Staff Sling	1D6+2	1D6+2	1D6+1	[50/75/100]
Thrown melee weapon	1D6	1D6	1D6-1	[10/20/30]
Dart	1D6+1	1D6	1D6	[10/20/30]
Javelin	1D6+3	1D6+1	1D6	[10/20/40]

As with other weapons, a steel projectile is better at penetrating Chlénhide or leather armour. Against excellent steel missiles, non-steel armour absorbs 1 less point of damage than usual. If enchanted steel is used, the protective value is reduced by 2.

## [531] Impales

Impales occur when a 6 is rolled for those missile weapons using D6 for damage or a 9-10 is rolled for a weapon using D10.

If no damage gets through the target's armour, the impale has no special effect other than adding 1 to the target's encumbrance (see sidebar, page 28) until he takes half a round to pull it out. When an impale is indicated for a hit that wounds the target, this indicates that the missile is stuck in his body. If he moves or fights while it is still there he automatically loses 1 Hit Point for doing so. To remove the missile he must make an unmodified Stamina check. Failure means he blacks out.

Once an impaling weapon is pulled from the wound, the character continues to lose 1 HP a round for the next 1D3-1 rounds. This represents

shock and loss of blood, but can be prevented by sealing the wound immediately with a spell of Carminry.

### [540] "Eyes"

Aimed Eyes differ from all other ranged weapons in two respects. Firstly, Eyes operate by producing a broad beam when the stud is pressed. It is much easier to hit a target in this way than it is to manipulate any other ranged weapon, even a crossbow. This means that your Missile value with an aimed Eye is equal to your base Missile value x3.

Secondly, no training is possible in the use of Eyes as the cost of charges is too high. Consequently there is no specific Eye aiming skill: characters must always use the basic chance to hit.

Range affects the chance of hitting, of course, but not so much as with a normal ranged weapon. Shooting at a target within 50m incurs no penalty. For longer ranges, adjust the chance to hit by -1 per additional 10m.

### [550] Targeted shots

This is an option for short range missile use only, allowing the character to aim for the target's head or a limb.

Targeted shots must be declared before the roll to hit is made. To hit at all, the D20 roll must be at least 5 below the usual required score. If you normally hit on a 1-18, you need a 1-13 to hit with a targeted shot. The shot will have a special effect only if it inflicts at least a Light Wound. If the damage roll yields less than a Light Wound, it still comes off the target's Hit Points as usual but there is no other effect.

A successful targeted shot affects the target as follows:

**Head** Stamina check at -5 required to remain conscious

**Arm** Target drops whatever's in that hand; the arm is out of action until at least one Hit Point is recovered

**Leg** Target needs Dexterity check to avoid falling (at -10 if running, -5 if walking fast, unmodified if stationary). It is possible to stand, but movement is reduced by 66% until at least one Hit Point is restored

Staff slings and thrown rocks are the only projectile weapons that do not permit the option of targeting.

### [560] Parrying with a missile weapon

Sometimes you may have no choice but to parry with your bow. Such skills are not taught, so your Melee value with the weapon will just be your base value plus your Warrior level. A check for breakage must be made on any parry with a bow, as a single strike is usually enough to render it useless. (A very few bows left over from ancient times are constructed of steel.)

Striking with a bow in melee does damage equivalent to a club.

### The bolas

The bolas is used mainly in hunting rather than as an anti-personnel weapon. However, it forms part of the equipment of some legions and is common among N'lüss war-bands, and is therefore included here.

The range categories of the bolas are as for a thrown weapon. If the target is hit he suffers 1-2 blows, each for 1D3 damage.

It is usual to aim the bolas either at the head (with the intention of stunning the target) or at the legs (to trip). A walking target who is struck on the legs by a bolas must make a +5 Dexterity check to avoid falling over. If the target is running he makes the check at no modifier. If sprinting, the check is at -5.

## Fauna (and some flora)

creature	attack	damage	Hit Points	armour	Evade	notes
Aqáà	bite (Melee 16) or tail (Melee 13)	1D10+6 1D6+2D6	40 [8/14/21]	4/2	2	swallowed victim (30% chance) takes 1D10 damage per round
Biridlú	bite (Melee 16) or envelop (Melee 10)	1D6+3 see notes	13 [-/-/]	3/2	10	Enveloped victim takes 1D6 on first round, 2D6 on second, etc
Chnéhl	club (Melee 10)	1D10	9 [2/4/5]	0	5	
Chólokh	bite (Melee 10) or rock (Missile 10)	1D10-1 1D6-1	5 [1/2/3]	2/1	9	
Dláqolel	bite (Melee 17)	1D10+3	16 [4/6/9]	3/2	5	
Dnélu	tongue (Melee 20) and claws (Melee 18)	1D10 1D10+2	21 [5/8/11]	3/2	12	
Dog	bite (Melee 12)	1D6-1	9 [2/4/5]	0	7	
Dzór	claws (Melee 17)	1D10+2D6	36 [8/13/19]	3/2	4	
Feshénga	bite (Melee 22)	2D6-1	15 [3/6/8]	3/2	12	
Gerednyá	sting (Melee 16) or bite (Melee 12)	1D6 1D10	11 [3/4/6]	1/1	7	+3 Stamina check vs poison or suffer palsy for 2-12 hours
Ghár	bite (Melee 28) or tail (Melee 12)	1D10 x3 1D10+5	32 [7/12/17]	6/3	3	scores three separate 1D10 blows with bite attack
Gíriku	bite (Melee 15)	1D10	12 [3/5/7]	2/1	6	
Hlí'ír	talons (Melee 22) and bite (Melee 26)	1D6+3 1D6+1	25 [5/9/13]	3/2	8	madness results on a <i>successful</i> Psychic Ability check
Hrá	sword (Melee 20)	1D10+4	30 [-/-/]	3/2	5	
Káyi	tentacles (Melee 15)	see notes	14 [3/5/8]	0	3	drains 1D6 Stamina per round
Lrí	bite (Melee 13) or sting (Melee 19)	1D6 1D6+2	16 [4/6/9]	2/1	6	-3 Stamina check vs poison or paralysed for 1-2 days
Mrúr	sword (Melee 14)	1D10	9 [-/-/]	3/0	4	
Qól	sword (Melee 13) and bite (Melee 16)	1D10 1D6	11 [3/4/6]	3/0	8	Stamina check or take extra 2D6 from venom in bite
Qumqúm	poleaxe (Melee 24)	1D10+7	40 [8/14/21]	2/1	6	invisible: opponents fight it at -6
Ru'ún	sword (Melee 32) and gun (Missile 16)	1D10+4 1D6+4	30 [-/-/]	4/2	6	Stamina check needed to avoid being stunned for 1-3 rounds
Sagún	tendrils (Melee 29)	1D10+1D6	35 [-/-/]	2/1	1	
Sérudla	weapon (Melee 22) or bite (Melee 24) or spit (missile 12)	1D10+5 2D6-2+1D6 see notes	23 [5/9/12]	5/3	6	spittle causes 1D6+1 in first round, then 1D6, then 1D6-1, etc, until cleaned off (halve armour)
Shédra	sword (Melee 16)	1D10	11 [-/-/]	4/0	4	
Teqéqmu	lash (Melee 16) or gas	1D6+3 see notes	30 [-/-/]	0	3	gas: Stamina check at -3 or collapse and die in 1-3 rounds
Thúnru'u	grapple (Melee 24) or sword (Melee 16)	1D10-1D6+4 1D10+4	23 [5/9/12]	2/1	9	grapple: counts as having 8 levels of Charage
Tsú'uru	tentacles (Melee 28)	1D10	22 [5/8/12]	2/1	10	immune to magic (not Eyes)
Vorodlá	sword (Melee 19)	1D10+3	11 [-/-/]	3/2	8	Psychic Ability check at +2 to avoid loss of 1-6 from Psychic Reservoir
Vringálu	bite (Melee 20)	1D10+1	18 [4/7/10]	2/1	9	-10 Stamina check to avoid infection
Yéleth	sword (Melee 13)	1D10	11 [-/-/]	2/1	8	Magical Resistance against hypnosis is at -1 per Yéleth attempting such
Zrné	bite (Melee 20)	1D6+3	21 [5/8/11]	2/1	12	

- The additive factor in each creature's damage dice (eg, "+2D6" in the case of the Aqáà's tail) is the creature's damage bonus (see Section 431).
- Creatures which do not have wound values listed after their Hit Points score do not need to make Stamina checks in combat. This applies to all undead and to certain other creatures (such as the Biridlú) with no pain response.

More detailed creature descriptions and stats can be downloaded [here](#).

## [600] MAGIC

There are two categories of magic recognised by sorcerers throughout the Five Empires. Ritual magic involves the use of chants and ceremonial gestures to draw power from the Planes Beyond. Psychic magic is worked directly from the mind of the sorcerer; it calls for less academic discipline than Ritual magic, but requires a powerful psyche.

Ritual spells cannot be cast while running, climbing a cliff, swimming, holding objects in your hands, etc. The limbs (particularly the arms) must be free and in working order. This means that a character who is tied up cannot use Ritual spells. The same goes for a character engaged in hand-to-hand combat. A character who wishes to use Ritual magic should also avoid encumbering himself with unnecessary equipment. Ritual sorcerers rarely wear more than light armour, if any.

Psychic spells do not require gestures or chanting. A sorcerer who knows Psychic spells can cast them even if tied up, providing that wounds or magical attacks have not rendered him insensible. Encumbrance has no effect on Psychic spell casting.

There are thus two distinct magic-use skills: Ritual Sorcerer and Psychic Sorcerer. These are not the same skill. Not all sorcerers are capable of learning both skills. In order to use magic, you must have the following minimum scores in Reasoning and Psychic Ability:

<i>attribute</i>	Ritual Magic	Psychic Magic	Both types
Reasoning	17	13	17
Psychic Ability	13	17	17

A high Psychic Reservoir is also a useful attribute. This is because a sorcerer's stock of magical energy is partly determined by his Psychic Reservoir. Even if you only have a Psychic Reservoir of 2 you can still become a sorcerer, but you won't have much energy for your spells.

### [610] Learning spells

Spells are divided into categories called spell phyla. For instance: the Fulmination phylum, which deals with lightnings and energies, consists of the spells Swift Thrust of Death, Fist of Fire, Infrangible Orb and Energy Bolt. There are 24 Ritual spell phyla and 10 Psychic spell phyla.

Every sorcerer has a rating in each spell phylum. This rating is 0 if the sorcerer knows nothing about that particular phylum and cannot use such spells. A sorcerer who studies a given phylum will build his rating from 0 to +1 to +2 and so on, up to +10 (the maximum). Your rating in a phylum can never be higher than half your Sorcerer level, rounded up. This means that an 8th level Ritual Sorcerer could study until he acquired a rating of +4 in the Fulmination phylum, for example, but would then need to advance another skill-level before further study could increase his Fulmination rating to +5.

The phyla are listed in full in Sections 651 and 652. A rating is given for each of the spells within a phylum. In the Botany phylum, the simplest spell (Bloom) corresponds to a rating of +1, the next (Purify) corresponds to +2, and so on. These are the minimum ratings you must have before you can even attempt to cast that spell. A sorcerer with a rating of only +1 in the Botany phylum could cast Bloom, but he needs to increase his rating to +2 before he can use the Purify spell.

### How common are sorcerers?

A reasonable proportion of player-characters will meet these attribute requirements and thus qualify as potential sorcerers. Most will then opt to study sorcery. But do not be misled into assuming that a similar proportion of sorcerers in the populace at large. Player characters are assumed to be townfolk, after all - giving a good chance of literacy and temple education. This gives them the opportunity to realise sorcerous potential. The same is not true of the general populace, most of whom are rural, ignorant and somewhat fearful of magic. Trained practitioners of sorcery are by no means as common as the attribute statistics alone would suggest.

### Choice of phyla

A character who is apprenticed to a senior sorcerer would normally be expected to study the same phyla as his master. This is not compulsory, however, and it is always possible to find books on all phyla in a large temple library.

Referees should remember that the various temples have their own distinct preferences (see Section 132). A low-level sorcerer of Vimúhla will attract the disapproval of his superiors if he shows too much interest in Necromancy rather than Fulmination. At higher skill-levels this is less likely to present a problem, as the sorcerer by that stage is left to his own devices. Indeed, the inner mysteries of the temple may well emphasise very different fields of sorcery from what a lay person might expect.

### Temple resources

In a metropolis with a population of 600,000 or more, each temple is likely to have around thirty priests capable of using magic. The numbers break down roughly as follows:

- 12 sorcerers of levels 1-5
- 9 sorcerers of levels 6-10
- 6 sorcerers of levels 11-15
- 3 sorcerers of level 16 & up

Taking any given phylum, the chance of there being an individual capable of casting spells of that phylum is:

up to rating +3	90%
up to rating +5	75%
up to rating +8	40%
up to rating +10	12%

These are approximate figures which do not take into account the temple's preferred types of sorcery. In the case of a phylum likely to be favoured by the temple (Ceraunics or Carminry at the Temple of Vimúhla, etc), double the percentage chance of finding someone who knows such magic. For phyla antithetical to the temple's doctrines, reduce the chance by half.

Also, about a third of the temple's sorcerers will be independent lay priests who may not be immediately available or willing to provide "commercial" spell-casting. Often a lay priest might require a service in return for casting a spell or providing you with a scroll.

### "Stacking" spells

Defensive or augmentative spells are those such as Empowering (which adds 1-3 to Stamina) or The Panoply of Iron (which gives 4-point armour protection). Casting a second such spell while the first is still in force does not double the effect. Instead, the spell's duration is extended.

### Spell duration

All non-instantaneous spells have a fixed duration. In the case of Ritual spells, this applies even if the spell's caster is subsequently knocked out or killed. Having been cast, a Ritual spell is independent of its caster and remains in force for its allotted duration. If the caster wants to terminate it prematurely, he must use Disenchantment. Psychic spells are sustained by the conscious thought of their caster. He can terminate such a spell at any time, and it is dispelled automatically by his death or unconsciousness.

### [611] Increasing in phylum ratings

Every time a sorcerer goes up a skill level, he gets two "buying points" with which to increase his phylum ratings. He could then increase a single phylum by 2, or two different phyla by 1.

### [620] Spell Points

Every spell has a cost in Spell Points that must be expended to cast it. This cost is normally 10 points times the phylum rating of the spell. For example, the Fist of Fire spell (+3 in the Fulmination phylum) requires 30 Spell Points to cast. If you make a critical success in casting a spell (see Section 630) then the cost is halved.

A sorcerer's Spell Points score is equal to ten times the sum of his Psychic Reservoir and Psychic Ability. Thus Kashu, with Psychic Ability of 15 and Psychic Reservoir of 18, has 330 Spell Points. Once you have used up all your current Spell Points, you can cast no more spells until you have regained some points through sleep (see Section 621).

### [621] Recovering Spell Points

A sorcerer's Pedhetl, or Psychic Reservoir, supplies the force to energise his spells. When the vessel is empty (that is, when all the individual's Spell Points have been used up) a period of sleep is needed for the Pedhetl to draw more energy from the Planes Beyond.

In one night's rest a sorcerer will recover Spell Points equal to his Psychic Reservoir multiplied by a 2D10 roll. This figure is based on a period of five hours' sleep. If the sorcerer is woken before this then the points recovered are adjusted downwards proportionately. Getting more than five hours' sleep will not add any more Spell Points, though, since the roll gives the maximum possible that can be recovered in one day.

Clearly a single night's sleep will often not be enough to get back all lost Spell Points. Sometimes it will take days to recover from a particularly gruelling adventure where many spells were needed. If you use further spells before your total stock of Spell Points is replenished, you will need to keep a running total.

### [630] Casting spells

The action of casting most spells takes one round (see Section 422). To cast a spell properly, you must make a Sorcerer skill check. The basic modifier is your phylum rating. For instance, a 12th level Ritual Sorcerer with a rating of +3 in the Occultation phylum would cast a spell of this phylum by rolling 15 or less on 2D10. Other factors can adjust the normal modifier (see Sections 632 and 633).

### [631] Spell failure

A failed Sorcerer check means that the spell is not cast. Spell Points must still be paid for it as usual. A critical failure indicates a serious mistake in the your casting procedure: roll D10 and add your rating in the relevant phylum, then consult the table below.

2 to 7	No effect. The procedure was not even approximately right, and no Spell Points are expended.
8 to 14	Abort. The caster has time to cancel the spell before it is cast, but must still pay the regular Spell Points.
15 to 20	Backfire. The spell is reversed, affecting the caster rather than its intended target. It costs spellcasting points as per normal. It can be neutralised (Section 643) but in that case the points must be paid again. (If the caster intended to apply the spell to himself, treat this instead as an Abort.)

It is clear from this table that critical failures in spell casting actually get more dangerous as the Sorcerer becomes more adept at a given phylum. This is because a relative novice is likely to omit a crucial phrase or mind-set so that nothing happens at all. Any mistake on the part of a more experienced sorcerer may be sufficiently minor that the spell still operates, although not in the way intended!

### [632] Preparing a spell

By delaying before you cast a spell, you can be more sure of getting it right. For each extra round spent in preparation, (up to a maximum of three rounds) adjust the casting chance by +1. This represents time taken to clear your mind of distractions, and you cannot move or do anything else while preparing a spell. If you cast the spell correctly, you can cast it again on the following round and keep the preparation bonus. If you fail to cast it, you lose the bonus.

### [633] Encumbrance

In the case of Ritual spells, the Sorcerer skill check is further adjusted by -1 for every two points of encumbrance. Thus it is possible to cast Ritual spells in heavy armour, but only the most accomplished mages would have much chance of doing so. The casting of Psychic magic requires no gestures and is unaffected by encumbrance.

### [634] Targeting spells

Spells are divided in those that affect several beings and those that must be thrown at a single target. The latter need to be aimed, and the chance of hitting is given by the caster's base Missile value plus Sorcerer level. Aiming at a target more than 30m away affects the chance of hitting slightly: -1 per additional 10m.

When only half a round is taken to cast an aimed spell, the sorcerer gets only half his usual Missile value with the spell. This is just the same as for a Bowman who takes half a round for a shot.

### [640] Resisting magical attacks

Anyone who is struck by a hostile spell has a chance to resist its effect. This involves a D20 roll of equal to or less than your Magic Resistance score. You must subtract the attacking sorcerer's phylum rating from the number you need to roll. (A roll of 1 always indicates success, and a roll of 20 is always failure, just as with Melee or Evade rolls.)

A Magic Resistance roll is not made in the case of spells which do not affect their target directly. Examples are: fighters or monsters summoned by magic, clouds of poisonous gas, earthquakes, streams of lava. These harm the target naturally rather than by direct magical means, and so cannot be avoided by a Magic Resistance roll.

### [641] Magic Resistance

A character's Magic Resistance is made up of two factors: his basic innate resistance to sorcery, and his acquired experience.

Your base Magic Resistance value is half your Psychic Reservoir. If you have a Psychic Reservoir of 14 then your base Magic Resistance is 7, and so on. (Round fractions up, as usual.)

Onto your base Magic Resistance, add one of the following:

- +1 per level of Ritual Sorcerer
- or +1 per level of Psychic Sorcerer
- or +1 per level of Shamanistic Sorcerer
- or +1 per level of Magic Lore
- or +1 per two levels of your highest Complex skill

Note that only one of your skills contributes to your Magic Resistance (whichever gives the highest bonus).

## Magic and metal

Contact with metal disrupts and disperses a sorcerer's link with the Planes Beyond. The more metal a sorcerer is carrying, the more likely that his spells will go awry. This applies to both Psychic and Ritual sorcerers. As a consequence, most sorcerers avoid using metal weapons or armour – and usually prefer not even to carry coins, making use of gems or letters of credit instead.

A sorcerer who attempts a spell while carrying metal items must consult the table below. Roll D10 and add the encumbrance of the metal items carried:

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| <b>2-5</b>  | The spell is cast normally.   |
| <b>6-8</b>  | The spell is automatically miscast. Roll to determine if it is a critical failure.  |
| <b>9-12</b> | The caster must make a Magical Resistance roll as though against one of his own spells. If this fails he dies. If successful, he takes no damage but loses all his current Spell Points.  |
| <b>13+</b>  | The caster and everyone within 2m of him are slain if they fail a Magical Resistance roll as described above. If the caster survives he loses all current Spell Points and his Psychic Reservoir score is permanently reduced by 1D3. |

## Secret names

Every individual has a secret name which he uses when addressing his deity. The secret name is not normally revealed to anyone else. If a sorcerer learns your secret name, his spells have more power over you: you get no base Magic Resistance (ie, the factor derived from Psychic Reservoir) when attacked by one of his spells. Why then would you ever disclose your secret name to a sorcerer? One good reason to do so is because then his spells of healing will always work on you (see the Carminry phylum, page 46). Few Tsolyáni would take the risk, however – even if the sorcerer were a clan-cousin.

## Buying spells

Player-characters often want to buy spells of healing or protection. They have three options:

### Temple

This is the most reliable source of spells. A temple will not try to cheat a customer. Determine availability of the spell required using the sidebar on page 42. Assuming the character makes at least occasional temple contributions, he can get the spell cast for 25 Káitars times the phylum rating. (Endurance would cost 150 Káitars, and so on.) A temple other than your own will charge 50 Káitars times the phylum rating. Spells above +7 are only rarely available, as higher level sorcerers have their own agenda and do not deign to sell their services.

### Full-time employees

Sorcerous bodyguards can be employed - usually for about twice the professional rates given in the sidebar on page 13. Naturally, if you employ a sorcerer in this way then you can call on his spells any time you want. It is rare to find a sorcerer above 10th level in private employment, however, except in the service of eminent nobles or high officials.

### Bazaar sorcerers

Here there is no guarantee the sorcerer knows the spell you want. He might pretend to attempt a healing spell and then claim that it failed to "take". Bazaar sorcerers charge only 1-6 Káitars times the phylum rating, but it is rare to find spells of higher than +3 and the chance of fraud is up to 80%. (You can guard against this to some extent by seeking a recommendation from a friend or clan-cousin who has used the sorcerer's services before.)

## Cost of ingredients

Every month, a Ritual Sorcerer must pay for fresh ingredients for each spell phylum that he knows:

phylum rating	cost in Káitars
+1	1
+2	2
+3	3
+4	4
+5	5
+6	9
+7	14
+8	20
+9	27
+10	35

*example* Tetkume has a *Psychic Reservoir* of 11. His highest *Complex skill, Theologian*, is at level 9. His total *Magic Resistance* is therefore 11 (ie, 6+5). He is hit by a *Shadows spell* cast by *Vortumoi hiChusu*, who is +4 in the *Occultation phylum*. To resist the spell, Tetkume must roll 7 or less on 1D20.

## [642] Metal armour and spell resistance

Metal conducts magical energy, which is why it disrupts spell casting. For the same reason, metal armour gives partial protection from spells cast at the wearer. A light coverage of steel (or any other metal) gives a bonus of +1 to Magic Resistance. Medium coverage gives +2. Heavy coverage gives +3. The quality of the steel (ordinary, excellent or enchanted) does not affect this bonus.

## [643] Counterspells

A sorcerer who is the target of a spell that belongs a phylum he has studied can attempt to counter it. He expends the same number of Spell Points as he would do to cast the spell, then rolls D10. If the roll is equal to or less than his own rating in the appropriate phylum, he counters the spell and has no need to make the Magic Resistance check. This only has the effect of neutralising the spell in the caster's immediate vicinity - any companions who were also struck must resist as usual.

Neutralising a spell takes only a split-second. It does not interfere with the sorcerer's normal action(s) for the round. However, it is only possible to counter one incoming spell in a given initiative phase. If you are attacked by several spells cast at exactly the same moment, you will have to decide which one to try neutralising.

Note that although the spell must belong to a phylum which the sorcerer has studied, he can try to counter it even if his own mastery of the phylum is not sufficient to cast the spell himself. Rudatokoi, who has a rating of +5 in the *Domination phylum*, has a fifty-fifty chance (5 or less on D10) of neutralising any spell of that phylum that is thrown at him.

## [650] Descriptions of the spells

Sections 651 and 652 detail the Ritual and Psychic spells. Unless the spell description states otherwise, any spell that affects a target can be resisted by making a Magic Resistance Roll. Armour usually gives no protection against damage inflicted by a spell - though wearing metal armour can help you to resist (see Section 641).

## [651] Ritual Spell Phyla

The following section details the various spells of the twenty four Ritual phyla. The minimum rating needed to cast each spell is given in brackets after the spell's name. For example, "Fist of Fire (+3)" means that you cannot cast Fist of Fire until you have a rating of at least +3 in the *Fulmination phylum*.

Ritual spells generally need a few ingredients. This might be no more than a drop of fluid or a pinch of dust or herbs. Such items are stored in a sorcerer's satchel. This holds enough ingredients for several days' worth of spells, so there is no need to require a sorcerer to keep constant track of the contents and replenishment of his satchel. It becomes important only when the campaign storyline dictates - perhaps if the character is surprised when he does not have his satchel to hand, or when on a long expedition which allows no chance to restock the rarer ingredients.

All these spells take one round to cast unless otherwise stated in the spell description.

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## BESTIARY (qu'úmyal)

### *the summoning of living creatures*

**Swarm (+2):** This affects a zone five metres across within 20 metres of the caster, drawing a swarm of stinging and biting insects to attack anyone in that area. The effect lasts five minutes. Living beings in the affected area suffer 1D3 damage (automatic special) each round and must make an unmodified check based on Cleverness and highest Complex skill to take any action other than exiting the swarm. (Characters can substitute a +5 Soldier check for this if they prefer.)

**Familiar (+4):** This spell creates a single small animal such as a dog, bird or fish. The animal has 4 Hit Points and will not fight, but can understand its master and is able to perform other duties which would be possible for a normal animal of the type such as carry a message, follow a scent, stand guard, etc. The spell takes five rounds to cast and lasts for twenty minutes.

**Hunting Pack (+5):** This takes five rounds to cast. It sends a pack of 3-7 hunting animals to a point within 30m of the caster. There they will attack anyone in a zone eight metres across, dispersing after five minutes. Appropriate animals include Hyahyú'u, Miku, Yazái and Kité. Regardless of the outward form, the creatures' Melee values, etc, are as listed in the accompanying box.

**Crawling Creatures (+6):** This takes five rounds to cast. It sends a group of 2-4 large insects, snakes, arachnids or other such creatures towards a designated group of targets, whom they will pursue at a speed of 12m/round until the spell expires after ten minutes. Creatures summoned in this way include the Bith, Epéng, Dnélu, Kókh, Horók, Étla and Aulléb.

**Predator (+7):** A group of 1-3 larger and more ferocious animals are summoned within five rounds and will remain for ten minutes. They attack anyone designated by the caster. Possible creatures include the Zrné, Feshénga, Qáqta and Chürstalli.

**Flying Beasts (+8):** This spell summons 1-5 large flying creatures for a period of thirty minutes. These could be Vringálu, Teqéqmu, Dlákolel, Giriku, Lri, or many other types. Again, the spell takes five rounds to cast. The creatures will attack any target designated by the caster and can also perform other duties such as carrying messages.

**Monster (+9):** This spell takes ten rounds to cast. It summons a single huge and powerful beast that will obey the caster for a period of one hour. Examples of possible monsters are the Sró, Sérudla and Ghár. If the species chosen is naturally aquatic or able to fly then the monster will also possess these abilities but (like the creatures summoned by the other spells of this phyla) it will not have any special abilities such as venomous fangs or noxious sprays.

**Underworld Denizen (+10):** This spell is unique to the worshippers of Ksáruul and Grugánu. It takes ten rounds to cast. It creates a creature of any of the living species native to the Underworld, and this being will serve the caster for one hour. It must be given its orders in the Tongue of the Priests of Ksáruul (a +5 check is needed) and will not obey any command to attack priests of Ksáruul or Grugánu. The possible species that can be summoned are: the Aqáá, the Biridlú, the Dlaqó, the Hli'ir, the Kúrgha, the Marashylu, the Ngáyu, the Ngóro, the Nshé, the Qól, the Qumqúm, the Sagún, the Thúnru'u and the Tsú'uru. Unlike other spells of the phylum, this does summon a creature with all the abilities usually possessed by the species (hypnosis, poison, or whatever).

#### GENERAL DETAILS OF THE BESTIARY SPELLS

<i>type</i>	<i>Melee</i>	<i>Hit Points</i>	<i>armour</i>	<i>move</i>	<i>Magic Resistance</i>
Hunting	11	<b>6</b> [2/3/4]	0	20m/round	9
Crawling	15	<b>12</b> [3/5/7]	1/0	12m/round	9
Predator	18	<b>15</b> [3/6/8]	2/1	20m/round	12
Flying	18	<b>15</b> [3/6/8]	1/0	40m/round	12
Monster	21	<b>24</b> [5/9/13]	3/1	10m/round	15

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## BOTANICS (mitlár)

### *the sorcery of plants*

**Bloom (+1):** Cast at touch range, this causes a plant to bloom and/or fruit within one minute.

**Purify (+2):** This operates on any plant held in the caster's hands, making it safe to eat even if it is rotten, infected or naturally poisonous.

**Toughen (+3):** Affects a sapling, vine, reed, etc, up to 10m long and 10cm in diameter, giving it the hardness of bronze for one hour. This spell works at touch range.

**Fragrance (+4):** An area of vegetation 5m across is affected for a period of one day. If crushed underfoot, the plants emit a strange perfume: every round in the zone of effect requires a Stamina roll to avoid falling asleep for 2-12 hours. A spell of Detoxify is needed before a victim can be woken.

**Embower (+5):** This animates bushes, tall grass, creepers, etc, in an area of 5m diameter. It has a range of 10m and lasts ten minutes. Anyone in the affected area must make a Strength/Dexterity check to avoid being entangled, with modifiers depending on the type of vegetation (unmodified for ordinary woodland undergrowth, ranging through to -10 in thick jungle) and an additional +1 to +3 if the character has a suitable edged weapon to hand. Ordinary failure allows a check at a cumulative -5 on the following round; critical failure means that the character is held fast. Once caught, a character will be choked to death within a minute if not cut free.

**Inboscation (+6):** The caster can insert his whole physical and mental self, including non-metallic possessions, into a plant (usually a tree) of equal or greater size. It can also be cast on another target within 10m, in which case a Magic Resistance roll is allowed. While inside the tree, the character experiences events as though slowed to one-tenth normal speed. He can "see" all around him but cannot move or speak. Psychic spells can be used while inboscated. A Lift Curse returns the character to his normal form 1m from the tree.

**Arboreal Spirit (+10):** This awakens animation within a tree about 3m to 6m in

height, which will serve its creator with a rudimentary intelligence. It can reach out its branches to strike, making 1-3 attacks each round with a Melee value of 11 and doing 1D6+1D6 damage. The animated tree will have about 30-40 Hit Points and resists spells with a Magic Resistance of 13. The effect lasts one week.

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## CARMINRY (wivár)

### *the incantations that promote healing*

*All Healing spells require the recipient to make a Psychic Ability check to see if the spell is effective. (This reflects the changes that have taken place in human biology since the spells were originally formulated.) A critically failed check means that magic cannot be used for further healing, and the target must recover naturally.*

**Recuperation (+1):** A target who succeeds in his Psychic Ability check will recover 1 lost Hit Point after a night's rest. Multiple castings have no additional effect: a maximum of 1 HP can be recovered per night's rest.

**Cure Minor Wounds (+4):** This spell operates at touch range and heals 1-3 lost Hit Points if the target makes his Psychic Ability check. Like the other spells of this phylum, it affects only wounds, not Hit Points which are effectively lowered owing to thirst, hunger, etc.

**Cure Major Wounds (+6):** Like the preceding spell, but 1D6 Hit Points are recovered and the Psychic Ability check is made at +3.

**Benefaction (+7):** 1-3 wounded targets within 3 metres of the caster each recover 1D3 Hit Points if they make a Psychic Ability check at +3.

**Cure All Wounds (+8):** The subject instantly recovers all lost Hit Points. The user must touch the subject. The Psychic Ability check is made at +5.

**Restoration (+10):** This is unique to the Temples of Thúmis and Keténgku. It heals and restores one lost limb, damaged organ or crippled body area. The Psychic Ability check is unmodified. It can be used to repair lost eyesight, hearing, and other mutilations caused by either magic or serious wounding, but cannot remove genetic de-

formities, nor will it treat the ravages of disease, poison, hunger or thirst.

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## CERAUNICS (furódhu)

### *the magic of scintillations and detonations*

**Dazzlement (+2):** Produces a short-lived coruscating flare of light. Any sighted being within 5 metres and facing the caster must make an unmodified Dexterity check to avoid being dazzled for 1-10 rounds. Dazzled characters fight at -10 from Melee values and -20 from Missile.

**Illumination (+5):** This spell creates a globe of radiance, equivalent to full daylight, with a radius of 10 metres around the caster. It disperses a spell of Shadows and is also useful in demoralising or driving off most types of undead. This powerful radiance negates the user's chance of surprise, however. It lasts twenty minutes.

**Fatalisation (+6):** This spell is placed upon an object or inscription, and remains until activated by being picked up or read by a member of a group specified when the spell was cast. An explosion then results that inflicts 1D10 damage on anyone within two metres; armour gives no protection. Individuals cannot be specified as the targets of a Fatalisation (even indirectly) but the caster can key it to detonate for any devotee of Avánthe, any Pé Chóí, anyone from Háida Pakála, etc. If the affected object is touched (or an inscription read) by anyone else except for the caster then the spell is broken. An item suspected of having this enchantment on it can also be made safe by means of Lift Curse.

**Doomkill (+7):** This powerful spell manifests itself as a huge explosion when it reaches its target. It has a range of up to 100m and requires a special aiming roll on two six-sided dice. A roll of 7, 8 or 9 indicates the explosion has hit its target. Less than this denotes that the spell has fallen short, and on a 10 or more it overshoots. Be warned that a roll of 2 ("snake eyes") on the dice signifies that the caster himself is caught in the centre of the explosion!

The blast area is six metres across, and any beings within this zone are blown to pieces if they fail to resist the spell. Doomkill cannot be counterspelled, and only the spell of Invulnerability protects against it. Even a character who successfully resists the spell still takes 1D10 damage (armour

gives half normal protection) and will spend the next round dazed and unable to take any action. A Doomkill detonating in a confined space such as a narrow passage or room has a 20% chance of causing a cave-in.

**The Gem of Obliteration (+8):** A sparkling jewel no larger than a centimetre across appears in the caster's hand. In casting the spell, a group of intended victims should be named. This could be all humans, all servitors of Change, all Ssú, etc. Specific individuals or very small groups cannot be named. If picked up or stepped on by someone belonging to this group, the gem explodes for 2D10 damage (anyone else within 2 metres at the time takes 1D6 damage). Armour gives half normal protection. The gem vanishes harmlessly if not touched within 12 days. It is possible to recognise a Gem of Obliteration by making a +3 Jeweller check (and another mage who has studied this phylum might be allowed an unmodified Sorcerer check). An unsuccessful attempt to disenchant the gem causes it to explode spontaneously.

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## DISENCHANTMENT (vlésh)

### *undoing the conjurations of others*

These are spells for disbanding other enchantments. Once the Disenchantment spell is successfully cast, the caster must make a Ritual Sorcerer skill check. Assuming you know (i) what spell it is you are trying to undo and (ii) the identity of the caster, the check is made at a modifier equal to your level minus the caster's. Other modifiers to the skill check are:

<i>Caster's secret name known</i>	+10
<i>A phylum you've studied</i>	+ rating
<i>Caster's identity not known</i>	-5
<i>Spell phylum not identified</i>	-5
<i>Per previous attempt (by you)</i>	-1

For example, a 13th level sorcerer tries to dispel a 14th level sorcerer's Domination spell. He correctly uses a Manumission spell, but does not know for certain that he is dealing with Domination; this incurs a -5. He does, however, know the identity of the caster. The required roll for success is 7 or less on 2D10. If this fails, the next attempt would require a 6 or less, and so on.

**Divestment (+1):** This removes one defensive spell from an enemy within 50m.

**Disbelieve (+2):** Dissolves illusions and images. As with all the spells of this phyla, if directed at a group of illusions formed from several separate castings, it will only dispel those resulting from a single spell chosen at random.

**Manumission (+3):** This is used to free beings from magical control. It has a range of 50m and affects up to 1-6 targets (though only those under the same command spell; see above).

**Disband Summonings (+4):** This is used to destroy beings created by the Marshaling or Bestiary phyla (but not demons summoned by Evocation). All beings within 50m of the caster that were created by a single spell will be disbanded.

**Harmonise (+5):** This spell restores sanity and normal peace of mind to a person who has been made insane or unnaturally fearful by magic. It must be cast at touch range.

**Broach Barrier (+6):** This penetrates any sorcerous obstacle such as that created by an Obstruction or Wall spell, leaving a gap 2m wide.

**Lift Curse (+8):** Removes any one spell from a single target within 5m.

**Cancellation (+9):** Instantly cancels out a single non-instantaneous spell within sight of the caster. The affected spell cannot be one which has been cast on a person (that calls for Lift Curse) but must be an untargeted enchantment such as Earthquake, Fair Winds, Fragrance or Vapour of Death.

**Dead Zone (+10):** This establishes a zone of 10m radius around the caster. No magic can be cast within this zone, though Eyes will still operate normally. For a spell to enter the zone from outside, the caster of the intruding spell must succeed in a competitive Sorcerer skill check versus the caster of the Cancellation. The effect lasts for fifteen minutes.

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## ESTRANGEMENT (*chantu'ún*)

### *altering the appearance, shape or substance of a being*

**Adornment (+1):** This spell, available only to worshippers of Dlamélish or Hriháyal, increases the Comeliness of the recipient

by 1D6. It must be cast at touch range and lasts for an hour.

**The Visage of Vokortún (+3):** This spell, named after a monster of Tsolyáni myth, has a range of 30 metres and turns the victim to stone. It can be cancelled by Lift Curse, but a character who has been turned to stone loses 1 point permanently from Stamina, Dexterity and Comeliness.

**Change Others (+5):** The caster can change 1-3 living targets into any animal, insect, or other living species with which he is familiar. Change Others can be used to alter a character's appearance to that of a different human being, but not to the appearance of a specific person (for that you need the Imitation spell). Transformed characters have the physical strength and fighting ability (including Hit Points) of the creature they are changed into. They cannot use magic or weapons while transformed. Nor can they speak – unless the acquired form is one capable of speech, such as a Küni. Also, transformed characters take on some of the "personality" of the animal: the aggressiveness of a Zrné, the placidity of a Tsi'il, and so on. Change Others is permanent unless dissipated by a Lift Curse spell. It travels invisibly towards its target at the rate of 5 metres a combat round, and has a maximum range of 15 metres.

**Change Self (+6):** The caster can change himself into any land, aquatic or flying creature. He acquires that creature's Melee value, Hit Points and other physical characteristics (wings, poison sting, etc) while retaining his own mental attributes. He cannot speak or use magic while transformed. The spell lasts thirty minutes, at the end of which the caster reverts to normal form and must make an unmodified Psychic Reservoir check. Success (sic) in the check means that he will continue to exhibit some of the animal's distinctive behaviour traits for 1-6 days thereafter.

**Imitation (+7):** The caster is given the appearance and voice of a specific person known to him – even a person of the opposite sex. He does not acquire any of the imitated person's attributes, memories or mannerisms. The spell can also be cast on another character instead of the caster, who must be within 20 metres at the time; a Magic Resistance Roll is allowed. The effect lasts for one day.

**The Panoply of Iron (+8):** This spell is known only to devotees of Vimúhla and Chiténg. The recipient's skin becomes living metal, conferring natural 4-point armour but also reducing Dexterity by 50%. It has a range of 1m and a duration of 30 minutes.

**Insubstantiality (+10):** This allows the caster to become intangible, extending also to any non-metallic objects he is carrying at the time of casting. He can move normally and also drift upward or downward through solid objects at 1m per round. An intangible Sorcerer can be attacked with spells or enchanted weapons, but cannot make physical attacks of his own and can use only Psychic magic (because he has no voice while in this state).

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## EVOCATION (*rifás*)

### *summoning the inhabitants of other Planes*

**Raiment of Authority (+3):** This causes creatures of the lesser demonic races (Sharétl) to respond more favourably to the caster. It has no effect on The Demon spell. If the caster succeeds in a +5 Demonology check then he can deter hostile demons from attacking him, and on a critical success they will even obey him in minor matters (though not to the extent of turning on their summoner). When the Raiment of Authority is cast in advance of a summoning, it reduces the Sharétl's "fee" for service by 25% (or 50% if the summoner gets a critical success on his Demonology check). This spell lasts twenty minutes.

**Dismissal (+4):** This magical formula returns a Sharétl instantly to its own Plane if it fails a Magic Resistance roll. It has a range of 3m.

**Summoning (+6):** This spell takes ten rounds to cast and summons a Sharétl. Such creatures include the Dwellers in Shadow, the acephalous Tsughiyúr, the Nation of Invisible Seekers, the Flame Dragons and the serpentine Aerial Ones of Tu'unkélmú. For game purposes all have Melee 26, 21 Hit Points, armour 3/1, Magic Resistance 19, and inflict 1D10+1D6 damage per attack. They move at 20m per round. The Sharétl will also have 1-3 spells which it can cast once during its time on this Plane.

When the Sharétl first appears, the caster must make a +5 Demonology check. Failure means that the Sharétl refuses to do his bidding (and a critical failure causes it to attack). A successful check means that the Sharétl is willing to negotiate; it will serve the caster in exchange for offerings of steel, gold, jewels, magic scrolls and the like, usually to a total value of 2000 kaitars. A critical success on the Demonology check means that the Sharétl will serve for half of the usual payment. Once it has agreed to serve, it will remain for three hours before returning to its own Plane.

Casting this spell temporarily lowers the sorcerer's Psychic Ability by 20 minus his level (eg, if he is 18th level then his Psychic Ability is lowered by 2 points). If Psychic Ability drops below the minimum value given in Section 401 then further spell casting will not be possible. Lost Psychic Ability points recover at the rate of one a day.

**Binding (+7):** One Sharétl can be bound in the caster's service on an indefinite basis. This must be attempted as soon as the Sharétl appears. If it resists the Binding, the Sharétl will immediately attack with initiative. If the spell succeeds, the Sharétl can be bound to a previously prepared object called a focus. This focus could be a mask, sword, flute, shield, ring, amulet – any non metallic object the caster chooses. The Sharétl is drawn into the focus and can be released at any time to do the caster's will. The presence of a Sharétl dormant within a focus can be detected by sorcery.

It takes one round to unleash a Sharétl from a focus, and then another round to issue it with orders. One round is also needed to return the Sharétl to its focus. The Sharétl will vanish if its focus is destroyed, or if a spell of Dismissal is cast at the focus or at the Sharétl itself. It cannot voluntarily move more than 30m from the focus, and if this should happen for any reason then it is immediately returned to its own Plane.

The Sharétl remains bound as long as the caster diverts 70 spellpoints each day to keeping it so. If these points are not expended, the Sharétl returns to its own Plane.

**Otherworldly Host (+8):** Like the Summoning spell except that 1-5 Sharétl are brought to this Plane for three hours. If tractable, they will typically serve for offerings amounting to 1000-10000 Kaitars.

Casting this spell temporarily lowers the sorcerer's Psychic Ability by 25 minus his level. These lost points recover at the rate of one a day.

**Petitioning of the Ebon Lords (+9):** This spell induces one of the mighty rulers of the other Planes to exert a fraction of his or her power on the caster's behalf. In effect, the caster is thus able to duplicate any other spell whose phylum rating is +6 or less. A +5 Demonology check is required to see if the caster knows which Demon Lord's powers correspond to the required spell (Tkél for Obstruction or Wall of Fire, Quyóve for Carmirny, and so on), with critical failure resulting in a random spell effect – or worse.

A person resisting a spell cast in this way has the option to use his Demonology level instead of Sorcerer, etc (see Section 641) as a factor in his Magic Resistance.

**The Demon (+10):** One large and terrible demonic being may be called forth to serve the caster for one hour. This is not in fact the true form of the Demon as would be summoned by a proper demonological ceremony. Rather, it can be thought of as an "avatar" of the Demon with only a fraction of the original's power. Some legendary Demons are Rū'ütlanesh the Hairy-Legged Mouth, putrescent Ge'én, tentacled Gashtené, Njénü of the Everlasting Dream, and the Beast Without a Tail. The referee should determine each "avatar's" powers, which as a rule of thumb should be around 35 Hit Points, armour 4, Magical Resistance of 20 and a Melee value of 30, with 1-3 attacks per round and a damage rating of at least 1D10+5. The Demon should also know appropriate spells to at least +7.

The Demon must be controlled by making a +5 Demonology check. A critical failure means that it attacks the caster in rage at having been summoned, and failure means that it simply departs at once. Success (or critical success) on the skill check means that the Demon will serve in return for some 5000-10,000 (or 2500- 5000) kaitars.

Casting this spell temporarily lowers the sorcerer's Psychic Ability by 28 minus his level. Depleted Psychic Ability recovers by one point a day until back to its normal score.

The Entities of Light (servitors of Lord Hnalla) manifest as dazzling globes of light and prefer to bargain for magical devices, books and scrolls.

The Heroes of Glory (servitors of Karakan) are tall humanoid warriors clad in steel. The Warriors in Scarlet (servitors of Chegarrá) wear glittering red plate. Both bargain for steel articles.

The Mighty Ones of the Pearl Mists (servitors of Thumis) are tall spindly creatures in grey cloaks, said to be adept at curing ailments. The Watchers of the High Tower (servitors of Ketengku) appear as many-coloured geometric flickerings and are skilled at tracing lost objects or person. Both bargain for books or scrolls of spells.

The Spirits of Air, Water and Earth (servitors of Avanthé) are wispy blue-green wraiths that can only be summoned outdoors. They are excellent wilderness guides, and count as having 20 levels of Survival. On a -10 Survival check they can cause wild animals to become placid and depart. They bargain for amulets, talismans and scrolls.

The Voyagers of the Farther Isles (servitors of Belkhanu) are man-sized golden insects with iridescent wings. All have 1-3 Nexus Travel spells. They bargain for gold, amber and topaz.

The Demons of the Dark (servitors of Hrü'ü) are squat amorphous creatures swathed in a mantle of darkness that fight with odd twisted polearms. They bargain for steel items.

The Flame Dragons (servitors of Vimuhla) are long flying reptiles with firecoloured scales. The Winged Serpents of the Conflagration (servitors of Chiteng) are similar, but red and black in colouring. They demand human sacrifice as payment for their services.

The Dwellers in Shadow (servitors of Ksarul) are shaggy, blue-grey spidery monsters that smell of rotting meat and vinegar. They bargain for blue gems. The Azure Denizens (servitors of Gruganu) are large indigo-hued amoeba that require human sacrifice.

The Tsughiyur (servitors of Sarku) are hulking headless beings whose sensory organs are set in the middle of their slimy grey torsos. They bargain for copper and gems. Other followers of this deity include the undead warriors of the Legion of the Despairing Dead and the even better Legion of the Mantle of Vipers. The Blind Ones of Hreshkaggetl (servitors of Durritlamish) are rust coloured beasts with long writhing tentacles and saucer eyes. They consume the brains of those they kill, applying a -5 modifier to the chance of a Revivify spell working.

The Aerial Ones of Tu'unkelmu (servitors of Dlamelish) are thick-bodied serpents with leathery wings. They demand gold, silver and other precious metals.

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## FULMINATION (jadhák)

*causing a foe to be struck by lightning*

*The visible manifestations of Fulmination spells can vary according to temple. A devotee of Hnálla or Drá casts Energy Bolts that appear as flares of scintillant white light. A sorcerer of Karakán or Che-gárta uses a variant manifesting as myriad "energy pulses", like quicksilver darts. Followers of Vimúhla and Chiténg have an affinity for fire-magic, and their Fulmination spells resemble blasts of scarlet flame. All other temples use the standard form of these spells: arcs or globes of coruscating blue-white electricity.*

**Swift Thrust of Death (+2):** This aimed spell strikes one target at a range of up to 10m. If the Magic Resistance roll is failed, the victim takes 3D10 damage. Even if the spell is resisted it still causes 1D3 damage.

**The Fist of Fire (+3):** This spell calls down a sizzling ball of lightning to a spot within 30m of the caster. This ball is 2m across, and initially strikes 1-3 beings at its point of impact. It then skids off in a random direction for 5-30 metres before dissipating, damaging anyone or anything else that happens to come into contact with it. To determine the direction it moves, roll D20 counting "north" as directly away from the caster: 1-5 = north, 6-8 = northeast, 9-10 = east, 11-12 = southeast, 13 = south, 14-15 = southwest, 16-17 = west, and 18-20 = northwest. It is possible to dodge the Fist of Fire (by a successful Evade roll) but a Magic Resistance roll is useless. Anyone struck takes 2D6 damage, against which armour will give half its normal protection.

**The Infrangible Orb (+5):** This spell can only be cast by servitors of Vimúhla or his Cohort, Chiténg. It surrounds the caster with a globe of incandescent plasma which does no harm to him but which burns everything else it touches. Those burned by the plasma suffer 2D6 damage (no Magic Resistance roll) with armour giving half normal protection. The globe is 2m across, which allows an opponent with a two-handed weapon to strike into it without being burned. A hafted weapon such as a spear will be burned away in 1-3 combat rounds, however, and even a Chlén-hide sword will be consumed within 1-6 rounds. The Orb reduces the damage potential of

a Cold spell or Eye of Frigid Breath fired through it by 75%. Other than this it has no effect on spells, missiles, etc, except that it is quite difficult to see through: subtract 1D6 from Missile value for any attacks targeted into or out of the Orb. It lasts ten minutes.

**Energy Bolt (+6):** This spell creates a powerful discharge of magical energy. It has a range of 60m and can hit 1-10 beings. A victim who fails to resist the spell suffers 3D10 damage, while a successful Magic Resistance roll reduces this to only 1D3 damage.

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## GEOMANCY (shazir)

*the ordering of elemental forces*

**Guiding (+2):** This helps the caster to find his way out of a jungle, maze or labyrinth. For the ten minutes that the spell lasts he is infallibly guided by the most direct route (not always the safest one) to the nearest exit. This route will avoid chasms, deep rivers, locked doors and other obstacles that would bar a person's path. No indication of traps or hidden mechanisms is provided, so the caster might be brought straight to a secret door and be unable to open it.

**Spoor (+3):** The caster is able to unerringly follow the trail of a being for the 30 minutes that the spell lasts. The trail can be as much as a day old. He does not have to know the quarry's name or even species, just so long as he is able to pick up some physical evidence of the quarry's passing (a cracked branch, a loosened tent-flap, etc). It is also possible to follow the spoor of a Globe of Distant Discernment or Morphetic Travel if the spell is cast at a point crossed by one of these.

**Transmutation (+5):** This spell transmutes an area of 40 square metres (a 7 metre circle adjacent to the caster) to a depth of one metre. Water can be changed to ice, mud to dry earth, and vice versa. It only works on flat areas of unworked ground, so you cannot use it to topple a mud brick wall or undermine a building's foundations. Once the area is transmuted, it remains in that form until it reverts naturally (a dried area of bog would slowly become waterlogged, for instance) and cannot be altered back by cancelling the spell. Creatures wading through mud have their movement rate reduced by two thirds.

**Control Terrain (+6):** This creates a tunnel up to three metres long and one metre in diameter through earth or solid rock. This could take the form of a ditch or pit beneath an enemy's feet, in which case the enemy needs an Evade roll to jump clear. The spell can then be cancelled leaving the enemy buried. Alternatively it can be used to throw up a boulder or earthen rampart of similar size. This spell has a range of 5 metres and lasts 5 minutes.

**Earthquake (+7):** A very powerful earth tremor is localised in a circle of 3 metres radius within 30 metres of the caster. Beings in this zone are thrown about helplessly and must make an Evade roll each round to try and get clear. Failure means that the being takes increasing damage: 1D6 in the first round, 2D6 in the second, 3D6 in the third, and so on. Armour gives no protection. Items of glass, pottery, etc, are automatically shattered, and there is a 30% chance of bringing down walls and pillars in the affected zone.

**Navigation (+8):** The caster learns his distance from and bearing in relation to a fixed point on the planet's surface (the city of Éngsvan hla Gánga in the case of Tsolyáni wizards.)

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## GUARDING (nlésh)

*gaining protection by means of magical barriers and wards*

**Avoidance (+2):** This spell gives the blessing of Chriya, the One Who Skulks, a very minor demon charged with the turning aside of blows. The spell can be applied to one person (either the caster or a companion within 1m) and its effect lasts for thirty minutes. Every combat round, it has a chance of deflecting one blow struck against the character in that round. If more than one attack is made against the character, he must decide which he wants the Avoidance spell to affect. Roll D6, and on a roll of 1-2 the blow is turned aside.

**The Unsleeping Eye (+3):** Creates a glistening green orb which hovers above the caster as he sleeps, waking him with a telepathic alarm if anyone visibly approaches within 5m. (Note that in a typical clanhouse or temple dorm this could mean numerous disturbances throughout the night.) The spell lasts for eight hours.

**The Circle of Quiescence (+4):** This spell creates a magic ring of protection of radius 2m around the user. Apparitions and Domination spells cannot cross the boundary of the Circle in either direction, and any other spell thrown into or out of it is attenuated so that a target gets a +3 bonus on his resistance roll. (Only spells that cross the Circle's boundary are affected.) It also blocks undead and creatures produced by spells of the Marshalling and Bestiary phyla, but if they are inside when the spell is cast they are still able to function. The Circle of Quiescence is stationary: unlike most defensive enchantments, it does not move with the sorcerer who casts it. The duration is 10 minutes.

**Obstruction (+5):** An opaque barrier of force is created in front of the caster to seal any door or aperture up to 25 square metres in area. This is impenetrable by any means (even Clairvoyance), but the caster can move through it himself and also take others who are in contact with him. The spell lasts ten minutes.

**Shield of Defence (+6):** An invisible defensive barrier forms around the caster. This is 3m across (big enough to protect up to five others along with the caster) and lasts ten minutes. It blocks all missiles and is also impervious to Fulmination spells. An enemy who tries to enter the Shield of Defence must make a Magic Resistance roll. If he fails, he is repulsed by the Shield and must wait until next round to try again.

**Invulnerability (+8):** This spell is learned only by sorcerers worshipping Karakán or his Cohort, Chegárra. It permits the user (or one companion on whom it is used) to become impervious to all Chlén-hide, stone and wooden weapons. Ordinary metallic weapons do only half damage to the character (after adjusting for armour), but it gives no protection at all against enchanted steel. It is also not proof against "Eyes" or spells, with the exception of Ceraunics, Psychokinesis and the Silver Halo of Soul Stealing. It lasts ten minutes.

**Munify (+9):** Creates a 4m diameter globe around the caster and his companions that is impenetrable by any physical or magical means. Light passes through dimly to the globe's interior, but from outside it is opaque. No magic can be used inside the globe. This lasts for one hour.

**The Seal upon the Powers (+10):** This takes five minutes to cast and lasts five hours. It affects an area 30m across, making the boundary impervious to magic in either direction. It does not prevent the use of magic inside the boundary. Demons, undead and creatures created by sorcery also cannot enter into the protected area, though they are not harmed if inside when the spell is cast.

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## HOPLOMAGY (jayulén)

### *the manifesting of arms & armour*

**The Unerring Javelin (+1):** This causes a javelin to appear, which the sorcerer can throw immediately (in the same round as casting) using his base Missile score plus his Sorcerer level. Any negative modifiers that would apply to the chance of hitting are halved, and if the javelin hits it will invariably strike the intended target (ie, even if he is closely grouped with others; see Section 523). It then vanishes. It counts as a magical weapon, doing 1D10 against which armour protects normally.

**The Blade of Disjsection (+4):** A two-handed sword of coruscating energy appears in the target's hands (either the caster or a companion within 5m). This is magical, and armour of any sort gives only half regular protection against it. The sword disappears after twenty minutes, or if put down or dropped before then.

**Pavis (+5):** This creates a large shield of some unknown golden metal, which can be retained by the caster or given to a comrade. The shield has a 75% chance of blocking a blow struck from the bearer's front or left, and cannot be damaged. It lasts for twenty minutes.

**The Sword of the Hero-King (+7):** This spell, taught only to worshippers of Chegárra, summons a manifestation of Chegárra's legendary sword Arosuél for a period of one hour. This is a bejewelled one-handed weapon endowed with an internal scarlet light bright enough to see by. It must be given to a warrior reverencing Karakán or Chegárra; he cannot fumble with it, nor can the sword be broken.

Other powers depend on the caster making a +5 Connoisseur (Arms & Armour) check. On a critical failure Arosuél functions as an enchanted steel sword with +1 to Melee and damage, and on ordinary failure as a +2 weapon. Success on

the skill check means that the intelligence of great power contained in the sword can advise the wielder and also use The Swift Thrust of Death spell 1-3 times at 15th level: ordinary success makes the sword +4; critical success upgrades this to +6 and adds +10 to initiative, but also prevents the option of full defense from being used.

**Cataphract (+10):** An antique harness of brilliant gold chased steel appears before the caster. This has an armour value of 9/4 (ie, it absorbs 4 points even from a special hit) and adds +4 to the wearer's Magic Resistance factor. The armour remains for one hour (including the 5-10 minutes required to put it on).

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## INSCRIPTION (súrim)

### *the preparation of magical scrolls*

Scrolls are individual pieces of vellum or Tlésa paper with one or more Ritual spells written on them. They can be used by anyone who is able to read. A scroll can only be used once (except for rare types prepared by Great Magic – see Section 690) and then the spell vanishes.

A spell written on a scroll must be a Ritual spell that can normally be cast in one combat round. You cannot write a scroll for a spell you do not know. Also, your rating in the Inscription phylum must be at least equal to the phylum rating of the spell you want to write. To prepare a scroll of The Silver Halo of Soul Stealing, for instance, requires a rating of at least +3 in the Inscription phylum. It is an ecclesiastical offence to make a scroll of a special Temple spell such as Infrangible Orb without the express permission of the High Priest.

To write the scroll, you first cast the Inscription spell at the requisite level: at +3 to write a Silver Halo scroll, and so on. This empowers your writing with sorcery. The process of preparing the scroll takes 1-3 days depending on the time available and how richly decorated you want the scroll to be. Assuming the initial casting of the Inscription spell is successful, two factors determine if a scroll will work when needed:

*Was it written properly?* To determine this, the writer needs to make a Sorcerer/Calligrapher check at +5 minus the spell's phylum rating. If a character with 10 levels in both Sorcerer and Calligrapher tries to inscribe a Silver Halo scroll, he'll get it right on a 2D10 roll of 12 or less. A critical

failure at this stage means that the inscription is dangerously incorrect, causing an automatic backfire when read. (Since the only way to detect a flawed scroll is by reading it, the referee should make a secret note of each scroll prepared.)

*Is it read properly?* This requires the reader to make a +5 Literacy check. Failure means the spell vanishes from the scroll but with no effect. Critical failure is actually better for a change: this indicates that the reader's attempt to decipher the scroll is so garbled that nothing happens at all the spell remains on the scroll and can be tried again later.

Two rounds are needed to read a spell from a scroll. (The spell takes effect on the character's fourth half-action phase after beginning to read.) Additionally, it takes one round to extract a scroll from a scroll-case, and if the case contains more than one scroll then a further half-round must be spent locating the one needed. Scrolls are thus not particularly convenient in an emergency.

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## INVULTUATION (dákhsa): the creation of likenesses

**Multipresence (+3):** 1-6 simulacra of the caster appear within 3m. A Cleverness/Reasoning check is required to distinguish these simulacra from the original. Each simulacrum has the physical strength and skills of the original, but with only 1 Hit Point. They cannot use magic. The simulacra will mimic the original's actions unless given a specific mental command to do something else (this requires the caster to concentrate). A simulacrum that goes more than 100m from the original is dissipated; otherwise they last for 10 minutes.

**Enantiomorphy (+4):** This creates an opposite copy of one being within 20 metres. The target is given a Magic Resistance roll. If this fails, the copy appears beside the caster and will immediately attack the original. The copy has identical attributes, spells, etc, to the original. It fades after five minutes, or when it or the original is defeated (whichever is sooner).

**Duplicate Self (+5):** This spell takes three rounds to cast. An exact duplicate of the caster appears 1 metre away. Hit Points and spellpoints are divided equally between the caster and the duplicate, but

other characteristics remain unchanged. The spell duplicates clothing and equipment, too, but not the magical properties of unusual devices such as Eyes. (Your duplicate may seem to be carrying an Eye, but it won't work.) When the spell expires after 20 minutes, remaining Hit Points and spellpoints are restored to the caster, who also acquires the memory of anything experienced by his duplicate while it existed. The duplicate fades away at once if it goes more than 300 metres from the caster.

**Replicas (+9):** This takes one minute (ten rounds) to cast. It creates replicas of 1-5 persons (randomly decided) within 5 metres of the caster. Hit Points and spellpoints are divided equally between each original and his replica; skills, attributes, etc, remain the same. The replicas will last for 20 minutes as long as they do not go further than 300 metres from their originals. Equipment and clothing are also copied by the spell, but as nonmagical items.

**Thaumogenesis (+10):** This spell, taking an entire day to cast, constructs a duplicate of an individual from a scraping of flesh, a clipping of hair, and droplets of blood and sweat. Under normal circumstances the duplicate will lack a soul. It has no Psychic Ability or Psychic Reservoir scores and will act only as and while specifically commanded. However, by means of Mediumship (see Section 652) it is possible to recall a deceased character's soul and install it into a previously prepared duplicate. This is a complex procedure which takes a further day. The result is that the character is restored to life, but with a minor attrition of his memory resulting in each skill being reduced by 1-3 levels.

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## MALEDICTION (thónte) the imposition of curses

Curses typically take longer to work than other spells, but can be cast at a greater distance from the victim. For the spell to work normally, the caster must (i) know the name and clan of his victim and (ii) be within sight of the victim's residence. Other factors may modify the target's Magical Resistance:

<i>Victim's name not known</i>	+5
<i>Have personal item of victim</i>	-5
<i>Within 5 metres of victim</i>	-5
<i>Per previous failed curse</i>	+2

Curses can be removed with the Lift Curse spell (see Disenchantment) but there is often the added complication that the caster's identity may not be known. Uniquely among Ritual magic, curses can also be lifted by killing the caster. The intended victim of a curse is always allowed a Magic Resistance roll to avoid it, but this should be rolled by the referee on the player's behalf so that he does not know he has been the target of hostile sorcery.

These spells are not considered honourable, and temples rarely provide them openly.

**Misfortune (+2):** This takes ten rounds to cast and has a delayed effect, coming into operation 1-20 days after casting. The victim suffers bad luck in the form of a -1 modifier to skill and attribute checks, melee and damage rolls. This lasts for 1-6 days.

**Obnoxious (+4):** This takes five minutes to cast and lasts for 1-10 days. The victim becomes ill-mannered and prone to insult others. In Tsolyanu's very formal culture this will involve him in payments of Shám-tla (financial compensation) amounting to 3-30 Kaitars a day. If he happens to insult a person of much higher status then it may become necessary to pay much more Shám-tla or even fight a duel.

**Infirmity (+5):** This takes five minutes to cast and lasts for a month. The victim is unable to recuperate from wounds naturally, and can only regain lost Hit Points by the use of magic.

**Calamity (+6):** This takes ten minutes to cast and the effect is delayed by 1-10 days. The victim suffers disastrous bad luck: any failed check counts as a critical failure, any missed combat roll becomes a fumble, and so on. The referee is at liberty to dog the character with any unpleasant misfortunes he pleases. This lasts for one month.

**Damnation (+7):** This takes ten minutes to cast and is permanent. The victim's spirit soul is doomed never to reach the paradises of Teretané after his death but will wander the Plains of Unending Grey for ever.

**The Nightmare of Terror (+8):** This spell is unique to the temple of Hrú'ü. It takes ten minutes to cast and subjects the victim to whatever nightmares the caster wishes. These dreams recur with increasing

intensity night after night. The victim becomes edgy and easily frightened: in any difficult or threatening situation he must make a Cleverness/Reasoning check to remain calm. After a week or so his hair will have turned white. On the tenth night he must make a Psychic Reservoir check. Success means that he succumbs to permanent insanity, failure means that he dies of fright.

**Dying Curse (+9):** This must be applied by a sorcerer who expects to die soon after (within ten rounds of issuing the curse) and will only take effect upon his death. The victim must be able to hear the curse for it to take effect. The curse can be anything the sorcerer chooses that will not prove instantly fatal to the victim. Examples include: death of firstborn sons for ten generations, sleeplessness, destitution, expulsion from one's legion, continual bad luck in the use of a particular skill, repulsive body odour, et cetera. An interesting use of the spell is to doom the character to die in a specific way such as drowning. This requires some clever management on the part of the referee.

**Extirpate (+10):** This takes ten minutes to cast. The victim loses 1-6 points of Stamina each day, dying when it reaches zero. A Lift Curse can end the spell but will not restore Stamina already lost. Note that someone whose Stamina is zero cannot be brought back to life by Revivify.

## MARSHALLING (tatlomán)

### *the sorcerous creation of loyal warriors*

Though all Ritual spells require a few ingredients (as explained previously) the Marshalling spells are special in this regard. The caster must have small statuettes for each spell, each counting as ½ an encumbrance point. Usually carved from a stone such as jade, but sometimes of Chlén-hide or Ssár-wood, the figurine is itself transformed into a full-size warrior for the duration of the spell. Because of the inconvenience of carrying many such figurines, a sorcerer who intends to conjure warriors in quantity may have a servant holding a selection of them in a carrying case. Some sorcerers go so far as to give individual names to their figurines, and claim them to have distinct traits and competences. Doubtless this can be ascribed to mere caprice.

The warriors created by these spells are intelligent but very single-minded. They can understand their creator's orders but will not communicate with him. They can only be ordered to patrol, guard or fight – not to hold torches, open chests and so on.

**Shieldbearer (+4):** A single spearman is created and maintained for twenty minutes. The spearman is equivalent to an average man with 3 levels in Spear. He comes equipped with one-handed spear, shield and medium plate armour and will use no other. For the duration of the spell he will remain beside the caster (within two metres) and will fight as directed. (This spell, like all others in this phylum, takes five rounds to cast. See the accompanying box for the Melee values, etc, of the fighters created by such spells.)

**Spearmen (+5):** 1-3 spearmen are created for a period of twenty minutes. These are like the warrior brought by the Shieldbearer spell except that they are not restricted to remain adjacent to the caster. They will fight for their creator or otherwise do his bidding until the spell expires.

**Archers (+6):** 1-3 archers are created and maintained for twenty minutes. These are equivalent to average men with 5 levels in the Archer skill and are equipped with composite bows, a supply of twenty arrows, and light Chlén-hide armour.

**Swordsmen (+7):** 1-2 more powerful fighters are created for a period of thirty minutes. These wear medium Chlén-hide plate armour and fight with one-handed swords and shields. They have scores of 14 in every attribute and possess 5 levels in the Longsword skill.

**Kuruthúni (+8):** A single Kuruthúni, or heavy infantryman, is created to serve the caster for one hour. He has scores of 14 in all attributes, is equipped with heavy Chlén-hide plate armour, and fights with a two-handed sword (having 8 skill-levels in the use of this weapon). He also carries a crossbow and ten quarrels, and has 8 levels in the Crossbow weaponskill.

**Praesidium (+9):** Six spearmen of the sort created by the +5 spell of this phylum are made to guard an area for a period of three hours. These spearmen will not leave the place they are set to patrol (an area up to 30m across) and will bar entry to anyone other than the caster and those identified to them as friends either by sight or password. They will fight in self defence or if so ordered by their creator, but cannot leave their stipulated area.

**Hero (+10):** This summons a Hnazál, or "mythago", the caster's subconscious impression of a great hero of mythic times. It is thus possible to call upon the legendary Pendárte of Khéiris, Chirené the Serpent-Headed Warrior, or even mighty Hróggá. These Hnazál are only pale reflections of the real heroes, of course, but they are powerful nonetheless. The caster must make a check against his Poet or Historian skill to convince the Hero to aid him, at a base of +5 but with an additional modifier determined by the referee according to how convincingly the player phrases his petition. If the Hero agrees to give aid, he will remain for one hour before vanishing.

The referee might choose to devise his own list of mythic figures with different combat abilities, but as a rule-of-thumb assume that any Hero will have scores of 17 in all attributes, 8 levels of the Warrior skill, 15 levels in his or her favoured

#### GENERAL DETAILS OF THE MARSHALLING SPELLS

<i>type</i>	<i>Melee</i>	<i>Missile</i>	<i>Hit Points</i>	<i>armour</i>	<i>Magic Resistance</i>
Spearman	13	–	<b>11</b> [3/4/6]	4/0	8
Archer	–	10	<b>11</b> [3/4/6]	3/0	9
Swordsmen	18	–	<b>14</b> [3/5/8]	4/0	10
Kuruthúni	21	15	<b>14</b> [3/5/8]	5/0	11
Hero *	40	20	<b>17</b> [4/6/9]	8/0	17

\* It is also possible to summon the mythago of one of Tékumel's wizard-heroes such as Súbadim the Sorcerer or Qiyór the Many-Tongued. These will have magical and scholastic abilities in place of the combat skills given here.

weaponskill, and perhaps 15 levels in some other skill for which he is famous.

This spell is very fatiguing to cast, and it may take some time to psychically recover from it. The caster's Psychic Ability is temporarily reduced by 25 minus his level. These lost points return at the rate of one each day.

*Sorcerers who worship Sárku or his Cohort, Durritlámish, are taught special versions of the Marshalling spells. Instead of living warriors, they must summon the undead equivalents: Mrúr, Shédra, Hrá, etc. These are less tractable than the warriors created by the regular versions of such spells. The caster must make a +10 check against his level in the Theologian skill in order to control them. Failure means that the undead refuse to obey him and wander off; critical failure means they attack. The caster can use Necromagy spells to control his own created undead and stop them attacking him. The Sárku version of the Hero spell produces a mythago of Gorún, the undead priest of the Lord of Worms. A +5 Theologian (not Poet or Historian) skill check is needed to convince Gorún to aid the caster.*

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## NECROMAGY (hnéshtu)

### death magic

**Withering** (+2): This affects one of the limbs of an enemy within 30 metres, inducing immediate necrosis. (Determine randomly which limb is affected, including tail and/or wings if the target creature has them. The caster can attempt to target a specific limb if he wishes; see Section 550.) If the target fails to resist, the limb becomes shrivelled and useless. This is permanent unless cured by a Restoration spell. If a leg is affected, the character will be unable to stand without a crutch; if an arm, he cannot use a bow or two-handed weapon. If gangrene sets in (70% chance) then the character becomes feverish after only a few minutes. He must receive a Cure Disease or a charge of the Eye of Healing, otherwise (unless the limb is amputated, requiring a Physician check) he will be dead within twenty-four hours.

**Command Undead** (+3): This spell invokes the authority of the demon Ashónu, Master of the Palace of the Lonely Tomb, to ensure that undead creatures will obey the caster. Up to six undead can be affected with a single casting (roll 1D6) and a

Magic Resistance Roll is possible except in the case of Shédra or Mrúr. Any command that the caster speaks aloud will be obeyed; it does not matter whether the undead would understand his language or not. The spell range is 30 metres, and it lasts one hour.

**Speak with the Dead** (+4): This awakens the Hlákme (intellect) of a dead person and allows the caster to speak with it for a period of three minutes. To have any chance of success, the caster must either have the body of the deceased or be in his tomb at the time of casting. A critical failure on the casting roll indicates that the sorcerer is unable to locate the dead Hlákme and must give up, though others can still try. The Hlákme remembers all the events of the deceased's life, including the manner of death, and will speak in the language he used when alive. In all, it is somewhat like talking to the real, living person except that the Hlákme is emotionless and disinterested in mortal affairs.

**Lay the Dead** (+5): This spell operates on 2-12 undead creatures within a range of 10 metres, laying them permanently to rest if they fail to resist.

**Reanimation** (+6): The intellect of a person dead not more than one week can be made to reinhabit his cadaver. The reanimated lich is clearly not alive, but does have the advantage of retaining all the deceased's memories, knowledge and skills. It is called a Jájgi, an intelligent undead. Its Melee, Dexterity, movement rate and Hit Points are only 75% of their regular values – maybe less if the corpse was particularly badly damaged. Like other undead, a Jájgi takes only half Melee penalties from wounds and, being immune to fatigue and pain, it does not need to make Stamina checks. If embalmed and treated by the ceremonies of Sárku, the reanimated corpse can last indefinitely. Without treatment it begins to putrefy, becoming rotted and inanimate in about two weeks.

**Raise the Dead** (+7): Dead beings can be reanimated as Mrúr (zombies) to serve the caster for a period of one hour. The spell affects 1-10 corpses within a range of three metres. These zombies retain little of the intelligence of the living self. They can use no sorcery or special skills, and have only 75% of their previous Hit Points, Melee value, Dexterity and movement rate. Also they fear daylight. They cannot be

given orders individually, and their orders must be of a simple nature ("Follow me", "Stand and fight", "Open this door", etc) unless a Command Undead is also cast. However, they take only half Melee penalties from wounds, have no need to make Stamina checks, and obey their master's will literally and completely.

**The Grey Hand** (+8): This dreaded spell is known only to the Priests of Wurú and is unique in that it can be cast while in melee; in fact, the sorcerer *must* be in melee to use it. It is the power of instant death, no Magic Resistance roll being possible. The caster must actually touch the victim (or his arms or armour) in the round in which the spell is cast. This requires a successful Attack roll using just the sorcerer's Base Melee plus any Warrior bonus. (Since the action of touching the target is actually part of the gesture-component of the spell, the entire process of casting and attacking counts as a single round's action.) If the victim fails to parry or evade, he is reduced to a heap of greyish dust and can never be revived. A successful parry will not necessarily save the victim: the spell's effect travels down the parrying weapon, allowing him the chance to drop it before he is himself affected. This requires an (unmodified) Cleverness/Dexterity check. A successful check means that the weapon is dropped (it crumbles to dust); a failed check means that the victim did not react in time, and he dies after all.

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## OCCULTATION (nodishén)

### the sorcery of obscurment

**Elusion** (+1): This covers the caster's tracks for a period of fifteen minutes. During this time he leaves no footprints or other signs that could be followed by a Hunter or Tracker. He can still be seen and heard normally. This spell works against a Spoor spell (see the Geomancy phylum) but cannot prevent an "aura trail" remaining that could still be seen by Psychometrics.

**Translucence** (+3): The caster is put slightly out of phase with this Plane, becoming indistinct. In dim light he is invisible to anyone more than 5 metres away. Close up or in bright light, he can be seen as a blurred silhouette. The effect lasts five minutes, and is useless against creatures such as Ru'ún and Pé Chói that are able to see out-of-phase objects.

**Shadows (+5):** This spell sends a wave of flickering, confusing shadows towards 1-10 opponents within 20 metres. It takes one round to reach its targets and can be dispelled by casting a Dazzlement spell in time. Anyone engulfed (the spell can be Evaded) has their sight permanently clouded if they fail to resist. A blinded character subtracts 10 from his Melee value and 20 from Missile. Sight can be restored with a spell of Lift Curse, Control of Self or Cure All Wounds.

**Invisibility (+7):** The caster is rendered invisible for thirty minutes. Enemies who are aware of his presence must fight him at -10 from Melee or Missile. He can be detected by those naturally able to perceive invisible objects (eg Pé Chói) and also by the See Other Planes spell. Invisibility can also be applied to another individual instead of the caster, and a Magic Resistance Roll is allowed to anyone who does not wish to be turned invisible.

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## **PATHOGENESY (kichéng)**

### ***the inducement and treatment of disease***

**Plague (+2):** This causes the victim to fall ill with a hideous rotting plague. It is aimed, and has a maximum range of 30m. A failed Magic Resistance roll means that the victim can continue to act for 1-3 rounds, then enters a coma and dies within another 1-3 minutes. Cure Disease can be used to save someone afflicted by this spell, but there is a 70% chance that physical contact will transmit the Plague, requiring the rescuer to attempt a Magic Resistance roll himself! The body of a Plague victim putrefies almost immediately, making Revivification more difficult. Modify the roll required for Revivification by -5.

**Cure Disease (+3):** This spell cures any magically-induced disease instantly if the recipient succeeds in a Psychic Ability check. It is also effective against a large proportion (say 70%) of natural diseases. Each application of the spell can treat only one person, who must be touched for the cure to take effect. A critical failure on the Psychic Ability check means that further applications of the spell are useless.

**Putrefaction (+4):** This spell is cast upon an area of swamp or stagnant water. The effect covers a zone 4m in radius and per-

sists for four hours. Any living beings that step into the affected zone must make a Magic Resistance roll, and those that fail are immediately infected with a gangrenous rot. This withers the legs within 1-3 rounds, and if a victim has not got out of the affected zone within this time he will fall into the water and die. Even if the spell is initially resisted, the Magic Resistance roll must be repeated each round until one leaves the area of infection. A being suffering from Putrefaction must be treated with Cure Disease or the rot will spread, causing death within an hour. Cure Disease will not restore withered limbs: a Restoration spell or a charge of the Eye of Regeneration is needed.

**Sending of Evil (+6):** This spell permits the user to send disease, pestilence and other afflictions upon 1-10 beings. It has a range of 60m and incapacitates in 1-3 rounds unless a Magic Resistance roll is made or Cure Disease is applied. Death ensues within 1-3 minutes. An additional threat is that the effect spreads from anyone infected. Patches of bluish-white fungus, invisible bacteria and lice spread out from each victim to a distance of 3m in all directions at the rate of 50cm a round. These zones of pestilence last for an hour. Anyone else entering them (eg, to treat a victim) must resist the spell or also succumb to its effects.

**The Worms of Death (+8):** This insidious spell is unique to devotees of Sárku and his Cohort, Durrítlámish. It causes an area of ground 3m across to become covered with tiny, wriggling vermin. Anyone within the affected area when the spell is cast must make a Dexterity check at -5 to leap clear of the Worms before they begin to burrow into his flesh. No Magic Resistance roll is possible. Anyone who fails the roll, or who voluntarily enters the area once the spell has been cast, has a 50% chance each round that he remains in the zone of being infected by the Worms. They will then swim around his bloodstream eating away at him from within, and a D10 must be rolled for damage every round: 1-5 = the worms are poisoning the victim's blood, causing 1D6 damage; 6-7 = they are ravaging the internal organs, causing 2D6 damage and the loss of 1 Stamina point; 8-9 = the victim's brain has been attacked, resulting in the loss of 1 Cleverness and 1 Reasoning point; 10 = the victim dies at once. This roll is repeated every round even after leaving the affected area

(the Worms can move outside the spell zone once they have penetrated a host), until a Cure Disease spell is applied. Even though Cure Disease will rid a character's body of the Worms of Death, it will not heal any damage he has taken. This requires a Healing spell or natural recuperation. Lost attribute points can be restored by a Restoration spell or the Eye of Regeneration.

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## **POTENTIATION (mazák)**

### ***imbuing a person with supernatural energy***

**Empowering (+1):** This can be applied to the caster and 1-3 companions, increasing their Stamina scores by D3 points each. It lasts one hour.

**Potency (+2):** A spell unique to the Temples of Dlamélish and Hriháyal. It provides the target with the ability to maintain his or her sexual appetite and performance for a period of six hours.

**Mastery of Weapons (+4):** The Melee value of 1-3 beings is increased by 5 in the use of all melee weapons and unarmed fighting techniques. Weapon damage is not affected, and the bonus does not apply to the characters' Missile scores. The caster can include himself in the spell's effect if desired. The effect lasts ten minutes.

**Festination (+5):** This spell speeds time for 1-3 beings (one of whom can be the caster himself), allowing them an extra half-action each round. A character under the effect of Festination can therefore make one full-action and one half-action, or three half-actions, every round. (See Sections 422 and 423.) This spell cannot be applied repeatedly in order to give more and more actions – ie, a being can only benefit from one Festination at a time. It lasts ten minutes, and when it expires the speeded characters must rest for the same period or lose 1D3 from their Dexterity scores for one day.

**Endurance (+6):** The recipient (the caster or a companion) gains a "buffer" of 1D20 Hit Points. Any damage inflicted on him comes off this buffer first, and only once the extra Hit Points are used up can the character himself be wounded. The spell lasts twelve hours, unless the extra points are expended before then.

**Paragon (+10):** All of the target's attributes other than Size and Psychic Reservoir are raised to 20 for the six hours that the spell lasts. An attribute that is already at 20 or above is raised by 1D3. Note that a very ugly individual will still be recognisable by his acquaintances, but they may wonder why they had not noticed his "beauty" before!

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## PROCUREMENT (visum)

### *the acquisition of goods and services by magical means*

**Wellspring (+1):** This spell creates fifteen litres of fresh water. This is roughly a day's requirement for five people. Characters must have bottles or waterskins ready in which to store the water produced.

**Flambeau (+2):** A ball of dim white light, equivalent to a single torch, appears above the caster and hovers along with him when he moves. The intensity of this light cannot be altered. It lasts for three hours.

**Weapon (+3):** This spell creates a single Chlén-hide melee weapon of any type specified by the caster (sword, dagger, spear, etc). This appears in his hand and lasts for one hour before dissipating. It confers no bonuses to its wielder's combat skill or damage, but it counts as a magical weapon in that it can harm creatures such as Huru'u that are unaffected by normal Chlén-hide weaponry.

**Refreshment (+4):** Food and drink sufficient for five people is conjured into existence. The quality of this meal will be commensurate with the caster's Cook skill (if any). A sorcerer who has no levels of Cook will produce fare that is barely palatable (just crusts of Dná bread and goblets of water) while one with 10 or more levels can create a sumptuous banquet complete with roast meat, fruit, Chuméll (salted buttermilk) and sweet sherbets.

**Mending (+5):** A damaged weapon or suit of armour may be repaired after combat by applying this spell. The spell works on a single item and takes five minutes for the repair to take effect. The repair is not automatic, however: roll as though a 15th level Armourer had attempted to mend the item.

**Shelter (+6):** This spell creates shelter from the elements in the form of a mud-

brick hut large enough for ten people. This lasts nine hours.

**Transportation (+7):** A boat or palanquin, complete with rowers/bearers, appears as though from nowhere. The boat will carry up to eight passengers. The palanquin has room for three. The transportation provided by the spell remains on this Plane for four hours and then dissipates.

**Labourers (+8):** A team of ten workmen are created to serve the caster for one day. Other than being tireless, they are in every way like unskilled human workmen. They can be left to dig tunnels, chop wood, carry objects or perform any other task requiring only a modicum of training. If required to do more complex tasks such as repairing a boat or building a house, they must be overseen by a craftsman.

**Paramour (+9):** This spell is taught only to devotees of Dlamélish and her Cohort, Hriháyal. It gives rise to a incubus or succubus (ie, of opposite sex to the caster) which will remain in existence for one hour. This being is of superhuman attractiveness and has 15 levels of the Paramour skill. The caster can dally with this creature himself or send it forth to tempt another who is known to him. The latter must make an Cleverness check to recognise the Paramour for what it is. This check is generally unmodified, but the character can add +1 for every five levels in the skill of Sorcerer, Theologian or Demonologist. If the Cleverness check is successful the victim can repulse the Paramour, but failure means that he is overwhelmed with desire and seeks to couple with it at once. One who succumbs to the Paramour without realising its true nature permanently loses 1-2 points from both Cleverness and Stamina.

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## PSYCHETHESIS (báletl)

### *the manipulation of immaterial spirits*

**The Silver Halo of Soul-Stealing (+3):** This glittering circlet of energy is spent spinning through the air to strike one target within 50 metres. It has the power of bearing the victim's soul (Báletl) off into the Plane of Unending Grey, leaving him a mindless automaton. It only affects humans and intelligent nonhumans. Instead of a Magical Resistance roll, the victim must make a -3 Psychic Ability check to resist its effect. Once a person's soul has

been taken, only Re embodiment or Lift Curse will restore it. The Silver Halo can be deflected by an already-established spell of Invulnerability, in which case there is a 25% chance that it will strike someone else standing nearby.

**Morphetic Travel (+5):** This puts the caster into a deep sleep and frees his Chuséll, or Shadow-Self, to journey away from his body to other places on this Plane. Generally the Shadow-Self will only be able to visit places in the present or recent past. Its destination should be within 10 kilometres and familiar to the caster. The Shadow-Self can silently observe events, but is not able to interact with its surroundings. Being unseen and insubstantial, it can only be detected by the See Other Planes spell (though a -10 Sorcerer/Psychic Ability check allows a character to sense that he is being observed). Since the Hlákme (intellect) is not sent forth by this spell, the caster has no conscious volition over what he observes. When his Shadow -Self returns after one hour, he awakens and is then told by the referee what he has experienced. Such memories are not like true events, but rather resemble vivid dreams – which, indeed, they are.

**Projection (+7):** This sends the caster's Shadow-Self and Intellect off to a distance up to a Tsán (1.33 kilometres), where he is able to physically manifest a simulacrum of his true form (which in fact remains in a coma while the spell lasts). This manifested form is an idealised self-image, and is not always instantly recognisable as the caster. Eyes and other special items are not included in the astral projection. The caster retains his regular attributes and he can speak, move, fight and handle objects. (But objects he picks up while in this form are not brought back to his real body when the spell expires.) He cannot cast spells because his Pedhéll remains behind. Any injury suffered by the Projection is also done to the real body, and if the body dies before the spell ends then the caster's spirit is irrevocably destroyed. The spell takes five minutes to prepare and lasts for thirty minutes.

**Viaticum (+9):** This spell takes one hour to perform. The caster's spirit is enabled to travel along the hidden concourse leading to the Isles of the Excellent Dead. There he can seek out a great sage of ancient times, a lost love, or some other departed spirit. To find the spirit he is looking for, the

caster must make a Sorcerer skill check. The modifier is -1 for anyone who died in the past three months, with an additional -1 for each doubling of this period. Even if located, the spirit may not be willing to converse with the caster. The check for this might involve the caster's Sorcerer skill, possibly averaged with his level in Etiquette, Poet or Historian. He must also know the spirit's language, of course. After the spell expires, a +3 Psychic Ability check allows the caster to return to the Plane of the Living at once; a failed check leaves him astrally wandering for 1-20 days, and a critical failure means he is lost forever on the Plains of Unending Grey.

**Revivify (+10):** This spell can return a dead person (a human or intelligent non-human) to life as long as at least 20% of the body still remains. Casting the spell takes an entire day and is very fatiguing, preventing the sorcerer from using other magic for a period of one month. Temples will typically charge in the region of 7500 Kaitars for the use of this spell.

Negative modifiers are applied to the chance of successfully casting the spell if the corpse is not intact: -2 for each 10% of the body that is missing. The target must not have been dead for more than a week (six days) and must make a Psychic Reservoir check to come back to life. At the first attempt this check is unmodified; ordinary failure means that the spell can be tried again (by a different caster) with a cumulative -1 modifier, but a critical failure means that the target is dead forever. After being successfully restored to life, a character loses 1D3 Stamina and makes an unmodified Stamina check to avoid permanent loss of 1 point from Strength, Dexterity and Comeliness.

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## TEMPERABILITY (srikátl)

### *alteration of the climate*

**Cold (+2):** This spell sends a blast of frigid cold towards the enemy, affecting 1-3 beings within 10 metres. No Magic Resistance Roll is possible. A target who fails to Evade takes 1D10 damage; light armour or ordinary clothing absorbs 1 point from this, medium armour or flowing robes absorb 2 points, and heavy armour or furs absorb 3 points. If the damage taken is sufficient that the target is required to make a Stamina check (Section 310), this is made with an additional -3 modifier.

**Quell (+4):** This spell surrounds the caster with a zone of tranquility of 5 metres radius. This calms violent weather: rain, wind and snow do not enter the zone, ocean waves are stilled, and even earthquakes cease within the spell's range. The effect lasts for 20 minutes.

**Part Clouds (+5):** 20% of cloud cover or fog is dispersed within five minutes of casting this spell. Multiple castings have a cumulative effect. It lasts for twenty minutes.

**Fair Winds (+7):** This allows the caster to control the direction that the wind is blowing local to himself (ie within 10 metres: enough to cover a medium merchantman or small warship) for a period of six hours. It gives only approximate control to the extent that the caster can turn the wind to face north, north-east, or whatever. The wind speed is not affected.

**Fog (+8):** An area of dense fog is created around the user. This is roughly 200 metres across and extends up to 10m off the ground. Visibility in the affected area is reduced to 3 metres. Fog is only created in the open and does not appear inside buildings. The duration is thirty minutes.

**Summon Storm (+10):** This spell must be used outdoors and takes ten minutes to cast. It raises a fierce storm over an area of one square Tsán (roughly a circle 1.5 kilometres in diameter). Clouds and heavy rain reduce visibility in the affected zone to around 15 metres. Flying creatures are forced to land by the screeching winds, which reduce walking movement by half and make normal communication impossible. At the referee's discretion, small objects might be blown away, buildings damaged and ships capsized. The caster can choose to centre the storm around him or to place it so that he is within 10-60 metres of the periphery, but other than this he has very little control. It is not easy to disperse the storm once it is raging; the caster can do this by taking ten minutes and making a Psychic Reservoir check. Otherwise it continues for 1-6 hours.

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## TRANSFLUENCE (onél)

### *the employment of inter-dimensional nexus points*

**Sequestration (+2):** This allows the caster to place objects into an airless dimensional interstice, with the limit that no single ob-

ject can be bigger than 1 metre across. The spell must be cast each time the sorcerer wants to put a new object into this "pocket dimension" or remove one previously put there. If the caster critically fails a Sorcerer/Psychic Ability check during retrieval then the object is lost forever.

**Claustration (+4):** This spell, with a range of 10m, works only on living beings, expelling 1-3 foes and their belongings into an otherdimensional prison. This featureless place contains air but no food or water. It is possible to return the victims by terminating the spell or allowing it to expire naturally; it lasts one week, but can be renewed subject to the victims failing a further Magical Resistance roll. The Sequestration spell can be used to send items to the prisoners or to reach items that they choose to send out.

**Reversion (+5):** This instantaneously transports the targets back 100 metres along the path taken by the caster. There is no degree of choice: the spell simply retraces the caster's movements and deposits the targets there. It affects two targets (the caster and one other, or two persons without the caster) at touch range, and a Magic Resistance roll is allowed.

**Metastasis (+6):** This opens an interdimensional tunnel between two points up to 200 metres apart, allowing the caster and one companion to move instantly from one point to the other. The entry and exit points of the tunnel must have been prepared previously; usually they are drawn on a wall in chalk or dye, taking five minutes or so for each. Once prepared, these "gateways" can be used by any sorcerer who has this spell.

**Teleportation (+7):** A spell used only by the Priests of Hnálla and Drá. The caster and 1-10 companions (or equivalent weight of treasure, etc) are instantly teleported from their present location to another place of which the caster has previous first-hand knowledge. This spell can affect targets within 3 metres (a Magic Resistance Roll is permitted to a target who does not want to be teleported) and has a safe teleportation range of 300 metres. If this is exceeded roll D10: 1-2 = the party arrive safely; 3-4 = they materialise somewhere else on Tékumel (decided randomly); 5-6 = they appear on another planet; 7-8 = they appear on one of the Demon Planes; 9-10 = they are dead and lost forever in an in-

terdimensional limbo. (Note that sorcery does not necessarily work reliably on other planets or on the Demon Planes, so return from these places involves more than another gamble with the Teleportation spell.)

**Nexus Travel (+10):** This opens an interdimensional gateway roughly 2m wide which remains in force for one minute. Objects or persons passing through the gateway are transported to the dimension to which it leads. The caster must make a Psychic Ability check to ensure that the gateway leads to the dimension he intended. (This check is unmodified if he knows where he's starting from, but at -10 or worse if he was lost to begin with.) A failed check means that the Nexus leads to a random but identifiable Plane; a critical failure results in the caster and his companions becoming lost. Note that it is not possible to specify a specific geographical point on the destination Plane, but a general sense of direction is included. (For example, you could decide that the Nexus was to take you further north on your current Plane.)

Possible destinations for a Nexus include: the past or future, an alternate timeline, another planet, one of the Demon Planes, a different location on Tekumel, a parallel world or pocket dimension. It is possible for a Nexus to lead to a magically barren area, leaving the travellers stranded.

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## VALLATION (timúng)

### *sending Walls to overwhelm a foe*

These are barriers of magical substance which move towards an opposing party at set speeds. There are ten types, each dedicated to one of the gods. A sorcerer learns the Wall spell that corresponds to his own deity when he attains a rating of +6 in the phylum. He then learns one other variant each time he increases his rating, so once fully competent in this phylum he will have five Walls to choose from. All will cost him the same number of spellpoints (60) to cast. Generally the Walls chosen will be those of his own deity and the other deities of that alignment (Stability or Change). There are other ways to view such affinities, however, and a sorcerer of Vimúhla will often prefer to cast the Karakán or Belkhánu versions of the spell rather than those corresponding to, say, Sáрку or Hrü'ü. This is left to the individual.

Walls are 3m wide and 3m high, and approximately 1m thick. A Wall initially

appears 1m in front of the caster and then moves straight away from him at constant speed until it dissipates after three minutes. Walls begin moving the round after they come into existence. If two opposing Walls collide, there are several possible outcomes: the Walls might pass through each other without effect, one might annihilate the other automatically, they might block each other, or they might "combat" one another. This depends on the type of Walls involved. If there is "combat" it is resolved as follows. Each Wall is given a Durability factor equal to its caster's phylum rating. At the end of each round, a six-sided die is shaken for each Wall and the lower score loses 1 from its Durability. On a tied roll, both lose 1 Durability point. After one of the Walls has been destroyed, the other continues to move onwards as before.

**Wall of Fire (+6 minimum):** This version of the spell is dedicated to Vimúhla, Lord of Flame. It moves at between 4m and 6m per round (caster's choice as to exactly how fast). Anyone struck by the Wall of Fire takes 2D6+3 damage. (There is also the chance of exceptional burn damage; see Section 330.) A Magic Resistance Roll is futile, but armour will protect to the extent of giving half its usual absorption. A Wall of Fire which meets an opposing Wall of any type except Stone or Swords will combat it as described in the general notes above. It gets +1 on its die rolls against a Wall of Ice. A Wall of Fire can also be destroyed by an Energy Bolt or Doomkill spell, and can be passed through safely by a person surrounded by Infrangible Orb.

**Wall of Ice (+6 minimum):** Dedicated to Hrü'ü, Master of Negation. A Wall of Ice moves at a constant speed of 2m per round to a maximum of 60m before melting away. It combats another Wall of Ice, Fire, Water, Mists or Swords, and gets +1 on rolls vs the Wall of Water. It blocks (and is blocked by) Stone, Serpents, Decay, Calm and Wind. Missiles shatter against this Wall, and it also stops Telekinesis, the Vapour of Death, Shadows and the Silver Halo. It can be destroyed by Energy Bolt or Doomkill and is stopped by the Infrangible Orb. Any being hit by the Wall of Ice takes 1D10 crushing damage (armour gives no protection) and must make an unmodified Stamina roll or pass out from cold for 1-6 rounds.

**Wall of Swords (+6 minimum):** Dedicated to Karakán, Master of Heroes. Invisible hands wield a host of flashing swords which move forward at a rate of between 4m and 6m a round (caster's choice) to a maximum of 180m. This spell combats an opposing Wall of Serpents (at +1), Ice or another Wall of Swords, and is blocked by Fire, Calm and Stone. It offers no resistance to Mists, Wind or Decay, but is automatically swept away by Water. It does not impede most spells at all, nor does it stop missiles. An Energy Bolt or a Doomkill will destroy it at once, however. If a Wall of Swords reaches a party, each person in the group is struck 1-6 times and each blow does 1D10 damage. Armour protects fully against this. The Wall then sweeps past on its inexorable course, usually leaving bloodied torsos and dismembered limbs in its wake.

**Wall of Serpents (+6 minimum):** These writhing monstrosities are dedicated to Dlamélish, Green-Eyed Lady of Fleshly Delights. They roll forward in a hissing, spitting tangle at a rate of 2m per round. The Wall of Serpents clammers over Stone but is frozen (and thus blocked) by Ice. It combats all other types except Calm, which causes it to become quiescent and dissipate. This Wall offers no resistance to other spells but can be destroyed by an Energy Bolt or a Doomkill. A Charm spell can send it back against its caster! If a character is engulfed in a Wall of Serpents he or she will be seized and constricted. Damage taken is 1D6 on the first round, 2D6 on the second, 3D6 on the third, and so on; armour gives no protection. If armed with a edged weapon the victim can try to cut himself free. The chance of this is 40% on the first round, 30% on the second, 20% on the third, etc; this roll is made after damage is determined for the round. Companions not caught in the Wall of Serpents can help to cut a victim free if they have edged weapons. Each character attempting this adds +30% to the chance of getting free, but there is also a risk (50% each round) that the character will get too close and be seized himself. A victim freed from a Wall of Serpents may nonetheless have been affected by the snakes' paralytic venom. He must make a +5 Stamina check or lose 1D20 from Dexterity. (If Dexterity is reduced to zero the character is immobilized.) Lost Dexterity points recover at the rate of one a day.

**Wall of Stone** (+6 minimum): This spell, the variant sacred to Thúmis, Sage of the Gods, sends a barrier of solid rock rumbling towards an opponent at the rate of 2m a round to a maximum range of 60m before it dissolves to dust. It blocks Fire, Ice, another Wall of Stone, Swords and Water. It is unaffected by Serpents and combats Calm, Mists and Decay (the last of these at +1), and it destroys a Wall of Wind automatically. It blocks Telekinesis, the Vapour of Death, Shadows, the Silver Halo and all missiles, although it can be destroyed by Energy Bolt or a Doomkill spell. The Eye of Advancing Through Portals will also blast through it. An Evade roll is needed by any being struck by the Wall of Stone. If this fails, the Wall causes 5D10 crushing damage. A successful Evade indicates that the party can climb over or leap clear without damage, assuming there is room to do this.

**Wall of Calm** (+6 minimum): This variant is associated with Belkhánu, Master of the Paradises of Teretané. It sends forth a wave of softly glittering lights which moves at between 2m and 4m a round (sender's option). This is blocked by Ice, Swords or another Wall of Calm and will destroy Serpents automatically. It combats all other types, gaining +1 on rolls against a Wall of Wind or Water. Beings touched by the Wall of Calm must make a Magic Resistance roll or fall into a deep sleep. One who is put to sleep in this way can be shaken awake (this takes up to a minute), but the sleep is otherwise of indefinite duration. Androids, automata and demons are immune to the Wall of Calm. Undead, however, are laid to rest permanently if they fail to resist it, and Vlëshga (Shunned Ones) do not sleep but lose 1D10 Hit Points through permanent ageing instead. Calm is also effective against the watery Nshé, an underworld creature that is otherwise quite difficult to deal with.

**Wall of Wind** (+6 minimum): This variant corresponds to Hnálla, the Supreme Principle of Stability. It sends a raging typhoon towards opponents at a speed of 6m a round. A Wall of Wind will combat Fire (at +1), Serpents, Decay (at +1), Water or another Wall of Wind. It disperses a Wall of Mists instantly. It is blocked by Ice and automatically destroyed by Stone, but offers no resistance to Swords. It knocks missiles to the ground and has an 80% chance of deflecting a Silver Halo spell or

Telekinesed projectile. The Vapour of Death is actually turned around by a Wall of Wind, which will push it back to engulf those who sent it. If a Wall of Wind strikes a party, each must make a Magic Resistance roll; otherwise he or she is lifted up and carried along by the Wall for 1-6 rounds. A victim so caught is helpless, and is buffeted for 1D20 damage each round. If the Resistance roll is successful, the Wall only causes 1D6 damage and the character is able to keep his footing while the typhoon passes him. Armour gives no protection in either case.

**Wall of Water** (+6 minimum): This version, associated with Avánthe the Great Mother, travels at a speed of 4m per round. It is blocked by Stone, but automatically washes away Swords and will combat any other type of Wall (Fire at +1). It can be dissociated by Energy Bolt, Fist of Fire, or Doomkill, but will attempt to reform and continue its progress within 2-12 rounds. If a party is overwhelmed by a Wall of Water, each must attempt a Stamina check at -2 to avoid drowning. This applies only to living beings, of course; demons, automata, artificial creatures and undead are immune because they do not need to breathe. Even if the check is successful, the victims are swept back 4m and must spend the following round standing up, getting their bearings, etc.

**Wall of Decay** (+6 minimum): This tumbling bank of grave soil, cerements, mouldering bones and worms is the special variant of Sárku, Lord of the Tomb. Moving at 3m per round, it is blocked by Ice and passes through Swords unimpeded. It combats all other types except for another Wall of Decay. If two Walls of Decay meet, they halt in place and begin to merge. Each round, the casters attempt to roll their phylum rating or less on a ten sided die. If both fail, the two Walls crumble away; if both succeed, the Walls remain where they are and the D10 rolls are repeated at the end of the next round. If one caster makes the roll and his opponent does not, then his Wall absorbs the other (increasing its Durability accordingly) and continues its progress as before. Living beings engulfed by a Wall of Decay must make a Magic Resistance roll. If they succeed then they suffer no damage, but if they fail then they are instantly slain, becoming ghastly corpses with no hope of resurrection. A Wall of Decay has no effect on androids, demons,

etc. If it strikes undead then it will absorb them, adding +1 to its psychic strength for each undead creature absorbed. More powerful varieties of undead are permitted Magic Resistance rolls to avoid this, but undirected Mrúr or Shédra will surrender willingly to such a fate.

**Wall of Mists** (+6 minimum): This is the form of Vallation associated with Ksáru, the Doomed Prince of the Blue Room. It manifests as a cohesive sheet of luminous azure corpuscles which drift forward at a speed of 1m to 6m a round (randomly determined at the end of each round by rolling a D6). It passes through a Wall of Swords and is dissipated by Wind, but combats all other types equally. Any spell cast through a Wall of Mists may be caught within it for a time. Roll 1D6-1, and this is the number of rounds the spell is held before re-entering the physical plane. A spell lost for any length of time within a Wall of Mists will be discharged in a random direction. To determine the direction, roll D20 counting "north" as the original trajectory of the spell: 1-5 = north, 6-8 = northeast, 9-10 = east, 11-12 = southeast, 13 = south, 14-15 = southwest, 16-17 = west, and 18-20 = northwest. A devotee of Ksáru or his Cohort, Grugánu, cannot be affected by this spell. Any other character or creature struck by a Wall of Mists must attempt a Magic Resistance roll. Failure means that the victim is borne off Tékumel's physical plane and into another dimension. He can then be seen only as a sketch of glowing lines and geometric shapes projected against the Wall. Victims can try to escape each round; this requires a Psychic Ability check at -10 on the first round, -11 on the second, etc. (Use the being's Magic Resistance factor for this check if its Psychic Ability is undefined.) Once the Psychic Ability check is made, the character is able to find the interdimensional route back to Tékumel and reappears unharmed. A victim who fails to find his way back before the Wall spell expires, though, is lost between the Planes forever.

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## VENEFICE (hlóru)

### *the inducement and treatment of poisoning*

**Detect Poison** (+1): If the caster succeeds in a Psychic Ability check (rolled secretly by the referee), this tells him whether a specific object or substance within 3m contains poison.

**Detoxify** (+2): This neutralises poison within the body of a living person or creature. Damage already caused by the poison is not healed; the spell just prevents any further harm. It also dispels alcohol, and most other drugs except Zu'úr. The poisoned character must be within 5m of the caster and must make a Psychic Ability check for the spell to take effect. A critical failure means that further castings are useless.

**Miasma** (+3): This affects a circular area around the caster, filling it with invisible fumes for 30 minutes. The circle is 3 metres across and moves with the caster. Living creatures within this zone (other than the caster) will find it hard to breathe, and must make a Stamina check each round to avoid being forced to retreat from

the zone. This Stamina check is unmodified in the first round, -1 on the second, -2 on the third, and so on. A critical failure causes unconsciousness, followed by death within thirty seconds unless the victim is moved out of the zone of effect.

**The Vapour of Death** (+6): This spell sends a visible cloud of poisonous vapour rolling towards an enemy. The user should first be sure that any wind is blowing away from him or her! The vapour starts directly in front of the caster as a bank of ochre fog nine metres long, increasing its extent forward from the caster by 2 metres per round to a maximum distance of 30 metres before dissipating. Anyone caught in the Vapour of Death for a full round must make a -3 Stamina check or die. Even if

successful, the character still takes 1D3 damage and must repeat the roll next round.

**Serpent's Breath** (+8): This spell is taught only by the Temple of Hrü'ü. It is identical to the Vapour of Death, but also contains wisps of a purplish corrosive gas that attacks Chlén-hide and nonmagical steel. The only way to protect items from the gas is to immerse them completely in water. Chlén-hide is immediately softened to uselessness by exposure to the gas, while steel armour deteriorates by 1 point of protective value each round. Additionally, characters inside the gas cloud must make Stamina checks as for the Vapour of Death.

### [652] Psychic Spell Phyla

Psychic spells differ from Ritual spells in that they can generally be terminated at the caster's whim. These spells require no gestures, words or ingredients to cast; it is only necessary that the sorcerer is able to see his intended target.

As before, all spells take one round to cast unless otherwise specified.

### Buying scrolls and talismans

The sidebar on page 44 gave costs for characters wishing to buy spells. Double those prices if you want to take the spell away with you on a scroll. (Again, scrolls bought from a bazaar sorcerer are cheaper but less reliable.)

Spells on talismans cost only 50% more than the prices on page 44, but bear in mind that you must reveal your secret name to the sorcerer in order for him to make you a talisman.

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## ASCERTAINMENT (fakish)

### *the probing of auras by mental magic*

**ESP (+1):** The user can detect the presence of living beings (but not undead or soulless automatons, etc) within a range of 10 metres. He is aware of the number of beings but not the direction or distance to them. It is possible to get some idea of the beings' intelligence – ie whether they are animals or sapient nonhumans. The duration is 5 minutes.

**Mind Reading (+3):** With this it is possible to probe the thoughts of a single target, who must be an intelligent being of one of the "friendly" races. The target is allowed a Magic Resistance Roll, of course. If this fails, surface thoughts are read easily. The caster can probe deeper by making a Psychic Ability check at a modifier set by the referee (up to -10 to find out about cherished secrets or matters of dim recollection). The spell has a range of 5 metres and lasts 5 minutes.

**Telepathy (+4):** This makes it possible for the caster to converse telepathically with another person at a distance of up to 50 metres. The target must be known to the caster, and is not obliged to reply to any telepathic message. The effect lasts for 5 minutes.

**Syntyony (+8):** The user is able to telepathically contact another person within 10 Tsán (about 13 kilometres). The target must be known to the caster at least by name, and if they have never met then the skill check to cast is given an additional -3 modifier per Tsán. Communication lasts for five minutes. The most skilled exponents of this technique are organised by the temples into a telepathic network that stretches right across the Empire.

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## CHIMERICS (nyélme)

### *the production of unreal images*

**Mirage (+1):** A thin film of ectoplasm up to 3m square is created in front of the caster. This appears as any simple uniform image such as masonry, wood, draperies, reeds, etc. It will disappear if touched, otherwise lasting for one hour.

**Seeming (+2):** Cast onto a character, this gives him the appearance of being someone else. Someone quite familiar with the imitated individual gets an Cleverness/Reasoning check (at a negative modifier equal to the caster's phylum rating) to spot something amiss with the seeming. Otherwise the disguise is impenetrable, but flawed in two ways: it only extends to the target's voice and appearance, and is not reflected in a mirror. (Mirrors are expensive and not commonly found in public places.) This spell lasts for one hour.

**Illusion (+4):** Creates an illusion covering a base area of 1 square metre, +1 per additional 10 spellpoints expended. This is a visual and auditory illusion only, and may be recognised as unreal on close scrutiny if the observer makes an Cleverness/Reasoning check as for Seeming. The illusion could consist of either a single or multiple image (eg, a group of guards playing Kévuk) and can move around within 5m of the point of casting. It lasts for three hours.

**Semblance (+5):** Cast over an object or creature, this masks it with an illusory appearance of the caster's choice – and the caster can alter this semblance at will while the spell lasts. Each casting of the spell covers an area of up to 3m across. The semblance cannot, however, be smaller than 10% of the object's true size. (A Chlén could thus be made to appear as a Sérudla, a small hut, or even a phalanx of spearmen, but not as a pet cat.) Other restrictions are as for Seeming. Semblance has a duration of three hours.

**Phantasm (+7):** This creates a highly realistic illusion of the caster's choice within a area 2m in radius. The spell has a range of 10m and lasts for one minute. A "typical" phantasm will require an unmodified Cleverness/Reasoning check to see through. This is for something which is reasonably plausible; eg, the sorcerer brandishes an Eye and suddenly a column of flame appears in front of him. If the phantasm is slightly less plausible (for instance, if he did not have a fake Eye to back the phantasm up) it becomes a +5 check. Extremely unlikely things (such as a demon in a marketplace) require only a +10 check. Conversely, if the Sorcerer was known to possess the Eye of Raising an Infernal Barrier then such an phantasm

becomes distinctly more credible, requiring a -5 check.

A character who believes an phantasm treats it exactly as though it were real. (Note that this means if one possesses an Eye of Triumphant Passage Through Infernos, for instance, one can use it to pass safely through an illusory fire.) To inform another character that he has been taken in by a phantasm requires you to be heard over the din of battle (say a 20% chance of this) and he may then make another Cleverness/Reasoning check (at -10) to see through it.

**Apparitions (+10):** This creates the illusion of a terrifying horde of 2-12 demons, ghosts and monsters, which last for one hour. They can rove around in an area extending up to 50m from the point where the spell was cast, and will attack anyone except their creator. Opponents who fail a check based on the average of Cleverness and Reasoning will believe these apparitions to be real, in which case they take real damage from their attacks. (A critical success on the check is required for a character to definitely recognise the apparitions' illusory nature.) Modifiers to the check will range from +5 to -5 depending on circumstances.

Each apparition has Hit Points equal to the caster's Pedhétl, Melee value equal to twice Pedhétl, and strikes for 1D10+2; they resist spells with their caster's Magic Resistance Factor. Each apparition slain causes the caster to lose a point of Pedhétl, with these points recovering at the rate of 1 each day. Once cast, this spell cannot be dropped voluntarily.

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## DOMINATION (chanrága)

### *exerting force over another's will*

**Trance (+2):** A spell which distorts all of the target's perceptions so that he is incapable of action while the spell lasts. A Magic Resistance roll is permitted, of course. It has a range of 20 metres and lasts ten minutes.

**Control Others (+4):** 1-6 intelligent living beings (but not animals or Underworld creatures) can be brought under the caster's control for twenty minutes. Targets who fail to resist will obey like automata as long as they understand the caster's language. If not, they stand motionless until

the spell wears off. It has a maximum range of 20 metres.

**Charm (+5):** Any animal, intelligent being or Underworld creature (excluding androids and undead) can be charmed into doing the caster's bidding. A Magic Resistance roll is possible. A target responds to the telepathic wishes of the caster and (unlike the previous spell) retains normal intelligence. However, Charmed beings are averse to acting in a way they would normally be violently opposed to. If asked to do something like committing suicide or killing a friend, the being gets an immediate attempt to break the spell by rerolling the Magic Resistance Roll. This spell has a range of 45 metres and lasts one hour.

**Mind-bar (+6):** This spell gives the user full control over the target's actions, memories and beliefs for a period of 24 hours. One can use the spell to cause a being to serve loyally, to kill himself, to forget something, etc. It affects only intelligent living beings, and has a range of 10 metres.

**Quest (+7):** A specialised form of mental domination known to the priesthood of Avánthe and Dilinála. It sends 2-12 targets on a mission of the caster's choosing. Only humans and intelligent nonhumans are affected, and they can attempt to resist. Characters who are affected will immediately lose interest in anything except the quest, which they pursue with relentless determination until it is completed or until one year has elapsed, when the spell wears off anyway. It has a range of 10 metres.

**Web of Command (+8):** Unique among the Domination spells because it permits control of androids and automata, this spell is learned only by the devotees of Ksáru and Grugánu. It ensnares the targets' power of volition in a psychic net, giving total obedience for thirty minutes if they fail to resist. It affects 1-6 sorcerous or artificial beings (including most Underworld creatures but not undead) and has a range of 50 metres.

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## FASCINATION (mróya)

### *the art of bewitchment*

**Evil Eye (+1):** This spell has a range of 50m. It inflicts a phobia on the target, with

a delayed effect of 1-10 hours and a duration of 1-6 months. In situations involving the phobia, the victim can make a check based on the average of Cleverness and highest Complex skill to see if he can control his fear. The modifier to this check is the amount by which the victim's Psychic Ability exceeds his Psychic Reservoir. Critical failure results in total panic, while ordinary failure temporarily reduces Melee and Missile values by 1D6.

**Aphasia (+2):** The target loses the power of speech (incidentally preventing the use of Ritual magic). This spell has a range of 20m. The condition has a 5% chance of disappearing after one month, a 4% chance in the next month, and so on down to a minimum 1% chance each month. Alternatively, the caster himself can dispel it at any time by touching the victim's lips.

**Impotence (+3):** This spell is known only to the temples of Dlamélish and Hriháyal. It has a range of 30m, and afflicts its victim with impotence. This can be temporarily overcome with a Potency spell (qv), but duration is otherwise as for Aphasia – or the caster can cancel it by touching the afflicted penis.

**Excecate (+4):** Inflicts blindness on a target within 40m. This lasts as for Aphasia, or until removed by the caster touching the victim's eyes.

**Paralysis (+5):** This inflicts paralysis on a victim within 50m. The extent of the paralysis depends on the caster's whim – anything from a single extremity to the victim's entire body. The effect is permanent if not lifted by the caster touching the victim.

**Hebetate (+6):** This affects 1-6 targets at a range of 60m, reducing their Cleverness and Reasoning scores to 2. Skill levels are effectively halved, and note that certain skills such as Sorcery will not be possible at all. The condition persists for 1-6 days.

**Amnesia (+7):** This has a range of 80m. It destroys the victim's memory of who he is and has the subsidiary effect of leaving him stunned for 1-6 minutes. An amnesiac victim is allowed a Psychic Ability check in stressful (ie, life threatening) situations to see if he thinks to use his old skills. Otherwise he will not know what he is capable of unless told or shown. The effect has a 1% chance of wearing off each day (10% immediately after a stressful situation).

**Enticement (+8):** The target of this spell falls hopelessly in love with the caster (or another person designated by him/her). The target and the intended sweetheart must be within 5m of each other at the time of casting, though the spell itself has a range of 80m. The effect is permanent unless removed by a second casting of the spell.

**Ostracism (+10):** The victim of this spell is rendered inconsequential to everyone except the caster. Others will ignore him or her unless physically assaulted, and even then they will retaliate just as long as the assault lasts, then return to acting as if the victim did not exist. (Note that such an assault will not give the ostracized character automatic surprise, since others remain subliminally aware of him all the time.) The spell has a range of 10m, and has a 1% chance of wearing off each day, or it can be terminated by the caster at any time.

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## MEDIUMSHIP (fadóm)

### *calling back the spirits of the dead*

**Séance (+3):** This allows limited contact with the spirits, permitting the caster to ask three yes/no questions concerning the past or present. There is a 30% chance the spirits will not know the answer to a question or will not reply for reasons of their own. Even if they do know, there is a 20% chance they will deliberately mislead the caster, either by giving no answer or by lying. The questions asked must be quite vague. ("Was so-&-so ever in Bény Sü?" "Is my brother still alive?" and so on.) You cannot ask repeated yes/no questions to narrow a line of enquiry down to specifics.

**Recall the Soul (+5):** This permits the caster to summon the Báletl, or spirit-soul, of a deceased person for the purpose of answering three detailed questions. The spirit summoned must not have been dead for more than 50 years. The caster needs to make a Psychic Ability check to locate the spirit from among all those in the Planes of the Afterlife. The referee may allow positive modifiers from +1 to +5 if the deceased was a close friend or relative, or if the caster possesses something that formerly belonged to the deceased.

A critical failure on the check means that the wrong spirit has been recalled. If hostile, the spirit may try to psychically assault the caster. This can be resisted by an unmodified Psychic Ability check. If the spirit succeeds in its assault it will typically make some doomful pronouncement through the caster's mouth and then return to the Isles of the Excellent Dead leaving him permanently insane.

**Re-embodiment (+10):** This spell, part of the inner arcana of the Temples of Belkhánu and Qón, reincarnates the spirit soul of a deceased character. It must be cast within 24 hours of the character's death, and after casting it one must refrain from further sorcery for a week. The spirit soul can either be placed into its original body (if this is available) or into the living form of a being of the same species. In the latter case, the spirit-soul must first be located with Recall the Soul. The spirit-soul displaces the soul of the "host" form, which is sent to take its place in the hereafter. The host must be restrained (drugged or bound) and can resist the possession by making an unmodified Psychic Ability check. If the spell works, the recalled spirit-soul occupies the body. (If this is not a host but is the spirit's own corpse, a spark of life is rekindled and spells of Carminry may immediately be applied.) The reincarnated character has his original scores in Psychic Ability, Cleverness, Psychic Reservoir and Reasoning; other attributes are those of the body he is reincarnated into. A newly Re-embodied character has a temporary Stamina score of 2, recovering at 1 point a day until up to its regular value.

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## PERCEIVANCE (fapané)

### *extending the senses by means of magic*

**Clairaudience (+1):** The caster can hear what is happening in an adjoining room. The spell has a range of 7 metres and a duration of five minutes.

**Clairvoyance (+2):** This gives the caster a vision of an adjoining room or space. It works to a distance of 7 metres, fading out quickly beyond this range, and lasts five minutes. Note that the caster will not be able to see anything if there is no light in the area he is trying to view.

**Cats' Eyes (+4):** The caster is enabled to see in darkness as though in twilight. The spell lasts for ten minutes.

**See Other Planes (+5):** This spell permits the user to see invisible objects and beings within 15 metres. It lasts for ten minutes.

**The Globe of Distant Discernment (+7):** The caster can send an invisible psychic viewpoint out away from him to a range of one kilometre. This "eye" travels at normal head height and walking speed. It cannot pass through solid objects, nor cross obstacles that the caster himself could not traverse (such as a river or gorge). Also, it does not relay sounds and does not confer the ability to see into a darkened area. The duration of the spell is fifteen minutes.

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## PSYCHOKINESIS (famüre)

### *action and movement at a distance*

**Telekinesis (+1):** The caster can lift and slowly move an object weighing no more than a kilogram up to 20 metres away. If flung at an opponent, the object does damage as a thrown weapon (it can be parried or evaded). If Telekinesis is used for precise actions like untying a knot, a Dexterity/Psychic Ability check is made with a modifier reflecting the complexity of the task. Once cast on an object, this spell lasts five rounds (30 seconds).

**Missile of Metálja (+2):** An invisible bolt of psychic force can be directed at an enemy within 25 metres. If the target fails a Magic Resistance roll, he is stunned and is allowed an unmodified Stamina check every 1-20 rounds to recover. It has no effect on automata or undead.

**Levitate (+3):** This permits the user to rise vertically upwards into the air at a rate of 6 metres per round to a maximum height of 60 metres. The spell can be sustained for up to ten minutes. The caster can move upwards or downwards at will, but no lateral movement is possible. Only the caster himself (and belongings equalling his normal encumbrance) are affected. Ritual magic cannot be used while levitating, though Psychic magic still can.

**Apportment (+4):** This instantly brings an object that the caster requires. Exact objects cannot be specified, only the general type – eg "a sword", "a coil of rope", etc. The object brought can weigh no more

than 6 kilograms and will be a common example of the type wished for. (So if you wish for a sword you will get a Chlén-hide one, not steel.) The object remains until put down or dropped by the caster, to a maximum period of six hours.

**The Hands of Krá the Mighty (+5):** This spell grapples and squeezes its victims. A Magic Resistance roll is given. If this is not achieved the victim suffers 3D10 damage, and even if he resists successfully he still takes 1D6 damage. Armour gives half its usual protection. The spell affects up to three targets at a range of 50 metres.

**Aeriality (+7):** This spell permits the user to fly at a speed of 20 metres per combat round for thirty minutes. He can maintain a maximum altitude of 20 metres above the general terrain. Normal encumbrance can be carried. The spell can also be cast on a companion, but this person must remain in contact with the caster and moves along with him. A Magic Resistance roll is given to anyone who does not want to be flown.

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## PSYCHOMETRICS (témre)

### *discerning hidden truths*

**Assessment (+1):** This spell probes the psychic aura of one being within 10 metres. The target does not get to resist. In game terms, the caster learns the Magic Resistance Factor of the target.

**Elicitation (+2):** By touching an object, the caster gets a hazy mental picture of the last person to handle it. This is roughly as clear as the memory of a dream on first waking up. The caster can tell the sex and approximate size of the person "seen", and usually gets an impression of any robes or armour worn.

**Afterglow (+3):** The caster can see whether any spell (Ritual or Psychic) has been cast during the past hour. The magical "residue" appears as a faint sparkling in the air which is visible to the caster within a range of 2 metres. The effect lasts for 5 minutes. A successful Sorcerer/Reasoning check allows the caster to identify the phylum to which a detected spell belongs. A successful Sorcerer/Psychic Ability check tells him its phylum rating and how recently it was cast. He cannot tell anything about the person who cast it, however.

**Spirit Aura (+4):** This allows the caster to see the aura of a target within 10 metres. A Magic Resistance Roll is allowed. If this fails, the caster learns the target's religious affiliation (Change/Stability). By making a successful Psychic Ability check, the caster also discovers the target's attributes and skills. The knowledge gained is fairly general; the caster learns that the target is "quite strong", "very stupid", "a journeyman sorcerer", etc, rather than getting the precise values.

**Dowsing (+5):** The caster concentrates on a substance or an item held in his hands. For the 5 minutes the spell lasts, he can sense the direction of more of the same substance, or another similar item. The caster is able to tell only when he is facing the object he is dowsing for, not the route he must take to reach it. Also, he senses only the nearest example of the object, not necessarily the biggest. You could use it to search for gold in the Underworld, for instance, but you might only be led to a single long-buried coin.

**Analysis (+6):** The caster can tell by touching a character whether he or she is under any spells. This requires the caster to make an unmodified Reasoning/Psychic Ability check. Critical success identifies the phylum and general intensity of each spell.

**Cognizance (+7):** This spell assists in finding lost objects or people. It lasts for thirty minutes, giving a general idea of distance and direction.

**Fabricate Aura (+8):** This bestows a false aura of the caster's choice on a single object or person, so as to delude or block other Psychometric spells. The spell has a range of just one metre and lasts twenty-four hours.

**Edification (+10):** Cast on an Eye, enchanted sword or other magical item, this spell determines its properties, magical charge and means of operation. The caster must be within one metre of the device under scrutiny.

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## TALISMANICS (vurir)

### *inculcating magic upon a focus*

Talismans are objects in which a single Psychic spell has been placed for later use. Such an object might be a ring,

diadem, pectoral, cloak-clasp or other item of jewellery. Gem pendants are the most common. When the talisman is used, the spell stored in it is released at no spellpoint cost to the user. The talisman can be used only by the person for whom it was prepared. Since you must reveal your secret name to a sorcerer if you want him to attune a talisman for you, most are prepared for personal use.

A spell placed on a talisman must be a Psychic spell that normally takes one round to cast. The sorcerer cannot prepare a talisman for a spell he does not know. Also, his rating in the Talismanics phylum must be at least equal to the phylum rating of the spell. To prepare the talisman, the sorcerer casts the Talismanics spell at the appropriate level (at +4 for Recall the Soul, for instance) and must then spend one day attuning it. If this initial casting is successful, two factors determine if the spell works when needed:

*Was the talisman attuned properly?* This is decided by the caster making an unmodified Psychic Ability check. Ordinary failure means that nothing happens when the talisman is used. A critical failure means that the spell will certainly backfire.

*Is it activated properly?* This requires the person trying to use the talisman to make a Sorcerer/Psychic Ability check. Failure means the spell vanishes from the talisman with no effect. Critical failure also wipes the talisman, and causes a psychic feedback that stuns the user for 1-6 rounds.

Two rounds are needed to activate a spell on a talisman. The spell takes effect on the character's fourth half-action phase after beginning the attempt. The talisman must be in the character's hand throughout this attempt and any distraction (such as receiving a wound) dissipates the spell to no effect.

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## TRANSCENDENCY (hlákme)

### *the supernormal powers of the mind*

**Control of Self (+2):** A technique for gaining complete self mastery of one's physical limitations. The user can hold his breath indefinitely (giving immunity to inhaled gas, spores, smoke, etc), use total memory recall, blank out the sensation of pain (removing the need for Stamina checks in combat), slow his heartbeat to almost zero, and so forth. As a rule of

thumb, the user can withstand inhospitable conditions ranging from -40° to +60° Centigrade. Note that attributes and skills cannot in fact be altered by the spell, however. He also cannot be affected by hypnosis or morale-affecting spells. The effect lasts for 30 minutes.

**Gift of Tongues (+4):** This lets the caster understand any spoken language. The language must be one that it is possible for humans to comprehend; he could not learn to communicate with the Ssú, for instance. This ability fades after 30 minutes.

**Enhancement (+5):** This allows the user to surpass his normal level in a skill. It can be applied to any skill he knows, giving a bonus of 1-6 levels for thirty minutes.

**Invigoration (+6):** This spell can be used to heal wounds. It converts psychic energy into physical energy, channelling a powerful restorative force through the caster's body. He recovers 2D6 Hit Points. Unlike spells of Carminry (see above) there is no need for a Psychic Ability check to see if the healing works. Lost limbs and scars, etc, are not restored.

**Comprehension (+7):** This allows the caster to decipher written inscriptions. He only gets to understand the general content of the writing, not the exact meaning of each word or how to read it aloud. (Given a magic scroll, it would tell you what spell was written there but not how to read it aloud and hence cast it.) The arcane languages used by certain sects are immune to decipherment by this spell. Its duration is one hour.

**Immanation (+8):** This transmutes hostile spell-energy into a form usable by the caster. Any time that the caster successfully resists a spell targeted at him, he adds half the usual cost of that spell to his current spellcasting points, up to a maximum of 500 points. Spellcasting points gained in this way last until used, or until the Immanation spell expires after six hours. (Note that Immanation does not actually confer any bonus to the Magic Resistance Roll.)

Warrior of the Flame  
(Bednalljan period)



### [653] Rare magic

Some spells cannot be classified as belonging to any of the preceding phyla. These are fragments of other once-complete phyla known in ancient times. They are not commonly taught, but may be found in antique texts or among the inner arcana of a temple.

### [660] Ceremonial Sorcery

Each priesthood has supranormal effects which can be achieved by groups of ritual priests working together in a ceremony. Ceremonies of this sort are part of everyday religious activity in Tsolyánu and the sorcery they evoke cannot be achieved by a single individual, no matter how skilled. The ceremony is effectively a spell worked by several casters in unison. The priests involved must fulfil the requirements to use Ritual magic (page 41) though they need not know any other sorcery apart from the special chants and dances of the ceremony. Effects that can be achieved include the enhancing of weaponry by the Temples of Vimúhla and Karakán and the enrichment of harvests by the Temple of Avánthe. Usually ceremonial magic is only undertaken at certain times of the year, most often on the holy days of the temple in question.

*The Enchantment of Arms and Armour* is achieved by the priests of Karakán, Vimúhla and their cohorts. Steel of the finest quality can be upgraded to "enchanted" steel, requiring the services of six priests for each Psé of steel affected. The ceremony begins with a period of fasting and ritual purification, taking in all thirty days to complete. All the priests involved in the ceremony must be competent in the Armourer skill, and they will not be able to use any other magic during that month. (The Temple of Sárku is said to have a similar ceremony with which they can enchant copper weaponry. There are also techniques for imbuing swords with spirits of their own; these involve demonology and are known to only a few specialists.)

*The Re-energising of Thaumaturgical Devices* such as Eyes can be brought about by the priests of Ksáru and Grugánu. The ceremony is performed by three or more priests and takes an entire day. At the completion of the ceremony, roll 1D10 minus 1D6 to find the number of charges restored to the device. The participants must refrain from using personal sorcery for one week thereafter.

*The Fructification of Harvests* is performed by the Temples of Avánthe and Dilinála. It keeps an area of farmland safe from pestilence and insects, and increases the likelihood of a good crop. This ceremony is performed as an everyday function of the priestesses for which any land owner who can afford it will pay. It should be performed twice: before planting, and again before the harvest. A single priestess can bless an area of some sixty metres radius. The ceremony for a square Tsán would involve nearly two hundred participants.

*The Rejuvenation of the Physical Self* is accomplished by this ceremony of the Temples of Dlamélish and her cohort, Hriháyal. It restores the recipient's youth and vigour, reducing his or her age by up to forty years. A side-effect is the formation of a small, black, nut-like kernel. The rejuvenated character must keep this within thirty metres at all times, otherwise he returns to his true age. Two priestesses are needed for the ceremony, which takes one night. The recipient must make a Psychic Reservoir check for the ceremony to be effective; ordinary failure means it can be attempted again, but critical failure instantly and irrevocably returns the recipient to his real age.

*The Reanimation of the Dead* is used by the priests of Sárku and Durritlámish for the creation of undead. (Similar techniques are known to the priests of Ksáru, but their use is not widespread.) The ceremony gives more lasting effects than can be achieved with the spells of the Necromagy phylum. The length of the ceremony and the number of priests

**The Eater of Souls (+7):** This (Ritual) conjuration of the Temple of Wurú instils life for a period of fifteen minutes in a small fire-charred wooden mannikin (which must be prepared prior to casting) so that it will pursue a victim named by the caster. The mannikin has 27 Hit Points, armour 7, a Melee value of 25, Strength 25, and strikes for 1D10+1D6 damage. It is unaffected by special hits or by any spell other than Cancellation. It pursues its victim implacably, moving at 6m a round, smashing down opponents or obstacles that get in its way. If it slays the victim it will then attempt to eat the body, taking two minutes to do so. If this is not prevented, the victim's spirit-soul is destroyed and he can never be restored to life.

### Weights and measures

A Psé is about 750 grams. A sword thus weighs two Psé, a suit of medium armour fifteen Psé, and a suit of heavy armour twenty-five Psé.

### Magical flux

To power his spells, a sorcerer draws on the energy of the Planes Beyond. The connection of the mundane world to those Planes varies at different places on Téकुmel. Some areas are rich in magical force, others barren.

The cost of spellcasting is halved in magically rich locations. These include the cities of Hmakuyál, Púrdimal, Avanthár and Sárku in Tsolyánu, Ch'óchi in Mu'ugalavyá, Jgrésh in Salarvyá, and most of the east coast of Livyánu.

Spells cost double in magically barren areas. One such is the long swathe of terrain from Chayákku to Nuru'un in the far north.

There are also magically dead areas where sorcery does not work at all. Among these are the Plain of Towers, the Dry Bay of Ssu'úm, and the Tsoléi archipelago.

### Differently abled

About 1 person in 20 is a Psychic Dampener, of opposite magical polarity to the rest of the human race. No spells can be cast within a metre of him. Spells cast from outside that zone might still affect him, but even then there is a percentage chance equal to his Psychic Ability of the spell simply "fizzling out". Eyes and other technological devices are not affected.

### **The death of Gámulu?**

Radiation sickness sometimes results from exposure to artefacts left over from Tékumel's distant past. Naturally the cause is not understood by modern scholars, who ascribe it to baneful demonic influences. It is possible that the death of Gámulu, first of the Fisherman Kings, resulted from radiation sickness after his banquet in the ruins of Ssug-anár. Or perhaps it is only that such is the reward given by the gods for hubris.

### **Things that go bump in the night**

The generic Tsolyáni term for ghost is Ssudú. Types found in popular superstition include the Veveráta (the ghosts of those slain on a battlefield), the Ktál (ancient spirits that haunt necropolises) and the Ngésja (women who died in childbirth).

### **Divine intervention (optional rule)**

20th Century belief is in gods that we can love or at least admire, but in most eras Man has worshipped the gods that he fears. This is true of Tékumel. The Five Mitlán are essentially indifferent to mankind but can sometimes be induced to give aid; the Five Kiriqálu care even less, and must be propitiated with rituals and sacrifices. The referee should bear this in mind if he decides to allow appeals for divine intervention.

Only player-characters can call for divine intervention. First it is necessary to get the ear of the deity. This takes five rounds and requires a basic -15 Theology check (-10 in the case of a cohort) for an impromptu appeal, with +1 to +3 for having the proper vestments and ritual paraphernalia.

If the Theology check succeeds, next determine the deity's reaction. This is based on a 1D10 roll averaged with one of the supplicant's attributes: Honour in the case of Hnálla, Strength for Karakán, Reasoning for Thúmis, Comeliness for Avánthe, Psychic Ability for Belkhánu, and Psychic Reservoir in the case of any of the Five Kiriqálu.

The reaction roll can be modified by offerings: +1 per 5000 Kaitars value. (For those deities accepting human sacrifice, use purchase price for slaves and Shámtla value for captives.) Offerings must have been made at the temple in the last two weeks or be on the supplicant's person. Once an item has been offered to a god it is taboo and must *not*

involved varies according to the strength of the undead being. Raising a Mrúr or Shédra takes a few priests only one night. The secret of creating such things as Vorodlá and Hrá is restricted to participants of much higher circle, and may take a month's ceremony involving up to a dozen senior ritual priests.

*The Banishing of Ailments* is the special province of the Temples of Thúmis and Keténgku, who are able to treat even conditions which are normally incurable such as radiation sickness, the Mottled Plague or addiction to the drug Zu'úr. Four priests are required (each representing one of the faces of Keténgku) and the recipient must make an unmodified Stamina/Psychic Ability check for the ritual to be effective.

*The Adjuration of Unquiet Spirits* is used by the priests of Belkhánu and Qón to exorcise ghosts. This ceremony takes three hours, and sometimes the ghost will try to disrupt it with poltergeist activity or frightening manifestations. The number and Circle of the priests involved varies according to the antiquity and strength of the haunting.

*The Hallowing of Sanctuaries* is practised by both the Temple of Hnálla and of Hrü'ü (and their cohorts). It consecrates an area so that it cannot be entered by priests, Sharétl or magically summoned creatures of the opposite Change/Stability alignment. This is often applied to temples, though areas are left unhallowed to allow priests of the other alignment to visit the temple on business, etc. The ceremony takes one day each month, each priest involved adding twenty-five square metres to the area hallowed.

### **[670] Great Magic**

There are techniques that go far beyond the spells described in Sections 651 to 653. These are the mysteries of immortality, the creation of life, and the means of commanding the elements and rules of other planes. They have been rediscovered throughout history by wizards of legendary renown: Qiyór the Many-Tongued, Hagárr of Paránta, Subadim the Sorcerer and others. But these savants guarded their secrets jealously, so that little is known of Great Magic by the scholars of today.

The referee is advised to restrict Great Magic to occasional non-player savants whom the player-characters may interact with from time to time. Partly this is to avoid unbalancing the game, but in fact the wizards who are destined to achieve greatness become increasingly withdrawn from their former lives and are likely to go off to meditate alone in the wilderness, rarely involving themselves with the mundane world. A player-character should not really have any chance of commencing a study of Great Magic before reaching at least 16th level, and even then the character would need to be retired from active adventuring to do so. Such a study might involve more than a single ordinary lifespan and the character (if he or she survives) would of necessity be greatly changed by the end of it.

### **[680] Military Magic**

Each legion has a contingent of some 50-100 military sorcerers whose function is to provide large-scale sorcery in battle. Usually these are junior priests, young and therefore capable of bearing up under the rigours of campaigning, led by a few more senior mages. Such a magical contingent (called a Shatsúr) is either provided by the legion's patron temple(s) or recruited and assigned by the Palace of Ever-Glorious War.

By participating in a group ritual, the military sorcerers achieve a kind of gestalt in which they are able to cast spells of enormous force. The sky above the battlefield is then lit up by great meteors of flame rebounding off invisible defensive shields, while other effects include miasmas in which phantom armies can be glimpsed, clamorous dins which confuse enemy troops and sap their resolve, and gusts of fresh or foul air.

No personal sorcery can be used on or near the battlefield while the military contingent maintain their rituals. One theory for this is that military magic drains all other-planar energy in the vicinity, leaving none available to power the spells of individual mages.

Military magic is highly ceremonial and cannot be used by individuals or in non-military situations. It is extremely puissant but lacks the versatility and fine control of personal magic.

### [690] Magical devices

Tékumel has a long history and there are many magical and technological relics of earlier eras. Some, such as the Eyes, were in everyday use before the Time of Darkness. Others were specifically designed as weapons using such technology as survived in the Latter Times, or are the magical or demon-imbued creations of later sorcerers.

### [691] The Eyes

Eyes are devices of the ancients. They are round objects of shiny silver-grey ceramic with an eye-like aperture on one side and an activating stud on the other.

Eyes hold 1-100 charges. Most have an indicator showing how many charges remain, but this is usually in an ancient numeric system which few characters will be able to decipher. (Make an unmodified check based on the average of Mathematician and the appropriate language skill).

Some Eyes (say 50%) bear an inscription, usually in an ancient language such as Llyáni. Others must be tested to discover their nature. About 1 in 20 will have deteriorated over the millenia and will malfunction when used. This either results in an explosion (as for a Gem of Obliteration, see page 46) or an effect opposite to the Eye's usual power.

In the following list, "aimed" Eyes require a roll to hit: this is three times the character's base Missile value. (For example, Dridakka, with a base Missile value of 6, needs a roll of 1-18 on D20 to hit using the Abominable Eye of Detestation.)

Although not strictly magical in nature, most Eyes most overcome the target's Magic Resistance (Section 640) to be effective. Treat all Eyes as having an effective phylum rating of +8 for this purpose. As with spells, armour does not count against the damage inflicted by an Eye unless otherwise specified.

#### The Abominable Eye of Detestation

This Eye must be aimed, striking 2-12 targets at a range of 40m. It is especially effective against undead. Targets who fail to resist will flee in panic, fighting at -2 from Melee value and damage rolls if cornered. The effect lasts for ten minutes.

#### The Eye of Advancing Through Portals

The beam of this Eye will throw open any door, push down walls of mortar or stone, or blast a 3m tunnel through solid rock. If directed at a target who fails to resist, it spreads him over the nearest wall. It is aimed, striking a single target at a range of 3m.

#### The Eye of Aerial Excellence

The effect of this Eye (which is not aimed) is centred on the caster, who can cause himself and 1-10 others within a radius of 3m to rise from the ground and fly at speeds of up to 30m per combat round for a period of thirty minutes. A character who does not want to be flown can attempt to resist the effect. While flying it is possible to use Eyes and to cast Psychic spells, but you must land in order to use melee or missile weapons and Ritual spells.

be used no matter how desperate the circumstances. The referee might apply other modifiers depending on how appropriate the request is to the deity's sphere of influence.

Any attempt at divine intervention costs the supplicant 1 point of Stamina. On a critically failed reaction roll he loses 3D6 Stamina, dying if it reaches zero. Ordinary failure means the petition is ignored, while ordinary success gives no more than an inspirational vision and the feeling that "the god is with you". Critical success is required for the deity to intervene, with the proviso that the gods will not alter the past - nor the predestined course of the future, insofar as it has a bearing on the fate of whole nations. The Five Mitlán prefer to act to restore the status quo while the Five Kiriqálu are more likely to cause change. Appropriate responses, depending on the deity, are: kindling a spark of life in a comrade thought slain, sending adverse winds to delay a rival's ship, sending a sacred animal to give guidance when lost, giving a burst of fresh strength to an exhausted warrior, and so on.

### Trading in Eyes

Eyes are generally assessed as being worth some 500 Káitars per charge, plus 10,000 for the instrument itself. The rarer and more sought-after Eyes will be worth up to 20,000 plus 2000 per charge or more. The equation distorts somewhat for Eyes with very few charges remaining.

In a major city there is a 5% chance each month of any Eyes being for sale. It will be useful to engage a Métrato, or buying agent, to assist in finding out what is available. The Métrato will charge a commission of 1% or so.

Characters buying Eyes will pay these rates (maybe up to 20% higher or even more, as the temple or clan involved will start the bargaining at a price higher than the Eye's basic value). Characters selling to their own temple or clan can ask only about 80% of an Eye's "official" value but get the advantage of an immediate sale. Looking for an individual wealthy enough to buy an Eye (and who wants one) could take months or even years.

### Magical books

Dozens of legendary texts exist: the works of long-dead heroes or wizards. Some of these were written on pages of gold leaf, others were treated with preservative spells by their author, still others survive today only because they have been diligently copied by a succession of scholars over the ages (possibly with the introduction of errors).

Some books can be used as a source of rare spells or Great Magic (see Sections 653 and 680). Others contain arcane details of Demonology or Theology, perhaps lost to most modern scholars. A few possess innate enchantment and confer supernatural benefits on the reader.

Reading any book requires a Literacy/language check - usually at +5, but possibly more difficult if the text has faded or is in an unfamiliar style.

*Korúnkoi hiQiyór:* “The Book of Qiyór.” This text, which exists in several modern Tsolyáni copies, details the magical theories of the wizard Qiyór. It can be used as a 25th level Ritual Sorcery tutor (see Section 240) in any month in which the student succeeds in a +2 Reasoning check. (A failed check means that he derives no benefit from the book that month; critical failure means he can glean nothing more from it.)

*Hengánikh hiZhálmigan:* “The Splendour of Decay.” Written in modern Tsolyáni and dedicated to Sárku. A worshipper of Sárku or Durritlámish who reads it and succeeds in an unmodified Theologian/Reasoning check gains a permanent bonus of +2 on D10 damage rolls (see Section 450). On a critical failure, however, he or she becomes ritually tainted and must be buried alive.

*Jnéshtlaq Kéq Yóssu:* “The Tome of Black Mold.” Written in ancient N'lüssa. Whoever reads it is instantly transported to the secret city of Schyák in N'lüss, where he will be admitted to the tomb of the Lord of Black Mold for five minutes. This tomb is filled with ancient treasures, and the character can take as much as he can find in the time and physically carry. (Spells and devices such as the Eye of Retaining All Things do not operate inside the tomb.) After five minutes the character is returned to his former location with the treasure; he must leave the book behind in Schyák.

*Zrú Hsún Tí Ch'á:* “The Excellent Travelling Volume.” Written in Tsáqw

### The Eye of Allseeing Wonder

This projects a beam which reveals invisible objects & beings, dimensional nexus points, etc. It also serves as illumination in the dark. The beam is only 30cm across, and it is quite difficult to keep it trained on a moving target, requiring a -5 Dexterity check. Each charge lasts ten minutes.

### The Eye of Being an Unimpeachable Shield Against Foes

This creates an invisible barrier at a distance of 1.5m from the user that reduces the momentum of any rapidly incoming object or attack. Projectiles are automatically stopped, but slow-moving attacks such as lava or poison gas are not impeded. Enemies must spend three rounds pushing through this force field before they can attack the user. Up to three companions can also be protected inside the force field, which lasts for ten minutes per charge.

### The Eye of Bestowing Life

This revivifies one slain character who has not been dead for more than three weeks. Any small fragment of the body is enough for the Eye to work, and there is only a 10% chance of the character's Stamina being reduced (cf the Revivify spell). This Eye is rare.

### The Eye of Calling Forth an Unconquerable Army

Each charge calls forth a phalanx of twenty automaton soldiers who remain for twenty minutes. These count as average heavy infantrymen armed with swords and shields. They will fight as the user commands but must act as a military unit, not as individuals. The automata have unshakable morale but cannot comprehend non-battlefield instructions such as to open a chest, stand guard, etc. Also they will not continue to attack a foe who has ceased to offer resistance.

### The Eye of the Creeping Fog of Doom

Vapour billows from the nozzle of this Eye to form a cloud 9m in diameter, which moves at 5m per round until dissipating after four minutes. Originally intended to produce any gaseous element required by the user, most of these devices have been set for poisonous gas; roll D100:01-25 Nerve gas; breathing creatures make a -5 Stamina check or die within 1-3 rounds. A spell of Detoxify will work if used before the victim dies. Control of Self gives immunity.26-50 Suffocating gas; any breathing creature falls unconscious within two rounds unless it can escape from the vapour, then dies within two rounds after that. Carminry or the Eye of Healing is needed to treat someone affected. Control of Self gives full protection.51-90 Contact gas; burns the skin, causing 2D3 damage every round that a character is exposed to the fumes. Clothing and armour give no protection, but moistened cloth will halve the damage. Detoxify and Control of Self are not effective.91-00 A harmless or unusual gas.Wind direction and speed must be taken into account. If the Eye is directed into a mild breeze, this will slow the vapour's advance to 2m per round; a brisk head-on breeze causes the vapour to remain in one place; a stronger wind reverses it. The Eye must be used in a space of not less than 100 square metres, as the vapour needs room to roll out and spread.

### The Eye of Departing in Safety

This device must be focussed at a spot you might want to return to. When activated anywhere within 300m of that spot, the Eye will then teleport the user and 1-10 companions back there. (The effect can be resisted.) If the target location is out of range, a warning light flashes and if the stud is still pressed then a charge is expended to no effect. If used without having been focussed, most Eyes (90%) emit a warning bleep and will not function, but in some Eyes this safety system has deteriorated and the device will then transport the user into illimitable darkness from whence there is no returning. Note that the Eye can be unset simply

by twisting the stud if the user changes his mind about the destination; this expends no charges.

### **The Excellent Ruby Eye**

This aimed Eye freezes 1-6 targets in time if they fail to resist it. They then cannot, move, think, act or be harmed until released by a second charge of the Eye. It has a range of 50 metres.

### **The Eye of Exquisite Power Over Maidens**

This is aimed at a single target within 20m. If not resisted, it causes the target to fall hopelessly in love with the user. The effect lasts until the victim is freed by another charge of the Eye. (Note that both sexes can use this Eye with equal effect. The traditional name derives simply from the fact that the scholars of ancient times were usually men.)

### **The Eye of Frigid Breath**

This projects a beam of intense cold to a maximum range of 60m. It spreads out in a cone: at 10m or less striking one target, at 20m up to two targets, and so on. The beam must be aimed up to 20m. It is not halted by intervening targets, and so can affect several ranks of an oncoming party. Beings struck by the beam take 3D20 damage if they fail to resist and 1D3 even if they succeed. (Remember that armour gives no defence.)

### **The Eye of Hastening Destiny**

This accelerates the user and 1-6 companions within its 1.5m range to twice their normal speed. This allows two full-value actions per round (see Section 422). The effect lasts ten minutes.

### **The Eye of Illuminating Glory**

A soft radiance shines out to a distance of 15m around the Eye. This zone can be adjusted down to smaller areas or "dimmed out" altogether. The light is polarized in such a manner that it is retroreflective. Thus it illuminates nearby objects for the benefit of the user and his companions, but does not carry far and gives little illumination to anyone else. It has a duration of two hours per charge.

### **The Incomparable Eye of Command**

This device is aimed. It affects 1-10 targets at a range of up to 20m. Targets who fail to resist must obey the user's commands without volition of their own until the Eye wears off after twenty minutes.

### **The Eye of Incomparable Understanding**

This telepathically translates speech (but not written languages) for the user and makes his speech comprehensible to others. It works up to a range of 30 metres. Each charge lasts three hours.

### **The Ineluctable Eye of Healing**

This is aimed, affecting one target at up to 3m. It can be used to treat injury, poison or disease: Wounds: one charge restores 1D6+1 lost Hit Points. Poison: one charge neutralizes any toxin (but will not reverse chemical changes that have already occurred in the recipient's body). Disease: one charge cures any disease instantly.

### **The Eye of Indefinable Apprehension**

This affects 2-40 beings at a range of 40m. It need not be aimed. Magic Resistance gives no defence: all targets feel a sensation of demoralizing fear and must make an unmodified Cleverness/Psychic Reservoir check. (A Soldier check can be substituted.) Failure means that the character flees and, if cornered and forced to fight, can only parry or evade. The feeling of dread lasts for ten minutes. This Eye has no effect on androids, undead or the supernatural creatures of the Underworld.

### **The Eye of Insubstantial Visioning**

This creates a hideous apparition, which appears within 15m and

(ancient Yán Koryáni), this book has the power to transport the reader, along with up to ten companions or equivalent weight, to any destination on Tékumel with which he is familiar. The book itself is *not* transported.

*Li'ób Miffánsa Missrábchi'i mikKsárulkchi:* "The Book of Sending Forth the Servant of Great Ksárul." Written in modern Livyáni, this calls forth an "avatar" of the demon Origób, who manifests as a lizard-like being with six ichorous mouths, clad in plates of crusted armour and covered with sparks of flame. The reader must make an unmodified Demonology check to control Origób, who will then remain to do his bidding for one hour. When the hour is up he departs with the book. The "avatar" has 36 Hit Points, armour 7, Magic Resistance 24, and strikes six times a round (each attack with Melee value 18) for 1D6+2D6 damage.

*Chnéshaq khü Chnéshayalu:* "The Mystery of Mysteries". This book, written in Classical Tsolyáni, contains formulae for contacting the gods. It must be read aloud, requiring a Poet/Literacy check for success. The reader can request divine intervention with a bonus of +1D6 on the required checks. (See sidebar, page 66.)

*Barukán Lli Fèshdrubál Chrén:* "The Labyrinth of Mutable Destiny." This treatise, in modern Yán Koryáni, is dedicated to the god Fnér-Khmíshu, a Yán Koryáni form of Belkhánu. It contains the power to make three wishes. When making a wish the reader must make an unmodified check based on Reasoning plus Psychic Ability minus Psychic Reservoir. On a critical failure the effect is the opposite of what was intended. Wishes cannot alter the past or matters that are pre-ordained, nor affect the heavens, the Planes Beyond or a person's innate abilities. (Thus, you cannot wish for 25 levels in the Ritual Sorcerer skill.) When all wishes have been used up, the book vanishes.

### Special items

Many of the devices listed below were constructed by means of Great Magic and are unique. Others, artefacts of the old technology, exist in several copies – perhaps with subtly different powers. Except where indicated, magical devices do not use charges.

#### *The Hammer of Pendárte of Khéiris:*

The favourite weapon of the legendary hero. It gives its wielder a bonus of +5 on both Melee and damage, and returns to his hand after it has been thrown.

*The Chariot of the Gods:* An ancient air car. Several are left over from ancient times, including at least two dozen in the hands of the Vrú'neeb, the Liváyni "Inquisition". Various types are known, but most are designed to carry half a dozen passengers at speeds of up to 50 km an hour. These vehicles require charges, like an Eye, and each charge lasts twelve hours.

*The Gloves of Chirené:* The mythological dragon-headed warrior of N'lüss possessed these gloves, which were said to enhance his great strength. They increase the wearer's Strength score to 32. (This applies only to the strength of his arms so, although his damage bonus may increase, Hit Points are not affected. See Sections 122 and 123.)

*The Alluring Maiden of Ngá:* A beautiful but implacable killing machine with the ebon hair and paper white skin characteristic of androids built by the ancients. She will stalk and kill her victims as directed by her owner, never abandoning the pursuit until she or the victim is destroyed. In ordinary human terms she is mindless, and cannot speak or interact socially; nor can she be detected with ESP. She is a 20th level Assassin with 25 Hit Points, Dexterity 25, Magic Resistance 25, armour 3, and a Melee value of 30. When found she will have 1-100 charges remaining, and each day's activity costs 1 charge.

*The Trumpet of Metállja:* This horn belonged to the mighty hero Metállja of Salarvyá. A -10 Strength check is needed to blow it. It summons any android or automaton within 60 metres to serve the caster for ten minutes. (Caveat bucinator: an ordinary failure on the Strength check will summon the androids but not control them!) Each use requires a charge, of which the Horn has 1-100.

*The Mallet of Inimitable Fealty:* A small mallet of silvery metal contained in a leather sheath. When touched to a character's exposed skin it creates a

remains in a fixed area of 3m radius. The chance of a character not believing the apparition to be real is determined by a Cleverness check. Modify the check by +4 in broad daylight in the open or +2 in a well-lit room, but by -3 in places like the underworld where such a creature might be expected. The apparition will strike at anyone except the holder of the Eye who enters its area, doing real damage to anyone who believes in it. The apparition projected is specific to a given Eye and can be treated as having 25 Hit Points, armour 6, a Melee value of 30, hitting for 1D6+2D6 per attack. It takes damage if hit, but is unaffected by degrees of wounding (Section 310) and cannot be affected by spells. This Eye has a duration of ten minutes per charge.

### The Eye of Joyful Sitting Amongst Friends

This turns 1-3 human or intelligent nonhuman enemies into loyal allies for a period of 30 minutes. The effect can be resisted. It is aimed and has a range of 20 metres.

### The Eye of Madness

This aimed Eye affects 1-10 targets and has a range of 40 metres. It causes humans, nonhumans and animals (but not androids or undead) to become hopelessly insane. The victim's Magic Resistance must be overcome. The effect is permanent unless cured by a Harmonise spell or the Ceremony of the Banishing of Ailments.

### The Eye of Non-Seeing

This renders the user and 1-5 companions invisible for a period of 30 minutes. Recipients must stay within 1.5m of the Eye or become visible. There is a -10 Melee penalty for any character fighting an invisible opponent.

### The Eye of Opening the Way

This Eye automatically detects and opens secret doors within 20m. It also emits a warning bleep when in range of hidden traps. Each charge lasts for two hours.

### The Eye of Raising an Infernal Barrier

This raises a wall of flame 10 metres in front of the user. The wall lasts twenty minutes and is 3m high and up to 10m wide (adjusting to the space available). Beings within 2m of the barrier when it appears must make an Evade roll to jump clear or take 2D6 damage. Anyone who tries to pass through the barrier takes 4D6 damage. Magic Resistance does not apply. If a character's clothing catches fire (30% chance of this) he or she takes a further 1D3 damage each round for 1-6 rounds.

### The Eye of Regeneration

This causes a single lost limb or organ to regenerate completely within twenty minutes. It cannot restore the dead to life, however.

### The Eye of Retaining All Things

This opens a channel to a "pocket dimension" in which the user can store items up to 100,000 Káitars in weight (about 300 kg, or 660 lbs). It does not require another charge to bring objects out of the Eye. There is no oxygen on the plane reached by this Eye, so living beings cannot be stored in it. If used as an anti-personnel device (a last resort, since it only works at touch range) the Eye must overcome the victim's Magic Resistance to suck him within.

### The Eye of Retarding Destiny

This is aimed, affecting 1-20 targets at a range of up to 30 metres. If they fail to resist, targets are slowed down to half their normal speed. They can then only act on alternate rounds, or make a "half-value" action every round. It lasts for twenty minutes.

### The Eye of Returning Unto Darkness

This creates totally impenetrable darkness in a zone of 3m radius within 10m of the user. The affected zone remains in place once created, so

characters can enter and leave it at will. A character striking at someone inside the zone of darkness suffers a -5 Melee modifier, and projectiles shot into it are at half the archer's usual Missile value. A character inside the zone takes a Melee modifier of -10 when striking out from it. The Eye has a duration of 30 minutes.

#### **The Eye of Rising Above All**

This Eye negates gravity, allowing the user to rise up to 200m vertically into the air. Ascent can be at up to 15m per round. Each charge lasts three hours. The Eye can also be used to degravitise up to 250 kg of treasure so that the user can pull it along behind him. If used against a foe, the Eye counts as aimed and affects a single target at a range of up to 5m; a Magic Resistance roll is permitted.

#### **The Eye of Ruling as a King in Glory**

This mechanism affects every human or intelligent nonhuman within 100 metres who is capable of understanding the user's speech. Magic Resistance does not apply. It enables the user to address these beings and sway them with his words. In effect the Eye gives a temporary Orator skill-level of 20. Modifiers depend on what the crowd is being urged to do (around -10 for something that goes greatly against their natural instincts). Each charge lasts for one hour.

#### **The Splendid Eye of Krá the Mighty**

This aimed device is capable of pulling or pushing objects with enough force to break down walls of up to a metre thick or move objects weighing 500 kilograms. If directed at a being who fails to resist, it inflicts the 4-400 points of damage - enough to kill most creatures! A target who resists still suffers 1D3 damage. It has a range of only 2 metres.

#### **The Eye of Strengthening the Majesty of Weapons**

Each charge of this device turns 1.5 kg of ordinary steel into excellent steel. It thus takes one charge to enhance a sword, but up to fifteen charges for a full suit of armour.

#### **The Terrible Eye of Raging Power**

The blast from this aimed device is a crackling beam of electricity 3m wide that is capable of striking through up to three ranks of an opposing party. The maximum range of the bolt is 35 metres, but if it contacts a wall or other large surface then it will rebound along its ionization path. A target who fails his Magic Resistance roll takes 2D6+1 damage, and even if successful he still takes 1D3 damage.

#### **The Thoroughly Useful Eye**

This extremely rare Eye does not itself require charges, drawing power directly from the "cosmic flux". It can be used once a day to restore 1-6 charges to any other Eye that the user possesses.

#### **The Eye of Transformation**

This is aimed, operating on one target at a range of up to 3 metres. If the victim does not resist, his personality becomes reversed. (A loyal soldier becomes a turncoat, a devout priest changes temple, a good clan-member becomes a wastrel, and so on.) The effect is permanent unless another charge of the Eye is used.

#### **The Eye of Triumphant Passage Through Infernos**

This protects the person holding it from conflagration. He or she can pass safely through a Wall of Fire, the spell of the Infrangible Orb, etc. Each charge gives protection for five minutes, and works only for the person holding the Eye.

#### **[692] Amulets**

On Tékumel only a fool is not superstitious. Even a humble peasant will be sure to wear a charm or two, while wealthy nobles include a host of amulets as part of their routine apparel. There are amulets for warding off

powerful mind-bar: the character can be made intensely loyal, caused to forget something, sent on a quest, etc. It can only be resisted by making a -10 Psychic Reservoir check, ordinary Magic Resistance being useless. Like an Eye, this device has 1-100 charges. Each charge lasts for one month. The Mallets of Inimitable Fealty were created in Engsvanyáli times. About fifteen still exist today; one is in the possession of the Temple of Vimúhla and another belongs to a senior noble of the Royalist Party.

*The Ladder of Mriddu the Magician:* A ladder 20 metres long that can be folded to fit in the palm of one's hand. It weighs only twenty Káitars (600 grams) but can hold up to six fully-armoured men at a time. At the top are small retractable claws that can be used to fix it securely in place. Three of these devices are said to exist.

*The Jade Bowl of the God-King of Purdánim:* By looking into this, the user can exchange his mind with that of another human within its 100m range. The victim can attempt a Magic Resistance roll against an effective phylum rating of +10. The mind exchange lasts for one day. If either person should be slain before this period elapses, he cannot return to his own body, which then becomes the permanent form of the exchange. Each use expends one charge.

*The Glorious Cloak of Many Eyes:* A splendid gown patterned with a hundred tiny eyes. Each charge permits the wearer to see and hear what is happening at a spot up to 300 metres away. It has a duration of ten minutes. Charges should be checked with percentile dice, and it can be recharged using the Thoroughly Useful Eye.

#### **Not in stock**

Players often ask about buying magical items like the ones listed here. The answer is that they are so rare (much rarer even than Eyes) that setting a market price would be meaningless. If the owner of an item does wish to sell it, he may be required to restrict the sale within his clan or temple. In the case of particularly powerful items it may be judged politic simply to make a gift of the item to Avanthár. Even when an open sale does occur, it is usually by auction to which only a select few are invited. (Interested parties are referred to Gij & Sons, who hold occasional presentations.)

## Making amulets

A Ritual Sorcerer can make any amulet whose bonus does not exceed his skill-level minus 10. The process requires 1-10 days and works only if the sorcerer succeeds in a skill check at +5 minus the amulet's bonus. This check is based not only on his Sorcery level, but should be averaged with any applicable skill. (An amulet designed to help in fighting the Ssú would therefore require a Sorcery/Longsword check, for instance.) The cost of materials depends on the amulet's puissance:

<i>amulet bonus</i>	<i>cost</i>
+1	10 Káitars
+2	15 Káitars
+3	25 Káitars
+4	35 Káitars
+5	50 Káitars
+6	75 Káitars
+7	120 Káitars
+8	200 Káitars
+9	300 Káitars
+10	500 Káitars

## Curiosities

Not every magical device need be a weapon. Characters might come across all manner of strange devices from ancient times: cigarette lighters, ballpoint pens, holographic greeting cards, sunglasses, electronic calculators - anything! The original function of the item might be a mystery, but it will still have rarity value to a collector. Here are some suggestions:

- A tunic that keeps the wearer dry in all weathers.
- A toy beetle that moves around at random on a flat surface.
- A baton that chimes when touched against gold.
- A goblet that improves the quality of wine poured into it.
- A locket that produces music (a different tune each time).
- A gem that clouds if exposed to poison or extreme danger.
- A whistle that creates evanescent luminous insects.
- Pieces from a boardgame that give rise to illusory champions (mythic heroes and monsters) which then do battle.
- The cold white hand of Cardinal Varámai, ancient priest of Sárku.
- A lens that translates any ancient text into Engsvanyáli.
- A magical mirror that reflects only the user's Hlákme (intellect), so that he may consult it on matters where emotion might cloud his judgement.
- A short black staff that moves at a constant speed of one metre per second when dropped.

sickness, averting disaster at sea, bringing fortune in business, and just about anything else you might need.

In game terms an amulet gives a bonus to any dice rolls that are connected with its specific function. The bonus might range from +1 up to +10, depending on the quality of the amulet.

The function of each amulet is very specific. You could buy an amulet to help against the Nightmare of Terror (see page 52), for example, but it would have no effect on other spells of the Malediction phylum. Combat charms are similarly specific. It is possible to obtain an amulet that helps in smiting the Ssú, but not one that gives a generic bonus in any fight.

Amulets give their bonus only once in a given situation. You cannot use that Ssú-smiting amulet to get repeated +10 attacks in the same fight - just one good lucky blow when it counts most. Also, for an amulet to work it must be touched and invoked. This is harder when you are wearing several. If you need to invoke an amulet in a hurry (eg in the middle of a melee, or to resist a spell) you must make a Cleverness/Psychic Ability check at a minus equal to the number you're wearing.

Amulets are usually purchased from a temple. Availability can be based on the same chances as for acquiring a scroll (see the sidebar on page 42). Prices are likely to be about twice the base cost of materials shown in the adjacent sidebar. Cheaper amulets can be had from the conjurers of the bazaar, but beware: fakes are common.

## [693] Exceptional swords

Tsolyáni legends are rife with stories of magic weapons which possess a spirit and magical powers of their own, assisting their owner and sometimes even communicating with him. Usually such weapons are those that are considered the "most noble": swords, scimitars or (more rarely) axes. Such weapons were created by means of demonological rituals or Great Magic, so it is likely that the only way player characters will come by them is as part of a particularly splendid treasure haul in the Underworld.

The referee should first decide which demon-lord or deity the sword is aligned with. It will contain up to three spells appropriate to this affinity. (A sword forged with the glyph of Ka'ing the Striker of Spheres might have Imitation and Shield of Defence, for example, these being in keeping with that demon's powers.) Roll 1D10 for the phylum strength of each spell. They can be called on once a day.

Next decide the weapon's combat bonus. This applies to both the user's Melee value and damage rolls, and typically ranges from +1 to +5.

1D20 minus 1D10 is rolled for the sword's Intelligence. This is roughly equivalent to the human attributes of Cleverness and Reasoning. A sword with no Intelligence simply functions as a normal magic weapon with the added advantage of combat bonus and spells, but swords with a positive Intelligence score can communicate with the user and give him advice.

The sword's Ego is rolled on 3D6+1, but cannot exceed its Intelligence score. The average of a wielder's Social Status and level in Longsword (or other weapon skill) must equal the sword's Ego for it to accept him as its master. Otherwise the sword will attempt to dominate and control him: make competitive checks of the sword's Ego vs the user's Psychic Reservoir to see who is dominant. (A sword with a very high Ego can even "reach out" to dominate persons nearby. In this case apply modifiers of -5 to the Ego check for each metre distance between the sword and its intended slave.)

## [700] THE EMPIRE OF THE PETAL THRONE

### [710] The world of Tékumel

Tékumel is a world of the distant future. Colonized by mankind and other races, its native lifeforms restricted to small reservations, it was a pleasure resort for the Galaxy's wealthiest aristocrats until an inexplicable disaster sucked it into a "pocket dimension" of its own. Cut off from the rest of the universe, Tékumel's inhabitants gradually lapsed back into barbarism. The last of their weapons were unleashed in internecine struggles. A new social order took thousands of years to develop, but eventually great empires rose from the ruins. Now the nations of Tékumel know nothing of their true origins. They are superstitious people whose culture is at a level with the civilizations of Earth's ancient world. The relics of old technology that still remain are regarded as magic.

### [711] The cosmos

The Tsolyani believe their world to be a flat oval contained within a black vault. It is longer north to south than from east to west, leaving room for the heavenly bodies to rise and set.

The solar system contains the sun (called Tuléng in Tsolyani) and four planets excluding Tékumel itself. Tékumel has two moons. These are Gayél, a green moon whose month is thirty days, and the smaller Káshi, a red moon with a month of fifteen days.

Nothing lies beyond the solar system, only a black void. The night sky is empty of stars.

### [712] Climate

Tsolyanu is generally warm. The south coast is tropical and experiences heavy monsoon rain. Temperatures in Jakálla range between 25° and 45° C with annual rainfall of some 400 centimetres. The north is cooler and drier. In Khirgár, for example, the average mean temperatures are between 12° and 32° C, with barely 25 centimetres annual rainfall. But Khirgár is close to sea level. Cities at higher altitude, such as Thrí'íl and Hekellu, are naturally much cooler.

### [713] Terrain

In the human nations much of the countryside is turned over to agriculture. In other places the original vegetation of the planet has made a resurgence. Jungles can be dense nightmarish places infested with ferocious beasts descended from the specimens in ancient zoos.

### [714] Animals

There are no riding animals. The main beast of burden is the Chlen, a huge lumbering creature with six legs that is used to pull carts. Cats and dogs were brought from earth, and there are various species of birds or bird-like creatures. Spiders and insects are also common.

### [715] Crops and vegetation

The staple cereal is Dna, a reddish grain used for making bread, porridge and cakes. This gives a much greater crop yield than wheat. Rice is also cultivated in the southern wetlands.

Various root vegetables, nuts and edible fungi are grown. Sugar is obtained from honey-bees (Nzi) or from the pulp of the Dmi root.

Ngalu wine is produced using the fruit of Ngalum vines, which thrive in central Tsolyanu. Plum-like blue Dlel fruit is used to make a popular brandy called Datsu. In the west a different variety of brandy is made with

The original idea of this chapter was to provide an overview of Tekumeláni societies somewhere between the D&D-ish sketchiness of [Empire of the Petal Throne](#) and the daunting academic heft of [The Tékumel Sourcebook](#).

That was back in 1996. Now new players have plenty of online resources like [www.tekumel.com](http://www.tekumel.com). I'm not sure if there's anything to beat *EPT* for an entry-level look at the world, however, and I'd still recommend setting your campaign in 2354 A.S. with the Emperor Hirkáne still in power. Trouble is brewing. There's a war in the north and the princes are impatient to compete for the throne when Hirkáne dies. That sounds like the start of something.

### Other domestic animals

*Hma*: a six-legged creature not unlike a sheep, herded for its meat and wool.

*Hmelu*: a smaller sub-variety of the Hma that yields tastier meat. Its milk is used to make the popular Tsolyani drink, Chumetl.

*Kaika*: a fat waddling creature not dissimilar to a duck.

*Küni*: a falcon with improved intelligence and the ability to memorize simple phrases.

*Renyu*: a small bipedal creature with vulpine features. Its rudimentary intelligence makes it valuable as a hunting animal.

*Tiuni*: the Terran cat, sometimes kept as a pet.

*Tlekku*: the Terran dog. Numerous breeds exist, though none is aggressive or powerful as the fighting dogs of old Earth.

### Quick start

For an excellent overview of the world of Tékumel, see Patrick Brady's [article](#) in *The Eye of All-Seeing Wonder* #4.

Also useful is Patrick's [summary of recent history](#).

Mash, a fruit rather like a sweet apple. A'ash, a whiskey made from Dna grain, is less popular.

The commonest variety of cloth is made from the Firya reed, which is also used for making papyrus. A richer, sandal-like fabric, also woven from plant fibre, is Gùdru. Still finer and more expensive is Thésun gauze, spun from insect silk.

### [716] People

Tsolyani men average 1.68 metres (5' 6") in height. Women are some 11 centimetres (4") shorter. Skin colour is coppery brown for men, a slightly lighter golden tan for women.

For most of the population, both male and female, clothing typically comprises just a kilt and sandals, perhaps with the addition of a straw hat to keep off the sun. Among the middle classes, a man adds a sleeveless vest and light headdress to the basic costume, while a woman will wear a longer kilt (slit up the side for freedom of movement) and a stiffened collar across the upper breasts. Scholars, lay priests and minor officials often wear a long over-robe of light silk as well.

The upper classes wear elaborately ornate costumes. The kilt is overlapped with a decorative tabard. Heavy jewellery is worn in the form of torcs, diadems, arm- and wrist-bands, and collars with upcurving wings. Headdresses sport long coloured plumes. A long silk cloak completes the outfit.

### [717] Technology

Iron is very scarce on Tékumel. Weapons and armour are manufactured from the horny hide of the Chlen. This is peeled off the animal at six month intervals, softened to malleability using secret chemical processes known only to the tanners' clans, then worked before rehardening with another bath of chemicals. The final product is a dull green material, usually lacquered if used as armour, which is as hard as bronze but only one-third of the weight.

### [718] Medicine

There is little experimentation in medicine. As in other disciplines, experts simply follow the teachings laid down in their texts. Diseases are believed to be caused by malign invisible spirits. They can be driven out of a patient's body with spells or repelled using the remedies devised in ancient times. Frequently there is no clear-cut distinction between the sorcerous and the non-sorcerous treatments, since both will typically involve chants, herbs, astrological factors, etc.

Surgery is a little more advanced, having benefitted from experience over the millennia. Cuts are stitched with sinew, broken limbs are set, and hot irons and boiling water are used to prevent infection (because it is known that fire is anathema to the disease spirits).

Crude hand-held lenses are sometimes used to aid failing eyesight, and some scholars have no doubt thought to mount such lenses on a wire frame, but these are not common enough for widespread use of spectacles to be known.

### [719] History

After the gods left the world came a period of great upheaval known as the Time of Darkness. No historical record remains of this time, the oldest accounts being from the empire of Llyan of Tsamra. Many devices such as Eyes (see below) bear inscriptions in Llyani, indicating that magic was already well understood by this time.

Subsequent empires include the Three States of the Triangle, in what is now southern Tsolyanu, and the Dragon Lords of N'lüss, who may have ridden to battle in flying chariots or on the backs of winged steeds.

### [720] Home life

Kinship is the core of Tsolyani life. For most Tsolyani, paramount loyalty is given to your immediate family, next to the lineage of which that family is a part, then to the clan to which your lineage belongs. A Tsolyani's closest friends are members of his own clan and (since many clans operate professions) they are usually the people he works with each day.

Even when a person is employed outside the clan, local traditions will often lead him to a niche that is dominated by his clan. The three "grand careers" of the bureaucracy, the armed forces and the priesthood are cases in point. In Tumissa, the aristocratic Sword of Fire Clan holds some three-quarters of the senior governmental posts in spite of their small size (five thousand clan members in a city of over half a million).

### [721] Clan and family

Every Tsolyani citizen is a member of a clan. A person's clan can usually be seen at a glance, from the colour and pattern of his clothing as well as from the ubiquitous clan symbol on amulets and jewellery. People are proud of their clan, and for a person to conceal his clan is suspicious and denotes bussan (= "sinister") intent.

There are over a thousand clans. These vary in general prestige and each has a heartland where it is most prominent. For example, the Vriddi Clan is found predominantly in the city of Fasiltum, the Round Rock Clan are located along the Eqúnoyel River, etc. Most clans specialize in one area of business, but a few are aristocratic landholders with no need for commerce.

The clans are further divided into lineages. The lineages differ in wealth and prestige, so that it is possible to have a wide spread of status within one clan. The Tlakotani Clan itself includes some middle-class merchants.

A person who has no clan is the lowest of the low - helpless, alone and with no-one to whom he can turn in times of trouble. He is nakome: "a bastard", the worst possible insult.

### [722] Daily life

Most people live communally with others of their clan. It is rare and eccentric to take up private residence outside your clanhouse. Even when travelling to a city where his clan is not represented, a Tsolyani prefers to lodge with another clan to which his own has friendly ties. Solitude is preferred only by secretive wizards, foreigners, and clanless outcasts.

The typical urban clanhouse consists of a walled courtyard leading to the main building, which may be up to three stories high. The reception hall, kitchen and dining room are all on the ground floor. Each lineage has its own dormitories, baths and latrines, and these are situated at the back of the building, with the more senior lineages on higher floors. Guest rooms are in a separate wing to the right of the gate. The clan workshops, sales rooms, Chlen stables and slave quarters are to the left.

The clanhouse provides for all the needs of its occupants. An individual need never handle coinage nor make a visit to the market, since clothing and foodstuffs are bought in.

The living space of each family comprises a dormitory divided by curtained archways. The Tsolyani sleep on mats on the floor and sit cross-legged on cushions, so there is little in the way of furniture other

### Clan organization

If a clan has several houses in a city then one will be the senior clanhouse with jurisdiction over the others. This does not apply between cities - ie, there is no formal nationwide clan unity. The Sea Blue clanhouse in Bey Sü might enjoy higher prestige than the one in Hauma, for example, but the elders in Bey Sü have no authority over the latter.

### Etiquette

Relationships between the social classes are rigidly structured. A peasant who is too familiar would be rebuffed as impertinent. A noble who behaves in too comradely a way towards a subordinate will become the target for ridicule by his own peers.

Conversation tends to be formal, circumspect, and florid by our standards. There are 6 different versions of *I* and 34 different versions of *you*, reflecting the relative status of the speakers.

Insults, even jocular ones, towards another person, his clan or temple or legion, are always taken seriously. To imply or joke that a person is ignoble, dishonest, foolish, weak, or generally less than magnificent is to invite an immediate demand for Shamtla (see page 149) or a challenge to a duel. It is an insult to touch someone who is not an intimate friend, unless you have permission or there is an emergency. It's a deadly insult to look at someone through a circle made by joining the left thumb and forefinger.

Fortunately, the Tsolyani love visual display, and so pretty much everybody wears clothing and ornaments that indicate their clan, temple, social status, etc.

## Baths

Each lineage has its own bathroom. The bather sits on a flat stone block while slaves pour a shower of alternately hot, cold and perfumed water. Wealthier lineages also have shallow pools and steamrooms.

## Names

Drichansa hiNaratal is a member of the Grey Cloak Clan. Naratal is his lineage ("hi" means "of") and Drichansa is his formal name, used by people outside the clan. His informal name is Chan, and this name is used by his clan relatives (and also by a very few select friends outside the clan). He also has another secret name, known only to himself, used in private oaths and prayers.

## Respect for authority

It is proper to show due deference to your betters. This allows noble characters sometimes to use their status to overawe people of lower social rank. The procedure used is a 2D10 check based on the difference in status. The referee decides when circumstances merit such an attempt, the modifiers that will apply to the check, and the results if successful.

*example Half a dozen lower-class militia are part of a group searching the corn fields one night for the escaped traitor Lord Tenaq hiVriddi. Suddenly they come face to face with him. Their orders are to attack on sight, but Lord Tenaq defies them using the full weight of his status. The referee deems that Tenaq must take a -5 modifier to his check, because the militia know that he is a wrongdoer and they have been commanded to get him. He succeeds even so, and the militia balk at attacking him. They hold him at bay until their commander turns up. The commander is of high status himself, and steps forward to deal with Tenaq personally...*

The advantage of this in dramatic terms is that conflicts are more likely to be resolved by key characters rather than just coming down to a question of who has more hirelings.

than the occasional low table or carved back-rest. Young single adults are housed in a separate dormitory, and the same is true for the very old and the sick.

## [723] Relationships

A Tsolyani may have many fathers and mothers. This is because all of your true father's brothers and all of your true mother's sisters' husbands are your "fathers". Your true father's sisters' husbands and your true mother's sisters are your "mothers".

Throughout most of your early childhood, you will have been brought up by your mothers and played alongside a profusion of brothers and sisters. The Tsolyani are used to large, closely knit families.

## [724] Coming of age

You become an adult at the age of fifteen. This is when you receive your formal name. Rituals and feasting accompany your induction as a clan member. If your parents have arranged a betrothal for you it may be finalized now. You will also announce your choice of temple at this time (almost always the same one as the rest of your lineage).

## [725] Marriage

## [726] The status of women

## [727] Etiquette and greetings

In a culture which prizes honesty and yet where any insult can be grounds for Shamtla, a complex code of etiquette is vital. See for example the sidebar note on Meshqu plates (page 21).

You greet a person by placing your palm to your lips and bowing slightly. A military salute involves striking the chest with the right fist.

## [728] Eating and drinking

Tsolyani take their meals seated cross-legged on mats or cushions around a low table. Dinner (served just after sunset) is the most important meal of the day. Serving dishes are set in the middle of the table. Spoons are used for soups and stews, but other dishes are handled with the fingers. (Only the right hand is used, the left being regarded as "unclean".) Bread made from red dna-grain accompanies the meal. To drink there may be water, chumetl (salted buttermilk), hot tea or sherbets. Wine and brandy are not usually served until after the meal. The preferred drink of the lower classes is beer, usually brewed using dna but sometimes with rice in the southern provinces.

In formal banquet-halls, the floor is divided into several levels, or daises. The higher your status, the higher the dais on which you sit. In a typical clanhouse there might be three or four daises to accommodate the different lineages. Noble palaces observe finer gradations of rank, and may have a dozen or more daises. You can call a lower-status person up to your dais, but he remains standing while he speaks to you. If you descend to his dais you can sit down, but it is not proper to eat or drink.

If no daises are available and it is necessary for people of different status to eat together, some means of displaying their rank must be found. A higher status person may thus be given a cloak or bedmat to sit on. In the scenario "Intermecine!", for instance, the castaways would tend naturally to divide into groups at meal-times utilizing the slope of the beach, descending from Lady Chamakiyang down to the youngest sailors, who would sit closest to the water's edge.

It is rare to socialize with people who are not members of your own clan. When doing so you would usually invite them to dine at your clanhouse,

or go to theirs. Because of this there are no taverns in Tsolyanu. The wine-makers' and victuallers' clans will provide drink and food brought to your clanhouse for special occasions, and these clans also set aside a wing of their premises where you can hire a private room for entertaining guests.

## [729] Entertainment and games

## [730] Society

### [731] Ethics

The Tsolyani ethical code is based on the concept of noble behaviour. Khomoyi, to act honourably, signifies things that are good, fit, proper, dignified and honest. Such an individual always remains proudly true to his declared beliefs. Ramoyi, to act dishonourably, is to be lazy, devious, ungrateful, sly and unworthy. Such individuals are not worthy of respect.

The principal Tsolyani virtues are pride, honesty, courage, family love, industry and duty.

### [732] Trade

Most clans of medium status and below are devoted to one trade. All the clans connected with a given trade in a city usually organize themselves in a kind of loose "guild". In order to practice a trade, you must belong to one of the clans in that "guild".

In commerce, family honour and the weight of tradition are more important than money. Cash itself rarely changes hands, since people prefer a credit system based on cross-lineage and cross clan favours.

Inducements in the form of gifts are an important part of business as in other aspects of Tsolyani life. Knowing the right gift to present to someone, and the proper way to present it, goes a long way in business.

### [733] Cities

(General architectural description. What cities look like, civic amenities if any, etc. Sidebar listing a few features of major cities.)

### [734] The Hirilakte

(Sports and duels; other uses of the arena such as victory pageants.)

### [735] Employment

When hiring employees a Tsolyani will give preference to his own relatives. This is not regarded as nepotism; it is simply what is expected. You know that you can trust your own kith and kin, so why give a coveted position to a stranger? Only when the job is too demeaning or dangerous will the employer look outside his clan.

### [736] Slavery

### [737] Roads

### [738] Rural life

More than four-fifths of the population do not live in the cities. Most villages comprise a single clan devoted to some local industry such as rice farming or logging. (Village description and organization. Also hunting lodges.)

## [740] The State

### [741] Avanthár

## Marotlán

A sport in which four teams of five players compete for possession of a sceptre which must be carried back to the team's goal (a raised dais with a hole in it). Body-blocking is allowed, but not grappling, and the sceptre can be thrown to a teammate.

## Stiff upper lips

The Tsolyani are fatalists. They believe that you cannot change what will happen to you, only the way that you face up to it. It is considered "noble conduct" to accept one's fate gracefully. This is why few prisoners of war make any effort to escape, and why disgrace is seen as more important than physical injury or financial loss. "It is as the gods ordained," they say, or: "A man cannot change his Skein of Destiny." The important thing is to maintain your dignity in the face of hardship.

## Bravo!

The Tsolyani applaud, not by clapping, but by clicking the fingers and (if very excited) whistling.

## Ditlána

The ritual razing and rebuilding of a city that is supposed to happen every five hundred years or so, but often put off by reason of the city's horoscope. (*Ditlána* = "renewing".)

## Leisure activities

Upper-class pastimes include hunting, coin-collecting, music, art, books, listening to the recital of the great epics (such as the Lament to the Wheel of Black or the Epic of Hrugga), watching dancers and acrobats, and shows in which puppets or actors fight out duels or act out scenes from the epics.

Common pastimes popular at all levels of society include the playing of games such as the chess-like Denden, dice-rolling Kevuk & stick-throwing Tsahlten (a gambling game).

### Some Tsolyani names

(Meanings are given in some cases, though these might be no more obvious to a Tsolyani than the connotation of “Hope” or “Faith” when used as an English name.)

#### *male names*

Aijom (thirsty)  
Autsulto (farmer)  
Autso (battle-cry)  
Akarsh (bald)  
Aknallu  
Arkutu  
Balash (a spell of power)  
Bashan (wisdom)  
Beshrügi  
Biyurgashu (alchemist, healer)  
Burdangeth (gambler)  
Chamang (idolator)  
Changekte  
Charikasa  
Chekrash  
Cheggukal (grace, kindness)  
Chamangesh (pious)  
Danuo (Chegarra’s shield-bearer)  
Dogengor (correct)  
Darakdakin (approval)  
Dadayel  
Dresu  
Dridakku  
Epengar (stinging insect)  
Eküne  
Emra (rib; thin)  
Favreng (decisive)  
Fashranu  
Fereshma’a  
Furodhu (explosive)  
Ghuru (a smoker)  
Ga’anish  
Gachaya (dragon)  
Girigashna  
Girikteshmu  
Grujung (thunder)  
Gyesmu  
Haikon  
Hejjeka (name of heretic emperor)  
Heredaru  
Hetle (anvil)  
Horu  
Hutligainu  
Ibash (a loner)  
Ihelmuna  
Itlang (nickname for a dunce)  
Janiyel (mercenary)  
Jagetl (far distant)  
Jugar  
Kagoth  
Kaikama  
Kakaganu  
Kalmuru  
Keleno  
Khivasha (capable, helpful)  
Korikadan  
Kureshu  
Kuruktashmu

### [742] The four palaces

### [743] Law and punishment

### [744] The army

### [745] The Omnipotent Azure Legion

### [746] Politics

### [747] Warfare

### [748] Recent history

### [750] Theology

The pantheon of Tsolyanu comprises the Five Mitlan and the Five Kiriqalu. Together these form the ten deities described by Pavar, the founder of modern Tsolyani theological belief. The Mitlan correspond to the principles of order and stability while their counterparts the Kiriqalu are associated with impermanence and change.

### [751] The Gods

(Mythological background; stress that there are not really just ten gods but hundreds of aspects each with its own adherents as in Hinduism.)

**Hnalla** is the first of the gods. Among his 51 Aspects are the Master of Light and the Foe of Turmoil. He is most often depicted in the form of an abstract emblem: a double joined circle (like an infinity symbol) with stylized wings. He aids those who strive to preserve the order of things, and provides for those who are pious, industrious and austere. Priestly regalia consists of white robes and a silver skullcap.

**Karakan** is shown as a winged hawk-headed warrior. His emblem is a stylized lightning bolt, since he is the god of thunderstorms. His 56 Aspects include the dwarfish Nagotai the Upholder, who guides statesmen, Niyonu of the Hand of Gold, who aids the families of those lost in battle, and Jajkuru the Victor of Ships, god of seafarers. Priestly regalia consists of red robes, golden breastplate, and gold helm with a tall scarlet crest.

### Thumis

### Avanthe

**Belkhanu** is the Lord of the Excellent Dead and the Master of the Paradises of Teretane. He is often depicted as a four-armed being with a round featureless head. In each hand he bears one of the symbols of Teretane: a gem, a staff, a bowl and a gold orb. His emblem is a golden “V” above stylized waves. He guides the souls of the departed on their journey through the afterlife. In his 67 Aspects he gives aid and succour to those who mourn, those who are close to death, those who would contact the departed, and those who are in peril from unquiet spirits. Priestly regalia consists of yellow robes and a tall yellow headdress with a coif masking the face.

**Hrū’ū** is the chief of the Kiriqalu, and the natural foe of Hnalla. He is usually shown as a bulbous purple globe from which eight spider-like arms extend holding silver swords, barbed hooks and other weapons. His symbol is a purple circle with a diagonal red slash. His 78 Aspects include the Master of Negation and the Dispenser of Calamities. He delights in discord and favours those of a secretive and avaricious

nature. When not propitiated he brings hate, violence and catastrophe. His priests and priestesses wear purple robes and velvet demon-masks.

**Vimuhla** is the Lord of Red Devastation. He appears as a monster of raging fire surrounded by black smoke, and his emblem is a stylized threefold flame. He, like Karakan, is the patron of warriors - but of fanatics and berserkers rather than Karakan's tempered soldiers. He has 87 Aspects and aids those in the thick of battle, those who advance their aims through conquest, and those who revel in destruction and pillage. Priestly regalia consists of flame-orange robes, armour, and a tall lacquered headdress in the shape of leaping flames.

**Ksarul** is often shown as a young man with a smiling yet emotionless moon face, clad in black velvet and carrying a staff topped with an azure beetle. In this form he is the Doomed Prince of the Blue Room. Among his 61 other Aspects are serpent-headed Chopruna, the Dweller in Shadow, and shadowy Gorrugu, the Ancient Lord of Secrets. His insignia are an azure beetle over a silver crescent moon. He aids those who pry into secrets, those who wish to contact the denizens of other planes, and those who hoard knowledge to use on his behalf. Priestly regalia comprises black robes embroidered with ritual verses in black thread, a square headdress of black velvet, and an inscrutably smiling mask (of silver in the case of a priest, black wood in the case of a priestess).

**Sarku** has 108 Aspects, among them Ku'un the Corpse Gatherer, Siy-enagga the Wanderer of Tombs, and Ha'otl of the Tattered Shroud. He is most widely known in his principal guise as the Lord of Decay, who has the form of a mighty five-headed worm with a mass of polyps holding the accoutrements of the grave: cerements, mouldering bones, skulls and corpse-candles. Sarku's emblem is a coiling wavy line with a red circle at one end. His realm is the necropolis, where he aids those who call up the undead, those who scuttle through the catacombs below the earth, and those who send the living down into the stillness of Death. Priestly regalia consists of earth-brown robes, white tunic or armour, a headdress of skulls, and white and grey face-pigment.

**Dlanelish** has 101 Aspects, including the Green-Eyed Lady of Delight and the Obsidian Princess of the Damned. She is depicted variously as a nubile lover, an Aridani warrior, an obese woman with a crocodilian head, et cetera.

#### [752] Demons

(Really a plethora of subsidiary deities and former aspects of the main gods of the pantheon. Hés is the little god of humour, Jnekshaa is the god of the furnace, and so on.)

#### [753] The temples

(What they look like; how they're organized; when a person would go to one.)

#### [754] The priesthood

(Sidebar will explain about secret societies within the priesthoods.)

#### [755] Rituals

(Divinations, etc.)

#### [756] Superstitions

(Sidebar to concern taboos.)

#### [760] Other lands

#### [761] Travel

Kurshetl  
Lazhato (seafarer)  
Lumetl  
Lobi (nickname for a fatty)  
Mengano  
Meshmuyel  
Mirusaya  
Mirkitani  
Morusai  
Mnashu  
Mriggadashu  
Mriktoken  
Nebussa (a rascal)  
Neqo  
Neshkiruma  
Ngangmorel  
Ngarrado  
Nriga  
Ontüto (fisherman)  
Orun (pillar)  
Panjang (desire)  
Purjinto (spy)  
Qolyemu (an old jakallan name)  
Qoruma  
Quren  
Runmaru  
Ruqu  
Saku'u  
Sangar  
Serqu  
Shrakan  
Sikun  
Siruksluma  
Ssiyor  
Ssursa  
Teregash (urgency)  
Thanüdü (icy cold)  
Thekuto (traveller) flaneno  
Tontiken  
Trasune  
Tsokalon (scout)  
Tsumikel  
Tsutel  
Tulkesh  
Uchang (flood)  
Urukai  
Urutlen (scroll or book)  
Üjütetl (horrid, unspeakable)  
Verussa  
Visumi (servant)  
Vrishtara  
Warghai (inducement)  
Yamashan  
Znayashu

*female names*

Areli (feather)  
Almodhin (calm)  
Ba'ne (light rain)  
Bara (argument)  
Biyun  
Changil (inquisitive)  
Chentsuni (autumn)  
Dashiluna  
Dijayadleli (like the fruit)  
Dlarumei (scabbard)  
Dhali (beautiful)  
Dha'ala (sharp)  
Dijaya  
Elulenequnil (late afternoon)  
Eshasuni (midnight)  
Essilia  
Falyai (good listener)  
Fathmei (desirable)  
Farzhai (mask)  
Galchai (sandal)  
Ga'ilingalu (extreme hatred)  
Issa (breeze)  
Iluntsa (courtesan name)  
Jalesa  
Jaluda (fair of skin)  
Jangaiva (emerald)  
Janule  
Kalusu  
Lelai (marvellous)  
Lulungi (moon)  
Lussani  
Miruine  
Mnela  
Mrissa  
Mshenninue  
Notaza (water)  
Nrainue  
Onelprazhuri (eternity)  
Sha'ira  
Sheresasriyesha  
Ssuri  
Su'esa  
Ta'ana  
Terutra (a poet)  
Thiala (maidenly)  
Tsana  
Tsunure  
Wezhda (jewel)

(Documents required, etc. A sidebar will deal with merchants and their role in espionage.)

**[762] Shipping**

**[763] Yan Kor**

**[764] Mu'ugalavya**

**[765] Salarvya**

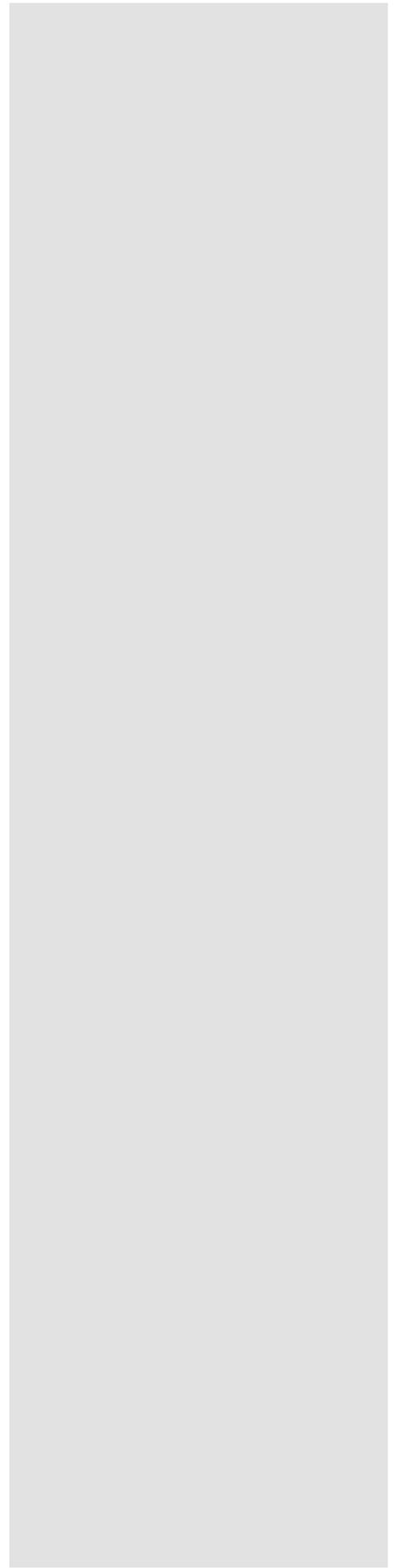
**[766] Livyanu**

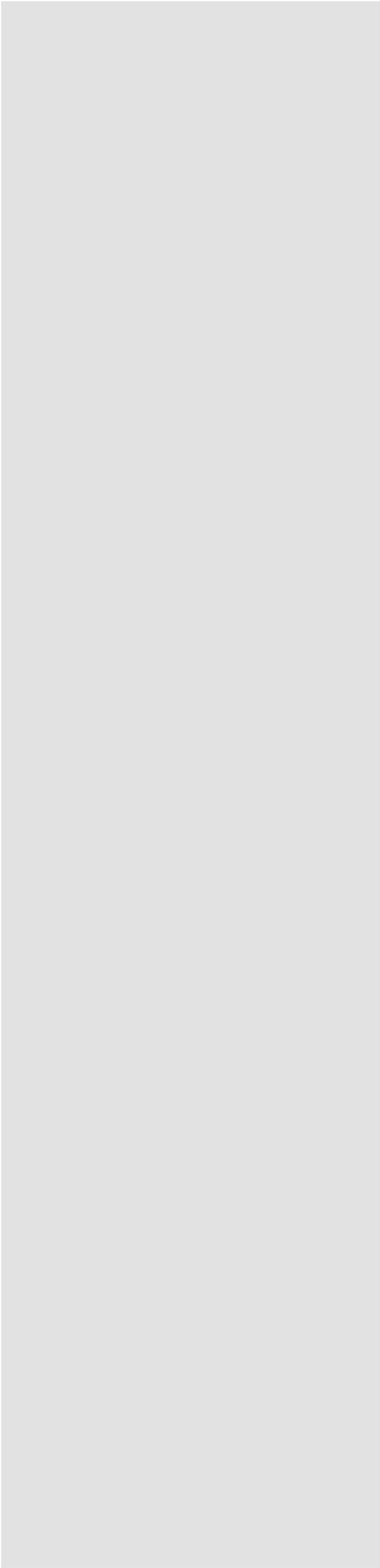
**[767] The smaller states**

(Sidebar concerning travellers' tales from afar – not necessarily "true".)

**[768] Nonhumans**

# Optional Rules





# HONOUR

## Enhancing Tsolyani role-playing with rules for loss of face

Tsolyani culture strongly values honourable behaviour. Ignoring this aspect of the culture in role-playing means that the game becomes little more than D&D with interesting monsters. These new rules help encourage players to act more like real Tsolyani. Players are given the choice: observe the Tsolyani code of honour and get to the top of the heap, or disregard it and remain a free agent.

The rules measure any blemish against a character as Discredits. Too many Discredits will hinder promotions, and may even result in the character losing rank and social prestige. A new attribute, Honour, is introduced. Characters with high Honour are often forced to act whenever they acquire Discredit; characters with low Honour have more freedom of choice, but may find themselves passed over for promotions.

### Honour

A character's Honour attribute is rolled for on 2D10. It indicates the degree to which the character feels obligated to act according to the unwritten code of correct behaviour that pervades Tsolyani life.

A character with high Honour finds it difficult to compromise their ideals of duty and propriety. They will take offence at any remark that might cause them to lose face. A character with low Honour is what psychologists call "unscripted": a person motivated by free will rather than by the sense of shame and duty that forces the actions of most Tsolyani.

Having low Honour does not necessarily mean that the character is a scoundrel. He might indeed be a Machiavellian schemer hiding behind a facade of noble action, but he could just as easily be simply amoral. Such a one could be an enlightened Adept of Dra, for example.

### Stung into action

An unmodified Honour check is made whenever a character incurs a Discredit. If the 2D10 roll is less than or equal to Honour, the character is obliged to settle the Discredit (for example by duelling one who has insulted them). A roll higher than Honour leaves the character free to accept the Discredit without being forced to take action.

Players are free to settle Discredit burdens voluntarily without making an Honour check. If they do this they have the option to increase or decrease their Honour score by 1. This represents the fact that the Honour check indicates the character's careful weighing-up of the exact limits of his required behaviour. A person who acts without this careful consideration is demonstrating that he or she is a free agent whose actions are not necessarily dictated by the need for public respect.

### Burden of duty

Any duty carries with it a Discredit, the value of the Discredit indicating the loss of face the character will suffer if he fails in the duty.

***example** Lieutenant Vajra hiMichashin is ordered by her captain to carry a message past enemy lines, but she stumbles into an ambush and loses the message while retreating. Vajra makes an Honour check. Success means she must suffer the full weight of the Discredit burden. A failed check means her lack of honour allows her to ignore the shame. (She may still be punished for her failure, but that is a separate matter. The Honour check merely determines if she personally feels compelled to atone for it.)*

### Discredit where it's due

A Discredit is any burden of obligation, and one who allows himself to build up a large debt of Discredit will lose the respect of others. This is no slight matter in a society as status-conscious and bound by tradition as Tsolyanu. A lord who has a large Discredit and does nothing about it will find his retainers drifting away. A merchant will lose his customers. A priest may lose the favour of the gods.

If a character receives a very large Discredit (25 points or more) from a single action and then fails to discharge it, he may feel obliged to "do the decent thing" - either resigning or (in extreme cases) sacrificing himself to the gods. The character can avoid this by failing an Honour check.

***example:** Shazir and Khiro are told by their clan elders to escort a clan-cousin from another city and see that no harm comes to him. Unfortunately, while passing through a forest their group is attacked by Dzor and the man is killed.*

*Both must make Honour checks. Shazir's Honour is 12 and, rolling 7 on 2D10, his check is successful. He immediately incurs a Discredit of 25 points value. If he is not excused by his clan elders, Shazir will have to lose his life to atone for the shame of having failed in his duty.*

*Khiro's Honour is 4 and he rolls a 6. A narrow scrape, but he manages to find some loophole that lets him squirm out of having to immolate himself. He must still tally the 25 point Discredit on his character sheet. The disgrace is such that he is automatically demoted from 10th to 9th social Circle, as a 10th Circle character must not have an outstanding Discredit of more than 20 points. Still, as he notes the preparations for Shazir's sacrifice to Vimuhla, Khiron reflects inwardly that life without honour is better than honour without life.*

### Discredit values

When a character incurs a Discredit, the referee should tell him the value of the Discredit based on the guidelines given in the table. The maximum Discredit a character can safely have at any one time depends on his Circle. If he goes above this maximum he will find it difficult to hold his head up among his peers. His influence will decline and he may even be demoted within his profession. No one in Tsolyanu has respect for a man or woman who does not repay their Discredit.

The following sections provide guidelines for you to determine Discredit penalties. You may also decide to enforce smaller Discredit penalties for minor matters, and these can often act as a spur to move the game-action along when players are being a little sluggish.

Most of the time Discredit values must be set by the referee. The examples here are of quite common situations, and should serve as a guideline:

Refusing a legitimate challenge	10 points
Using dishonourable tactics in a duel	5 points
Losing a duel	5 points
Failing to keep your word	50% of Social Circle
Acting ignobly	15 points
Displaying incompetence	5-15 points
Not accepting your fate gracefully	5 points
Dishonesty	2 points
Treachery	5-25 points
Heavily in debt	10 points
Socializing with slavers/moneylenders	1 point

A character's Honour score and undischarged Discredit may limit their career progression. Minimum Honour and maximum Discredit set limits outside which superiors will not sanction any promotion. If Discredit climbs too high the character will be demoted. (This applies also to social Circle, so that a character with much Discredit will be treated as of lower social Circle than he or she actually is.)

Circle	to reach this status		to retain this status	
	min Honour	max Discredit	min Honour	max Discredit
I to III	2	35	0	45
V to VI	5	25	2	35
VII to IX	7	20	4	25
X to XII	9	15	6	20
XIII to XV	11	10	8	15
XVI to XVII	13	5	10	10
XIX up	15	5	0	any *

\* Once you're this important you'll never get demoted! However, a nobleman who accrues a large burden of Discredit without doing anything about it must expect his retainers to start trickling away.

When two actions conflict and a character is liable to incur a Discredit either way, the proper course is to undertake the action with the larger potential Discredit. The other action then incurs no Discredit. This is because the character has behaved correctly, and no-one can think ill of him because he was forced into a dilemma. (If ordered by your fathers to refuse a challenge to duel, for instance, you should obey; there is no Discredit penalty for refusing the challenge in this case.) This only applies if both sides of the dilemma are publicly known, though. Discredit represents public shame, and even a character who behaves correctly must accept a Discredit if the reasons for his action are not clear to others.

For most Tsolyani the paramount duty is one's duty to family. Bringing the family into disrepute or causing the death of a relative incurs a Discredit of 25-30 points. Failing to defend the family or avenge a relative's murder incurs a Discredit of 20-25 points. Taking no action when your family is insulted brings a Discredit of 1-25 points (depending on the source and severity of the insult). Disobeying the heads of family incurs a Discredit of 10-15 points. In all cases the heads of family can grant a dispensation which absolves the character of any Discredit.

Next comes duty to the clan. Discredit values for transgressions against clan-cousins of other lineages are 90% of the values given above for family.

A character who joins a legion or temple is expected to give the same loyalty to his superiors that he would give his lineage elders. In practice, however, the moral imperative is not quite so strong. Discredit values for transgressing against one's superiors in the army, priesthood or bureaucracy are about 75% of those listed above for family. Large undischarged Discredit in these circumstances will result in dismissal from the legion, temple or Palace.

Characters are not very likely to receive a direct command from the Emperor, but it could happen. The Emperor's command should be treated as carrying a potential Discredit just 1 or 2 points less than the command of one's clan elders or liege lord. A powerful lord could thus countermand an Imperial order given directly to a vassal, but would be uncomfortable if he received the order himself.

### Insults

It is tremendously important to Tsolyani that they avoid losing face in front

of others. Any disgrace that falls upon a character's good name, or the name of his family, must be avenged.

When you insult someone, you place a Discredit on them that can only be removed by a payment of Shamtla or a duel. If you succeed in an Etiquette check (with a modifier of -1 to -5, depending on the insult) then the other person has no redress and cannot demand Shamtla. They can challenge you to a duel, but you are perfectly within your rights to refuse. If you fail the Etiquette check, on the other hand, you cannot legitimately refuse Shamtla or a duel without taking a 10 point Discredit yourself.

### **Wiping the slate clean**

It is possible to reduce your accumulated Discredit by outstanding actions that bring strong public approval. Such actions include great bravery, making a good marriage, lavish spending on a family banquet, etc. The referee will permit such actions to reduce accumulated Discredit by 1 to 5 points.

A character's accumulated Discredit is reduced by 1 point in any month in which the character has not gained any further Discredit.

# NON-RANDOM CHARACTER GENERATION

This is an alternative character generation system for the Tirikélu rules. Every player begins with a certain number of points to spend building his/her character. These points are spent to raise attributes above 11 and to buy special advantages.

Each character starts with 10 points. Extra points can be gained by taking disadvantages (see below) or reducing attributes below 11. Points are spent to buy attributes above 11 and/or advantages.

## Attributes

Extra points can be gained by taking an attribute below 11 and spent to take attributes over 11. (See sidebar for costs.)

Note that these rules apply to buying your Size attribute—not Height and Build, which are then up to the player as long as they average to give the Size score he has bought.

## Random attribute option

This is an opt-out of the points based system just insofar as it affects attributes. Instead of buying attribute scores, the player can choose to roll the entire character as per the regular Tirikélu system. To do this, spend 3 points and then roll all your attributes in the usual way. You can reroll for two attributes (of your choice) if you don't like the original scores, at a cost of 1 point for each reroll, but you cannot otherwise change the character's attributes once rolled.

## Basic Character

Do not use the initial skill generation tables in Tirikélu. Instead, all characters get the following basic skills:

Etiquette	8
Tsolyáni (spoken)	8
Historian	1
Theologian	1

In addition, any character who does not acquire weapon skills from any other source may take 1 skill level of dagger, short-sword or unarmed combat.

All characters, whether rolled or generated, are subject to the following restrictions:

- The character is a member of a medium lineage of a low status clan
- The character has no military training and so cannot take skill levels in long 1-handed or 2-handed weapons, nor the longbow, composite bow nor any crossbow.
- The character may not use sorcery, even if he or she has the requisite attribute scores.
- The character may not take any skills from the military section of the initial skills rule.

These restrictions are lifted by taking some of the advantages listed below.

## Special traits

The following traits can be used to embellish the character. Some are advantages, which must be bought; others are disadvantages and have a negative cost. There are some restrictions on the combinations of advantages and disadvantages that a character may take:

Attribute	Points cost
1	-10
2	-9
3	-8
4	-7
5	-6
6	-5
7	-4
8	-3
9	-2
10	-1
11	0
12	+1
13	+2
14	+3
15	+4
16	+6
17	+7
18	+8
19	+10
20	+11
21	+12
22	+14
23	+15
24	+16
25	+18

## Freaks

Some disadvantages will cause others to regard the character as a freak. A character who is a freak is automatically considered to be of very low lineage status within his clan, and so must also take this as a disadvantage. However, this is a “free” disadvantage and does not count towards the total of three permitted.

- No character may have more than three different advantages and disadvantages in total, and usually less.
- Each character may take a maximum of *one* of the advantages and disadvantages marked with an asterisk.
- A character may not take three disadvantages.

## Disadvantages

**Albino \*** cost: -2 points  
Albinos are considered outlandish freaks and are detested by the people of Tékumel (except in certain primitive tribes who regard them as holy wizards). The character must reduce Comeliness to no higher than 5 and will be treated with horror and revulsion wherever he goes. He also has no resistance to sunlight, taking burn damage in direct sun (which causes -1 to Dexterity for every fifteen minutes' exposure) and being dazzled (-3 from Melee and Missile).

**Addicted \*** cost: -2 points  
The character is over-fond of alcohol or some other intoxicant. Each time it is possible to indulge, attempt one check based on Intelligence and highest Complex skill, and another check based just on Psychic Reservoir. If the Psychic Reservoir check succeeds then the character will start a “binge” unless the other check also succeeds. If the Psychic Reservoir check is a critical success, nothing can stop the binge—and, afterwards, Psychic Reservoir will have increased by 1 point and Intelligence will have decreased by 1. A binge will last 2-6 hours and will leave the character depleted (all checks at -2) for twelve hours afterwards.

**Berserker \*** cost: -1 point  
The character must roll a Psychic Reservoir check after spending more than three rounds in combat, or if challenged, insulted, or attacked. Success means that he must not employ the option of full parry at any time during the fight. Critical success adds +6 to the character's initiative, +3 to Melee and +1 to damage but prevents any parrying or evading at all. If no opponent is close enough to attack, the character must move to engage the nearest. After all foes are down, the character must succeed in a +5 Intelligence check to come out of berserker rage; otherwise he will attack his friends.

**Clanless** cost: -6 points  
The character does not belong to any clan, usually because he or she is a foreigner. Clanless characters have no rights or protection unless they are employed by a clan who may, if the circumstances warrant it, choose to extend their protection to the clanless person. In return, the character will be expected to perform his or her duties for a pittance: 1 or 2 kaitars a week plus board. A character who takes this disadvantage cannot take any other advantage or disadvantage relating to clan or lineage status.

**Deformed \*** cost: -3 points  
The character must set his Comeliness no higher than 6. The people of Tékumel are prejudiced against anyone with any deformity, considering them to be freaks, and the character will have difficulty getting promotions.

**Dwarf \*** cost: -2 points  
The character has the following maximum attribute limits: Height 1, Build 15, Comeliness 6. Others will treat him as a freak. (This option can be taken with a randomly-rolled character, in which case alter the attribute scores to the maxima given here. In addition to the 2 points for being a Dwarf, you also get the points difference for the alteration in attributes. For instance, if you originally rolled Height 8, Build 12 and Comeliness 15 then this would alter to Height 1, Build 12 and Comeliness 6, giving you an additional 19 points.)

**Epileptic**

cost: -2 points

Seizures come upon an epileptic randomly (roughly 1% chance each day) and when under severe stress (2%-20% at the referee's discretion). The seizure lasts 1-100 rounds, leaving the character physically tired and slightly absent-minded for 1-6 hours afterwards. A sorcerer who has a seizure is allowed a Psychic Ability check. On a critical success his Chusetl flies forth as in a Morphetic Travel spell, but for no spellpoint cost. At the end of the seizure the sorcerer makes another Psychic Ability check, this time at +5; critical success means that he recovers from his seizure psychically refreshed (recovering 1-100 spellpoints), but critical failure indicates the Chusetl is lost, leaving the unfortunate sorcerer in a perpetual coma.

**Gaunt \***

cost: -1 point

You are very tall and thin. Your minimum Height is 18, and maximum Build is 3. Comeliness cannot be higher than 10. Others treat you as a freak. (This option can be taken with a randomly-rolled character, in which case alter the attribute scores to the boundary limits given here. In addition to the 1 point for being Gaunt, you also get the points difference for the alteration in attributes—even for Comeliness. For instance, if you originally rolled Height 13, Build 12 and Comeliness 15 then this would alter to Height 18, Build 3 and Comeliness 10, giving you an additional 10 points.)

**Incompetence**

cost: -6 points

The character has a tendency to lose concentration, become overconfident and make major mistakes. A character with this disadvantage is unlikely to simply fail a skill or attribute check where concentration is important. If the character rolls a normal failure, this is considered a critical failure unless the character rolls 17 or more on a D20. An additional D20 roll is added to all weapon fumble results, though the total may not exceed 100 of course.

**Lame**

cost: -1 point

The character has a bad leg. Encumbrance limits, Evade and movement are 80% normal, and the character cannot sprint. His base Melee value is reduced by 2.

**Low Lineage Status**

cost: -2 point

Characters begin the game as members of a medium status lineage within a low status clan. They may choose to start as a member of a low status lineage instead.

**Obligation**

cost: -2 points

The character owes a debt of honour to his clan, temple or influential person. There is a 5% chance each month that the debt will be called in. If so, the character must comply without further delay or negotiation, even if the request involves some illegality. If the character refuses to comply then he will be disowned by his clan (if it is a public debt of honour) or face the wrath of his creditors!

**Phobia**

cost: -3 point

The character has a morbid fear. Examples are fear of spiders (*atlungssünrú*), bats (*vrissünrú*), death (*missúmssünrú*), the undead (*mrurssünrú*), and enclosed spaces (*tsuru'ussünrú*). The specific fear must be agreed with the referee, who may reduce the points allowed if the feared object is rarely encountered. Any time the character is exposed to his fear, he must roll a Psychic Reservoir check. Success means he is afraid (i.e., his uncontrollable emotions are getting the better of him) and makes all rolls at -2 while exposed to the object of his fear. A critical success on the Psychic Reservoir check causes him to panic and run; if cornered, he must make a check based on Intelligence and highest Complex skill to fight back at all, and even then does so at -2.

**Poverty** cost: -2 points  
The character starts the game with only 25% of normal wealth, rounded down, and may not take the “Legacy” advantage.

**Psychic Dampener** cost: -1 point  
No magic can be cast within 1.5m of the character. Spells cast outside this zone can still affect him, but even then there is a percentage chance equal to his Psychic Ability that the spell will “fizzle out” at that distance from him. Enchanted devices and Eyes are not affected.

**Very Low Clan** cost: -2 points  
Players start the game as members of a medium lineage of a low status clan. They may choose to be members of a clan of very low status instead. This does not affect the character’s lineage status within the clan.

**Very Low Lineage Status** cost: -3 points  
Characters begin the game as members of a medium status lineage within a low status clan. They may choose to start as a member of a low status lineage instead.

**Weak Willed** cost: -1 point  
The character has a tendency to succumb to temptation. The character modifies all rolls to resist hypnotism or temptation by 1 pip to his disadvantage.

## Advantages

**Ambidexterity** cost: +2 points  
The character can fight with a weapon in either hand using full skill. (Without this trait, characters are at -3 when fighting with their “off” hand.) The trait is not essential to the study of Arruche: anyone can learn to fight with sword in right hand and dagger in left. An ambidextrous Arruche fighter can, however, fight with sword in left hand and dagger in right, if he wishes.

**Artistic Talent** cost: +2 points  
The character has real genius for creating works of art in a field of his choice. If applied to music, for example, then excellent arias might be composed or even improvised. Note that this is not essential in order to play a musical instrument, etc (the Tsolyáni rather admire one who performs by rote) but will certainly improve original works.

**Charisma** cost: +3 points  
A person of forceful personality and obvious leadership quality. Promotion rolls get a +1D6 modifier in the character’s favour. In situations where instant leadership is needed, he must make a check based on Psychic Reservoir and the applicable skill (eg, Soldier): success means anyone of lower averaged Psychic Reservoir and skill-level will do whatever he says.

**Clan Favour** cost: +1 point  
The character has rendered some favour to his or her clan in the past. The clan will look very favourably on a single request from this person for an important favour or service in return. A clan favour could be used, for example, to allow a friend to join the character’s own clan. This advantage may only be taken once.

**Education** cost: +2 points  
A character may elect to have received a Temple school education. A prerequisite for this is a Reasoning of 13 or more. An education gives the character the following additional skill levels:

Literacy:	3+ REA/3
Historian:	REA/3
Theologian:	REA/3
Calligrapher:	REA/3
Mathematician:	REA/3

Warrior:	1
<i>or</i>	
Linguist:	1

Education can, under certain circumstances, be taken without using up one of a character's advantage/disadvantage slots (though it still costs 2 points). This is allowed:

- In combination with the Wizardry or Priest skills (but excluding Warrior Priest)
- By any member of a high clan
- By members of a high or very high lineage of a medium clan
- By members of a low or very low lineage of a very high clan

**Fame/Notoriety** cost: +1 point

The character is well known for his skill in some field. Anyone locally will probably have heard of the character and will have a 10% chance of recognising him or her on sight (or 70% if the character has ability in the field for which the character is famous). A character may take this advantage only once, and must have some justification for the reputation: an attribute of 22 or more, or a skill level of 15+ in any skill.

**Friendship \*** cost: +3 points

The character has struck up a friendship with an influential person. This is similar to a patronage, except that neither side may politely request a service or favour of the other. However, minor favours such as "Please tell me what this document says as I cannot read Engsvanyali" will normally be granted. If a character does ask for a substantial favour of his influential friend then there is a 75% chance that the friend will comply. Regardless of whether he or she complies, the friendship will be dissolved.

**High Clan Status** cost: +8 points

Characters begin the game as members of low status clans. Taking this advantage allows the character to begin as a member of a high status clan. The character's lineage is reduced to very low status in the new clan, but may be increased by taking other advantages.

**High Lineage Status** cost +3 points

A character whose lineage status is medium may raise his or her lineage status to high by taking this advantage. The status of the character's clan does not affect the cost of this advantage. Due to the restriction on the number of advantages that a character may take, he or she may well not be able to achieve this status in a higher clan than the one they started in.

**Language Aptitude** cost: +2 points

This advantage allows a character to learn a modern language. The character's aptitude with the language is determined by rolling a D6. This advantage may be taken several times for the same or a different language. If the character is literate then this advantage also applies to written skills with the language.

**Legacy** cost: +1 point

The character has been left a bequest by a clan relative. The bequest may be one of the following:

- a suit of medium or heavy chlen plate armour, plus shield if necessary
- a small weapon of ordinary steel (1 dagger, 5 arrow heads or similar)
- 1D20 x 1D20 kaitars

This advantage may *not* be taken multiple times.

**Legionary** cost: +4 points

The character must meet the attribute requirements for belonging to the legion (i.e., the bonuses given in Tirikélu for being a legionary must be paid for from the player's initial points total). Characters not taking this option cannot have belonged to a regular legion. A character who does take this skill is not subject to the weapons skills restrictions given in the introduction and gets the following additional skill levels:

Soldier:	6
Main Weapon	5
Second Weapon:	4
Armourer:	1
Physician:	1
Tactics:	1
Warrior:	1

**Low Lineage Status** cost +2 point

A character whose lineage status is very low may raise his or her lineage status to low by taking this advantage. The status of the character's clan does not affect the cost of this advantage.

**Medium Clan Status** cost: +4 points

Characters begin the game as members of low status clans. Taking this advantage allows the character to begin as a member of a medium status clan. The character's lineage is reduced to very low status in the new clan, but may be increased by taking other advantages.

**Medium Lineage Status** cost +3 points

A character whose lineage status is low may raise his or her lineage status to medium by taking this advantage. The status of the character's clan does not affect the cost of this advantage. Due to the restriction on the number of advantages that a character may take, he or she may well not be able to achieve this status in a higher clan than the one they started in

**Militia Member** cost: +2 points

The character is a member of the Hekellu district militia. This allows the character to develop skill in any weapon, i.e. to disregard the weapon restrictions given above. However, there is a 4% chance each week that the character must report to barracks for training and maneuvers. The character must adjust his strength and stamina scores to a minimum of 11 each before taking this advantage. The following additional skill levels are obtained by joining the militia:

Soldier:	3
Sword:	3
Other Weapon:	2
Armourer:	1
Tactics:	1
Warrior:	2

**Night Vision** cost: +2 points

The character has extremely good night vision and takes only half normal penalties for movement, combat and vision at night or in poor light.

**Patron \*** cost: +6 points

The character has a patron, who is an influential member of a higher clan

or an influential priest or official. A patron will grant up to one favour (see Clan Favour or Temple Favour) each month, but there is a 5% chance each month that the Patron will require the character to perform some service or favour in return. This must be done without delay, complaint or further bargaining, otherwise the patronage will be lost and the patron may even have the character beaten or assassinated!

**Priest** cost: +3 points

The character may choose skills from the "Priest" section of the Tirikélu rules, except for the Scholar Priest and Lay Priest skills (which require the "Wizardry" advantage) or the Temple Guard skill (see above). There is a 10% chance each week that a character with this skill will be called away on Temple business.

**Secret Society \*** cost: +4 points

This is similar to the "Patron" advantage except that the character must only visit his or her society in secret. Favours will not be granted for personal reasons, only if they further the goals of the society. Furthermore, the chance of the secret society requiring a favour or request in return is 10% each month. Secret societies almost always assassinate recalcitrant members.

**Stealth** cost: +3 points

The character is able to move quietly and follow people without being noticed. Roll 2D6 for the character's stealth aptitude level. The character may make a skill success check against this aptitude to hide, or to follow or ambush another character. This advantage may be taken more than once and the aptitude is cumulative.

**Streetwise** cost: +1 point

The character knows the darker side of life in cities and towns. Roll D6 for the character's streetwise aptitude level. The character may make a skill success check against this aptitude to know of rumours, informers, crimes, gossip or where "items" can be obtained. He or she also gains an equal number of skill levels in the "City Lore" skill. This advantage may be taken more than once, counting still only as a single advantage, and the aptitude is cumulative.

**Strong Willed** cost: +1 point

The character is resistant to temptation and may modify any roll against hypnotism, mind-control or temptation by 1 pip in his or her favour.

**Temple Favour** cost: +1 point

The character has rendered some favour or service to their Temple in the past. The Temple will look very favourably on a single request from this person for an important favour or service in return. A Temple favour could be used, for example, to obtain sorcerous healing at no cost, but not a full revivification. This advantage may only be taken once by each character.

**Temple Guard/Warrior Priest** cost: +3 points

The character is employed by a Temple in a military or combative capacity. A character taking this advantage must have a Strength and Stamina of at least 10 each. There is also a 10% chance each week that he or she will be called away on Temple duties. In addition, a Temple Guard has the following additional skill levels:

Sword or Mace: :	4
Dagger:	3
Etiquette:	2
Administration:	1
Soldier:	1
Linguist:	1
Theologian:	1

### Example

A player decides to create a famously strong ex-legionary called Tsónoge. The character's main attribute will be strength, and this will be paid for by reducing mental and psychic skills:

<i>attribute</i>	<i>cost</i>
STR 22	14
STA 14	3
DEX 13	2
CLV 11	0
REA 8	-3
PS.A 4	-7
PS.R 9	-2
COM 8	-3
HGT 15	
BLD 15	
SIZ 15	4
<b>SUBTOTAL:</b>	<b>8</b>
<i>advantages &amp; disadvantages</i>	
Very Low Lineage	-3
Legionary	4
Famous	1
<b>SUBTOTAL:</b>	<b>2</b>
Points Allowed:	10
Points Remaining:	0

### Optional rule for starting cash

The initial sum is further multiplied by a factor for the average of the character's Cleverness and Reasoning:

18+:	x3
14-17:	x2
8-13:	x1
4-7:	x0.75
below 4:	x0.5

### Very High Clan Status

cost: +12 points

Characters begin the game as members of low status clans. Taking this advantage allows the character to begin as a member of a very high status clan. The character's lineage is reduced to very low status in the new clan, but may be increased by taking other advantages.

### Very High Lineage Status

cost +4 points

A character whose lineage status is high may raise his or her lineage status to very high by taking this advantage. The status of the character's clan does not affect the cost of this advantage. Due to the restriction on the number of advantages that a character may take, he or she may well not be able to achieve this status in a higher clan than the one they started in.

### Wizard

cost: +5 or 7 points

The character has the option to be a sorcerer. He must also adjust his attributes accordingly so as to reach the minimum scores needed. However, Psychic Reservoir cannot be reduced in order to increase other attributes at this time, and must initially remain at 11. Once the process is complete the player must reroll his Psychic Reservoir and take the new score. (Thus, you can't be sure of not ending up a sorcerer with a low Psychic Reservoir). Two points costs are given for this advantage because it is possible to take the literacy advantage with this skill without it taking up one of the three advantage slots. The higher cost is paid only if the character elects to take the literacy skills.

### Belongings

Characters start the game with the following equipment:

- A chlen hide or wooden weapon for each weapon that they have skill in.
- 20 items of ammunition for each missile weapon possessed
- Militia members have a suit of light chlen armour
- Legionaries have a suit of medium chlen armour, plus a shield
- Clothes appropriate to profession, rank, and clan

Characters also start the game with an amount of money determined as follows. (Clanless characters start with 1D6 Kaitars and ignore the rest of this section.)

The basic cash amount is determined by clan status:

Very High:	100+1D100 Kaitars
High:	50 + 2D20 Kaitars
Medium:	25 + 1D20 Kaitars
Low:	10 + 1D10 Kaitars
Very Low:	6 + 1D6 Kaitars

The basic amount is multiplied by a factor for the character's lineage status:

Very High:	x3
High:	x2
Medium:	x1
Low:	x0.75
Very Low:	x0.5

# LIVYANI SORCERY

These spells are variants on the Tirikélu magic system. Spells are grouped into phyla and rated from +1 to +10. It is unusual for a sorcerer to study more than four or five phyla, and only a 20th Circle wadra would have mastery up to +10.

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## Phenomenation

### *the acquisition of goods and services by magical means*

#### **The Goblets of the Unknown One (+1)**

Goblets of white onyx, bearing a glyph of unknown meaning, appear in the hands of 1-6 people. These contain a full day's water requirement, vanishing when drained or set down. Before drinking, characters must toast their other-planar benefactor with the formula: "May he never be known!" Failure to do this is said to bring bad luck for a year and a day. (The quality of the water in the goblets varies cyclically according to unidentified causes. It was once believed to correspond to the position of the planet Ziruna in the night sky, but this theory of the mage Wuyoneb has now been disproved. The contemporary taste of the water, and speculation as to how it will change in the future, remain subjects of discussion among Livyani wizards.)

#### **Chiyuvaz's Lantern (+2)**

A beam of light shines from an aperture in the ether above the caster's head, turning to follow his line of sight and moving along with him. The light turns on and off on command. It lasts for three hours.

#### **The Cantraip of Immediate Accoutrement (+3)**

This spell creates a single item of unlacquered Chlen-hide. It can be a melee weapon of any type required by the caster (sword, dagger, spear, etc), or light armour, or some other simple implement such as a dish, shield or digging tool. The item remains for thirty minutes.

#### **The Sumptuous Repast of Chiyuvaz's Hall (+4)**

Food is created. This is of very fine quality by aristocratic Livyani tastes, though may seem overly dainty to a commoner or foreign person. The banquet appears on dishes of gold laid out on a low silk draped table, complete with wine and even a tray of narcotic powders. There is sufficient for 1-6 people (depending on how hungry they are) but it is obviously laid out as if for a solitary diner. The board is always identical, and all may be consumed with the exception of the uppermost Dlel in the fruit-bowl, which appears with a single bite taken from it. This is rumoured to be the last morsel of food tasted by the wizard Chiyuvaz (at least on Tekumel's plane) and to eat it is taboo. Some believe that breaking the taboo would result in the diner exchanging places with the long-lost wizard – hence the Livyani expression "To share the wizard's banquet<170>".

#### **The Excellent Armoury of Llyan of Tsamra (+5)**

This spell exercises miraculous agencies to rapidly repair a simple damaged object such as a suit of armour or a cart-wheel. Not only is the object repaired, but it is also re-lacquered in Llyan's colours and supplied with archaic ostentation. Some opinions hold that the object is not in fact repaired at all, but simply replaced by a duplicate of appropriate size from Llyan's obviously capacious armoury. (For reference, the primary colour is a thick dark bronze gold, the secondary colour is white and the third, "crest" colour is light purple; trim colour is maroon.)

### **The Pale Jade Pavilion (+6)**

A tent providing shelter from the elements is caused to manifest, with room for up to ten people (twenty at a squeeze). This lasts nine hours. The interior is furnished with cushions, and silken drapes partition the space according to the number of occupants. The Pavilion always gives most restful sleep, such that Stamina and Psychic Reservoir are treated as at +5 for purposes of recovery of HP and spellpoints. Indeed, it is believed to be the gift of the demon Njenü, for it can only be entered by bowing and saying, "I thank the Master of the Everlasting Dream for his hospitality." Incursion without this formula will motivate the demon to umbrage, resulting in the character's immediate and permanent expulsion from all manifestations of the Pavilion. (Apparently it is also bad form to use violence against anyone else in the Pavilion: from which comes the saying, "It seems we must share the Pavilion," used between two rival sorcerers obliged to a temporary truce.)

### **The Vessel of the Invisible Seekers (+7)**

A boat or palanquin appears as though from nowhere and lasts for four hours. The boat will carry up to eight passengers; the palanquin has room for three. The rowers or bearers are invisible (so that the palanquin seems to float in the air) but they do leave footprints of a nonhuman nature. The vessel's crew always know a route to your destination even if you do not know it yourself. For example, you could command them to take you to the Tower of the Red Dome even if you had never previously visited Jakalla. They cannot be commanded to take you to a person, however, but only to a specific location which you can name. Additionally, you must always command them to convey you to such &-such a place and no further; omitting this stipulation could prove disastrous. (A different boat or palanquin is summoned each time the spell is cast, varying in historical design and ornamentation. Seemingly the Invisible Seekers pluck any available craft from out of the time-stream - sometimes still with the original occupant!)

### **The Loyal and Indefatigable Workers of Qelem (+8)**

A team of ten labourers arrive to serve the caster for one day. These are short, lightly-built humanoids with hairless golden skin and rat-like tails. Upon appearing, one of them will come forward and ask "Do you wish us to serve you?" The caster must not reply until he has examined each worker thoroughly to ensure that none bears the small green atlun spider that represents the curse of Rü'ütlanesh. Only if no spider is found is it safe to give the workers a task. They will perform tirelessly and require no supervision. (There seems to be about a 5% chance that the workers will bear Rü'ütlanesh's spider with them. If they do, a +5 Cleverness/Sorcerer check is needed to find it. Should you fail to notice the spider, they will fulfil their day's tasks but whatever construction they produce will bear the curse of Rü'ütlanesh.)

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## **Ergolepsy**

### ***imbuing a person with supernatural energy***

#### **The Magnification of Bodily Vigour (+1)**

This can be applied to the caster and 1-3 companions, increasing their Stamina scores by D3 points each. It lasts one hour.

#### **The Celerious Despatch of Lord Ru'ungkano (+3)**

After receiving this spell, up to a twenty persons are able to keep to an easy and purposeful stride, covering 10% greater distance than they would otherwise manage in the six hours that the spell lasts.

### **The Mantle of Champions (+4)**

The Melee and Missile values of 1-3 beings are increased by 1D6. The caster can include himself in the spell's effect if desired. The effect lasts ten minutes.

### **Expedition (+5)**

This spell speeds time for 1-3 beings (one of whom can be the caster himself), allowing them an extra "half-round" action each round. A character under the spell can therefore make one "full-round" and one "half-round" action, or three "half-round" actions, every round. This spell cannot be applied repeatedly in order to give even more actions. It lasts ten minutes.

### **The Martyr's Blood (+6)**

This acts on 1-3 persons. Each gains a "buffer" of 2D6 Hit Points. Any damage inflicted on a character so protected comes off this buffer first, and only once the extra Hit Points are used up can the character himself be wounded. The spell lasts twenty-four hours, unless the extra points are expended before then. (The theory behind the enchantment is that some being of another world – the "martyr" of the spell's appellation - is taking the blow in your stead. On being wounded, you should invoke your deity in blessing this unknown individual, as for instance: "Dlamelish bless you, whoever you are!" in order for the buffer to come into effect. Failure to do so means that you will take the injury, though the buffer points will remain for later use.)

### **The Peerless Perfected Persona (+10)**

All of the target's attributes other than Size and Psychic Reservoir are raised to 20 for the six hours that the spell lasts. An attribute that is already at 20 or above is raised by 1D3. (Note that a very ugly individual will still be recognisable by his acquaintances, but they may wonder why they had not noticed his "beauty" before!)

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## **Sanation**

### ***the incantations that promote healing***

All Healing spells require the recipient to make a Psychic Ability check to see if the spell is effective. This reflects the changes that have taken place in human biology since the spells were originally formulated. A critically failed Psychic Ability check means that magic cannot be used for further healing, and the target must recover naturally.

### **Lesser Iatrics (+1)**

This spell operates at touch range and heals 1-3 lost Hit Points if the target makes his Psychic Ability check. Like the other spells of this phylum, it only affects wounds, not Hit Points which are effectively lowered owing to thirst, hunger, etc.

### **Greater Iatrics (+3)**

Like the preceding spell, but 1D6 Hit Points are recovered and the Psychic Ability check is made at +3.

### **Benefaction (+5)**

1-3 wounded targets within 3 metres of the caster each recover 1D3 Hit Points if they make a Psychic Ability check at +3.

### **Cure All Wounds (+7)**

The subject instantly recovers all lost Hit Points. The user must touch the subject. The Psychic Ability check is made at +5.

### **Restoration (+9)**

This heals and restores one lost limb or crippled body area. No modifier is given to the Psychic Ability check. It can be used to repair lost eyesight, hearing, and other mutilations caused by either magic or serious wounding. It cannot remove genetic deformities, nor treat the ravages of disease or poison.

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## **Ars Elementorum**

### *the ordering of elemental forces*

#### **The Obviator of Ambages (+2)**

This helps the caster to find his way out of a jungle, maze or labyrinth. For the ten minutes that the spell lasts he is infallibly guided by the most direct route to the nearest exit. This route will avoid chasms, deep rivers, locked doors and other obstacles that would bar a person's path. No indication of traps or hidden mechanisms is provided, so the caster might be brought straight to a secret door and be unable to open it.

#### **The Ineluctable Hunter (+3)**

The caster is able to unerringly follow the trail of a being for the 30 minutes that the spell lasts. The trail can be as much as a day old. He does not have to know the quarry's name or even species, just so long as he is able to pick up some physical evidence of the quarry's passing (a cracked branch, a loosened tent-flap, etc). It is also possible to follow the spoor of a Globe of Distant Discernment or Morphetic Travel if the spell is cast at a point crossed by one of these.

#### **The Efficacious Earthen Exhortation (+5)**

This spell transmutes an area of 40 square metres (a seven-metre circle adjacent to the caster) to a depth of one metre. Water can be changed to ice, mud to dry earth, and vice versa. It only works on flat areas of unworked ground, so you cannot use it to topple a mud-brick wall or undermine a building's foundations. Once the area is transmuted, it remains in that form until it reverts naturally (a dried area of bog would slowly become waterlogged, for instance) and cannot be altered back by cancelling the spell.

#### **The Irresistible Incursion (+6)**

This creates a tunnel up to three metres long and one metre in diameter through earth or solid rock. This could take the form of a ditch or pit beneath an enemy's feet - in which case the enemy needs an Evade roll to jump clear. The spell can then be cancelled leaving the enemy buried. Alternatively it can be used to throw up a boulder or earthen rampart of similar size. This spell has a range of 5 metres and lasts 5 minutes.

#### **The Eructating Upheaval of Chaos (+7)**

A very powerful earth tremor is localised in a circle of 3 metres radius within 30 metres of the caster. Beings in this zone are thrown about helplessly and must make an Evade roll each round to try and get clear. Failure means that the being takes increasing damage: 1D6 in the first round, 2D6 in the second, 3D6 in the third, and so on. Armour gives no protection. Items of glass, pottery, etc, are automatically shattered, and there is a 30% chance of toppling walls and pillars.

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## **Crepusculation**

### *the sorcery of obscurement*

#### **Stimulation of the Ambages (+1)**

This covers the caster's tracks for a period of ten minutes. During this time he leaves no footprints or other signs that could be followed. He can

still be seen and heard normally. This spell works against Ineluctable Hunter (qv) but cannot prevent an "aura trail" remaining that could still be seen by Psychometrics.

#### **The Veil of Felicitous Shadow (+2)**

The caster becomes completely invisible when stationary, but can be seen as a flickering overlay of light-limned shadow when he moves. The effect lasts five minutes.

#### **The Essence of Nethermost Darkness (+4)**

This spell causes a cloud of darkness to swirl up out of the caster's shadow; this rises to blot out the sky above 2-12 opponents within 20 metres and then descends upon them like a living thing. (Some have likened it to a gigantic demon *Biridlu*.) It takes one round to reach its targets and can be dispelled by casting a Dazzlement spell in time. Anyone engulfed (the spell can be Evaded) becomes catatonic if they fail to resist. This lasts until they are attacked.

#### **The Abrogation of Mundane Visibility (+6)**

The caster is rendered invisible for thirty minutes. Enemies who are aware of his presence must fight him at -10 from Melee or Missile. He can be detected by those naturally able to perceive invisible objects (eg *Pe Choi*) and also by the Seeing Other Planes spell. This spell can also be applied to another individual instead of the caster, and a Magical Resistance Roll is allowed to anyone who does not wish to be turned invisible.

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### **Arcana Armamentari**

#### ***the conjuration of weaponry***

##### **The Unseen Dart (+1)**

An invisible javelin is cast at a target using the sorcerer's base Missile score plus his Sorcerer level. Any negative modifiers that would apply to the chance of hitting are halved, and if cast into a group (in circumstances that would normally require a random roll to see who is hit) the javelin cannot strike any but the intended target. It counts as a magical weapon, doing 1D10 against which armour protects normally. Since the dart vanishes after striking something, impaling hits are not applicable.

##### **The Reaper of Lives (+3)**

A golden two-handed scythe is bestowed upon the recipient: either the caster or a companion within 5m. This is magically sharp, and armour gives only half regular protection against it. It counts as a polearm, and disappears after 10 minutes or if put down or dropped before then.

##### **The Aegis of Shadow (+4)**

This creates a large circular shield (with centrally-located handle) of dull black substance. It can be retained by the caster or given to a comrade. The shield has a 60% chance of blocking a blow struck from the bearer's front or left (it cannot be damaged) and adds 1D3 to his Magical Resistance against spells targeted from in front of him. It lasts for 20 minutes.

##### **The Scimitar of Dismemberment and Carnage (+7)**

This spell, taught only to worshippers of Ru'ungano, summons a *chidok* of secret mythic significance. This is a long one handed sword of unidentifiable metal which cannot be broken. It has the power of inflicting special hits 50% of the time; eg, with a Attack of 26 a 1-13 would count as a special. Unlike a weapon of excellent or enchanted steel, it does not reduce armour's effectiveness against ordinary hits. When wielded by the person who has attuned it (see below) the scimitar cannot be dropped,

Of course this is only a small part of the complete Livyani magic system, which comprises at least as many phyla as the Tsolyani system. Additionally, there are some spells that do not fit into the regular pattern, being fragments of formerly complete phyla that have become lost over the ages. For example:

**“Creating the Fetch, or Shard of the Liminal Soul”** from *The Treatise of Chiyuvaz*:

“First get a woman with child. Then the unborn child must be cut out within its first month. Place it within a lead box, filled with the caster’s own blood, spittle, semen, bile and urine. Seal the box with corpse wax and wind about with the mother’s hair. Next take the box to a sepulchral place and bury it in the ribcage of a man dead at least forty years. Do this at the dark of the moons. The caster must sleep upon this spot until the time when Gayel is full but Kashi is not yet risen, when the Fetch will visit him in a dream. Then the box may be disinterred and the Fetch released. Each day the Fetch must be allowed to suck blood from its master’s nipples, whereupon it renders him service. Retain the box as its abode.” \*

The Fetch appears as a sort of large maggot with the caster’s face. It is part of his Shadow-Self, having 1 point of his Psychic Ability (this gives it 10 spellpoints) and 1 of his Hit Points. It cannot fight, but is difficult to hit (Evade 17). It resists spells with the magical resistance of the caster. It sees in darkness and can travel through wood or earth (but not stone or metal) at 10 metres a round, leaving almost no visible trace. When it returns to its box and the lid is closed, the caster knows all that it has seen while absent from him. If the Fetch is slain, the caster immediately takes a wound of 1-10 HP (with the usual chance of lasting injury) and must make a Stamina check to avoid unconsciousness for 1-3 hours.

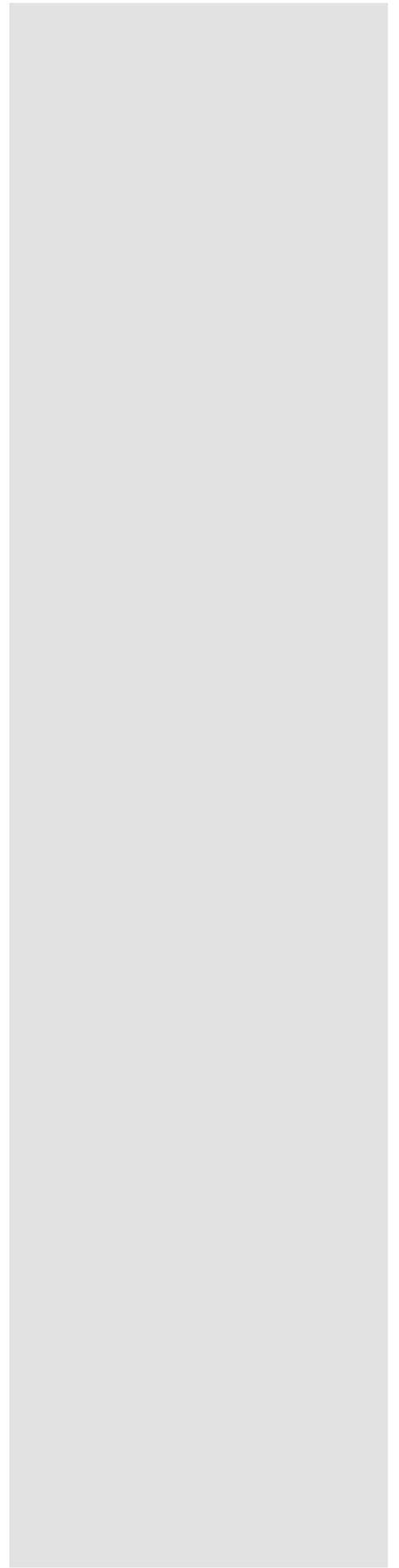
*\* A loathsome process, but squeamish readers can at least console themselves with the thought that Chiyuvaz eventually got his just deserts. Or, if you prefer, his just dessert.*

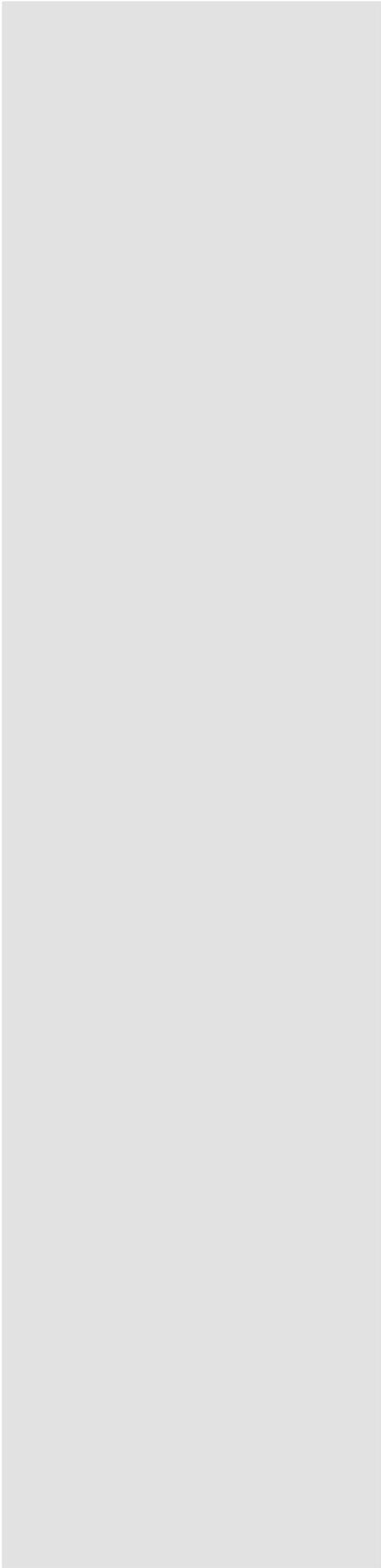
disarmed or fumbled. For anyone else it will invariably fumble. (When the bearer takes up the sword, he must cut himself for 1 Hit Point to attune it, allowing the blood to run down the blade while saying, “Thus do I acknowledge, O Lord of the Stratagems of Warfare, that the blade cares not whose blood it drinks. ”This ritual is perhaps intended to symbolise an understanding of the ambiguous nature of conflict, though only the savants of the Temple of Ru’ungkano could speak with authority on the matter.)

**The Inviolable Vestments of Lu-Ishatur (+9)**

This creates an “armour” of glowing blue energy around the target, who must be naked to receive the spell. The energy field absorbs 2D6+1 points damage against all hits including specials, and also adds 1D6 to the wearer’s Magical Resistance Factor; the exact protective value is determined by a new dice roll for each attack. The energy field has a certain inertia, causing it to lag behind the wearer if he tries to move faster than a brisk walk. (Thus, if he were to fall he would lose the field’s protection for a few seconds before it flowed to reform around him.) The spell has a duration of one hour.

# Scenarios & Campaigns





# Just off the Boat

## A start-up campaign for players new to Tekumel

The player-characters come from Falesá, a coastal village on a small island of the same name that lies just north-east of Ssámris Island.

Players start by determining status, then choosing a role and (optionally) one or two personality traits. They should then roll their characters according to the standard Tirikélu rules, with the exception that natives of Falesá are generally good-looking (roll Comeliness on 2D6+6) and ethical (roll Honour on 2D10+2). This does not apply to the Outsider.

### Status

Players roll for status using a six-sided die. A roll of 1 indicates high status, 2-3 is medium, 4-6 is low. This is the character's status in the Falesá community. (As far as mainland Tsolyáni are concerned, they're all equally contemptible.)

### Role

This choice determines the character's initial skills. There is one each of: Acolyte, Athlete, Black Sheep and Outsider; those are unique characters. The rest of the characters should be either a Fisherman or a Hunter. Players should make their selection based only on the role description, without seeing the skill-level allocations. Note that some roles have a prerequisite status.

The Acolyte has studied under the priest of the village. He/she must be of high or medium status.

The Athlete is the village champion in the annual wrestling and acrobatics contests held against other islands. He/she must be of high status, and will have often got out of humdrum chores so as to train (possibly inducing jealousy in the other characters).

The Black Sheep can be of any status. He/she has had a misspent youth, having run away to Ssámris Isle for several years. He begins with 3 Discredit but has picked up some interesting skills.

The Fisherman, a standard island character, can be of low or middle status. Any number of players can select this role.

The Hunter is another standard character, but this time of middle or high status. As with the Fisherman, more than one player can take this role.

The Outsider is of low status. He or she is not one of the Falesá villagers by birth, but a Nom merchant who arrived penniless and decided to stay.

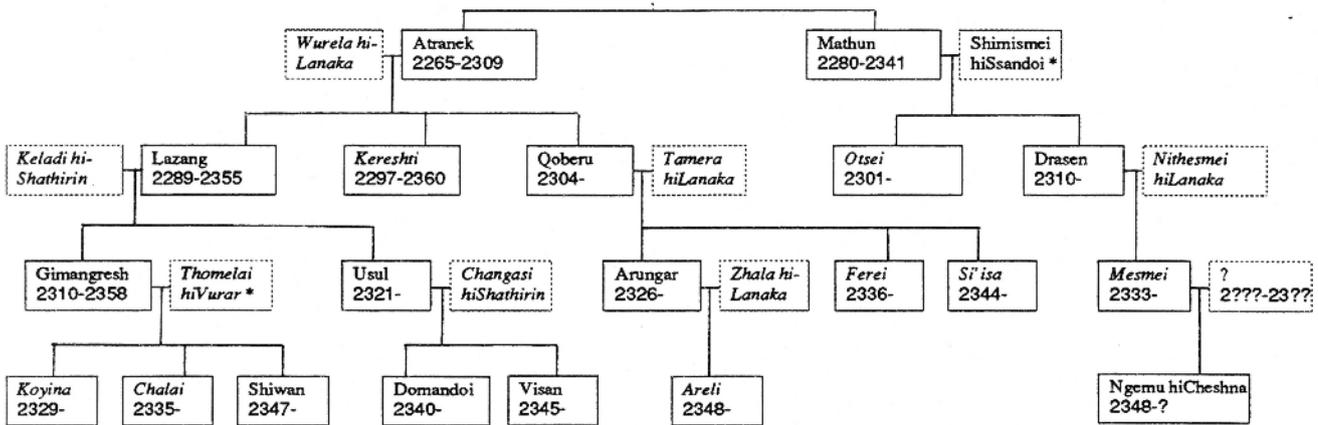
### Personality traits

A player can list up to two personality traits on his or her character sheet. These could be such things as honesty, intolerance, greed, courage, laziness, modesty, deceitfulness - the choice is up to the player. These are qualities for which the character is renowned.

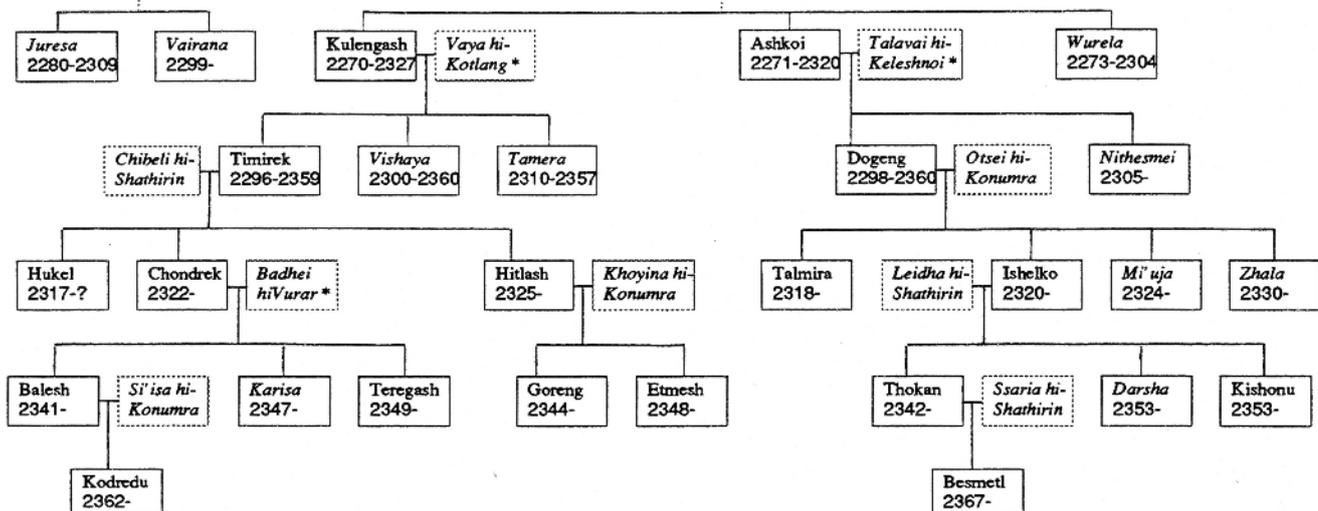
### Names

Each character (except the Outsider) must be fitted onto the family trees provided. A player who strenuously objects to being assigned a first name may change it, bearing in mind that these are the characters' formal names and they would have other informal names for use by family and close friends.

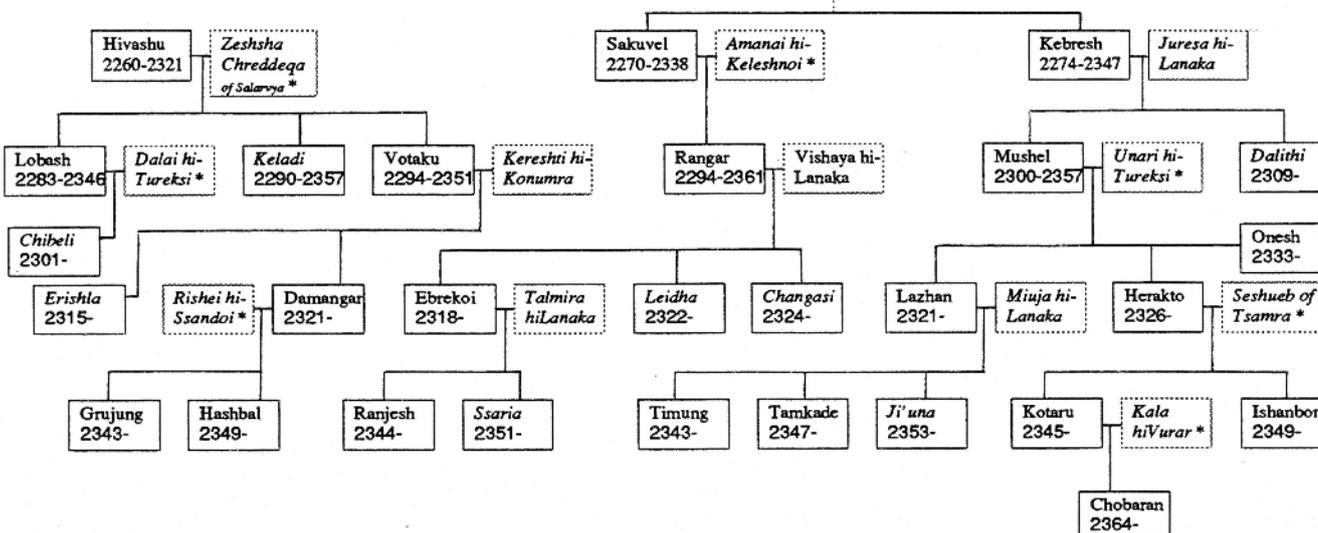
### The Wise & Generous KONUMRA Lineage



### The Brave & Honest LANAKA Lineage



### The Energetic & Modest SHATHIRIN Lineage



Women are denoted by *italics*.

\* Indicates a spouse from another island or the mainland.

## Background skills

All characters get the following: Etiquette 8, Historian 1, Mu'ugalavyáni 3 and Tsolyáni 8. In addition:

*The Acolyte* gets +1 Reasoning and Psychic Ability, plus these skill-levels: Alchemist 8, Calligraphy 1, Divination 9, Literacy 6, Musician 4, Orator 8, Physician 10, Sorcerer 4, Storyteller 7, Swimming 7, Theologian 9 and Warrior 3.

*The Black Sheep* gets +2 Cleverness and these skill-levels: Carpenter 1D6, City Lore 2D6, Cook 1D6, Kickboxing 1D6+3, Languages 2D6+3, Sailing 8, Survival 2, Swimming 7, Sword 1D6+3, Thief 5, Thrown Weapon 5 and Warrior 3.

*The Outsider* gets +1 Stamina and Cleverness, along with these skill-levels: Armourer 6, Bow 8, City Lore (Jakálla 7, Pála Jakálla 9, Bey Sü 10), Literacy 8, Nom Etiquette 12, Physician 3, Poet 8, Salaryani 11, Shortsword 9, Swimming 5, Tomb Robber 8 and Warrior 1.

Any *Fisherman* character gets +1 on Cleverness, Dexterity and Stamina, plus these skills: Carpenter 1D6, Charáge 7, Cook 5, Dagger 3, Fisherman 9, Javelin 6, Netmaker 1D6, Sailing 9, Spear 4, Survival 5, Swimming 12 and Warrior 6.

Any *Hunter* gets +1 on Strength and +2 on Stamina, along with these skills: Bow 5, Charáge 7, Cook 2D6, Dagger 4, Fisherman 3, Hunter 11, Javelin 5, Sailing 4, Spear 3, Swimming 8, Sword 5 and Warrior 5.

*The Athlete* gets +1 on Strength, Stamina, Dexterity and Cleverness. He/she should roll 1D6 for performance in last year's all-islands contest: 1-2 = no distinction; 3-5 = performed well; 6 = outright winner. Initial skill-levels are: Acrobat 9, Charáge 10, Dagger 3, Dancer 8, Sailing 3, Singing 1D6, Survival 3, Swimming 8, Sword 1 and Warrior 9.

## Relationships

In Falesá, as in mainland Tsolyánu, your true mother's sisters (and your father's brother's wives) are all your "mothers". Likewise, your true father's brothers (and your mother's sister's husbands) are all your "fathers". Children of these people are your brothers and sisters. Your true mother's brothers (and true father's sister's husbands) are your "uncles", and your father's sisters (and your mother's brother's wives) are your "aunts".

Thus many of the player-characters are related. Shiwan, for example, is the younger brother of Goreng's and Etmesh's mother, making him their uncle. Areli's mother is the sister of Timung's and Tamkade's mother, so the three of them are siblings. And so on...

Some marriages are pending. Shiwan hiKonumra is betrothed to Karisa hiLanaka, Etmesh hiLanaka to Ji'una hiShathirin, and Timung hiShathirin to Darsha hiLanaka. It has not been possible to hold the marriage ceremonies for want of the wealth needed for the appropriate gifts and ceremony.

## Money & equipment

Shathirin family members start with 20 Hlash, Lanaka family members with 40 Hlash, and Konumra family members with 60 Hlash. The Outsider is equipped with a spear and light leather armour. Shathirins have light leather and two weapons. Lanakas have medium leather and three weapons. Konumras have medium leather, a small shield, and four weapons. Anyone taking a bow as one of his weapons also has twenty arrows.

## Background

*(Give each player a copy of these notes after he/she has generated a character.)*

In former times, life in Falesá was not so hard as now. Historically the island of Ssámris has passed between Tsolyáni and Mu'ugalavyáni hands several times. Your families sided with the Tsolyáni in the dispute of 2020 AS. Now Ssámris is back in Mu'ugalavyáni hands and you are paying the price. Settlers have come to your little island. The Mu'ugalavyáni government favours them in trade and legal matters, leaving you in straitened circumstances.

You have decided to leave and seek your fortune in Tsolyánu. Perhaps you can return with wealth to help your families; perhaps you can pave the way for them all to enjoy a new life on the mainland. Perhaps you will even rise to prominence as admirals in the Tsolyáni navy and come back to displace the Mu'ugalavyáni from your home!

## Lineages

The Konumra family (high) are considered wise and generous. The Lanaka family (medium) are noted for their bravery and honesty. The Shathirin family (low) are thought energetic and modest. If you have taken a personal trait that corresponds to one for which your family is renowned, gain 1D3 Honour; you are considered to exemplify your family's virtues.

## Religion

Falesá reveres Pavar's gods, most notably specific aspects of Hnalla, Hrü'ü, Belkhanu and Karakan. Also important is an aboriginal deity called Bithra who has a fane in a stand of bamboo on your island. The Shathirin family are keepers of the fane, and only the older women of this family take offerings to Bithra. However, Bithra is the tutelary deity of all Falesá and it is the custom among all the islanders to call on him first when in trouble. He may only be a minor deity, but he is more likely to help you than those mighty Lords of Heaven!

## Assets

You each have some money. Also you have a yacht. This is jointly owned by all of you but technically subject to the disposal of Konumra family members.

## The Nom

(Give a copy of these notes to the Outsider player.)

The Nom are a seafaring race inhabiting a number of city-states spread throughout an archipelago of many islands and coral atolls. The economy is based principally on fishing, with some agriculture on the larger islands, and other commodities traded overseas with Salarvya and Haida Pakala. (Property is less important than custom: the right to fish in a certain bay, etc. Property can be lost, but such rights—which descend through the female line—can never be taken away.)

The Nom gods are:

*Lord Done*, who sends fair winds for ships.

*Lord An Hu*, who gave the gift of fire; he oversees metalworking and the exchange of hard currency; he is invoked when making pacts because he abhors an oathbreaker.

*Lady Jiu*, lady of the sea, who protects children and pregnant mothers.

*Lord Kaa*, who rewards bold men with the courage to fight and win in battle, but punishes cowards with slow death.

*Lord Ne'en*, terrible harbinger of violent storms.

*Lady Pei*, goddess of luck.

*Lady Chi'nh*, spirit of night and mother of the moons, who brings the tides that give fishermen their catches.

*Lord To'u*, who is Death.

The Nom have a shame-based culture (even more so than the Tsolyáni). Simply to refuse to accept a Nom's word on a matter is to shame him. To avoid disgrace a man will choose exile or even death. Nom who have been shamed say "Pei has turned her face away" and become fatalistic until some happy stroke of luck restores their belief in the chance to redress their shame.

Nom society is matrilineal. This does not mean it is a matriarchy, however. Men still rule, but inheritance is through the female line. A man is therefore often closer to his sister's children than to his own; they are the ones who will inherit his family's responsibilities, rights and property.

## History of the island

These are the major events which have provoked gossip, speculation and daydreams over the last quarter century.

*Twenty-five years ago*: A Tsolyáni priest from Jakálla visits Falesá on his way to Khéiris. He ends up staying a month and blesses the fishing boats before going on his way. At the next catch, the nets fill with fish and there is feasting for a month.

*Twenty years ago*: Mesmei hiKonumra becomes pregnant but refuses to divulge the father's name. The child is called Ngemu hiCheshna – "the son of the unknown".

*Eighteen years ago*: A strange creature, said to be a Hlüss, is washed up dead on the beach. It is buried under a pile of coral rocks at the mouth of the lagoon.

*Sixteen years ago*: A Livyáni ship puts in for supplies. Its crew (including a Shen) terrorize the village until Chondrek hiLanaka wrestles with and beats the Shen.

*Fifteen years ago*: Tsolyáni sailors press-gang Chondrek hiLanaka while he's trading in Ssámris. He is destined to return later after many adventures.

*Thirteen years ago*: A rock falls from the sky onto the beach and emits a yellow vapour that kills Chondrek hiLanaka's old dog.

*Twelve years ago*: Hukel hiLanaka signs on aboard a Salarvyan ship. He has not been seen since.

*Ten years ago*: Gimangresh hiKonumra is drowned when his boat is caught in a squall.

*Nine years ago*: A gang of boys pelt Ngemu hiCheshna with pebbles while he is walking on the hillside. Later, two of the boys are badly gored by an unidentified creature while playing in the forest.

*Eight years ago*: Chondrek hiLanaka (now missing a leg) returns from his voyages. He is a drunken hulk of his former self and sits on the beach all day telling wild stories.

*Seven years ago*: Ngemu hiCheshna disappears.

*Six years ago*: The great storm, in which the houses lose their roofs and half the island's fishing boats are washed away. Ashinra hiShathirin tells everyone: "It is Bithra, out searching the bay for Ngemu hiCheshna."

*Five years ago*: A traveller from Tsolyánu is washed ashore after a shipwreck and spends a month recuperating in the village before travelling to Ssámris. There is a plentiful catch after he leaves and the elders are reminded of the priest who stayed with them twenty years before. Later it is discovered that the Black Sheep character has left, presumably having stowed away on the boat that took the Tsolyáni back to Ssámris.

*Four years ago*: Ashinra hiShathirin sees a chashkeri washing its hair in the lagoon. She never speaks again.

*Three years ago*: Domandoi hiKonumra wins the all-islands athletics trophy and there is joyous feasting lasting for days. As the feasting ends, the Black Sheep character returns from his wanderings.

*Two years ago*: The Nom outsider arrives on the island. Penniless, he is given hospitality in return for helping with odd jobs.

*Last year*: Mu'ugalavyáni sailors put in at the island and take Ssaria hiShathirin to the god Bithra's fane and rape her. They all die of fever a few days later.

It is now 2368 AS. Dhich'une has been deposed and the new Dra-worshipping Emperor Neshkiruma II, "the Conciliator", has taken the throne. A Diltana has been announced for Jakálla. The Empire looks forward to a period of renewal, but the prospect on Falesá is bleak.

### **Clan and nationality**

(The following is strictly for the Referee's eyes only.) The player-characters are not recognized as Tsolyáni citizens, nor do they belong to a clan. However, if one or more of them eventually acquire citizenship then by implication it would be possible for the whole island to become known as the Falesá clan.

Another route to acquiring citizenship is by precedent. Back in 2020, there was a period of some fifty years when Falesá island served as a depot for the Red Flower clan. The Shathirin family are in fact direct descendents of the Zanirin lineage of that clan. (The spelling differs because literacy is low on the island.) The others are collateral branches of lineages no longer represented in Red Flower, but known in other clans. If the characters discover this fact (which is not widely known) then they might be able to petition for the clan to recognize them.

### **Divine intervention**

Being only a minor demon, Bithra is very interested in his few worshippers and is relatively likely to render them aid. On the island itself, an unmodified Theology check is needed to obtain intervention. Check at -5 anywhere other than Falesá itself. If successful, the character can then attempt an Honour check to try and impress Bithra, with +1 per significant offering. Critical success means the little god grants intervention - usually something very minor such as some fluke that gives the characters a clue badly need. Critical failure results in the character getting a rash, a cold, or some other petty ailment, such things being known as "Bithra's chastisements".

### **Setting forth**

The yacht that will take them to Jakálla is a single-masted vessel large enough for ten people. The whole village gathers on the beach and, after a final pep talk from the elders, they are ready to set sail.

The voyage starts well, with a fair south-westerly breeze making for good headway. One course is to steer due north until they reach the mainland, then follow the coast around to Jakálla. More daringly, they could strike out directly east for Point Küne. Assuming the yacht covers 100-150 kilometres a day, landfall will optimally occur after three or four days on the former route, ten days on the latter.

A Sailing check must be made each day by whoever is navigating. This check is at +5 on the first day, +4 on the next, et cetera, until land is again sighted. A failed check puts them off course by up to three compass points in either direction - double that on a critical failure. (Obviously these checks must be made secretly by the referee so that the players don't know how they're doing.) Once within sight of the coast, navigation checks need not be made except in fog or heavy rain.

Each player must also check every day to see if they have had any mishaps. This is a +5 Dexterity/Sailing check, with further modifiers if the weather turns bad. Each failure reduces the distance covered by the yacht that day by 10 kilometres. On a critical failure roll D6:

- 1-2 Damage to the yacht; reduce speed and resale value by 10%
- 3-4 Man overboard; Swimming check required to rescue him, with modifier depending on weather
- 5-6 Accident; character is injured for 0-11 points (2D6-1D6)

Several lineages make up a Nom clan. Each city-state has members of all twenty-four clans. Nine of the clans comprise the Sea People and fifteen are the Land People. The names of these two factions indicate their different areas of authority: fishing & overseas trade in the former case and farming, crafts & markets in the latter. The paramount lords of the two factions rule the city on alternate days.

The clans themselves are exogamous. Men marry outside their lineage and clan, and then go to live with their wife's family. Each clan is responsible for certain rituals. For a city-state to declare war, for instance, requires twenty-four rituals to be performed and therefore cannot happen without the consent of all the clans. But a lesser state of aggression can be declared by only nine Sea People rituals, giving those clans considerable sway in matters of minor foreign policy.

There are serfs, but the caste is hereditary and the Nom view the enslavement of free men as a barbarous practice. In general Nom society is very cultured. Oaths made in the name of An Hu are always honoured, but An Hu is only invoked if the pact is a matter of great weight—to mention him in the same breath as a simple promise would be disrespectful.

The yacht has fresh water and food for two weeks. Once this has run out, an unmodified Survival check allows them to keep on for another couple of days at best. (Only allow one Survival check, by whoever is calling the shots.)

The aim is not to kill off the characters before their adventures even get started. If they get into real trouble there are plenty of alternative fates you can throw at them. They could be wrecked on an uncharted island, picked up by a passing ship, or beached in the mangrove swamps between Penom and Point Küne. If they reach Jakálla without the yacht, they get 2 Discredit (4 in the case of Konumras) and have the task of making do without the money they would have got for selling it.

### **Seeking their fortune**

On arrival in Jakálla, the characters first task is to find themselves accommodation. Staying at a hostel in the Foreigners' Quarter earns them all 1 Discredit (they don't think of themselves as foreigners in Tsolyánu) but is at least cheap – say 20 Hlash a day for the whole group. Alternatively they can find a squat in the Jakállan slums. Either option is dirty, smelly and generally a far cry from life on their tropical island home.

The Konumra family members have the final say on whether or not to sell the yacht. They should be able to get 80 to 150 Kaitars for it, assuming they are sensible enough to trust the advice of those characters with City Lore. Otherwise they'll probably be tricked with clipped coins or some other ploy and only get half the yacht's true value. (Clipped coins also have to be handed in to the Imperial Mint on pain of execution, and it might then be months before they got back even a fraction of their money.)

### **Heads held high**

The theme of this campaign is the struggle of the characters to achieve wealth and recognition without betraying their principles. They have been raised in a close-knit community that (in common with most of mainland Tsolyánu) sets great store by honourable behaviour. Thrown into the urban jungle of Jakálla's slums, can they maintain their dignity or will they soon resort to crime?

As referee, your task is to present the players with scenarios that will challenge their moral values and present difficulties for them to either triumph over or give in to.

### **The first adventure**

The characters are visited by Mirizhan hiTathlua of the Blazoned Sail Clan, steward of Nokesh hiPayuli of the White Stone Clan. He offers them 5 Hlash a day each to protect Nokesh, with a bonus of 50 Kaitars if they deal with the person who has been threatening him.

Nokesh lives in a villa along the coast, about eight hours' walk from Jakálla. The characters are told to present themselves there the following day. When they show up, Mirizhan passes them on his way out. Has has packed and is leaving, he says, now he's done his duty and arranged for his master to be guarded.

Nokesh is blind. He keeps to a locked room at the back of the house. He opens a panel in the door before unbolting it to admit anyone. He conducts his arrangements entirely with the character's leader (the eldest Konumra family member).

Nokesh's room is a musty book-lined study. Doors open onto the garden patio, but they are shuttered and bolted. As they cross the room to a table where there is a bottle of brandy waiting, Nokesh makes some comment about the player-character's physical attributes – "Ah, you are a strong

man,” or something like that. How did he know? He chuckles before explaining that the steps dividing the antechamber from the main room creak under a person’s weight. He can tell how tall a person is when they speak, so their weight lets him estimate how muscular they are. Nokesh is quite pleased with himself when he manages a little trick like this.

Nokesh is willing enough to tell his story over a goblet of brandy. He was a captain of marines in the Flotilla of Hagarr. Twelve years ago he and his lieutenant, Thojeng hiDresak of the Red Sky Clan, won a hard battle against the escort of a Mu’ugalavyáni ship. They discovered a treasure worth many thousands of Kaitars which they buried off Ngeshtu Head, knowing they could come back for it when their term of service was up.

Nokesh and Thojeng were subsequently captured by the Mu’ugalavyáni and imprisoned. During an escape attempt they got separated. Thojeng was recaptured; Nokesh escaped into the backstreets of Khéiris where he was press-ganged by Livyáni pirates along with his steward, Mirizhan. He later became blinded by a Doomkill explosion. Three years ago he and Mirizhan got their freedom and made their way back to Ngeshtu Head, but the treasure was already gone.

Nokesh learned that his family had perished in a Mu’ugalvyani raid on Penom. He retired to the family villa near Jakálla, where he lived in lonely isolation until a few weeks ago, when he received a message from Thojeng demanding a large sum of money.

“Isn’t it enough that he took my treasure?” laments Nokesh. “Why does he come to persecute me now?”

### **The truth**

The treasure wasn’t taken by Thojeng but by Mirizhan, who was lying when he told his blind master it was gone. Mirizhan has moved his family off up north and has been slowly preparing for the move himself, intending to retire to a life of luxury, but Thojeng’s arrival on the scene scuppered that plan.

Thojeng thinks Nokesh has swindled him. After spending six years in the Mu’ugalavyáni prison he was sold into slavery in Ch’ochi, escaped, and ended up leading a band of brigands in the Tlashte Heights for three years. When he finally got to Ngeshtu Head and found the treasure missing, he came gunning for his erstwhile captain.

### **What happens**

Mist begins to roll in off the sea, advancing up the garden like a solid white wall. Towards dusk, an old man with a wooden leg comes hobbling up to the house. His ragged clothes, staff and backpack make him look like a traveller. But he is no pedlar or wandering lay priest. He says his name is Ssunruel of Tumissa; “Thojeng sent me. I’m here to parley with the master of the house.”

He is admitted to the study and spends some time talking with Nokesh. Voices are raised, then Nokesh summons his manservant and has Ssunruel put in a guest room. “We’ll speak again in the morning,” says Ssunruel.

Nokesh snorts: “Why bother?”

The next day Nokesh will not let anybody into his room. By mid-afternoon Ssunruel decides to leave.

That night, assuming the characters get suspicious and force an entry, Nokesh is discovered dead. He has obviously been dead for hours. The room appears to have been searched.

Failing to protect Nokesh earns the characters 7 Discredit. If they succeed in an Honour check they must remain and if possible bring the culprit to justice. A failed Honour check allows them to just scam with their money and leave Nokesh's servants and distant clan-cousins to sort things out, but inevitably they will be questioned by the police and there is a strong chance they'll be blamed for Nokesh's murder.

### **How it happened**

Inside Ssunruel's backpack hid Chikattag, a Tinaliya with a gift for ventriloquism and mimicry. Posing as the characters' leader, he got into Nokesh's room during the night and killed him, but could not find the money. To buy more time to search the room he mimicked Nokesh's voice and told people to keep out.

### **Clues to look for**

Nokesh was murdered beside the creaky steps. (That was when he realised it wasn't a human that had entered the room, but something much lighter.) The wound was a stab upwards into his abdomen. (Hence a very low blow.) There are tiny scratch-marks on the polished floorboards (caused by Chikattag's hard chitinous feet).

### **Climax**

After hearing Ssunruel's report, Thojeng assumes the characters are the ones with the missing loot. He comes in force with his men to issue an ultimatum. They must convince him they don't have the treasure (or agree to a strip-search and then vamoose, for 1 Discredit). Otherwise it's clobbering time.

### **Various outcomes**

The ideal situation would be if the characters guarded Nokesh well enough to prevent him being murdered in the first place. This will be quite hard, because Chikattag is stealthy and cunning.

The characters ought to be given time to get suspicious about "Nokesh" refusing to let anyone into his study the next day. If they listen at the door they could hear boxes being opened and cabinets moved around. They don't have much chance of catching Chikattag even if they decide to break the door in - since the fire has burned out overnight he can escape up the chimney.

Even if the characters have figured out everything when Thojeng shows up and tell him that Mirizhan must have the loot, they still might feel obliged to do something about Nokesh's murder. They can wipe out most of that 7 Discredit by taking revenge on the Tinaliya (who is not a Tsolyáni citizen) or by insisting that Thojeng makes a payment of Shantla and half the treasure to Nokesh's clan. They'll still be left with 2 Discredit to reflect their failure to do the job they were hired for.

For another introductory scenario in which player-characters begin as barbarians new to Tsolyánu, try Michael Cule's "[Welcome to Jakállá](#)" in *The Eye of All-Seeing Wonder* #1 and his notes [here](#) on why that's the best way to initiate new players.

Without too much effort the scenario could be adapted for use with the Falesá islanders.

# Keeping the Peace

## A campaign featuring members of the Pála Jakálla police

Given a free choice of character background, most players opt to be members of high clans. This is the approach advocated by Professor Barker himself in *Adventures on Tekumel*, and it is undeniably the easiest course if the group want to play adventurers of the traditional sort. Wealth gives noble characters more individuality and freedom of action, and they are more likely than other social classes to fraternize with others not of their own clan.

But that is not the only option. For the middle and lower classes, individual aspiration is less important than the needs of the clan as a whole. Player groups who are willing to try something a little bit more challenging will get a lot out of playing characters who are authentic Tsolyáni. This means characters who live and work beside their clan-cousins. Kinship forms a bond which will hold the group together and generate plot-threads throughout the course of the campaign.

This article sets out a basis for a campaign in which the players are united by being both clan-cousins and members of the Pála Jakálla city militia.

### The boys in blue

The city militia of Pála Jakálla comprises a single cohort of 400 troops. While not having the status of a regular army unit, the militia is constituted along army lines, its official designation being the 18th Cohort of the First Jakasha Provincial Militia.

The militia captain is Daranai hiSarashkü of the Clan of the Moon of Evening. Daranai reports to an 8th Circle bureaucrat in the Palace of the Realm (the effective “major” of the militia) who in turn reports through the Palace Head to the Governor. A small cadre within the police is detached for the gathering of intelligence. This group (which the player-characters are destined to join) reports directly to Slegu hiVorusel, a lieutenant of the Omnipotent Azure Legion.

The campaign begins with a “pilot episode” in which the characters are still serving as ordinary members of the militia. This introduces them to the background and lets them get a feel for what their job has so far entailed. In the course of this adventure, they are co-opted to Lt Slegu’s unit – the equivalent of being re-assigned from the traffic division to Special Branch!

### The cast list

Eight player-characters are provided, with preset skill-levels. Players should roll their own attributes, rerolling any score that is not appropriate. (They are of course free to change the characters’ names if the ones provided do not appeal.) These characters are about 20 years old at the start of the campaign. All except Gurrekai Mreshsha are members of the Clan of the Red Flower. The first three characters listed are only peripherally attached to the militia and, with fewer opportunities for derring-do, would suit more thoughtful and experienced players.

**Korenoi hiLaumek** (status 6) is a junior magistrate of the 5th Circle attached to Lt Slegu’s office. This role would suit a thoughtful player who might enjoy some extra intriguing between regular game sessions. He must have Reasoning of at least 15. Having been educated at a temple school he gets the skills listed for that (*Tirikélu* page 6) as well as the following: Administrator 4, Calligraphy 3, Etiquette 9, High

Police characters must have Strength, Stamina and Height all at least 10. After five years' enlistment, the skills gained are:

Armourer	1
Charáge	4
City Lore	5
Lawyer	2
Longsword	4
Livyáni	1
Mu`ugalavyáni	1
Physician	1
Police	7
Salarvyani	1
Warrior	2

These levels include both the professional and "off-duty" skills acquired in early adult life (Tirikélu Section 142). Note that although police are usually equipped with maces, not swords, the Longsword skill covers both weapons. The Police skill is equivalent to Soldier, but with less emphasis placed on tactics, drilling and legion history. Police skill-checks (often averaged with Cleverness) may be used to spot something wrong, control a riot, placate an angry drunk, identify the drug zu`ur, recall details of old crimes, and so on.

In special circumstances, militia can be equipped with medium plate armour. Most of the time (particularly in the hot southern climate) they wear only medium leather or ordinary clothes with an azure skullcap for identification. Salary is 15 Kaitars a month for an ordinary militiaman, 30 Kaitars/month for a sergeant, and 70 Kaitars/month for a lieutenant.

Society 5, Historian 1, Intrigue 5, Lawyer 6, Orator 2, Poet 2, Scribe Accountant 3, Theologian 1, Tsolyáni 9, and 6 levels in any foreign language(s) of the player's choice. His regular salary is 30 Kaitars a month, but he has a wealthy patron (Lord Nichevar hiSanmiren of the Sea Blue Clan) who gives him an additional 30-40 Kaitars a month.

**Vrishemu hiDorusan** (status 3) is a former infantryman in the Legion of Mighty Jakálla, which he left after a six-year enlistment because of a lung infection. He must have minimum Strength of 15 and Height of 11, but Stamina now no more than 10. His skills are: Armourer 2, City Lore 5, Etiquette 8, Historian 1, Longsword/axe 6, Merchant 2, Mu`ugalavyáni 2, Physician 2, Polearm 7, Sailor 3, Salarvyani 2, Ship-builder 4, Soldier 8, Strategist 2, Swimmer 8, Theologian 1, Tsolyáni 8 and Warrior 1. Joining the militia would be beneath him after the distinction of serving in a heavy infantry legion, but Lt Slegu has the perspicacity to see that an ex-legionary could be useful to his team, so Vrishemu will be paid a "consultant's" salary of 15 Kaitars a month. He also continues to receive a pension from his legion of 8 Kaitars/ month.

**Chaizel hiOrutesh** (status 4) is from the Red Flower clanhouse in Penom and hence something of an outsider here in Pála Jakálla, where his lineage is not represented. He is a 3rd Circle lay priest employed by the Omnipotent Azure Legion as a scribe, physician and spell-caster. He must have at least Reasoning 13 and Psychic Ability 17. His skills are: Astrologer 1, Bednalljan 2, Demonologist 1, Engsvanyali 2, Calligraphy 4, Etiquette 8, Historian 6, Physician 5, Psychic Sorcerer 5, Theologian 5 and Tsolyáni 8. To these levels, add the skills appropriate for education at a temple school.

**Telüre hiDorusan** (status 3) is an Aridani militia member. Her drop-dead gorgeous looks (Comeliness 20) are of the vulnerable "good clan-girl" sort, so her toughness is likely to come as a surprise to anyone foolish enough to give her trouble. She has the police skills listed in the accompanying box, plus childhood skills as given in *Tirikélu* Section 141.

**Bashan hiDorusan** (status 3) was rejected by the Squadrons of Tlaneno the Steersman, and only reluctantly joined the militia. He is alert and watchful, often reaching a swift conclusion on the basis of intuition while others are still puzzling over the facts. (Minimum Cleverness and Psychic Ability both 16, but Height no more than 9 – the reason the marines turned him down.) His skills are as listed in the box, plus the player's choice of childhood skills.

**Shoretl hiDorusan** (status 3) comes from a long and proud line of militiamen. One of his fathers (now retired) was a police sergeant involved in the arrest twenty-five years ago of the traitor Futharek hiVridi, who was trying to flee the Imperium by sea. Shoretl has a lot to live up to. He has the standard police skills listed, plus childhood skills.

**Ssomu hiRanagga** (status 2) is the "poor country cousin" of the group, a great hulking young man who has been sent to the city from his home village upriver to make a career in the militia. His lack of status is compensated by his physical attributes (minimum Strength, Stamina and Size all 16). He has the police skills listed, plus childhood skills which should include levels of swimming and hunting.

**Gerrekai Mreshsha** (status 1 originally) is a Salarvyani employed as a minder by Korenoi hiLaumek. His clan is not represented in Tsolyánu, making him zero status here in Pála Jakálla, but Korenoi knows that he can be useful to have around. He must have Strength, Stamina and Dexterity all at least 11. His skills are: Arruche 4, City Lore

2, Etiquette 7, Foreigners' Quarter Lore 5, Hijajai (the language of Haida Pakala) 4, Historian 1, Theologian 1, Salarvyani 7, Survival 2, Swimming 4, Thief 5, Tsolyáni 6 and Warrior 3. This role would suit a player with little previous experience of Tekumel.

### **Life at home**

The "core group" of militia characters (Telüre, Bashan, Shoretl and Ssomu) naturally know one another very well, having worked together for the last five years. They are also well acquainted with Vrishemu (he is Telüre's brother and Bashan's and Ssomu's cousin) but won't have seen much of him over the last few years because he was posted with his legion. Prior to the campaign they will have had less to do with Korenoi and Chaizel, but will have seen them now and again around the clanhouse. They may have seen Gerrekai once or twice tagging along with his employer, and on an unmodified Police check they might know a few snippets about him.

All the player-characters except Gerrekai have quarters in the wing of the Red Flower clanhouse that is given over to young unmarried adults.

### **Drunk & disorderly**

The first scenario begins on a sweltering hot summer's afternoon. The four militia members are walking their beat while chatting to Vrishemu, who has recently left the army. (The other player characters will have to sit this one out, or "guest-star" as NPC patrons of the winemakers' clan.)

Suddenly a man in a grey and green kilt comes rushing up. On a +5 City Lore check, the characters can identify him as belonging to the Clan of the Shaded Garden, purveyors of wine and beer. He blurts out that there is trouble at his clanhouse and asks them to come at once.

The public rooms of the winemakers' clan are reached by a doorway directly onto the street. Entering, the characters find a group of about a dozen clanless day-labourers sprawled on mats around a low table directly inside the door. They are obviously very drunk and are laughing and joking loudly. The rear part of the ground floor is a raised section partitioned into several open-fronted booths. Various people of low to lower-middle class occupy these, most notably a group of four cadets of the Squadrons of Tlaneno the Steersman who appear to take umbrage at the day-labourers' rowdy behaviour. They are glowering at the labourers and fingering their swords.

A stairway leads up to a balcony where the better-quality private drinking rooms are located. An observant character (probably Bashan) will notice that a tall warrior with the badge of the Sea Blue Clan is standing at the top of the stairs surveying the scene below with stony-faced indifference.

The problem stems from the fact that the day labourers have been working on an annex of the Temple of Vimuhla down the street and today is pay-day. After a long hot day's work, the beer and wine have hit them pretty hard. Even so they are only being loud, not abusive. Normally there would not be anything to worry about, but the experienced Shaded Garden servants spotted that look in the marine cadets' eyes that means trouble's brewing...

What's eating the cadets (four cousins of the Green Opal Clan) is that instead of the swashbuckling encounters with Hlüss and Salarvyani pirates that their recruiting officer promised, they've spent the last four months' basic training sailing up and down the Missuma River. ("No better than bleedin' coppers!" as one of them tactlessly might put it.) The cadets have come straight off duty and have not yet been back to barracks. They are not armoured (it's too hot!) but are wearing swords.

In one booth over in the corner sits a heavy-set man with a scarred face. This is Chikor of Meku, a renowned local gladiator. He is of low social status but high prestige because of his public profile. No trouble-maker, he is the sort of dependable fellow who might step in and help the young militiamen if he sees them making a hash of things.

Three private rooms are occupied upstairs. In the first, Lord Goreng hiViridu of the Sea Blue Clan is having a discreet briefing session with six foreign adventurers whom he's hired to go on a little "antique collecting" expedition into the underworld. Lord Goreng is keeping this quiet because he doesn't want anyone in Pála Jakálla to suspect how badly his finances have been depleted by his lavish lifestyle. He is seeking a prestigious bureaucratic appointment and cannot afford even a whiff of scandal.

Another private room is being used by an odd couple: Gapraloi hiTetolan, an elderly scribe from the Palace of Foreign Lands, and a young temple prostitute of Hrihayal whom he has engaged for the afternoon. Gapraloi cannot conduct this liaison in his clanhouse because he is afraid of his three wives.

The third suite is occupied by half a dozen priests of Gruganu. The party is being paid for by one of the priests, Hruchak hiYa'anelu, who is visiting Pála Jakálla to conduct some research at the temple library. Since his clan is not represented here, he has been staying at another clan which has friendly links with his own. However, he felt that it would be an imposition to expect his hosts to entertain his friends from the temple, so he has brought them here instead.

The man on the stairs is Lord Goreng's bodyguard, a tough ex-soldier of the Clan of the Sweet Singers of Nakome. He has no intention of letting anyone into his employer's room, police or not. The characters actually have no need to go upstairs anyway, so they won't get any trouble from the bodyguard unless they go looking for it.

The point of this scenario is not for the player characters to have a bar-room brawl. Quite the reverse! They have to demonstrate that they can defuse a tense situation without getting ruffled. Remind them that violence is not the only way to solve problems – a bit of fast talking followed by a Police skill-check often does the job just as well.

### **The new job**

After getting back from the incident at the winemakers' clan, the characters are making their report to the sergeant at the precinct house when a messenger enters. He exchanges a few words with the sergeant, who tells the characters they are to go with the messenger to the Palace of the Realm. Vrishemu will doubtless assume this doesn't apply to him, but then the sergeant peers at him and says: "You're Vrishemu hiDorusan, aren't you? You're to go along as well."

They arrive at the Palace of the Realm and are led through the bustling outer hallways, up an imposing marble staircase, along cool hushed corridors to a dark-panelled chamber high up at the back of the building. Here they are kept waiting for hours while scribes bustle in and out of the inner office, along with some very furtive and disreputable-looking types who come and go at intervals. Chaizel might look in at some point, but he can't enlighten them other than to tell them they're in the office of Lieutenant Slegu hiVorusel of the Omnipotent Azure Legion.

At last, as the rays of sunset trickle out of the room and a servant comes to light the lamps, Slegu has them called in. Korenoi is here. Slegu doesn't mince words: they're being transferred to intelligence work, and that's it. Korenoi recommended them, so Slegu hopes they measure up.

“Report here tomorrow morning,” he concludes, gesturing towards the door. As they’re about to leave he adds: “Which of you is Vrishemu hiDorusel? Stay for just a moment, will you.”

Slegu goes on to explain the job in a little more detail to Vrishemu. Korenoi has a letter from Vrishemu’s old legion captain which he hands to Slegu to read. Slegu gives a judicious nod. “Police work’s a bit beneath a man with your military record,” he says to Vrishemu. “But this isn’t ordinary police work. We deal with Imperial security here.” He goes on to explain the deal: Vrishemu will be informally attached to the group on a monthly salary of 15 Kaitars.

### **First day at work**

The characters show up at the Palace of the Realm the next morning to find another sixteen militiamen waiting too, making a full Semetl of twenty in all. They soon ought to realize that Slegu is not going to be a hands-on kind of boss. He emerges from his office long enough to appoint one of the group as sergeant: a canny middle-aged chap named Qurugar hiTolketh. Then he goes off on other business, leaving Korenoi to explain the first day’s duties.

In case the pitfalls ahead haven’t occurred to the characters, Sergeant Qurugar loses no time clueing them in: “You lads think you’ve landed yourselves a plum job? Not a bit of it! We’ve got important matters to look into, all right – matters of state security and that – but we’re still no more than humble militia. We can’t barge in wherever we like as if we were the Omnipotent Azure Legion. So you’re all going to have to learn a bit of diplomacy, and you’d better learn fast. Fall afoul of some of the people we’ll be investigating and they’ll just stonewall you. Others will have highly-placed friends who’ll be more than happy to bust you back to street-sweeping if you’re not careful.”

### **The lieutenant’s view**

Slegu has very little regard for militiamen, who are generally of fairly low status. The characters will have to earn his respect. He likes Vrishemu, thinks he got a raw deal being invalidated out of the army, and is careful not to seem patronizing in assigning him to what (in Slegu’s own view, in any case) is a rather demeaning job. He resolves to try to find Vrishemu a more suitable post, but in fact never gets around to it. Slegu’s opinion of Korenoi is that he is reliable and capable, but after all just a pen-pusher.

Along with about a dozen other OAL intelligence operatives, Slegu’s job is to deal with serious matters of Imperial security in and around Pála Jakálla. The idea of assigning a Semetl of the regular militia to special intelligence work came from higher up, and is a pretty half-baked scheme as far as Slegu is concerned. But since it has been left to him to make it work, he’s decided that these militia can at least be of value looking into minor matters and doing preliminary spade-work that would otherwise eat into OAL time.

Slegu will call Korenoi in from time to time to review the group’s progress and assign new tasks. Other than that he leaves them to their own devices, and is often absent for extended periods on missions of his own. While Slegu is away, the day-to-day running of investigations is the responsibility of Korenoi and Sergeant Qurugar.

### **Perks**

People are very far from equal in the eyes of the law. Foreigners who get into trouble might be sold into slavery or taken for use in Imperial work gangs. Low-class citizens can expect a spell in a very unpleasant gaol, often with a drubbing into the bargain. The middle classes are likely to bribe their way out of trouble, so a militiaman might get an extra 2-6

A scenario that could be easily adapted for use in this campaign is Jack Bramah's "[History is Bunk](#)" in *The Eye of All-Seeing Wonder* #5.

Kaitars a month or more on top of his regular salary. The upper classes, on the other hand, will not stoop to dealing directly with the militia, offering their inducements to presiding bureaucrats like Korenoi (who therefore ought to make an extra 3-18 Kaitars a month).

### Adventure seeds

*The Holy Hawk:* Someone has stolen a künü that the priests of Karakan use to keep sea-birds out of the temple. The High Priest suspects the culprits may be members of the Society of the Emerald and Silver Crown, a secret group in the temple of Dlamelish. If so, the theft would be a breach of the Concordat – an Imperial crime.

The truth is that this is just a matter of internal temple politics, and has nothing to do with the Dlamelish people. Two senior priests were conspiring to withdraw their support for the High Priest's protégé at the next temple council. The künü overheard the conversation. Recognizing that it might repeat their plans at an inopportune moment, they arranged to have it abducted until after the council meeting.

If the characters start getting close to the truth, the two priests get very jumpy and will do anything necessary to cover themselves. If they're found out, the High Priest could have them tried by an ecclesiastical court – not for intriguing against him, but for stealing the künü, which is technically the property of the god.

*The Coining Caper:* A collector of rare coins complains that he bought some that have been filed down. Tampering with the coin of the realm is an Imperial offence, so Sergeant Qurugur sends them off to investigate. ("We might get a few impalements out of this one, lads," he says, rubbing his hands.)

They trace the coining operation to some Nighted Tower clan-members in the village of Pendara. A successful result? Not quite. The miscreants have been filing coins, true, but only antique coins such as Engsvanyali Suor, not Imperial coinage. This is just a civil offence, requiring them to pay Shamtla to those of their victims who can be traced. Which just goes to show that you can't win them all.

*The Goodfellas from Gunurum Isle:* A group of low-class Salarvani have been preying off new arrivals in the Foreigners' Quarter, demanding money with menaces. This would not normally be a matter of interest even to the regular militia, but one of the gang's victims was a Livyáni nobleman who is now the friend and guest of a high-ranking official. The intelligence department is therefore being leaned on to do something about it. This is an adventure where Gerrekai gets a chance to shine.

*The Honeyed Trap Gambit:* Lieutenant Slegu is convinced that a noblewoman and her friends are implicated in the use of the illegal drug zu'ur but he can't prove it. His own face is too well-known in such circles, so he tells the characters to go undercover. They are to approach the nobles purporting to be suppliers of the drug and entrap them into making a deal. Doing well in this scenario will put them in Slegu's good books.

*The Tight-lipped Troopers:* A pretty girl of the wealthy Ssanmiren lineage has been raped and badly beaten, leaving her permanently brain-damaged. The culprit is not known and the girl cannot give any account of the attack. But when her fingers are prised open, a medalion of the Legion of Mighty Jakálla is found. Some troopers of this legion having been seen around the city, the characters investigate only to find that their suspects have returned to barracks.

They follow the suspects to Jakálla. (The referee here gets the opportunity for the old fish-out-of-water routine, Jakálla being a huge metropolis in comparison with Pála Jakálla.) At the barracks they find that they are barred entry. The legion officers insist they'll conduct their own internal enquiry. If justice (and the Ssanmiren family) are to be served, Vrishemu will have to do some delving of his own. As a former legionary, he can get into the barracks and snoop around – but will he find out something that leads to a conflict of loyalties?

### Other episodes

The campaign will get tedious if every session hinges on matters of state security. Think of the campaign as a long-running TV series. Not every episode of Star Trek involves contact with aliens. A police series like *Between the Lines* focusses on the detectives' private lives as often as on the business of catching crooks.

*The Slippery Pole:* This should take place once the players have settled into a routine. Sergeant Qurugar dies unexpectedly following a bout of pneumonia. (Play him with a cough for a couple of weeks before this.) To make matters worse, his death comes in the middle of a very tricky investigation. Slegu is not around, so Korenoi has to appoint a brevet sergeant. (Presumably he will choose one of the player-characters.) This character is in for the hardest week of his career, but if he holds things together then Slegu confirms the promotion on his return.

*Putting Their Feet Up:* At the end of a hard week, the characters are relaxing in the Red Flower clanhouse when a longshoreman rushes in with dreadful news. A strange stone idol has been found in the cargo unloaded from one of the clan's ships. The captain and crew are being held by a Squadron of Tlaneno the Steersman, whose officer suspects the idol of being a Pariah Cult object. If found guilty of diabolism (worship of the Pariah gods) the entire ship's company could be imprisoned or even executed!

*Under Pressure:* The elders of the Red Flower Clan decide it would be a good idea to marry off Talüre and Korenoi. Either can refuse the match, but this might cause resentment back at home - those elderly aunts only think they're doing their best for the young things, after all. Other player-characters may be asked to "have a word with them." And what if one of the other characters was already carrying the torch for his lovely cousin? There could even be a duel! Here is a potentially touchy situation which could give some amusement if played with a light touch.

### Dead Shark syndrome

A campaign must remain fresh or it stagnates. After a year of game-time, the player-characters will reach the end of their first term in the militia and must decide whether to re-enlist or seek adventure elsewhere. This is a good point to switch direction. The show enters its second season, if you will.

If the players would prefer the chance to really cut loose, they can go into the clan shipping business and get involved in adventures on the high seas. Alternatively, they might stay in counter-espionage but make the move to being fully-fledged OAL operatives. (They'd have to have performed pretty damned well to merit it, though.) A third option is to have Korenoi elevated to administrator of a rural fief upon reaching 7th or 8th Circle. Since the fief is in a remote region of Do Chaka with a history of rebel activity, he'll need subordinates he can trust.

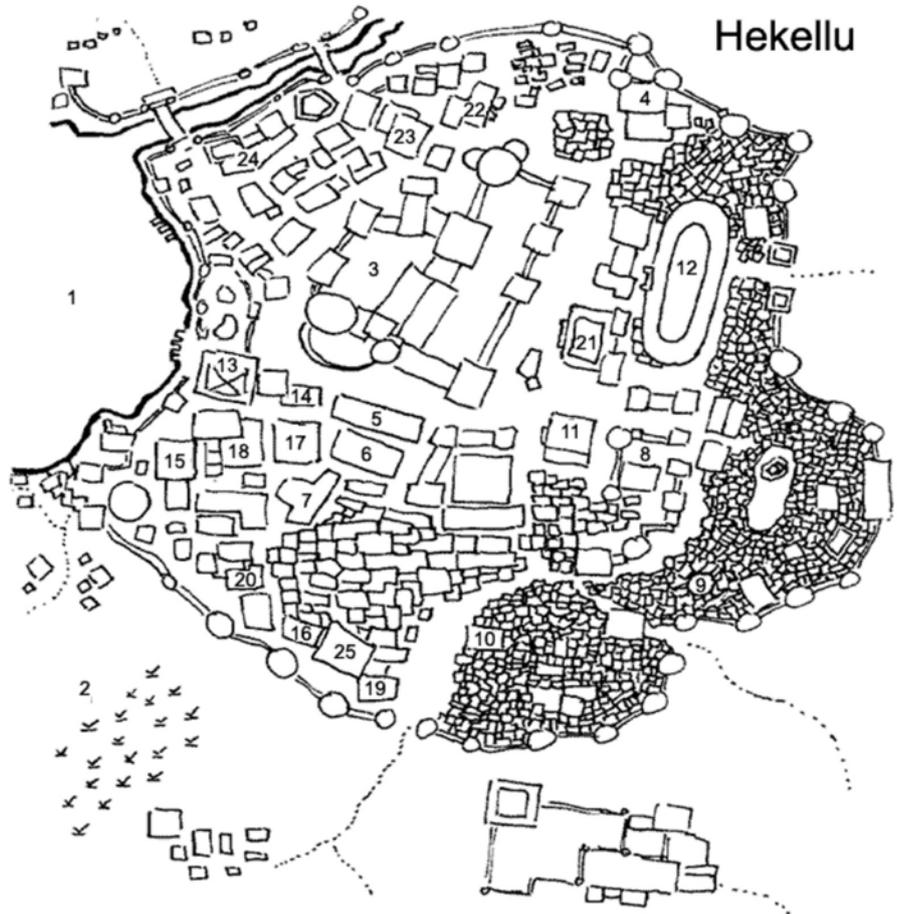
Dermot Boltens's scenario "[Crystal Clear](#)" from *The Eye of All-Seeing Wonder* #2 could be readily adapted for use in subsequent stages of this campaign.

[Sharu'una Fief](#) is another campaign setting, this time devised by Steve Foster.

A scenario for the same setting, "[Mayhem Mansion](#)", can be found in *The Eye of All-Seeing Wonder* #5.

There is also an online colour map of the [city of Hekellu](#) with its own [key](#) which reproduces much of the Sharu'una fief background.

Other Tsolyáni city maps can be found [here](#).



- |                             |                               |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Lake Hekellu.            | 14. Temple of Thumis          |
| 2. Fens.                    | 15. Temple of Hnalla          |
| 3. New Palace.              | 16. Temple of Belkhanu        |
| 4. Ito clanhouse            | 17. Temple of Ksarul          |
| 5. Palace of the Realm      | 18. Temple of Vimuhla         |
| 6. Palace of Foreign Lands  | 19. Temple of Dlamelish       |
| 7. Palace of the Priesthood | 20. Temple of Karakan         |
| 8. Old Palace (semi-ruined) | 21. Barracks                  |
| 9. The Greys                | 22. Golden Bough clanhouse    |
| 10. Temple of Sarku         | 23. Blue Shadow clanhouse     |
| 11. Temple of Hrü'ü         | 24. Rising Sun clanhouse      |
| 12. Hirilakte arena         | 25. Translucent Emerald lodge |
| 13. Temple of Avathe        |                               |

## Friends in Foreign Parts

### Strange goings-on in Mu'ugalavyá

The emphasis in this adventure is on detective work rather than violence. It will be helpful if the party includes some people of high status so that they are not totally at the mercy of the authorities. One of the characters should belong to the Red Star clan, which is one of those clans that occur in both Tsolyánu and Mu'ugalavyá.

#### Setting the scene

It is the year 2372 AS. The player-characters are staying at the Red Star clanhouse in Khéiris. (The reason for their visit to Mu'ugalavyáni is not important – whatever fits in with the campaign.) The Red Star clan patriarch is **Hekkunish Matir**, whose Tsolyáni is quite good. Many of the other clan members have a smattering of Tsolyáni also, so communication is not a problem.

Khéiris has two off-shore lighthouses. Most of the coast is dangerously rocky with high cliffs, but there is at least one good sheltered cove (see below).

At this time of year the weather is blustery, with high humidity and warm rains blown in off the sea. Occasionally hurricanes bring cooler rain, but this is naturally not very welcome since it puts a halt to all shipping and often costs lives owing to flooding, storm damage, and so forth.

#### Ex-pats

There is a very substantial Tsolyáni population in the foreigners' quarter of Khéiris, accounting for close to 5% of the overall population of the whole city. That is about 20,000 people. Many fled here from southern Tsolyánu when Dchich'une came to power four years ago. Karakan-worshipping clans are strongly represented, including many Vrayani, with some clans aligned to Hnalla and Dlamelish also. There is even a Black Y clanhouse here, licensed to operate only within the foreign community.

When they first arrived, the most important refugees were seized by the Mu'ugalavyáni, either as bargaining chips with the Tsolyáni or as a source of military intelligence. The rest were left to settle. Although so many of the Tsolyáni here are disaffected exiles, the large Tsolyáni population in the "Blue District" has had a positive effect on trade with Tsolyánu.

#### Getting involved

The player-characters have been in Khéiris for about a week when Hekkunish asks them to go up to the home of **Ssiriei hiFushmangar**. Ssiriei is a Red Star clan-member of Tsolyáni extraction who lives alone in a villa on the cliff-tops. Hekkunish explains that she has apparently arrived home unexpectedly after a trip abroad and he just wants to see if there's anything she needs. Since the protagonists are Tsolyáni themselves (and presumably include at least one Red Star member), it seems appropriate that they go to look in on her.

#### A damsel in distress

The characters arrive at the villa in the middle of the morning to find Ssiriei and her maid, Hishtlai, quite distraught. When she has calmed down, Ssiriei manages to tell them the whole story. She arrived home last night, several weeks earlier than expected, and was greeted at the door of her own house by a stranger – a rather rough looking Mu'ugalavyáni who she thinks might have been a sailor. Along with two other men (one

of them possibly a local Tsolyáni) he seized Ssiriei and Hishtlai and bundled them up in the cellar. Ssiriei managed to break a bottle and cut her bonds, but by that time the house was deserted. Four servants were looking after the house in Ssiriei's absence: Korchek hiYalida the major-domo, Ransrü hiEshmazun the cook, and two house-slaves called Basura and Chaktesh. They are all missing. Nothing has apparently been stolen except the contents of a display box of antique coins – only five coins, worth no more than 50 kaitars or maybe 100 kaitars to a dedicated collector.

### Looking around

Ssiriei is happy for the characters to stay and investigate the mystery if they want to. A thorough search of the house confirms that only the antique coins are missing. It seems that someone has made an inventory of the cellar, which contains many fine bottles from the collection of Ssiriei's late father. Ssiriei herself rarely drinks wine.

There is a well in back of the villa. If the characters take a look they will discover the dead body of old Korchek the major-domo, one of the four missing servants. He has been dead for a couple of weeks.

The characters might also reconnoitre along the cliffs. If so, they will soon come across a sheltered cove with a stretch of sandy beach at the rear of it.

When the characters return from taking a look around they will find that several militiamen have arrived on the scene, having been fetched from the city by Hishtlai the maid. These men are commanded by **Lieutenant Atvallah Gishko** of the Scarlet Eye. Atvallah will not appreciate anyone withholding evidence. If they get too obstructive he will hand them over to **Captain Hautmekkish Hri'ar** of the Company of Mourners in Sable, the Mu'ugalavyáni equivalent of the Omnipotent Azure Legion.

### The ship's company

The next day a Tsolyáni ship arrives in Khéiris out of Jakálla. Many of the crew are of the Red Star clan, and they therefore come to stay at the clanhouse. This group includes the ship's owner, **Dengetl hiRishyai** and his Aridáni captain **Terukai hiShadika**. Others take chumetl here and then are obviously bound for other lodgings. There is much news from home:

- The Marotlan championship was won by the team of the Clan of the Artificers of Iron. It was quite an upset, as the heavy betting was on the Legion of the Searing Flame team. Varchu hiCharken apparently leaped high over a body-block, rolled over the attacker's back, passed to his brother Ga'intor, who scored with a flying leap in the closing moments of the game.
- The rice harvest was rather poor around the south west this year.
- Two officials of the Omnipotent Azure Legion are rumoured to have been arrested after an Omnipotent Azure Legion internal affairs investigation at the Palace of the Realm in Pála Jakálla. Some people are saying they were secretly in collusion with pro-Mirusiya insurgents.
- Talk around Jakálla is that the political agitator Chanaq hiVridi has somehow escaped from Torunal Island, where he's been held prisoner for thirty-two years. "Some people claim that Chanaq is a wizard who induced a demon to spirit him away." This is the opinion of one of the lower-clan sailors. Dengetl is of more practical cast: "It doesn't seem the authorities agree – they had Imperial troops on the streets looking for him within three hours, and the Omnipotent Azure Legion informer network didn't get any peace for the day or so before we shipped out."

- The famous Bey Sù gladiator, Chamor hiDogeng of the Red Flower Clan, recently arrived in Jakálla. At the age of 29 he is undefeated in thirty-one duels. (He has also won virtually all of his innumerable unarmed “friendly” bouts.) The talk is that he will compete in two duels in Jakálla during next year’s season and then retire. He has been advised by his sponsor’s astrologer that thirty-three wins will be well aspected, that being the number of Chegarra’s aspects.

### **Eavesdropping on secrets**

As Dengetl is seeing off his comrades, most of whom are going to clanhouses or hostels in the Blue District, he pauses to talk to one fellow. This is Jankoi hiSengireth of the Open Hand Clan, the ship’s quartermaster. One of the player-characters happens to be returning from the lavatory at this point and may overhear a snatch of conversation:

Dengetl: “I’m going to need more storage space, Jankoi.”

Quartermaster: “I could clear a little space in the hold if – “

Dengetl: “Ships, man! I need more ships.”

Quartermaster: “I could talk to Fenul hiNakome...”

Dengetl nods.

Quartermaster: “He’ll want more than a payoff.”

Dengetl: “No. I don’t need any partners.”

Quartermaster: “You can’t deal with a man like Fenul that way, sir.”

Dengetl: “Set up a meeting. Tell me when it’s arranged. And, Jankoi – keep quiet about all this. Stay off the drink.”

### **The root of the matter**

**Fenul hiNakome**, with the co-operation of Tsumikel Tarket of the Hanging Rug Clan, was planning to smuggle **Chanaq hiVridi** ashore. The plan was to land him by night in the cove near Ssiriei’s villa and to take advantage of her absence to let him lie low in the villa until he could be conveyed inland to a safer location such as Ch’ochi.

Three of Ssiriei’s servants (the cook and the two slaves) accepted a bribe. Korchek the major-domo would not, so Tsumikel’s henchmen murdered him and threw his body in the well.

Fenul and Tsumikel had left men at Ssiriei’s villa to await Chanaq’s arrival. Now that Ssiriei has returned the plan has had to be changed. Fenul and Tsumikel cannot alert Chanaq’s ship, which is due in about ten days’ time. Their new plan relies on Tsumikel’s son Senyatokoi managing to lure Ssiriei away from the villa on as many nights as possible. In that way she hopefully won’t be in when the group escorting Chanaq arrive. The following morning they will take the risk of moving Chanaq to Fenul’s townhouse hidden in a wine-barrel.

### **Asking questions**

There are three principal clues the characters might follow up: the missing servants, the stolen coins, or the rough-looking Mu’ugalvyani sailor.

It should not be long before they think to take a look around the Blue District. Make sure that you are fully conversant with the plot so that you can respond to whatever the players decide to do.

The following time-line is a rough guide, showing the likely sequence of events at each major location:

These "common knowledge" biographies can be copied and given to the players for reference after they've met each character.

**Fenul hiNakome** A bigwig in the Blue District, the Tsolyáni area of the Foreigners' Quarter. Of an older generation than the recent influx of political refugees and their families. He lives in a red-doored townhouse on the northern fringe of the Foreigners' Quarter. He is not now very active in business, but his name is still spoken with awe by the older residents of Blue District. It seems he is still a force to be reckoned with.

**Tsumiyel Tarket** Originally of the Black Hood Clan. A Tsolyáni who came here 25 years ago and bought himself full Mu'ugalavyáni citizenship in a medium-low trading clan (Hanging Rug). He now lives at the clanhouse and carries on a kind of double life: respectability within Mu'ugalavyáni society, extortion and slaving among the foreigners here. He escapes opprobrium from his clan for this by doing his business entirely through intermediaries in the Foreigners' Quarter. (One rumour is that he's not above press-ganging low-class foreign labourers for his slave vessels.) Tsumiyel deals in various commodities, which he ships primarily to Tsolyánu and Livyánu. He has a number of cut-throat types working for him—mostly Mu'ugalavyáni of very low clans. Tsumiyel's only son is the handsome Senyatokoi. His chief henchman is Chuvunish of Chi'i Mu'ugha.

**Chuvunish of Chi'i Mu'ugha** Tsumikel's right-hand-man, a former sailor who has a Livyáni-style tattoo on his arm. Chuvunish belongs to a very low clan, and even they pretend otherwise. Not a nice chap.

**Senyatokoi Tarket** Tsumiyel's only son. 24 years old and very good-looking. His mother was half-Livyáni and half-Mu'ugalavyáni, so he has rather mixed parentage. Although he speaks his father's native tongue, it is with a strong Khéiris accent; and both father and son are thoroughly Mu'ugalavyáni in their dress. Senyatokoi seems to tend towards the Tsolyáni side in his disposition, however—indeed, he represents the very Tsolyáni stereotype of the dissolute young roustabout. He usually has nothing to do with his father's business.

### The Villa

*Day 1:* The player-characters find Ssiriei and her maid just after they've got free of their bonds.

*Day 2:* When the characters arrive, Ssiriei is about to go into town with Senyatokoi.

*Days 3-9:* Often there's no-one at home as Ssiriei is by now being kept busy by Senyatokoi.

*Day 10:* The ship carrying Chanaq hiVridi arrives in the cove under cover of darkness.

### Fenul's townhouse

(On any visit here, there is a small chance of seeing the missing cook sneaking in or out.)

*Day 2-3:* The characters see a man with tattoos leaving the place. This is Chuvunish.

*Day 4-9:* If they visit in the early morning, the characters see large wine barrels being delivered to the house.

*Days 4-9:* On the third visit to this location, perceptive characters might spot two dodgy characters lurking nearby whom they also noticed on a previous visit. It should be apparent that these two are keeping the townhouse under observation.

### Margulan hiFarom's Numismatic Stall in the Blue District

*Day 2 onwards:* The stolen coins give a possible lead to the Hostel of the Two Towers, the dive where the missing house slaves are lying low.

### The Hostel of the Two Towers

*Day 2 onwards:* If the house-slaves don't manage to give the player-characters the slip, they'll reveal that the cook is at Fenul's place. They don't know much more than that.

### Tsumiyel's clanhouse

*Day 2-5:* The protagonists could spot Senyatokoi. (Check to see if they remember having seen him previously at Ssiriei's villa.)

*Day 6-9:* Some very shady-looking types emerge from the clanhouse courtyard after a brief exchange with Tsumiyel. If followed, they lead the protagonists to Chuvunish.

### General locations within the Foreigner's Quarter

*Anytime:* Fenul's men are spotted looking for the missing house slaves.

*Anytime:* The protagonists discover that Fenul owns no ships, but is the middleman for deals with Tsumiyel.

### Senyatokoi's townhouse

*Day 3 onwards:* Ssiriei will often be found here as she becomes increasingly infatuated with Senyatokoi.

### Dramatis personae

**Fenul hiNakome** left Tsolyáni thirty-one years ago, following the Vridi rebellion. Now quite old but still alert, he keeps pretty much to himself in his heavily guarded townhouse. Formerly he was a sort of godfather to the older-established Tsolyáni community, but his influence was eroded

by the large influx of political refugees four years ago. There is some circumstantial evidence that Fenul helped the Mu'ugalavyáni authorities in rounding up some of the anti Dhich'une ring-leaders.

Fenul has recently been receiving daily shipments of large wine-barrels, which arrive in a cart just after the gates of the Foreigners' Quarter are opened at sunrise.

**The spies.** Fenul's townhouse is being watched by two scruffy types who look like labourers. These are actually Kazhurin hiTalu and Yodekkan hiMaksoi, who work as informers for the Omnipotent Azure Legion. They have heard of Chanaq's escape back in Tsolyánu and are keeping an eye on Fenul because of his Vriddi connections.

**Tsumiyel Tarket** is a Tsolyáni ex-patriate who bought himself full Mu'ugalavyáni citizenship in a lower middle class trading clan (Hanging Rug) and now lives at its clanhouse. Most of his employees are native Mu'ugalavyáni of very low clans.

Tsumiyel deals in various commodities, which he ships mostly to Tsolyánu and Livyánu. He has made a lot of money, some of it by slaving. He escapes full opprobrium from his clan for this by doing his deals through Tsolyáni intermediaries in the Foreigners' Quarter. It is rumoured that he's not above press-ganging low-class foreign labourers for his slave vessels.

Tsumiyel's only son is the handsome Senyatokoi. His chief henchman is Chuvunish of Chi'i Mu'ugha.

**Senyatokoi Tarket** is Tsumiyel's only son, 24 years old and very handsome. He usually has nothing to do with his father's business – apart from spending the profits on wine, feasting and dog fights. Just after Ssiriei's return, however, he strikes up a friendship with her and soon the two are constant companions.

Senyatokoi has even gone to the trouble of having a private townhouse decorated in Tsolyáni style for Ssiriei's comfort. (This place was in fact rented by Tsumiyel and furnished at considerable expense the very day after Ssiriei's sudden return to Mu'ugalavyá.) His aim is to keep her in town with him so that she will be absent from her villa when Chanaq hiVriddi arrives.

**Chuvunish of Chi'i Mu'ugha** is Tsumikel's chief henchman, a former sailor who has a Livyáni-style tattoo on his arm. Chuvunish belongs to a very low clan, and even they pretend otherwise. He is not a nice fellow. This is the "rough-looking Mu'ugalavyáni" that Ssiriei was greeted by on her unexpected return home.

**Ssiriei hiFushmangar.** A wealthy young Aridáni of the Red Star clan who lives in seclusion at her villa overlooking the sea, some way along the coastal cliffs outside the city. In her mid twenties, she is not outstandingly attractive. Ssiriei is the only daughter of the late Tekkunel hiFushmangar, a former administrator in Jakálla, who fled to exile here after being implicated in the artificial grain shortage of 2349 AS. She was born on the ship after her father's departure from Tsolyánu.

Ssiriei is a scholar specialising in ancient Tsaqw texts. Having become interested in certain documents reputed to be stored at the Monastery of the Tempered Blade, in the city of Lnoris on the island of Vra, she took ship for there eight weeks ago. Anticipating a stay of at least a month at the monastery, she told her servants she would be back in about three months. However, when she got to Vra she quickly found that the documents were not what she'd hoped for. Immediately taking ship back to Khéiris, she therefore returned home seven weeks early and seemingly surprised some robbers in the act of burgling her home.

**Ssiriei hiFushmangar** A Tsolyáni member of the Red Star clan. In her mid-20s, an absent-minded scholar. Not terribly beautiful, though pretty enough in a sea of Mu'ugalavyáni faces. She speaks perfect unaccented Tsolyáni and dresses in Jakállan style, unaware that the revealing style is unflattering to her rather out-of-condition figure. She was born on the ship after her father's departure from Tsolyánu. Rich and of high lineage, she keeps pretty much to herself in her villa atop the cliffs outside town.

**Ransrü hiEshmazun, Basura and Chaktesh** Respectively, Ssiriei's missing cook and house-slaves. Ransrü was already in employment at the villa when Ssiriei's father died five years ago, but both the slaves were acquired since then.

**Dengetl hiRishyai** A Jakállan member of the Red Star clan. Owner of the Spear of the Sea. About 43 years old and an example of another common Tsolyáni type: the serious-minded merchant adventurer.

**Terukai hiShadika** An Aridáni in her 30s, a handsome rather than openly beautiful woman. She does not belong to the Red Star clan, but is staying at the clanhouse (rather than at a hostel like most of the ship's company) by reason of her status as captain. Seemingly not much interested in anything that happens anywhere other than on board her ship.

**Lt. Atvallish Gishko** An investigating officer in the Scarlet Eye, the police overseeing arm of the Second Palace. In his late 20s, gruff but reasonably affable for a Mu'ugalavyáni official. Having lived most of his life in Khéiris, he has acquired a good grasp of Tsolyáni.

**Capt. Hautmekkish Hri'ar** The representative in Khéiris of the Company of Mourners in Sable, Counter-intelligence & State Security wing. A thin-lipped, hooded-eyed man whose manner brooks no impertinence. He is quick to remind any foreigner that in this country murder is a criminal, not a civil, offence. Violence is often treated as a crime against the state, and Hautmekkish has a reputation for pushing the full weight of the law against offenders—particularly Tsolyáni, for whom he seems to have a special distaste.

Once news has spread concerning Ssiriei's ordeal, she is visited by Senyatokoi Tarket, ostensibly to discuss finding a new major-domo. (This is odd because Senyatokoi is a spoiled playboy and normally doesn't have anything to do with anything resembling work.) A romance soon develops.

**Ransrü hiEshmazun** was Ssiriei's cook. A fat jaundiced looking man, full of self-interest – though at least he has the dignity to be slightly ashamed of himself for it. He is lying low at Fenul's townhouse.

**Basura** and **Chaktesh**, Ssiriei's missing house-slaves, are sleeping rough in the Blue District. They are worried because they think Fenul or Tsumiyel might decide to silence them. Basura helped herself to a handful of antique coins when Chuvunish of Chi'i Mu'ugha wasn't watching. Now she's hoping to get some money for these, as she and Chaktash don't dare try to collect the rest of their promised payoff. (When she sells them to a collector in the Blue District it might give the player-characters the chance of a lead.)

**Chanaq hiVridi** is a one-time hothead whose ardour has been somewhat cooled by thirty years in an Imperial prison. Chanaq remains dedicated to the Vridi cause, but is mellower and more introspective than he was in his youth. Also he is still a little bewildered by the sudden turn in events following his escape, and is consequently more inclined than he might otherwise be to go along with the plans of others.

Contrary to widespread belief, Chanaq is not a wizard. That rumour only arose because he has managed to slip so miraculously through the Imperial security net on several occasions in the past.

**Dengetl hiRishyai** is a Jakállan member of the Red Star clan, owner of the Spear of the Sea. Dengetl has nothing to do with the scheme to bring Chanaq hiVridi into the country. He just wants to take advantage of rice shortages in southern Tsolyánu, and is therefore keen to hire ships for carrying the extra cargo. He's trying to do a deal with Fenul, who in fact owns no ships but acts as middleman for Tsumiyel. (This fact can be established by enquiry at the harbour office.)

**Terukai hiShadika**. A member of the Blazoned Sail clan, but staying at the Red Star clanhouse rather than in a hostelry by reason of her high status as ship's captain. She's not really interested in anything that happens on dry land; her job is to see to the ship.

Following Terukai will at least give the characters a taste of Mu'ugalavyáni thoroughness. They see soldiers of the Second Palace insist on searching the ship's cargo and then place it under sealed guard until unloading, which is supervised by dock militia. This is standard procedure for any incoming vessel.

#### Author's notes

This scenario was inspired a Dashiell Hammett short story. Like "Just off the Boat" it was originally set in my own campaign, where Dhich'one was soon replaced as Emperor, but can as easily fit into the official Tekumel timeline.

# In the Wrong Hands

## A scenario of happenstance, coincidence and enemy action

### Overview

These events are set in the summer of 2365 AS. Dhich'une sits on the Petal Throne and Baron Ald is his First General. Elselne and Kettukal are isolated in Paya Gupa. In the north-east, Mirusiya suffered crushing defeat from an army comprising both Tsolyáni and Yan Koryani elements, but he escaped and is rumoured to be heading for Fasilum with the remnants of his troops. In various parts of the country, simmering discontent threatens to boil up into civil war. There are food shortages in the south, and riots and lawlessness are spreading.

The player-characters have travelled through the Kerunan protectorate down to Rû, intending to cross the border into Salarva. Use any pretext that suits the campaign: the characters can be simple merchants, spies, refugees, or whatever.

### Arrival in Rû

Arriving at mid-day, the player-characters find the whole city hushed by the intense shimmering heat. Across a wide plaza, a couple of dogs bark at a trader dozing under the awning of his stall. Beside a still fountain, children laugh and shout until called into their clanhouse by a woman. The architecture is bizarrely ornate by the standards of most of Tsolyánu: many huge onion-domes, trefoil arches and grotesque carvings. The creamy marble buildings, splashed with colours of gilt and mosaic, gleam as though with inner light under a violet sky.

The characters have been given a letter of introduction to Tharan hiKunush, the Patriarch of the Victorious Globe Clan in Rû. Rousing the doorkeeper of the clanhouse, who was taking his siesta, they are shown into a hall panelled with dark wood. After their journey along the Sakbe in sweltering heat, the characters ought to be glad of the cool chumetl they are handed by a servant. The Patriarch enters and, after examining the letter of introduction which the doorkeeper hands him, gives a cordial greeting to each in turn. Glancing over to the doorkeeper, he says, "I suppose you have already put Utzar hiKusrem in the Tetel Rooms?"

The doorkeeper nods, thinks for a moment, then ventures to add: "But the servant took him along barely a few yom ago, sir. I should have thought he won't have unpacked yet."

The Patriarch is pleased by this. "I'm sure you'd be most comfortable in the Tetel Rooms," he says to the characters. "Utzar won't mind being moved. When the kheshchal flies down to drink, the kaika must waddle aside, as they say! Ha ha! I'm sure you won't mention to Utzar that I said that, but the poor fellow really isn't used to such grand accommodation anyway."

Leading the way, the Patriarch takes them out into the central courtyard, along a tiled veranda fringed with ivy. He stops in front of a large door, brushes the wooden clapper with his knuckles, then strides in briskly. The characters follow in time to see the Patriarch stop short, obviously surprised to see two people in the room. One is a long-limbed fellow with a broad weather-beaten face, who still has the dust of the road on his sandals. This is Utzar. The man he is talking to appears to be a person of respectable status – perhaps a bureaucrat or priest. The characters

may recognize the design on his cloak as denoting the Black Stone Clan. Seeing the Patriarch and the characters, the two men stop their hushed conversation, smiling broadly to cover their surprise.

The Patriarch apologises to Utzar for the intrusion. "I had not supposed you would have any visitors so soon after your arrival here. But, as you can see, a party of travellers has just arrived." He makes a sweeping gesture to indicate that these spacious rooms are too much for one person. "Since I notice you've yet to unpack, perhaps you wouldn't mind being moved to the room just along the veranda?"

Utzar, apparently a humble trader of the Turning Wheel Clan, is quick to oblige. Shouldering his pack, he waits for his guest to precede him out of the room, nodding politely to the player characters as he leaves. If any characters dawdle out on the veranda, they will notice the doorkeeper leading Utzar and his guest to the door at the end.

Servants bustle in with the player-characters' goods. The Patriarch withdraws, saying he looks forward to seeing them at dinner. As a cool gust of wind stirs the chimes hanging out on the veranda, he casts an appraising look at the sky. "Ah, we're in for a storm."

After the Patriarch has closed the door, one of the characters spots a piece of paper lying beside a low table. It looks as if Utzar or his visitor must have dropped it. Picking it up, they discover it to be a crumpled letter addressed rather vaguely to "the Clanhouse of the Morning Haze, in the Far Chakas". The seal has been broken and scraped away, and the letter bears traces of blood and dirt.

Only a couple of minutes later, the characters hear the clack of the door-clapper. The door opens before they have time to ask who is there, and Utzar comes in. He is looking for something he's lost, a document. He wonders: have they seen it, please?

The wisest course is for the characters to "discover" the letter under the table now and pretend they had not noticed it before. Alternatively they might hide it in the hope of getting more time to study what it says. Utzar can be fobbed off with excuses (particularly if a point is made of his lowly clan-status). Not so his friend, however. If Utzar fails to retrieve the letter, Hejentu will come along a minute later and politely insist on a thorough search of the room. If the letter still does not show up, Hejentu will finally leave wearing a thin smile in which a sensitive character might well perceive the warming of heating irons and the oiling of thumbscrews.

If the player-characters look out from their rooms they will see Utzar and Hejentu walk together to the clanhouse gate, where they lean together in conspiratorial conversation for a moment. Utzar glances back in the direction of the veranda, but the foliage conceals the characters from him. He listens to what Hejentu says, then gives a sombre nod. As Hejentu leaves, the sky opens and the afternoon rain comes down in hissing sheets.

### **What has gone before**

The letter is a coded document prepared by Arijan hiSamvara, a renegade agent of the Omnipotent Azure Legion. He was sent south by Prince Eselne to find out how people were reacting to Dhich'une's accession. The letter was his coded report, sent by runner to a contact in Sokatis who would know to forward it on to Paya Gupa. But the letter never reached Sokatis, as the runner was observed leaving the Sakbe and ambushed. He died, and the letter fell into the hands of a Yan Koryani spy (of Tsolyáni birth) by the name of Utzar hiKusrem.

### **THE LETTER**

To Mirizhan,

Major-Domo at the Clanhouse of the Morning Haze, the Far Chakas,  
Greetings!

I arrived safely in Rū, but found the local clanhouse unsafe for habitation by reason of woodworm. While repairs are being carried out I am staying with friends of our master's old comrade, who lament that they have not seen him for almost two months, but remember him with affection. Their home is very warm and comfortable, as you would expect.

On the road I passed a lady in a green cloak. She had with her four hunting dogs, or perhaps as many as five, and I am given to understand she will also be residing locally for a time. Why bring her own dogs? Well, in Rū there are only two, and they are old and even toothless, but they still have some spirit and I do not think they would take to the lady in question.

Your obliging nephew.

PS If there is any difficulty in making reply, and I know our master is busy, only say to his old comrade: remember Vreshsheqmu's curse.

Utzar returned with the letter to Rū where, in keeping with his usual practice, he went to stay at the Victorious Globe Clanhouse. He arranged to meet his contact there: Hejentu hiWorishar of the Black Stone Clan, a Palace of the Realm official loyal to the Emperor. But while they were discussing the meaning of the letter, the Patriarch inconveniently displaced them to another room because of the arrival of a bunch of hma-faced travellers. Only when they looked for the letter five minutes later did Utzar and Hejentu realize it had got left behind. What if those hma-faced travellers got hold of it? They might not be as stupid as they looked...

### Truth

The meaning of the letter might seem transparent to modern eyes, but in fact is quite sophisticated code by Tsolyáni standards. It indicates that Arijan discovered the senior officers of the Omnipotent Azure Legion in Rū to be loyal to Dhich'üne. While waiting to see what he could do about this, Arijan is in hiding at Tsayil, a little town seven miles south of Rū famous for its hot springs. This was the site of General Kettukal's victory against the Salarvani nearly two decades ago. Arijan's letter also indicates that four or five thousand Yan Koryani troops have been sent into the Kerunan region. Arijan suspects that the two thousand or so local militia are not happy about Dhich'üne's alliance with Baron Ald, which allows soldiers of Yan Kor thus to freely march within the Imperium's territories.

Vreshsheqmu was the commander of the Regiment of the Mace of Steel, turned back from an abortive invasion of the Kerunan protectorate by Kettukal in 2347 AS. Towards the end of the battle, Kettukal's squadron of hlaka were running out of ammunition to drop on the enemy and he instructed them to use hot mud from the springs. Some mud spattered Vreshsheqmu's helmet and he tore it off, exclaiming, "Shit!" Hence the local expression "Remember Vreshsheqmu's curse" which means to watch out for calamity from an unexpected direction. (However, Arijan is using it in a different context, to remind his superiors that they can get a reply to him by hlaka messenger.)

### Consequences

Although loyal to the Throne, Hejentu hiWorishar is uncomfortable about the presence of Yan Koryani forces in the area. It makes him deeply uneasy about the future. Much depends on whether he believes the characters to be involved in current affairs. If he thinks they are agents of any other faction, he will not hesitate to have them assassinated. For this task he would use Utzar and some reliable Nighted Tower thugs whom he's employed for such purposes before. He cannot risk sending soldiers to arrest the characters as he does not want news of his own carelessness to leak out. Particularly not at the moment, when the Yor Koryani and Dhich'üne's new men are assiduously weeding out time-servers like himself.

If Hejentu thinks the characters got a glimpse of the letter, his concern will be to find out what they intend to do about it. He might send one of his henchmen purporting to be an Elselne sympathizer, with a view to entrapment. He will certainly get Utzar to spy on them. If the characters show themselves to be only bumbling amateurs at the espionage game, they might get off by paying Hejentu and his cronies an inducement. If they look to be dangerous, there is always the assassination gambit.

If there is no reason to suppose that the characters even saw the letter in the first place, Hejentu is content to let the matter lie. Like many medium-level bureaucrats, he much prefers a quiet life. Utzar, on the other hand, is canny, suspicious and zealous. He might well eavesdrop on the characters or follow them if they go out.

## MILITARY INFORMATION

### The Legion of the Clan of the Red & Green Banner

*General:* Lady Hu'myek of Dharu

*Base:* Dharu, Yan Kor

*Recent events:* The entire legion (3000 medium infantry and 2000 light-armoured crossbowmen) has been assigned to the Kerunan Protectorate. Baron Ald is anxious to maintain his grip on the outlying fringes of Tsolyánu and not let the Imperium fragment in civil war.

### The Regiment of the Mace of Steel

(Part of the Army of the Fist of Chaddarsha)

*General:* Lord Kurek Tiqonnu Thirreqummu

*Base:* Koyluga, Salarvya

*Recent events:* A contingent of this force has recently occupied the city of Fenul, in the Chaigari Protectorate. This contingent is commanded by Lord Arraqu Tiqonnu, the General's second son.

### **Red herrings**

Naturally in a border city like Rû there is all manner of skulduggery going on. In various corners and crevices and shadowy back alleys are lurking agents of the Emperor, the Salarviani, the various parties, the secret societies, the old guard OAL – and no doubt others as well. The characters could easily blunder into real trouble if they go nosing around the city without thinking things through.

It is quite likely that they will follow one of two leads: either the letter's reference to somewhere "warm and comfortable" or the line about "Veshsheqmu's curse". On the face of it, the former might suggest the Temple of Vimuhla. Indeed, the Flame-Priests will be interested in anything the player-characters can tell them, but this is just a red herring. Arijan really meant that he was staying near the hot springs at Tsayil.

Also the characters might question a clan servant about local expressions and so learn about "Vreshsheqmu's curse". Certainly there are one or two hlaka resident in Rû, at least one of whom fought at the battle in 2347 AS. This is old Kirichur, a seller of amulets who lives in a lean-to on the roof of a tenement block in the Foreigners' Quarter. Being raddled by age and somewhat bewildered in his thinking, Kirichur might well give the impression of understanding whatever the characters talk to him about. In fact his only interest is in selling his cryptic talismans and amulets. If Utzar follows the characters to Kirichur and sees him pressing an amulet on them, he will make the obvious assumption that the hlaka is involved in spying and will murder him once the characters have left.

The heavy rain keeps most people off the streets until evening, when the clouds roll back allowing the full light of Kashi to shine down on the glistening flagstones. The rain helps Utzar to tail the characters without getting spotted, but it is still their best time to act because (i) there are few militia patrols about and (ii) Hejentu will not go and summon his Nighted Tower henchmen until the storm passes over.

### **Taking the waters**

If the characters decide not to cross into Salarvya, the adventure will take them no further. But assuming they proceed on to the border they will pass through the town of Tsayil. A little further on, they see numerous tents set up in the fields close to the border post. The reason soon becomes all too clear. In an effort to make their mark, the newly-arrived Yan Koryani troops have clamped down heavily on border control, which in normal circumstances is quite a relaxed business involving a bottle of datsu or a new pair of sandals for the border guards. The new system requires each person to hand in all money and belongings, for which they are given receipts. There is then a wait of three or four days in the camp while their travel documents are studied and their belongings are searched. Surprisingly there has not been much pilfering, although characters would be wise either to hide really choice items or else to see that a high ranking officer countersigns the receipt.

While cooling their heels in the camp, the characters may wish to stroll back to Tsayil. The letters-of-credit handed out by the border guards are effectively worth only 90% of face value there. Arijan is being sheltered by some old war veterans who remember Kettukal, and is unlikely to announce his presence to the player characters without good reason.

In the fields outside Tsayil is a massive stela commemorating the victory of 2347 AS. This is a stone monolith about six metres high depicting Kettukal standing over a bound enemy warrior on a sacrificial slab. The stela has sunk into the ground over the years, and the base has become overgrown, until it is no longer possible to read the inscription: "He who

loves his Emperor, let him stay his hand, for that love is a shield without which the Empire falls.”

On the player-characters’ second day in the camp, the Yan Koryani sappers are ready to pull down the stela. They intend to replace it with a new stela depicting Baron Ald. This has been prepared by Yan Koryani craftsmen and bears the illiterate inscription: “Beware to try conquer Ald, Army-Breaker.”

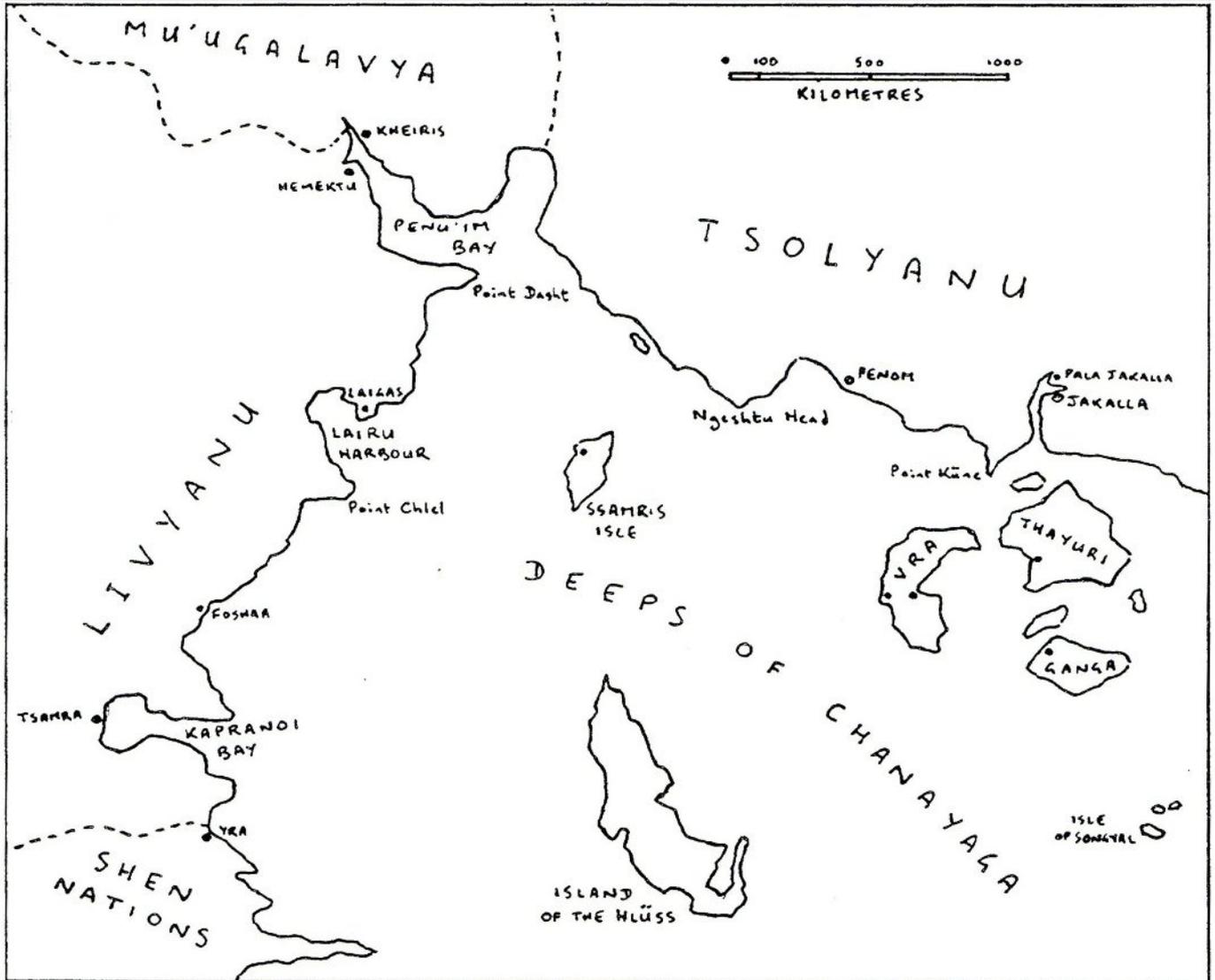
The locals assemble in the field to watch the stela being toppled. Some of the old men growl and grumble under their breath, but with so many soldiers of the Legion of the Clan of the Red and Green Banner on hand, no-one dares to cause trouble. The work takes longer than expected, and by the time the great stela’s roots have been torn from the ground the sky is darkening with the approach of the afternoon rains. As the storm hits, everyone runs for cover. The old stela is left face-down in the mud to be moved away the next morning.

The player-characters can go out in the storm to investigate without fear of discovery. The Yan Koryani soldiers are stationed within their camp and on patrols through the village, but the rain makes it easy to sneak past. The rain has washed away some of the earth beneath the uprooted stela, revealing a jumble of human bones. This is the remains of one of Vreshsheqmu’s senior officers who was sacrificed after the battle that took place here eighteen years ago. Below him is a long stone box sealed with lead. This bears the same inscription as on the base of the stela. Anyone who opens it whose declared loyalty is not to the Emperor suffers a psychic blast causing a Grievous Wound and automatic lasting injury. Of course, when Kettukal’s wizards sealed it they were thinking of the Emperor Hirkane. Ironically, the same spell will now harm any enemy of Hirkane’s murderer, Dhich’une!

The box contains the battle-standard of the Regiment of the Mace of Steel, the group whom Kettukal defeated. Kettukal’s astrologers determined that as long as the standard remained buried here, the Army of the Fist of Chaddarsha could never gain a hold in Kerunan. Naturally the ruling family of Koyluga, the House of Thirreqummu, would like to recover this standard. Many other factions, if they learned about it, would try to get their hands on it too. The player-characters cannot easily smuggle it across the border, and turning back if they are already signed into the border control encampment would entail loss of cash and belongings. They could just put it back where they found it and walk away, of course – but the referee might remind them that this is an opportunity that comes perhaps once in a lifetime.

**If you liked this...**

There’s more military espionage in Bob Dushay’s scenario [“Behind Enemy Lines”](#) in *The Eye of All-Seeing Wonder* #4.



# Internecline!

## A scenario of co-operation and conflict

This adventure takes place when a ship carrying the player characters is wrecked on a small uncharted island in the Deeps of Chanayaga. It is suitable for characters with a little adventuring experience, the best fighters having Melee values around 21-26.

As written, the adventure assumes that the player-characters are employed aboard the ship as marines. One or two characters might be sorcerers, again in the employ of the ship's owner.

Other options are possible. Some of the players might be sailors. It is possible that a foreign passenger is aboard. Further player characters could show up as marooned sailors from previous wrecks. In fact, the adventure provides a good excuse for bringing together quite a disparate group.

### The journey

The ship on which the characters are travelling, the *Meteor*, is one of two Sescha-class fighting galleys accompanying the *Illustrious*, a Tnek-class merchantman, as escort. The flotilla set out from Jakálla, sailing close to the Tsolyáni coast until they reached the small island west of Ngeshtu Head. They then struck out south into open ocean as far as Ssámris Isle. The intention was to sail west from Ssámris Isle until they made landfall around Lairu Harbour, then down the coast to Tsamra. In theory this route (as opposed to sailing right round Penu'im Bay) should clip some 10-15 days off the journey time. It should also not have been too risky at this time of year (the month of Halir).

Alas, it is the fate of man to be at the mercy of the gods. A storm blew up barely a day out of Ssámris. The flotilla was scattered. It was all the crew of the *Meteor* could do to hold her together as she ran before the wind, driven on all through the afternoon and night.

By morning the storm has died down. The *Meteor* is taking on water and has the additional problem of carrying very little in the way of supplies. But the day brings a glimmer of hope when they sight an island ahead. The mast has split, so the rowers bend wearily over their oars and slowly the *Meteor* limps into the shelter of a placid bay.

### The island

The island is roughly oval, seven kilometres long by four across, with a coastal fringe of thick jungle, above which steep grassy hillsides rise towards the soaring peak of an extinct volcano in the centre. (Of course, the characters won't discover the extent of the island unless they send out scouting parties.)

The referee may find it helpful to sketch the bay where the *Meteor* puts in. The beach, of white coral sand dotted with a few rocks, is 35 metres wide and backs onto a area of dense jungle. To the characters' left as they come ashore, the beach tapers to a strand only 15 metres wide that stretches into the distance. To their right, a high shelf of overgrown rock blocks the beach after only 200 metres or so. At the foot of this rock they see the wreck of a Mu'ugalavyáni bireme.

### The ship's company

The *Meteor's* crew are all members of the Blazoned Sail Clan. The ordinary oarsmen (of whom there are forty-two) are of the Deilesha and

Ra'agana lineages – all of social status 2. The oarsmaster, carpenter and stroke-singer are of the Nerukan lineage (status 3-4). The captain and first mate are cousins belonging to the Farrekesh lineage (status 6).

There are twelve marines. This includes the player-characters. Assume that any non-player marines are average ex-troopers with Melee values in the range 19-24.

Naturally someone is in command of the marines. Lord Hetepek hiAztlan (the ship's owner and thus everyone's employer) will have previously assigned this position to the player-character with the best soldiering experience. If this character dies in the course of the adventure, command will pass to the marine of highest social status.

Also aboard is Lady Chamakiyang hiAztlan, Hetepek's wife. Her presence gives the characters good reason to hope that Hetepek may come looking for them. She is also a potential source of discord, and of headaches for both the marine commander and the captain.

### **Rescue chances**

Lord Hetepek was aboard the *Illustrious* when the storm blew up, and may already be scouring the area for signs of the *Meteor's* fate. Of course, the characters have no way of knowing whether the *Illustrious* weathered the storm, but it is a fair assumption. Even so, they would be foolish to sit it out in the hope of rescue. The island they are on lies almost four hundred kilometres south west of Ssámris and is not marked on any charts. Hetepek has no reason to suppose they can survive more than a few days on the supplies aboard to *Meteor*, and any search of the area could take weeks. In fact he will make the attempt anyway, but the chance of the *Illustrious* finding the island is only 3% each day. (Check for this on the third and subsequent days. Once the characters put back to sea, the chance of the *Illustrious* finding them drops to 1% daily.)

### **Repairs**

The captain orders the *Meteor* hauled up onto the beach. After a brief inspection, he estimates repairs will take two or three days. He immediately tries to establish an authoritative tone: "We must assume the *Illustrious* will be circling in the area trying to find us. In the meantime, we need food and a supply of fresh water. And I want a party to look over the Mu'ugalavyáni ship yonder..."

The player-characters may wish to dispute who is in overall command. The problem is that there is no formal chain of command. In normal circumstances, the marines are supposed to take charge during sea battles and to organize shore parties. Unless the player character leading the marines agrees to defer to the captain, it is probable that the whole group will begin to polarize into factions.

For the referee's information, 120 man-days' work is required to make the *Meteor* seaworthy. They could set to sea before this work is complete, but it would be taking a risk. Someone will need to supervise the repair work, and at the end of each day this person must make a +5 Shipbuilder check. A critical success on this roll means that 25% extra progress has been made (eg, if forty men were working they will have achieved fifty man-days worth of labour). Critical failure means the day's work is wasted; ordinary failure means half the work is wasted.

The captain has 6 levels of Shipbuilding, while the carpenter has 12. Ideally, then, it should be the carpenter who oversees the work. Tsolyáni regard for status being what it is, however, the captain will actually do this in consultation with his clan cousin the carpenter, the net effect being to average their skill levels for the purpose of repair checks.

## The bireme

Searching the Mu'ugalavyáni bireme reveals a few dead sailors and many dead oarsmen. They were apparently killed in the wreck. Evidently most of the rowers were slaves, as can be seen by the bronze torcs around their necks. This is odd, as slaves are not usually set to work as oarsmen in the Five Empires. A few of the slaves seem to have been set free – perhaps by a kindly slavemaster as the ship foundered? Many are still chained to their oars, and from their condition it looks like the wreck occurred maybe a week or more ago.

Curiously, about a dozen of the rowers are not here. It seems that they must have survived the wreck and were unchained so as to be moved elsewhere.

The bodies of one or two of the slain show sharp gaping wounds. Anyone who has fought Hlüss has a chance (unmodified Cleverness check) to recognise these characteristic injuries inflicted by their jagged swords. Anyone who can read Mu'ugalavyáni (or who is Mu'ugalavyáni) will spot the glyph stamped into the slaves' collars that indicates they were property of the state. The same glyph is visible on an open despatch-locker located in a small raised cabin at the stern of the ship. Someone succeeding in a -5 Soldier/Reasoning check realizes that the likely explanation for the bireme being rowed by slaves is secrecy. Free men might blab when in their cups, but slaves could be put to death when the bireme reached its destination with no one any the wiser.

## Survival

The ship's remaining supplies will last for only two days. Tall trees along the back of the beach sport a profusion of large dark nuts under their glossy foliage. A +5 Survival check identifies these as G'ar nuts, providing edible blue flesh once the hard shell is broken open. Any characters gathering them must make a +5 Dexterity check, with critical failure indicating the character falls while climbing and suffers 1D10 minus 1D6 damage. (Ingenious characters may find other ways to gather these nuts.)

Few of the fruits and berries to be found on the island are much like anything back home in Tsolyánu. Without the Survival skill, they will be reduced to trial and error to determine what is safe to eat. A character sampling anything rolls D10: 1-7 = the fruit is okay; 8-9 = stomach cramps reduce Stamina by half for the rest of the day; 10 = poison requires an unmodified Stamina check or incapacitated for the rest of the day.

Each person gathering G'ar nuts can get enough in two hours to provide one person's daily food requirement. In theory this would be an ideal task for the player-characters and other marines, while the sailors get on with repairs. Characters of respectable status may chafe at doing any such undignified work, however. ("We are warriors, not farmers!") This is a challenge that the player-character in charge must deal with, or else risk losing authority.

## Scouting

It will be necessary to send out at least one group to search for fresh water. A kilometre or so along the beach they come across a strange broken object the size of a boulder. The substance it is made of is not stone, but a light calcinous material about as hard as pumice. Other similar objects are nearby.

Continuing another half-kilometre, they find the source of these objects, lying across a reef of rocks like a giant broken egg. It seems to be some kind of wrecked vessel – but not like any craft that ever sailed out of Jakálla harbour! It is platter shaped, about thirty metres across, filled with

a flooded honeycomb of low tunnels. It seems to be made of the same substance as the “boulders” on the beach. (This is in fact a Hlüss hive-ship, as a -5 Sailor or unmodified Magical Lore check will identify. It was thrown up by the storm onto a spur of rock at the end of the beach. It is so badly damaged as to be completely unseaworthy.)

Higher up, at the edge of the trees, there are signs of burnt-out fires and a makeshift Hlüss camp. There are several dead Hlüss here, obviously slain by sword-wounds, including one Hlüss noble with many gems remaining in its carapace. These gems are worth a total of maybe 1000 Kaitars, but will take almost half an hour to prise out.

While the characters are having a go at getting the gems, they may well be surprised by two or three “runt” Hlüss. These are tiny wizened versions of the full-sized creature, ranging from twenty to forty centimetres in length. Cast out by the full sized Hlüss to fend for themselves, their only aim is to grab a bit of food (ie, flesh) and scuttle off into the jungle with it.

### **Shipwrecked mariners**

The scouting party subsequently encounter two figures who dash off as soon as they're seen. One, who has a Tsolyáni look about him, turns and hesitates as he gets a closer look at the party, then stops running and calls his companion back.

Approaching warily, the pair introduce themselves Aisenish Turel and Zakaren hiAhanur. Both came to the island on the wrecked bireme. Aisenish is a sailor, and Zakaren is a slave from Tsolyánu. (Originally from Penom, and of the Flowering Life Clan, though he has been a slave for ten years and by now is almost used to it. Indeed, up until a week ago he had a better life than he ever did as a free man.)

These two were part of a foraging party sent out by Prince Hurusamish (see below). They were ambushed by Hlüss. “We managed to get away,” says Zakaren, “but now we can't find the others. Aisenish thinks they must have relocated to another camp. We've had to fend for ourselves these last three days, and a bloody nightmare it's been too, with those Hlüss scuttling about at all hours of the night. Safest time's the middle of the day, funnily enough...”

### **A tale to tell**

Aisenish and Zakaren cannot tell the characters much. They were aboard the Mu'ugalavyáni bireme, the *Scourge of Hrsh*, which was transporting several officers the Company of Mourners in Sable to Ssámris Isle. En route they encountered a Hlüss ship which must have ventured north for plunder. Caught in a sudden storm, both ships were blown far off course. The Hlüss ship was wrecked first. The *Scourge of Hrsh* stood out to sea until the rowers tired, then it too was wrecked. The soldiers and surviving crew freed a few slaves, but were forced to flee when the Hlüss showed up. That was over a month ago. For the last three days, Aisenish and Zakaren have been on their own.

### **The Hlüss**

The Hlüss appraised the damage to their ship and realized it was irreparable. The surviving slaves taken from the wrecked bireme were used for egg-laying, but then the ship's “mother” died of injuries it had sustained in the wreck. Stranded on the island, the Hlüss switched into a colonizing mentality, rather as some social insects do. They divided into two factions, each supporting a “princess”. These factions are now at war with each other. Both factions desire more humans for egg laying: the “runt” Hlüss (about half normal size) are all they can hatch from the local Jakkohl-like fauna.

These is one Hlüss lair at each end of the island, located in caves in the jungle. The strong acid reek of these places gives anyone who has encountered Hlüss ample warning not to enter. Each lair comprises one “princess” and one “chamberlain” (who do not fight), two “lords” (old warriors distinguishable by the gems studded into their exoskeletons) and about twenty ordinary fighters. There are also several paralysed slaves in whom eggs have been laid, but these will not hatch for another hundred days.

### **The Mu’ugalavyáni**

The *Scourge of Hrsh* was transporting Prince Hurusamish Gatlena, commandant of the Company of Mourners in Sable, the elite Mu’ugalavyáni state security legion. He was on his way to Ssámris Isle with orders that would place him in command there. By the terms of the treaty of 2021 AS, the Mu’ugalavyáni are only supposed to maintain a token presence on Ssámris Isle and Tsolyáni shipping is to be given free passage. Prince Hurusamish’s orders were to change all that. The plan was to rapidly build up a large fleet at the island and use it to launch a full-scale invasion against the outlying Tsolyáni islands (Ganga, Vra and Thayuri). Thus the Mu’ugalavyáni hope to snatch territory from their old foes while the Imperium is off-balance from the threat of civil war.

Since Prince Hurusamish and his men are outnumbered by the Hlüss, they have set up a hideaway on the upper mountain slopes. From there they observed the crippled *Meteor* putting in to shore. Naturally Hurusamish is keen to get off the island, but he is content to let one day go by while the sailors make repairs. During the morning of the second day, he will choose his moment to try to seize control of the *Meteor*.

Hurusamish’s scouts have reported some sort of factional conflict among the Hlüss. He knows nothing about the reason for this, of course, but he is enough of a realist to know that such a lode of luck cannot last. His aim will be to get off the island once he judges the repairs to the ship to be at least three-quarters completed.

Prince Hurusamish is accompanied by his ruthless second-in command, Lord Surendish Ju’una, and six elite troopers. All wear light excellent steel and are armed with excellent steel swords. The Prince also has an Eye of Healing with 6 charges and an Excellent Ruby Eye with 12 charges.

Also in the Mu’ugalavyáni group are the captain of the *Scourge of Hrsh*, his Aridáni bo’sun, two sailors and four slaves. None of these will fight unless their lives depend on it.

### **Hurusamish’s strategy**

Hurusamish is outnumbered by the Tsolyáni, but a direct assault to wrest ownership of the *Meteor* is not his only option. First he will try approaching the marines, preferably while they are scouting and hence without a rabble of sailors to back them up. He knows that if he can establish an authoritative position over the marines, the Tsolyáni sailors will go along with that.

Hurusamish starts by explaining the situation as regards the Hlüss and pointing out the importance of a truce. His tone ought to make it clear to the characters that this would not involve a partnership of equals. Remember that Hurusamish is a tough soldier, accustomed to command. By making sure that his men refer to him conspicuously as “His Highness the Prince”, he capitalizes on the respect for social rank that pertains throughout the Five Empires.

If Hurusamish sees that the Tsolyáni will not buckle under, he will target the character in charge with a formal challenge to mortal combat. This

mirrors the form of a Qadami battle challenge, and it would be very difficult (-5 Soldier/Etiquette check) for the character to avoid it without serious loss of face. (Players may not appreciate the importance of face. If so, explain that the character cannot remain in authority if this challenge is not met.) Prince Hurusamish will not fight in person, but appoints one of his men. Similarly, the Tsolyáni commander can appoint a champion from among the marines. The Mu'ugalavyáni champion offers to exchange weapons with his opponent to make things more even, insofar as he himself has steel armour.

Only if the player-characters manage to worm out of fighting a duel will Prince Hurusamish commence direct hostilities. If his champion loses the duel, he grudgingly accedes to an equal partnership. (The player-characters ought to have the sense to realize that this is the best they can hope for when dealing with a person of such exalted status.)

If it comes to a fight and the Mourners in Sable succeed in overpowering the marines, the *Meteor's* sailors will surrender. (One blast of the Excellent Ruby Eye is more than enough to convince them!) Hurusamish will accept the parole of any character who lays down his arms. He then, quite courteously but firmly, will insist on placing metal shackles on Lady Chamakiyang to prevent her using further sorcery. If things do get to this stage, the characters are in trouble. Hurusamish is prepared to take Chamakiyang and any other Tsolyáni nobles along with him when he leaves, but he intends to strand the rank-&-file marines because they are non-essential personnel.

### Setting to sea

The *Meteor* can carry enough water to supply sixty-one people (the entire ship's company) for five to eight days. (The difficulty of hygiene means that barrels can go bad, hence this margin of uncertainty.) Finding freshwater streams on the island is not difficult, but transporting full one-Nmecha barrels (each weighing 60 kilograms) back to the beach will require some effort.

Cargo space is also sufficient to store a week's basic rations. This can be supplemented while at sea by a character making a +5 Survival or Fisherman check, which will add one day's food for 1-3 people (1-6 people on a critical success.) The sailors won't have any time for fishing, as they will be engaged in rowing and other chores.

Once at sea, the characters are faced with three options:

1. Sail around hoping that the *Illustrious* will show up. The chance of that is only 1% each day.
2. Sail due north. Mu'ugalavyáni coastal waters lie about 1400 kilometres in this direction, whereupon the chance of encountering another ship climbs from virtually nil to 10% or more each day. The mainland lies another 300 km north, and the ship will probably make landfall quite close to the Tsolyáni border.
3. Sail due west. The chance of encountering coastal shipping becomes 10% a day after 950 km, and another 150 km will bring them into Fashaa Port, on the Livyáni coast.

### Making headway

There will be no more storms once back at sea – unless the referee is feeling vicious and wants to maroon his players on Hlüssuyal! The distance covered each day depends on several factors including the prevailing wind, the health of the crew, and the captain's skill. Abstract this by rolling 2D6+3. Subtract 1 for every ten man days the *Meteor* was short of optimum repairs, down to a minimum of 1. Multiply the final result

	Melee value	damage	Hit Points	Armour	Stamina
<i>Tsolyáni</i>					
average marine	24 (sword)	+1	13 [3/5/7]	4	13
average sailor	11 (club/oar)		12 [3/5/7]	0	13
<i>Mu'ugalavyáni</i>					
Hurusamish	30 (sword)	+1	13 [3/5/7]	6	13
Surendish	29 (sword)		13 [3/5/7]	6	14
Tharandesh	35 (sword)	+2	16 [4/6/9]	6	15
average soldier	31 (sword)	+1	15 [3/6/8]	6	15
<i>Hlüss</i>					
average "lord"	32 (sword) and 19 (sting)	+2	17 [4/6/9]	4	14
average fighter	21 (sword) and 12 (sting)	+1	15 [3/5/7]	3	12
<p><i>The Hlüss stings inflict a base 1D6 damage and are poisoned. Characters stung must make a -3 Stamina check. Ordinary failure reduces the character to one half-action a round. Critical failure (or a second sting) results in paralysis. Recovery takes 1-5 days if a Detoxify spell or Eye of Healing is not available.</i></p>					

by 20 kilometres to give the base distance covered in a day, assuming the captain succeeds in a +5 Ship's Captain check. (Critical success increases the distance covered that day by 25%. Failure reduces it by 25% – or 50% on a critical fail.)

### Running out of time

Whether or not they realize it, the characters are working against the clock. Scouting parties may have caught sight of groups of Hlüss stalking one another around the jungle interior. By noon of the third day there will be no such sightings. The Hlüss civil war is over. There is just a single undisputed Hlüss "mother". Now they need some hosts for their eggs...

The Hlüss attack comprises three jewel encrusted "lords" and twenty-five ordinary fighters. A group of ten launch a diversion from the trees at the top of the beach while the remainder emerge from out of the sea. (Hlüss are semi-aquatic, remember.) At this point, a +5 check based on the average of a character's social status and Soldier level is needed to hold firm. Anyone failing this check runs for the trees. (Player-characters are exempt from making the check. If and when their morale breaks it should be as a result of role-playing choice, not random dice rolls.)

To save having to make forty-seven separate rolls for the Blazoned Sail people, the referee can just assume that all but 2-12 of them will panic. The captain and first mate should be among those who stand their ground.

None of the Mourners in Sable will panic. If Hurusamish is in charge by this stage he will have his men fight side-by side with the Tsolyáni against the Hlüss, and if they acquit themselves well he'll be honour-bound to take them all with him in the *Meteor*.

### Principal characters

**Lady Chamakiyang hiAztlan** (22 years old, status 16) is proud, beautiful, pampered and wilful. A princess in her own land ([Chung An Satar](#)) she is accustomed to obedience. She does not hold any specific position of

### Chamakiyang's homeland

Chung An Satar, which means 'Land of the Manifest Spirit' in the tongue of its natives, comprises two large islands lying some six thousand tsan to the west of Tsolyánu, which is to say about three thousand tsan west of the Tsolei Isles.

The two islands, which total about one third the land area of Tsolyánu, are separated by a narrow channel, the Straits of Ajong, only ten tsan wide at its narrowest point. A chain of mountains, which includes some peaks estimated at more than six tsan in height, runs the length of the islands and forms a small archipelago off the south coast. The snow on the highest peak is often whipped up the winds into a strange spiral shape which hangs in the air. The early inhabitants of the island believed this to be the manifestation of their deity, and named the peak Chung An: the Manifest Spirit.

authority in the ship's company, but that won't stop her. Almost as soon as the *Meteor* is dragged ashore she will start issuing strident commands. She wants a parasol set up over some mats and cushions. She wants a good breakfast. She wants less noise from the work force. Characters may begin to think she wants something else, too, but since she is their employer's wife they had better not try it. Another factor to consider is that she is a 9th level Ritual Sorceress with Carminry +5, Necromagy +4, Pathogenesy +4 and Venefice +5.

**Hafarek hiFarrekesh** (30 years old, status 6) is the captain of the *Meteor*. He distrusts soldiers because he believes the military are jacks-of-all-trades. In an emergency like this, he would rather fall back on his own expertise than trust to a bunch of marines "whose main interest is in designating tasks and shouting orders." Hafarek is completely guileless; if the party descend into factional squabbling he will refuse to have any part of it.

**Prince Hurusamish Gatlena** (51 years old, status 32) is the commandant of the Company of Mourners in Sable – the black-liveried "legion of executioners". He is a man of honour, but first and foremost he is motivated by his duty as a Prince of Mu'ugalavyá. Thus he recognizes that sometimes one must put the needs of the state above one's personal honour. He is carrying coded documents (see above) which he will destroy rather than see them fall into Tsolyáni hands. To decipher these, a character must follow a +5 Literacy check with a -10 Mu'ugalavyáni/Spy check.

**Lord Surendish Ju'unu** (43 years old, status 25) is Hurusamish's second-in-command. A practical-minded and ruthless man whose extreme zeal for the god Hrsh blinds him to the possibility of admirable qualities in a non-worshipper. He would as soon simply butcher the Tsolyáni marines ("...and the heathen witch!") and enslave the sailors.

**Sergeant Tharandesh Ngale** (23 years old, status 10) is in charge of Prince Hurusamish's elite bodyguard. An earnest, dedicated young man. He has five troopers under him, one of whom has 6 levels of Assassin.

### The employer

To develop the lead-in to this adventure (the voyage from Jakálla to Ssámris), the referee will need some background detail on the player-characters' employer:

Hetepek hiAztlan (22 years old, status 25) is a charismatic young warrior who has had a meteoric rise in wealth and influence. After a relatively impoverished childhood in the village of Kúgashtene outside Jakálla, followed by a term in the Legion of Mighty Jakálla, he had the good luck to become bodyguard and steward to a lord of the Tlakotani Clan. This gave him a good financial base and brought him to the notice of some high-ranking nobles and bureaucrats. Driven by boundless energy and vision, he has almost single-handedly revitalized the fortunes of the ancient Silver Links Clan.

A worshipper of Dlamelish, Hetepek is always courteous to women since in his view they share the nature of the goddess. He is clever, but his intelligence is solely of a practical down-to earth sort. He has no patience with abstract concepts. He believes utterly in his own destiny ("I am the clan; the clan is me!") and is driven by inexhaustible ambition. He rewards loyalty with generosity, treachery with ruthless reprisal.

### Author's notes

The title of the adventure was intended as an ironic comment on the factionalism of both the Hlüss (which I expected the players to perceive as entirely biological) and the humans (which they would of course justify as politics, not biology).

In practice, the internecine splits ran deeper than I thought, the Tsolyáni group beginning to show signs of fragmenting as soon as they arrived on the beach – something I have tried to reflect (and even encourage) in writing this version. Interestingly, it is pretty much the same thing that happens to the group of isolated legionaries in Professor Barker's novel *Flamesong*.

In a sense, the adventure is like a nightmare equivalent of one of those "corporate survival weekends" – except this is the real thing. Characters who manage to hold things together and bring the group through the ordeal in one piece will be rewarded with high rank and responsibility. Hetepek recognizes and values such ability. Characters who are found wanting will most likely never have to worry about facing Hetepek's wrath. Their just deserts will be a unmarked grave on an uncharted beach – or worse, ending up as food for a new clutch of Hlüss larvae.

# Source Material

## Sites of interest

Source material and discussions can be found at:

[Tekumel.com](#) - a huge and beautifully designed repository of maps, background details, rules, scenarios, fanzines, etc. I will especially point out the back issues of [The Eye of All-Seeing Wonder](#).

[The Tekumel Foundation](#) is the official guardian of Professor Barker's legacy.

[The Hall of Blue Illumination](#) hosts a regular Tekumel podcast.

[The Eye of Joyful Sitting Amongst Friends](#) is not specific to Tekumel but has several Tekumelani posts.

[Fate of Tekumel](#) emphasizes the science fantasy origins of Professor Barker's creation.

[Seas of Tekumel](#) - a description of a maritime combat scenario.



# The City of Pála Jakálla

The capital city of Jakásha Province, Pála Jakálla is situated on the headland between the estuaries of the Missúma and Ranánga rivers. The walls encompass eight hills that rise above the low country of the Flats of Tsechélnu, with the necropolis built on a ninth. Pála Jakálla had a population of some 45,000 at last census (in 2350 AS).

Some say that this was the original site of the great metropolis of Jakálla - hence the name, which means "Yesterday" Jakálla. The noted scholar Nyélme hiSurúkhói asserts that in the course of several Dítlána the site of the city has gradually shifted. However, a shift of forty tsán across a major river is somewhat hard to credit. More credible is the theory that this was the original Jakálla of very ancient times, a title usurped for the current site after the collapse of the Three States of the Triangle.

The mouth of the Missúma River is ideal as a staging post for goods coming down from the interior of the empire. Positioned as it is, the city receives a large proportion of the goods shipped from the hinterland for transportation along the coast or export overseas. Since the river is the easiest method of transporting goods to the capital, the markets of Pála Jakálla are well stocked with exotic goods of all sorts.

## Vade mecum

Several noble clans have houses here. Alongside those usually to be found in the south there are houses of the Íto and the Blade Raised High clans.

Most houses of the noble clans are clustered around the hill on the top of which is the clanhouse of Cloak of Azure Gems. Many private mansions and palaces, as well as some of the smaller upper-class clanhouses, are situated on the hill where the Tower of Tanmrúktu stands. The area by the city wall between the Gate of Supernal Wisdom and the Gate of Bushétra contains most of the other high clanhouses such as Grey Cloak and Red Sword. The upper-middle class district comprises the area around the Hirilákte. The buildings between the Governor's Palace and the Market Square are mostly artisans' clanhouses, particularly those associated with the finer arts and crafts. The area between the temples and the Missúma holds the lower-class clanhouses, along with some small and rather shabby private residences. The very low-class district lies along the walls next to the Fish Market.

Within the Foreigners' Quarter, the various nationalities and nonhuman species congregate together in their own little enclaves. Páchi Léi, Swamp Folk, Ahoggyá and Shén are all to be found here (though not in great numbers). There are people from virtually any place in the known world that has a coastline - even the occasional barbarian from as far away as the Nyémesel Isles.

The area surrounding the city is flat and very fertile, benefitting from the fertile silt laid down by both rivers. There are extensive rice paddies, of course, as well as a few specialist crops that are grown almost exclusively in this region.

Away from the city walls the rural population is fairly dense at some seventy people per square kilometre, with towns and villages scattered about the area. Because of the nature of the crops, the peasants here tend to be somewhat better off than their cousins elsewhere in the Empire.

## Key to the City of Pála Jakálla

These are some of the principal clanhouses and buildings of the city:

1. **Clan of Sea Blue** The traditional lords of the south, tracing their ancestry back to the Bednálljan royal family. Many members are highly-placed bureaucrats, army officers and priests.
2. **Clan of the Golden Bough** A southern noble clan with Engsvanyáli roots. It has strong influence in the bureaucracy, and locally many clan-members are high in the Palace of War.
3. **Clan of the Golden Sunburst** Another Engsvanyáli noble clan, even more aristocratic than Golden Bough. The local lineages are especially wealthy, and its members prefer to exercise power through patronage and indirect influence rather than seeking public office.
4. **Clan of the Might of Ganga** A noble clan with strong links to the priesthoods of Belkhánu, Avánthe, Thúmis and Hnálla.
5. **Clan of the Cloak of Azure Gems** A noble clan who trace their history back to Ksáru's officers at the Battle of Dormorón Plain. Some members worship Hrüü.
6. **Clan of the Blade Raised High** Descended from the palace guards of Engsvanyáli times, this Karakán-worshipping clan is strongest in the mid-west.
7. **Clan of the Jade Diadem** Another noble clan containing many city officials. Most members are followers of Dlamélish and Hriháyal.
8. **Clan of the Rising Sun** A high clan comprising upper class merchants and some minor landed nobles.
9. **Clan of the White Crystal** A venerable Jakállan clan with houses right up the Missúma river.
10. **Clan of the Joyous of Vrá** Descendents of the old Vrayáni nobility, principally devoted to Hnálla, Belkhánu and Thúmis. This clan maintains a legion (the Third Imperial Slingers) and also includes many medium-level priests and bureaucrats.
11. **Clan of the Staff of Beneficence** A small clan of high status whose members revere Thúmis and Keténgku. Contains many wealthy physicians, apothecaries and scholars.
12. **The Council of the Clans** A kind of guildhall used for meetings of the mercantile clans when thrashing out pricing agreements. Various celebrations are also held here, in particular the fertility rituals of the temple of Avánthe.
13. **The Shipyards of Hagárr** The base for two cohorts (800 men) of the Squadrons of Tlanéno the Steersman. There are also several commercial and Imperial shipyards, which produce both sea-going and river vessels.
14. **Clan of the Emerald Girdle** A prestigious land-owning clan whose main centre of power lies upriver, although there are often members visiting the area because of the large volume of trade they are involved in. Thus the clanhouse has only a dozen permanently resident members, but with staff and accommodation sufficient to support up to fifty more.
15. **Palace of Jedusáne Tlakotáni** See Notable Personalities below.

## Ceremonies and holy days

*1st Hasanpór:* New Year's Day is celebrated with feasts and gift-giving.

*2nd Shápru:* A procession from the Council of the Clans, by way of the temples and the four Palaces, to the Governor's Palace marks the legendary date of the founding of the city.

*25th Didóm:* The Litany of Noble Deeds takes place at the temple of Karakán; a traditional date for youths to take their adult name.

*3rd Langála:* Feasts and elegant parties celebrate the Summer Solstice.

*9th Drénggar:* The Enhancement of the Emerald Radiance in praise of Dlamélish.

*5th Firasúl:* Autumn Equinox (also Shén New Year)

*1st-10th Halìr:* Harvest festivals.

16. **Clan of the Standing Stone** A high clan which maintains its own legion: the Second Imperial Slingers, based in the city of Ürmish. Members of the clan include priests, bureaucrats, soldiers and farmers.

17. **Blue Kirtle Clan** A medium-status clan devoted to Avánthe. Locally the clan specialises in winemaking, though some members are priests and bureaucrats.

18. **Clan of Sweet Decay** A Sárku-worshipping clan of medium status, but with only one house in the whole empire. They specialize in the distillation of fine brandies from másh-fruit brought down from the hills near Tumissa. The clan have a secret method for treating the fruit on its journey south that imparts particular qualities to the flavour of the liquor obtained. The purists of Tumissa insist that it is not truly másh brandy, but this lighter decoction is more to southern tastes, and people will pay a hundred Káitars for a bottle of the best vintages. Másh brandy is not the clan's only product; they also distil dátsu and brew ngálu (wine).

19. **Clan of the Shaded Garden** A medium-status clan who brew and serve wine and faóz (rice-beer). The clan maintains public rooms where lower-class patrons can sit and drink, and a suite of guest chambers for more distinguished guests.

20. **Clan of the Moon of Evening** A medium-status clan specialising in trade. The Yarisal lineage is famous for its wood carvers.

21. **Green Malachite Clan** A clan with strong maritime links whose members include sailors, fishermen and rice farmers.

22. **Clan of the Collar of Bronze** A wealthy but low-status clan devoted to the transport and sale of slaves.

23. **Clan of the Green Tattoo** Another slavers' clan, but not so wealthy as the Collar of Bronze because their warrant permits only the sale of "foreign persons brought from overseas".

24. **Clan of the First Moon** A medium-status mercantile clan. Some lineages have links to the Palace of Foreign Lands.

25. **House of the Pleasant Hour** This is part of the Temple of Dlamélish. A trained priest or priestess can be hired for anything between 1 and 100 Káitars, depending on skill, comeliness and the services required.

26. **Clan of the Ripened Sheaf** A prosperous middle-status clan devoted to farming and rural crafts. Smaller clanhouses are found in almost every village in these parts.

27. **Clan of the Red Flower** A medium-status clan involved in shipping and foreign trade.

28. **Armoury of the Red Eclipse** This is the house of a small local clan specialising in the production of functional but unelaborate arms and armour. (The clan includes artisans who are able to work in iron and steel.)

29. **Pyramid Tomb of Prince Bekundráne** This is the largest pyramid in the necropolis. Bekundráne was the third son of Ssirandar II, who was killed in a rebellion by the people of Ngála, a ruined city some way to the southwest of Pála Jakálla. The tomb later fell into a state of serious disrepair, although it was not looted owing to a rumoured curse. It has recently been restored to some of its former glory by Májjaq Skendrúzhzha.

30. **Tower of Tanmrúktu the Astronomer**

31. **Headquarters of the Omnipotent Azure Legion**

32. **Weapon School of Makkúdzó the Salarvyáni** Unsurprisingly for a Salarvyáni-run school the speciality is Arruché (sword &-dagger fighting), in which Makkúdzó is an acknowledged master. Other noble weapon-styles are also taught. Makkúdzó's prices mean that his school tends to be the preserve of the upper classes, but he has been known to take on the occasional promising but poor student at reduced fees. (Price for a two-hour lesson: 15 Káitars with Makkúdzó himself, 10 with a junior instructor.)

33. **Gladiator School of Panú'ish Ketlán of Ssa'átis** Panú'ish is a former gladiator who made his fortune in the Hirilákte in Jakállá. His sponsors, the Clan of the Blade Raised High, set him up with this school after his retirement. Although his primary interest is in the training of gladiators for the Hirilákte, he can be prevailed upon to give private instruction. (A two-hour lesson costs 5 Káitars.)

34. **The Palace of the Realm** The largest of the four bureaucratic Palaces in the city, overseeing local taxes, trade, civic upkeep and law enforcement.

35. **The Palace of Ever-Glorious War** Deals with recruitment, supply, the Sákbe guard units and maintenance of the city walls. (The units of the Squadrons of Tlanéno the Steersman who patrol the river report here, not to the Palace of the Realm.)

36. **The Palace of Foreign Lands** Responsible for customs, foreign trade and shipping, and diplomatic relations.

37. **The Palace of the Priesthoods** Responsible for temple tithes, public rituals and relations between the priesthoods and the state. The ecclesiastical courts are located here.

38. **The Hirilákte** Because of the gladiator school there is a healthy level of activity at the arena, giving Panú'ish's pupils a taste of the big time before moving them on to the arenas of the great metropolises.

39. **The Citadel of Hágarr** This citadel is of Bednálljan architecture, very solid and not particularly attractive. Its one claim to fame is that it has never fallen to a siege. That at least is what the locals claim, and certainly it has not happened in the history of the Second Imperium. It is used as a warehouse for essential supplies and any imported goods destined for the Imperial Coffers at Avanthár. This leaves a lot of unused space, most of which is left prepared for use as barracks in case Imperial troops should be billeted in the city.

40. **The Isle of Torment** The prison for those convicted by both Imperial and civil courts. The guards comprise two Semétl (40 men) of the Legion of Kétl.

41. **Mansion of Donmikáyel hiGángasa** See Notable Personalities below.

### **Foreigners' Quarter**

42. **The Palace of Winds** Rest-house for foreigners of royal or noble status. Prices range from 50-100 Káitars per day.

43. **The Tower of the Blue Dawn** Rest-house for foreigners of high status. Costs 20-50 Káitars a day.

44. **The Courtyards of Hirkáne** Rest-house for foreigners of upper-middle status. Costs 10-20 Káitars a day.

45. **Foreign merchants' "guild"**

46. **Ahoggyá enclave** A high wall ameliorates the rank smell emanating from these thatched log-built abodes.

47. **Shén enclave** A high wall protects the faint-hearted from any sight of these terrifying creatures.

48. **House of the Fulfilment of Dreams** This bawdy house is owned by Majjác Skendrúzhzha and run by his brother-in-law, Zékkumet Ssámadan. They cater for all purses and tastes. Given enough time, Zékkumet will procure any type of pleasure or perversion his clients can afford. (The Temple of Dlamélish receives a 25% cut of the profits in return for allowing the House to remain open.)

49. **Hostel of Buzhúnra** Rest-house for foreigners of middle status. Costs 1-10 Káitars a day.

50. **Fazhzhá's House of Repose** Rest-house for those of lower-middle status. Costs 1-20 Hlásh a day.

51. **The Buzzing Domicile** Rest-house for those of low status. Costs 1-20 Qirgáls a day.

## Notable Personalities

**Lord Jedusáne Tlakotáni** (aged 45, status 20) The great-great-grandson of the 56th Emperor by a series of younger sons. He is an affable man who spends his time studying the history of the Imperium and dallying with his concubines. His income derives from large estates near Jakálla. Recent events have made Jedusáne a rallying standard for various discontented factions, since he is potentially a candidate for a future Kolumejálim (literally "Emperor-choosing") if the Emperor were to die childless (in which case all Tlakotáni have the right to compete except for previous princes who have already renounced the Gold.)

**Lord Bedrántu hiSegutháne** (aged 67, status 25) Governor of Pála Jakálla. A traditionalist, elder of the Clan of Sea Blue, shrewd politician and stalwart member of the Royalist faction. This posting is effectively a retirement sinecure for him after a distinguished diplomatic career. He rules the city with a rod of iron, dealing harshly with any who disturb its harmony.

**Major Taimoshétl hiSukándar** (aged 52, status 18) Local commandant of the Omnipotent Azure Legion. He is a former soldier who served in the Legion of Ever-Present Glory under General Kéttukal. He treats this appointment extremely seriously, as it is the first time he has held political office. He is a member of the Red Sword clan (in which the Sukándar family is strongly represented) although originally of the Red Star clan. **Majjác Skendrúzhzha** (aged 35, status 12) An extremely fat Salarvyáni merchant who is the head of the "guild" of foreign merchants in the Foreigners' Quarter. He made his fortune in the shipping of rare woods and spices. He is the most influential foreigner in the city and is invited all the smart social functions. He has committed a good deal of

his wealth towards the maintenance of the Imperial Fleet in Pála Jakálla and to various civic works.

**Bénshatun hiZhámek** (aged 28, status 10) The local Dlantü (Clan Chief) of the Clan of the Moon of Evening. He is extremely youthful for a Clan Chief, a situation which has come about because of the death in an epidemic of all the senior members of his lineage. He keeps a very high profile, hosting regular feasts to celebrate one event or another. These are regularly attended by most of the influential members of the upper-middle class.

**Lord Donmikáyel hiGángasa** (aged 25, status 15) Eldest son of the Chief of the Clan of the Might of Gánga in Pétris Layóda. He is currently District Commandant of the Temple of Hnálla in Pála Jakálla. He lives in a small mansion close to the Tower of Tanmrúktu with his two wives and two children. A poet of mediocre talent, he owns an extensive library of original editions of some of the standard works.

**Tanmrúktu the Skywatcher** (age unknown; status unclear) A foreigner who has been around for so long that nobody can remember where he came from originally. He lives in a high tower atop the highest of the city's hills. Candles can be seen burning in the windows of the tower long into the night. He is one of the most respected astrologers in the empire. Although he can only rarely be prevailed upon to cast horoscopes, he does produce charts for important occasions such as the birth of Imperial heirs. His methods of casting are somewhat different from the standard Engsvanyáli routines, but he seems to come up with similar results.

**Kornámu hiVitéshmai** (aged 26, status 9) A minor scion of the Golden Sunburst Clan who is employed as bodyguard by Lord Jedusáne Tlakotáni. He is an exponent of the hlèpurdál (two weapon) school of fighting, using not Arruché but a style he developed himself.

**Lord Parshurái hiQolyélmu** (aged 50, status 26) The local Chief of the Clan of the Blade Raised High. Rather plump, he looks young for his age and has many friends among the priestesses of Dlamélish and Hrihayal.

**Dáusek hiParúdar** (aged 60, status 26) The Chief of the Jade Diadem clan. He is a worshipper of Dlamélish and a renowned sorcerer. He is always accompanied by two exquisitely beautiful female slaves who wear torcs, not of the customary bronze, but of steel.

**Paránda hiSsanyúsa** (aged 34, status 12) This redoubtable woman married into the Clan of the Cloak of Azure Gems. When her husband died she took Aridáni status and now involves herself in clan business. She is a worshipper of Avánthe and spent four years in the Legion of Lady Mrssa.

**Korazánu hiVriddi** (aged 30, status 15) A well known local duellist who has a reputation for issuing challenges to opponents who have virtually no chance of winning. He is overbearingly arrogant (like most Vriddi) and gives the impression of extreme ruthlessness. When he chooses, however, he can seem as charming as Lord Ksáru himself.

**Fasharángga the Neck-Breaker** (aged 22, status 4) Nobody is quite sure of the origins or nationality of this gladiator. He was trained at the school of Panú'ish Ketlán, and is now under the patronage of the Clan of the Might of Gánga. He is famed for his utter savagery in combat; in one bout he almost tore his opponent's head from his shoulders. He has been to Jakálla and Béy Sü for bouts. He is immensely powerfully built, and by no means as stupid as his demeanour might suggest.

# The Clan of the Red Flower

## A closer look at one of the clanhouses in Pála Jakálla

The Red Flower Clan traces its ancestry back to the war-fleets of the ancient kingdom of Vra. Vra was conquered by Tsolyani troops more than a millenium ago, in the reign of the Emperor Kanmi'yel Nikuma IV, and the fleets were disbanded. In the years that followed, the clan prospered through trade with Ganga, Thayuri and the mainland. Clanhouses were established overseas first at Tleku and Petris Layoda, then at Jakálla and Penom on the coast, then upriver at Pála Jakálla, Bey Sü and Thraya.

The clanhouse in Pála Jakálla has some 800 members (not including children) spread across six lineages:

The **Laumek** lineage is highest in status. It has seventy members, few of whom take a day-to-day interest in the clan's shipping business. Some are bureaucrats, others priests and lay-priests of the temples of Thumis, Hnalla and Ketengku. It is this lineage which holds title to most of the clan's ships. The family characteristics of the Laumeks are their honesty, dignity and flair - the very models of lan behaviour.

Next in status is the **Chaquvar** lineage, which has fifty members. This is the traditional provenance of the clan's navigators and captains. Some other members are enlisted in the Legion of the Echoing Stone and the Squadrons of Tlaneno the Steersman, and a few are guards at the temple of Chegarra. The Chaquvars are noted for their phlegmatic temperament.

The **Ji'anash** lineage, of medium status, comprises most of the clan's book-keepers and business administrators. Members are noted for their perspicacity and caustic wit. Some are employed as middle-level bureaucrats at the Palace of Foreign Lands, and a few are scholar-priests at the temple of Wuru. This lineage has eighty members.

The **Dorusan** lineage has a hundred and ninety members. Many are seamen and bargees, but some younger members enlist as Sakbe guards and city militia for a few years before returning to help with the clan enterprises. The Dorusan lineage are renowned for their bravery and droll wit. Traditionally they are followers of Karakan and Chegarra, but there have been exceptions.

The **Issasa** lineage traditionally reveres the god Karakan, particularly in his 10th Aspect as Jajkuru the Victor of Ships. From among its two hundred and ninety members are drawn many of the ordinary seamen of the clan. The principal family characteristic is a good-natured willingness to muck in.

The **Zinarin** lineage is of lowest status. It has a hundred and twenty members, most of whom are engaged in semi skilled labour and activities peripheral to the clan's business (unloading and transporting of wares, cooking and cleaning, repairs to the clanhouse, care of livestock, etc). Zinarins have a reputation for stubbornness.

### Assets

The clan's ocean-going vessels consist of one Tnek (double masted) and three Hru (single-masted). These are capable of transporting cargoes of some nine hundred tonnes, usually on short hauls of a week

out to Tleku, Vra or Petris Loyoda. Longer voyages (sometimes as far as Chame'el or Kheiris) are undertaken infrequently.

The clan also has a dozen or so barges for shipping goods by river to Bey Sü and Thraya, and points in between.

### Elders

The Pála Jakálla clanhouse is led by a council of twelve elders. Most elders belong to the Laumek and Chaquvar families. Each is appointed for a period of five years, but most have been re-elected to their posts continually for several decades and will continue to serve until removed by senility or death.

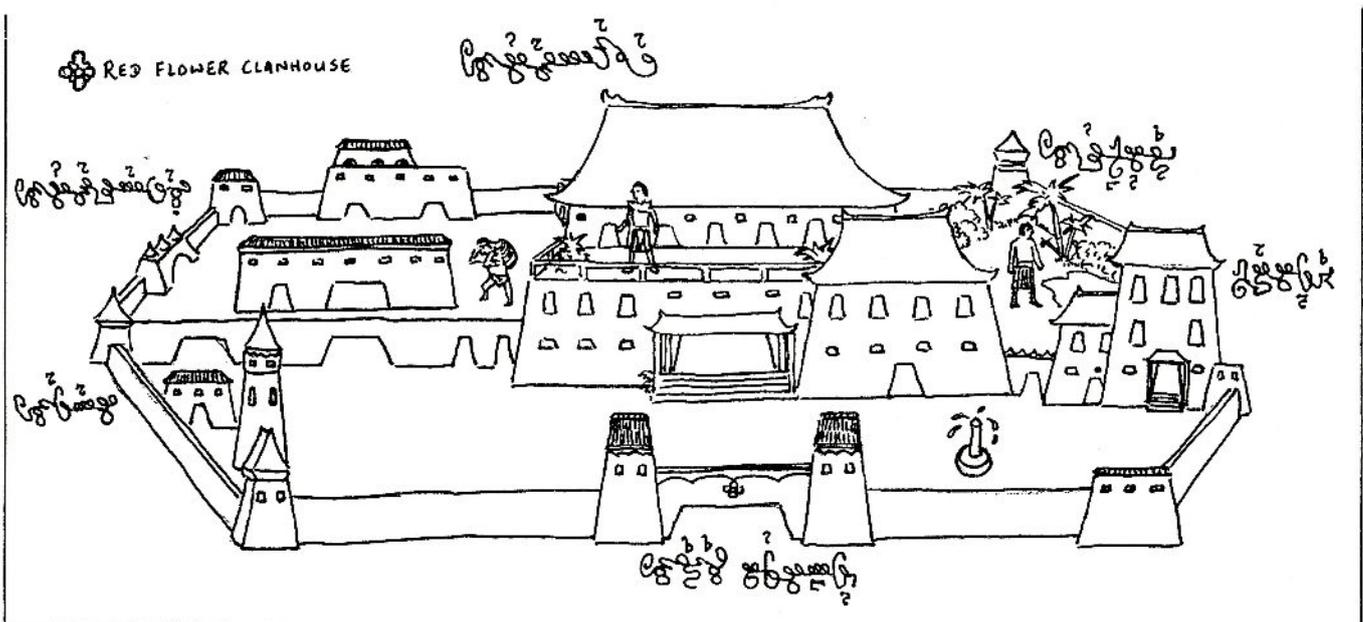
The council of elders meets once a week to review domestic affairs, settle intramural disputes and assign funds to clan projects. There is only a general discussion of business, the details of which are left to the Ji'anash family.

The Chief (Dlantü) of the clan is **Rifashiya hiLaumek**, a sprightly old man of sixty-odd years who cuts quite a dashing figure with his silvery hair and elegant clothes. He gives the impression of never attaching much importance to any difficulties that arise, but manages to deal with things all the same.

Among the other elders, **Tershenbei hiDorusan** is notable for both his humble origins (he was born in a fishing village on the island of Vra) and his youth. Only twenty-nine, his keen intelligence and calm judgement have made him respected by all.

**Noriar hiJi'anash** is a gruff old fellow with beetling brows who quietly probes at every aspect of clan life. If there is a feud or a romance going on that everyone else has overlooked, Noriar can be trusted to find out about it.

**Gulvesh hiChaquvar** is a mild old fellow who is responsible for keeping an eye on the clan buildings. In practice he spends most of his time playing *denden* over a cup of *chumetl* while it is left to his assistant, Horu hiZinarin, to make sure that the guttering is kept in good repair and the roof doesn't leak.



# The Laws of Homicide

Under Tsolyani law, homicide is a civil offence. This means that a murder charge can be dealt with by paying financial compensation (Shamtla) to the victim's family. The appropriate sum depends on the victim's status.

Shamtla is less if the murderer's social status far exceeds the victim's. Reduce the figures given in the sidebar by 25% for every 5 full levels difference in status. (Thus, an exalted aristocrat of status 21 can cut down a peasant of status 1 with complete impunity, perhaps tossing down just a few copper Qirgal for the sake of form.)

A victim's family has no grounds for refusing Shamtla if the amount offered is fair. On the other hand, there may be differences of opinion on what constitutes a "fair" payment in the circumstances. Factors such as provocation, prior enmity, insults and the way the killing took place all have a bearing on this.

A particularly outraged family may demand satisfaction under the Manifesto of Noble Deliverance (see below). Alternatively, it is possible to take the case to a civil court. Usually this results in months of wrangling before the court reaches a decision. The court might set a level of Shamtla (either greater or lesser than the sum desired). If the judge deems that the killing was not justified, however, he can order other punishments, ranging from imprisonment to execution.

## Exceptions

Shamtla cannot be demanded from an Imperial official or soldier who kills someone in the course of duty. The family's only recourse in such a case is to invoke the Manifesto of Noble Deliverance or take the matter to an assassins' clan. Conversely, a civilian who kills an Imperial official or soldier cannot evade the matter by offering Shamtla. Such a killing is accounted an Imperial crime and carries a mandatory charge of imprisonment or death.

## Drawbacks

In theory it is possible to murder someone and then wipe the slate clean by paying Shamtla. So, isn't this an open invitation for a person with enough money to murder anyone he takes against? In practice, no. Firstly, there is the danger that your victim's clan will refer the matter to a civil court. This is likely to cost them in legal fees, but the satisfaction of seeing you mutilated or impaled may outweigh the attraction of a Shamtla payment. Secondly, no-one is comfortable around a person with a reputation for random violence, and if your victim was a member of your own clan then home life may become particularly strained. Lastly, if your clan elders feel that you are going to go on wasting resources on Shamtla (to say nothing of the effect on the clan's reputation) then they may well ship you off somewhere you can do no harm - such as a tiny hut on Burru Isle, for instance.

## Duelling

The Manifesto of Noble Deliverance is the pre-Engsvanyali duelling code. It is not part of the formal legal system, but is frequently used to settle differences - particularly between nobles, though it is also popular among soldiers and warriors of all classes.

Anyone who feels direly affronted or slighted can invoke the Manifesto. It is a sign that a matter of honour runs too deep to be settled with Shamtla. For the Manifesto to apply, the cause of the dispute must be a matter of public knowledge. Once entered into, the rules of the Manifesto must be

## The value of a life

<i>Social Status</i>	<i>Shamtla</i>
1	100 Kaitars
2	175 Kaitars
3	300 Kaitars
4	550 Kaitars
5	1000 Kaitars
6	2000 Kaitars
7	3500 Kaitars
8	6000 Kaitars
9	11000 Kaitars
10	20000 Kaitars
each +1	extra 10000 Kaitars

strictly adhered to. Any breach of the Manifesto is regarded as an Imperial crime.

The Manifesto is not an excuse for bullying or social impertinence. A person who is elderly, infirm or unskilled in weapons has a perfect right to refuse the challenge. So does a person whose clan's status is higher than that of his challenger. An army officer need never accept a challenge from a subordinate within his own legion. However, honour makes it mandatory to accept a challenge from another soldier of equal rank even if he is not your social equal.

Once a duel is agreed, both parties appoint their seconds. Usually a second will be a close comrade, though it is right and proper ("Lan") for even an enemy to act as your second if you are among strangers. (This might occur, for example, if you were the lone captive taken from a ship attacked by privateers.) In such a case, of course, it is Lan for the second to strive to act in your best interests, whatever his personal feelings.

In consultation with the referee, the seconds must agree on the terms of the duel. These are as follows:

#### **The weapons**

Both duellists must use the same weapon. The longsword is the most likely choice, but obviously each second will be aiming to maximize his principal's advantage at the opponent's expense. Outlandish weapons are not encouraged.

#### **The armour**

Again, both duellists must wear armour of the same type and quality. Serving soldiers prefer to duel in their legion armour as long as both belong to the same legion, or to legions with equivalent armour.

#### **The extent of the duel**

The limits to which the fight will go are decided in advance: either to first blood, surrender, incapacitation, or death. This is judged by the seconds and referee in accordance with the seriousness of the matter. For a combatant to deliberately exceed these limits is a breach of the Manifesto.

#### **The time and place**

If either combatant fails to show up, the referee will make three calls for him to appear. These are at intervals of one yom (90 seconds). If he fails to appear by the third call, he is deemed to forfeit the duel. Duels under the Manifesto are customarily held at the Hirilakte arena. This is not always possible for soldiers in camp or sailors at sea, for example. In all cases, the duel must be refereed and publicly witnessed, and its outcome must be reported to the authorities.

#### **Sorcerers' duels**

Duels involving magic are not common, but there are some precedents – more often in folktales told in clan common rooms, it must be said, than in living memory. The spells and/or Eyes that are to be used must be agreed in advance, and it is a breach of the Manifesto to use any other magic. More usually, sorcerers opt not to use magic in a duel. (Probably because of the inescapable paranoia that the other fellow will know something that you don't.) Thus you will sometimes see quite aged and learned sorcerers squaring off in the arena with ceremonial armour and maces.

#### **After the duel**

The loser of a duel becomes the winner's slave, and ownership of the armour and weapon(s) with which he fought become his new master's

property. Other than in exceptional cases, however, the winner will sell the loser back to his clan. The sum demanded varies from 50% to 100% of the loser's Shamtla value, depending on the winner's disposition. When too high a price is set, this can lead to a further duel with the loser's second. (The chance to redeem a losing duellist can not always be relied on, though. There was the famous instance of a commander of the Legion of the Portals of Death who became a slave as the result of a duel. His family had fallen on hard times and were not able to purchase his freedom. In view of the winning duellist's reputation with the sword, the second declined to make a follow up challenge.)

### The end of the matter

A duel under the Manifesto constitutes the final word in a dispute. Once the duel is over, the matter is closed and no further discussion or litigation is allowed. Furthermore, the duel is not a trial and its outcome does not establish the rights and wrongs of a case. The duel is an end in itself, a means for both parties to settle their disagreement like gentlemen - or ladies, in the case of Aridani.

### Professional assassins

While not part of the official legal procedure, the assassins' clans are a venerable Tsolyani institution. They exist to provide redress in cases where the regular legal system is inadequate and where individual circumstances rule out the Manifesto of Noble Deliverance.

There are three major assassins' clans: the Clan of Whispered Fear, the Clan of Relievers from Life, and the Black Y Clan. (The "Y" in this case is not a letter, but a pictorial representation of an Onel, or three-way crossroads.) Other smaller clans exist. Almost all venerate the gods of the so called Dark Trinity - Hrū'ū, Ksarul and Sarku - but some of the smaller clans worship Karakan.

Assassins will stalk a victim and beat, cripple or kill him according to their commission. Even if the would-be victim should succeed in defending himself from an attack (rare, given the assassins' skill) he has only bought himself a reprieve. Having accepted the commission, the clan will persist until it is completed. They leave behind a clan token to show that the attack was properly sanctioned. To attempt reprisals, either against the assassins or the person who engaged them, is not honourable or legal.

To engage an assassins clan, you must visit one of their high-walled clanhouses and there explain why your case is Lan. The basic fee you must pay depends on the severity of the action: 25% of the intended victim's Shamtla value for a simple beating, 50% to inflict a crippling injury and/or disfigurement, and 100% for a killing. Once this is offered, the assassins will consider the commission. Add the following factors:

1. **Status** Take your social status minus the victim's.
2. **Justice** To the result of 1, the referee secretly adds a number that represents the strength of your case against the intended victim. This ranges from +1 (a very poor case) to +10 (justice is on your side). A successful check on Etiquette or Orator can add +1, and Poet can add +2, up to a maximum of +10.
3. **Partiality** If you are a follower of Hrū'ū or Ksarul, add +2. If a follower of Sarku, add +1.
4. **Inducements** The scales of justice are balanced by a little gold. For each extra 20% that you offer above the basic fee for the job, add +1.

The result of these four steps is then used to make a standard 2D10 check. Success indicates that the clan takes your money and agrees to do the job. Ordinary failure means they are unconvinced by the justice of

### Assassins' weapons

**The Springing Doom** A slim cylindrical dagger which is concealed within a scroll-case, stylus, etc, emerging on a powerful spring when needed.

**The Collar of Forever** A garrotte.

**The Whisperer** A small blowgun with an effective range of 5 metres.

**The Summoner upon the Way** A small hand-cocked crossbow with a range of up to 10 metres. So called because its sound is like the single abrupt finger-snap used to summon a servant.

**The Teeth of Tomua** Crustacean spines which can be scattered like caltrops. Even a light scratch can induce unconsciousness for up to 30 minutes. Named after a horrid demon with the power of envenomisation.

**The Deliverer from Life** A razor-sharp throwing knife, sometimes of steel.

**The Dance of Peril** A web of rasping poison-smeared threads strung across a path that the victim will take.

**Pa'iya's Kiss** A thrown glass bottle which can contain acid, inflammable chemicals or deadly fungus spores.

**The Tender Companion** An Alash snake which is trained to go towards a victim whom the assassin points out with a rod. These are rare. (In ancient times, Queen Nayari's court assassin is said to have used a mechanical Alash made of silver.)

**The Worms of Death** Deadly worms which remain dormant inside clay "coins". When the coins are broken, the worms emerge and tunnel into the flesh of the nearest person, bringing sickness and rapid death.

For the most part these weapons are more effective by reason of their surprise value than because of any intrinsic merit. Assassins also use most conventional weapons and are often skilled in unarmed combat.

the case - you have the option either to leave, or to immediately increase the sum offered by 20% and try the roll again. Critical failure means your offer is rejected and you are shown out of the clanhouse.

***example:** In order to worm his way out of a duel, Tlangten hiSsanyusa applies to have his foe Veshtaru hiChaishyani assassinated. Tlangten is status 18 and Veshtaru is status 14, so this gives +4. The referee judges that there is no honourable basis for trying to avoid a duel: a modifier of only +1. Tlangten has no etiquette or persuasion skills, nor is he a worshipper of Ksarul or Hrü'ü, but luckily he is very rich. The basic fee for the job is 60000 Kaitars. He actually offers the assassins twice that, giving a further modifier of +5. Overall, Tlangten must roll 10 or less on 2D10 for the assassins to accept the commission without demur.*

The weapons and techniques of the assassins' clans are too extensive to cover here in any detail. Disguise, stealth, poison and concealed weapons are all used, of course. The referee should bear in mind that there will be no attempt on the part of the assassins to give their victim a fair chance - these people are trained killers, not hunters. Most ordinary citizens witnessing an attack by members of an assassins' clan would not think to get involved, any more than passers-by in London would intervene to stop private security guards ejecting someone from an office or bank. Similarly, it is unthinkable for the average person to pass himself off as a professional assassin in order to murder a foe - such an act is not only improper (*bússan*), but it would attract swift reprisals from the clan impersonated.

# The Profession of Arms

## How social class affects promotion in the legions

Tsolyanu, like almost all advanced societies, is stratified. Positions of authority are usually allocated as much on the basis of clan and lineage as on ability. In theory, the three “grand careers” (Army, Priesthood and Civil Service) provide ladders of social advancement for all Tsolyani. In practice, social class is the over-riding factor in such advancement.

These rules are for the legions, but the same principle can be extended to other walks of Tsolyani life. The core concept is that a character who is competent in his career will quickly rise to a position that corresponds to his social class – and rarely further than that. A notably talented or courageous soldier thus could make it all the way to the top (as some indeed have), but the notion that the system is fully egalitarian is not true.

The legions are divided into seven categories according to the prestige they hold, ranging from “Elite & Exalted” to “Lowly”. (I am indebted to Jack Bramah for classifying the legions into these categories, a process which he based on the type and quality of the troops, the ability of the general, and the unit’s history and battle honours.)

The table below shows the Social Status (see Tirikélu page 4) for the different ranks. This table supersedes the method given in Tirikélu (sidebar, page 5) for calculating the Social Status of different ranks.

### Promotion

A soldier can apply for promotion on first joining the legion, at the end of each year of service, and at any time that he distinguishes himself in action. Use the following procedure:

- 1:** In the case of Heavy or Medium Infantry find the average of the character’s Comeliness, Cleverness and Strength. In the case of Light Infantry take the average of Comeliness, Cleverness and Dexterity.
- 2:** Average the result of **1** with the character’s Soldier level.
- 3:** Use the result of **2** to make a standard 2D10 check subject to the following modifiers: +2 per level by which the character’s current Social Status exceeds that of the rank he’s applying for; +1 for every four months’ salary (at the rank applied for) offered as inducement; +1 per level of Tactician/Strategist; +1 for recent battle honours.

### SOCIAL STATUS OF LEGIONARIES

LEGION	<i>Tpr</i>	<i>Sgt</i>	<i>Lt</i>	<i>Capt</i>	<i>Maj</i>	<i>Col</i>	<i>Gen</i>
Elite & Exalted	5	6	8	11	18	22	30
Venerable	4	5	7	10	16	17	28
Distinguished	3	4	7	9	15	16	25
Notable	3	4	6	8	13	15	20
Average	2	3	5	7	12	14	17
Mediocre	1	2	4	6	8	10	14
Lowly	1	1	2	3	5	6	10

### The Relative Status of Tsolyáni Legions

#### *Elite and Exalted*

- The Omnipotent Azure Legion
- The First Legion of Ever-Present Glory
- The Legion of the Golden Sunburst
- The Legion of the Lord of Red Devastation

#### *Venerable*

- The Legion of Lord Hnalla, Master of Light
- The Legion of Mirkitani, Hero of Victories
- The Legion of the Givers of Sorrow
- The Legion of Searing Flame
- The Legion of Serqu, Sword of the Empire

#### *Distinguished*

- The Legion of Potent Destiny
- The Legion of the Sweet Singers of Nakome
- The Battalions of the Seal of the Worm
- The Legion of Girikteshmu
- The Legion of the Clan of Noble Vrayani
- The Legion of the Twelve Paths of Avanthe

#### *Notable*

- The Legion of the Mighty Prince
- The Legion of the Scales of Brown
- The Legion of the Echoing Stone
- The Legion of the Deep Purple Dark
- The Legion of Heketh of Purdimal
- The Phalanx of Lord Durrilamish
- The Legion of Gusha the Khirgari
- The Cohorts of Lord Chegarrá the Hero-King
- The Legion of the Storm of Fire
- The Legion of Kaikama of Bey Sü
- The Legion of the Clan of the Broken Bough
- The Legion of Lord Kharihaya
- The Legion of the Sapphire Kirtle
- The Legion of the Inverted Hand
- The Squadrons of Tlaneno the Steersman

#### *Average*

- The Legion of the Portals of Death
- The Legion of the Ruby Hand
- The Legion of the Mace Raised High
- The Legion of Kurukaa
- The Legion of Mighty Jakálla
- The Legion of Mengano the Jakállan
- The Legion of Ketl

The Battalions of Vrishtara the Mole  
 The Legion of Lord Langsha of Jaikalor  
 The Legion of Mnashu of Thri'il  
 The Legion of the Clan of the Golden Sphere  
 The Aridani Legion of Lady Mrissa  
 The Legion of the Many-Legged Serpent  
 The Forces of Lord Ga'anish of Katalal  
 The Legion of Defence Against Evil  
 The Armoured Vision of Death  
 The Legion of Chulin the Foreigner  
 The Legion of the Prince of the Blue Room  
 The Legion of the Band of Mnerr  
 The Legion of Morusai the Chieftan  
 The Legion of the Black Band of Mirizha  
 The Regiment of the Clan of Silver Lightning  
 The Legion of the Peaks of Kraa  
 The Legion of Elechu of Usenanu  
 The Legion of the Crystalline Peak  
 The Regiment of the Knower of Spells  
 The Legion of Glorious Destiny  
 The Legion of the Citadel of Glory  
 The Legion of the Clan of the Standing Stone  
 The Legion of Lord Kaingmra of Bey Sü  
 The Flotilla of Hagarr of Paranta  
 The Slayers of Cities  
 Temple guards of the war gods

#### Mediocre

The Legion of the Fishers of Death  
 The Legion of the Lord of Wisdom  
 The Legion of the Shattering of Ssúyal  
 The Phalanx of Heretlekka of Sokatis  
 The Legion of the Smiting of the East  
 The Legion of the Night of Shadows  
 The Regiment of Noble Ssiyor of Mrelu  
 The Battalions of Srüma of Vra  
 The Forces of Chai Miridai  
 The Legion of the Wind of Iron  
 The Legion of the Wind of Arrows  
 The Legion of Gagarsha of Mmillaka  
 Temple guards of other deities

#### Lowly

Tomb Police  
 Irregular Light Infantry  
 City Militia

Results of this check are interpreted as follows:

*Critical failure:* Demoted one rank

*Ordinary failure:* Try again next year

*Ordinary success:* No immediate promotion, but try again in six months with an additional +1 modifier

*Critical success:* Promoted one rank.

(This is based on the 2D10 skill-check system used in Tirikélu. Critical success is a roll of half the number needed for success, or lower. If you need to roll 14 or less, for instance, then a critical success would be a roll of 7 or less. Too high a roll – in this case 18 or more – indicates a critical failure.)

#### Recruitment

The same procedure is used on first joining a legion, recruitment being considered as “promotion” to the rank of ordinary trooper.

*example:* Tlangten hiSsanyusa applies to join the Legion of Red Devastation. Strength 14, Intelligence 11 and Comeliness 11 yield an average of 12. When he makes his application Tlangten has not as yet acquired any levels of Soldier, so this brings the basis for the 2D10 check down to 6 (the average of 12 and 0, rounded up). Tlangten's Social Status is 9, which is 4 higher than the norm for a trooper in an Elite & Exalted legion, and his clan also offers the recruiting officer an inducement of 60 Kaitars, giving a total bonus of +9 on the 2D10 check. A 15 or less is needed for ordinary success, with critical success (indicating acceptance into the legion) on a roll of 2-8.

#### War gaming

When running a legion-based game, it's often assumed that player characters must be officers in order to be viable. This isn't so. Consider the disadvantages. Firstly, having officers as characters will often embroil the game in the details of military action, which might not appeal to players who dislike table-topping. Also, characters of high rank will often be required to act alone. Five Kasi and a Molkar won't often be asked to undertake a mission together; five Kuruthuni and their Tirikamu might.

The assumption apparently derives from players' perception of an ordinary soldier's status. In our world, the profession of soldiering carries little status. The “poor bloody infantry” are predominantly drawn from disadvantaged social groups. This has generally not been the case in non-technological civilizations such as Tsolyanu.

Players prefer officer characters because they dislike the idea of being ordered around. But Tsolyani discipline need not be predicated on the “scum of the earth” philosophy that officers in our culture have held since Wellington's day. The Tsolyani soldier begins from a basis of self-discipline and an awareness that his place in the scheme of things is potentially glorious. For him, insubordination is not a gesture of defiance in the face of an arrogant aristocracy, it's just a quick way for him to lose face and disgrace his family name. Since a capable soldier genuinely can rise right through the ranks, the effective segregation between officers and enlisted men that applies in the case of a modern army would not hold for Tsolyanu. A better way for players to conceive the true status of their position would be to imagine a Kuruthuni as equivalent in status terms to a lieutenant of the British Army.

# The Palace of the Realm

The Palace of the Realm of the Glorious and Ever-living God King, Master of the Many Universes and Emperor of All, is one of the four departments of the Tsolyani civil service, It is responsible for all domestic affairs including taxation, law enforcement, land ownership, records and public works. There is a branch of the Palace of the Realm in every town.

The Palace in Jakállá comprises a vast complex of buildings situated on the south bank of the Eqúnoyel River, below the Governor's Palace.

The visitor approaches along the broad avenue between the temples of Hnalla and Hrü'ü. Passing the Imperial armoury, he enters through great gates surmounted by the azure-&-gold Seal of the Imperium. To his left stretch the parks and gardens, to his right lie the imposing Marble Mansion of Metlunel I and other buildings. Immediately he is approached by the denizens of the outer courts: guides, prostitutes, and food vendors offering sweet pastries, sweetmeats, sherbets and buttermilk. There are also scribes who will draw up petitions for the illiterate, guides and servants, lawyers' touts seeking custom for their masters, and courtiers (often impecunious petty nobles) who offer to use their "special influence" to help our visitor transact his business here.

Passing through the outer precincts, the visitor is guided to the hall, court or colonnade appropriate to his business. The typical hall is vast and cool after the blazing sunshine outside. The visitor's eyes adjust as he stands facing many stepped pyramids swathed in the smoke of oil lamps. The smells of ink, sweat, incense and wax mingle on the air. In 20th century terms, each pyramid is a separate "office". The overseer of the office sits at the pinnacle, surrounded by his subordinates on descending tiers.

If our visitor is of noble status, he may expect to be escorted to a side chamber where a senior official will come to discuss his business. The majority, though, must present their petition to the scribes on the lowest tier and wait while it is laboriously passed up the levels to the person who must eventually deal with it. This may take hours (or days, if insufficient inducement is offered) and so our visitor may wish to stroll out in the gardens with the crowds of others awaiting judgements.

## Echelons

Key positions in the Palace of the Realm are held by adherents of the Imperial Faction - Omnipotent Azure Legionaries and Lords of the Court of Purple Robes, whose first allegiance is to the Emperor. More numerous are the Royalists, who dominate the higher echelons of the bureaucracy. These people belong to the noble clans that trace their ancestry back to the dynasties of ancient times.

The Palace Chief is Jalugan hiVordesa of the Golden Sunburst Clan, a 51-year-old worshipper of Hnalla with three wives. He is of the XVIIIth Circle, but may be even higher within the secret hierarchy of the Omnipotent Azure Legion. An ardent Imperialist, he keeps a beady eye on powerful members of the Royalist faction such as the head of the Department of Domestic Affairs, the head of the Department of Agency and Exertion, and the Grand Sequestrator of Clan Taxes.

A bureaucrat can expect to rise in the hierarchy until he reaches a Circle equivalent to his social status. To progress beyond this point he will need ability, luck, wealth (for lavish gifts to his superiors), the right political connections, and talent for intrigue. Good looks also help, this being a quality much admired by the Tsolyani.

## Official calendar

The Palace of the Realm is closed every Daunel (the sixth day of the week) and on these official holidays:

*The intercalary days:* These five extra days are set aside for religious rites and observances. It is unlucky to commence any enterprise on the intercalary days. Every fourth year, an extra intercalary day is devoted to rituals in praise of the Emperor.

*1 Hasanpor:* New Year's Day (temple ceremonies followed by feasts, pageants and the giving of gifts)

*13 Shapru:* Congregation of the Clans (a local festival; artisans and traders meet at the Commonhouse of the Clans, a banquet paid for and attended by the Governor)

*19 Didom:* The Touching of the Copper Worm (funerary rituals at the necropolis)

*3 Langala:* Midsummer's Day; parties and entertainments

*18 Fesru:* Foundation Day of the Legion of Mighty Jakállá

*2 Drenggar:* The Unveiling of Beauty (rituals and orgies)

*9 Drenggar:* The Enhancement of the Emerald Radiance (rituals to Dlamelish; further saturnalia and feasting)

*5 Firasul:* Autumnal Equinox (clan-related rituals)

*7 Pardan:* Festival of Souls (candles set adrift on the Missuma river in small floats made of woven leaves)

*10 Halir:* After a proclamation of the Dna harvest, the Palace is closed for the rest of the day. Even high nobles will taste at least one glass of A'ash (grain whiskey).

*5 Trantor:* Midwinter's Day; temperatures in Jakállá can drop as low as 26° C by day, 15° C by night.

*18 Trantor:* The Might of Heroes (military rituals)

*9 Lesdrim:* The Birthday of the Emperor Hirkane (still observed locally, the Emperor Dnich'une being regarded as a pretender)

*10 Dohala:* Accession of Hirkane to the Golden Tower

In addition to official holidays, many departments of the Palace of the Realm are closed (or at best operating with reduced staff) during the height of summer, when the sweltering heat brings most work to a standstill.

Bear in mind that the efficiency of the Tsolyani bureaucracy is commensurate with a society where documents must be copied by hand, despatched by runner, and filed by archivists who insist on using their own personal systems. The pace at which things get done is different from that in the modern Western world. To get any matter dealt with quickly you must be prepared to hand out “inducements” – perhaps two or three weeks’ salary for the officials involved to have any hope of stirring them into a sense of genuine urgency.

To advance in the bureaucracy, first average your Reasoning, Comeliness and any pertinent skill (usually Official, Lawyer, Administrator or Scribe). Use the result to make a standard 2D10 check subject to the following modifiers: +2 for each point your Social Status exceeds to Circle you’re applying for; +1 for every three months’ salary (at the Circle applied for) offered as inducement; +1 if your lineage has any members at sub-department level or higher; +1D10 if you succeed in a competitive Intrigue check vs the official responsible for your promotion. Critical success on the 2D10 roll advances you one Circle, ordinary success lets you try again in six months. (But critical failure means you are sacked!)

The clans that dominate the most senior positions (XIVth Circle and up) locally are Sea Blue, Golden Sunburst, Golden Bough, and Jade Diadem.

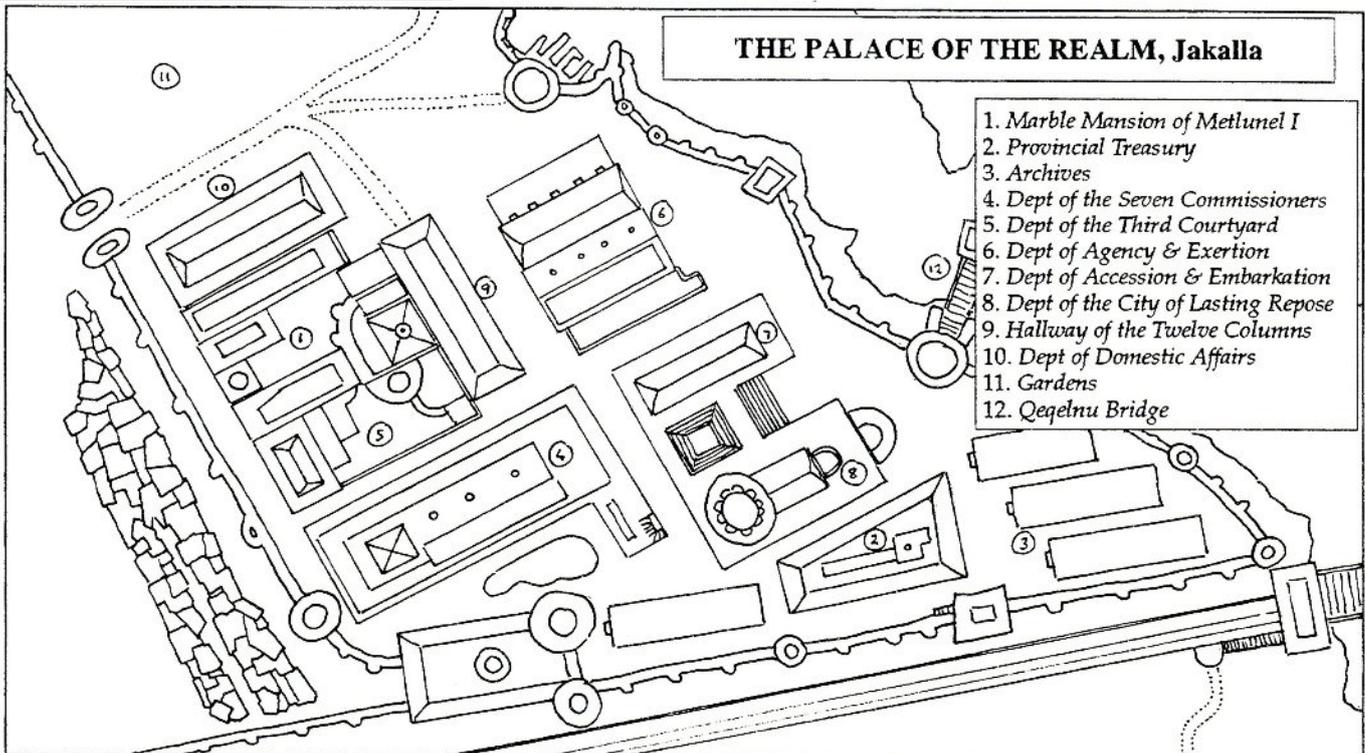
The clans most widespread in the upper hierarchy (IXth through XIIIth Circles) are White Crystal, Purple Gem, Standing Stone, and Joyous of Vra.

The clans with most members in the middle positions (IVth through VIIIth Circle) are Blue Kirtle, Black Stone, Scroll of Wisdom, Iron Plume and Victorious Globe.

The clans figuring prominently in the lower echelons (up to IIIrd Circle) are Plume of White, Sunlit Dome and High Tower.

### The Eight Departments

The Palace of the Realm in Jakála employs more than a thousand civil servants, plus a whole host of guards, servants and hangers-on. Remember that Jakála is a vast metropolis and the capital of the Kaija Protectorate. In other towns the Palace of the Realm will be accordingly smaller – perhaps only a hundred officials in Pála Jakála or Vra. In a small town or village, the Palace of the Realm might amount to no more than a single hall adjoining the headman’s clanhouse.



## The Department of Domestic Affairs

This department is run by High Prefect Vrishmuyel hiPurushqe of the Sea Blue Clan (age 56, XVIth Circle). It includes these sub departments, the records for which are held in the three buildings in the south-east area of the Palace compound:

**The Registry of Births, Marriages and Deaths** is headed by Prefect Giu hiQolyelmu of the Golden Bough Clan (age 43, XIIIth Circle). It deals with an average of 100 births a day for Jakálla and surrounding towns and villages. (The figure is kept within reasonable limits by the use of lisutl root, a natural contraceptive genetically engineered by the original colonists of Tekumel.)

**The Registry of Aridani Declarations** is headed by Sub Prefect Horri hiGallai of the Golden Bough Clan (age 29, IXth Circle). Here women may come to declare themselves legally independent. The woman is then Aridani, meaning that she has all the legal rights and responsibilities of a man. Aridani status is necessary for any woman who wishes to carry on a career outside her clan - eg, in the priesthood, army or bureaucracy. The option is more popular in the south, but only some 10% of Jakállan women opt for it. If a woman wishes to revoke Aridani status (as some do in later life) she has only to return here and make another declaration to that effect.

**The Registry of Conferral of Citizenship and Rights to Permanent Residence** is headed by Prefect Genemu hiHehesha of the Grey Cloak Clan (age 56, XIIth Circle).

**The Registry of Malefactors** is headed by Chokoresh hiMunalek of the Grey Wand Clan (age 27, Xth Circle). This maintains a partial list of known or suspected wrongdoers. Others are kept by the Department of the Seven Commissioners, the Marble Mansion of Metlunel I, the Palace of Ever-Glorious War, and the Omnipotent Azure Legion.

## The Department of the Seven Commissioners

This department is run by Regional Inspector-General Heketh hiSenkdun of the White Crystal Clan (aged 49, XVIIIth Circle; balding, meticulous, a fervent Belkhanu worshipper). It has charge of the following:

Tax affairs are overseen by Grand Sequestrator Count Chushel hiSsanmirin of the Clan of the Cloak of Azure Gems (aged 31, XIVth Circle), who is a portly bearded lecher with five wives and a grand appetite; he is an ardent Royalist. By no coincidence he happens to be one of the wealthiest men in Jakálla. His sub-department comprises **the Office of Assessment of Clan Worth, the Office of Collation of Revenue Reports** (which maintains a network of spies and informers) and **the Office for the Organization of Tax Collection** (which employs gangs of former legionaries to scour the countryside).

**The Imperial Mint** is charged with minting and distribution of coins and the prevention of counterfeiting.

**The Stamping Office** marks weights and measures for use in the marketplace, etc, to show that they have been verified by Imperial officials. Falsification of such a stamp is an Imperial crime, though in fact the cost and time required to get weights checked deters most merchants (even the honest ones) from bothering to get this done.

**The Provincial Treasury** might look like a lure to thieves, but it is well-guarded by a crack contingent of the militia and is also reputed to have sorcerous wards.

## Court cases

Most courts are presided over by a senior judge and two deputies. These individuals are members of the bureaucracy. Lawyers, on the other hand, are not bureaucrats but private members of one of the clans specialising in law and custom.

In the court, the judges sit on daises beneath a representation of the Imperial Seal. The plaintiff and defendant involved in the suit sit facing the judges on tiered pyramids of their own, along with their lawyers and scribes. (The defendant sits to the left, ie the judges' right.) Court cases involving entire lineages or clans are more common than suits between individuals, so usually the plaintiff and defendant are merely representatives of the clans.

The basis for the Tsolyani legal system is the Book of Golden Signs, set down by Mikotlangme of Purdanim during the reign of the Priest-Kings of Engsvan hla Ganga.

The following lawsuits are currently before the courts. (It is possible for a case to take months or years to resolve, becoming ever more complex and expensive as additional lawyers are called in.)

A demand for shamtla upon Kruom hiArkodu of the Standing Stone Clan, a priest of Qon, who called Lord Vurrihend Khekhessa a slave and an idiot. Lord Vurrihend, of the royal clan of Heru in western Salarvya, is a Lord Adept of Thumis who is visiting Jakálla to glean certain facts concerning the necropolis.

(This is an interesting case-study in the quirks of the legal system. In theory a foreigner like Lord Vurrihend has little chance of collecting shamtla from a Tsolyani citizen. But he is very rich, and by bringing the case to court he can deliberately escalate the costs until poor Kruom is reduced to penury. Kruom's lawyers are now employing informers to look into Vurrihend's activities in the necropolis, in the hope of digging up something that would interest the tomb police.)

The alleged murder of Huketlayu hiViridame of the Cloak of Azure Gems by Ta'ana hiRi'inussa of the Golden Sunburst Clan. He had purportedly raped her, and a week later was set upon by three slaves (apparently Livyani) in the dining room of his clanhouse. The men killed each other before they could be taken by the

clan guards, but a witness claims to have seen them in the company of one of Ta'ana's servants the day before.

The review by the Third Appellate Court of the case of Shenbei hiRanagga of the Red Flower Clan, IInd Circle guard at the temple of Wuru. Shenbei was convicted of grievously wounding Gemelan hiKellukar of the Golden Lintel Clan, a moneylender, on the temple steps. He does not deny making the assault, but maintains he was possessed by the spirit of Teshtesh, Wuru's wrathful 10th Aspect.

The trial of Elulen hiDanolel, a slaver of the Silver Anklet Clan, who has apparently concealed some 100,000 Kaitars of taxable income from the Imperial tax collectors. The rumour around town is that it is a trumped-up charge because Elulen refused to give a particularly winsome slave to the expropriating official.

The theft of an Engsvanyali iron sword, one thousand antique gold coins and a carnelian amulet from the tomb of the Clan of the Sankolun lineage of the Clan of Sea Blue. These materials turned up briefly in the possession of one Fū'urik hiBanthadha of the Clan of the Scarlet Planet of Knives, but he has now disappeared. His family is being sued by the Sankolun lineage, although they claim he was murdered by Sea Blue henchmen who took the disputed treasures with them.

The exact dispersal of the possessions of Meshmuyel hiAmnu'a of the Red Stone Clan after his death from a surfeit of tshoridu. His estate amounts to more than 700,000 Kaitars. Two wills exist, the older having a codicil which is more recent than the newer will, but which cuts out his lineage and divides the money instead between his temple and his third wife's clan - Dark Water - where he was living at the time of his death.

(By custom a man's legal heirs are the sons and Aridani daughters of his wives. Usually any will which leaves his money to others will be overturned by the courts. In this case, however, Meshmuyel had been all but estranged from his clan for many years, and there is some argument that the Dark Flame Clan hold precedence.)

## The Marble Mansion of Metlunel I

This department is run by Grand Procurator Lord Genemu hiQolyelmu of the Golden Bough Clan (age 42, XVIIIth Circle). He has a sallow complexion and straggly beard, but keen piercing eyes and an intelligence to match. Originally from Bey Sü, Lord Genemu is pretty uncorruptible and is a staunch Imperialist to boot - to the dismay of the local members of his lineage, who tend to be anything but! Lord Genemu is an expert on the epics and has a vast collection of ancient texts. He enjoys socializing and has a large coterie of friends in Jakálla, even though he has only been here two years. His sub departments are:

**The Imperial Courts**, comprising the Court of Ten Pillars, the Court of Delegates and the Court of Thirteen Pillars.

**The Civil Courts**, comprising the First and Third Appellate Courts, the Court of the Brazen Dais and the Court of Pleadings. The Office of Interrogation is operated by members of the Clan of the Edification of the Soul. This is a small tightly-knit clan of low social prestige but great importance in legal matters because its members are traditionally the only people (other than officers of the Omnipotent Azure Legion) who are able to apply judicial torture. A Mri (literally "Quartet") of four orange-robed members of the clan, each wearing the lizard-like mask of the god Chiteng, must be present at any torture or public execution.

**The Gallery of Expectation** contains cells for those undergoing trial. (Some of these "cells" can be quite luxurious if one gives the police guards a large enough bribe.)

**The Office of Debt Reclamation** is where a person found guilty of bankruptcy will be held while his clan is given the chance to pay his debts. If this is not done within a few weeks, the unfortunate bankrupt is handed over to the slaver's clan for sale, and the proceeds are disbursed to his creditors.

## The Department of the Third Courtyard

This is run by High Prefect Elkhome hiSsanmirin of the Sea Blue Clan (aged 33, XVIth Circle). He is a suave sprightly sophisticate who is on the fast track to a post at Avanthar. The various sub departments here are:

**The Office of Marketplaces** is headed by SuperIntendant Qurrumu hiPrachu'ab of the Purple Gem Clan (aged 52, XIIIth Circle), a genial fellow who has done very well indeed out of this plum posting over the past twenty years. This office is responsible for issuing trading permits (but not customs or foreign trade) and appoints market magistrates. It maintains close liaison with the market police.

**The Registry of Slaves** keeps track of all slaves passing through the slave market. You've arrived in town to find your gambling addicted cousin has gone missing? Here's the place to start the search - as long as you're prepared to wade through several hundred scrolls' worth of documentation.

## The Department of Agency and Exertion

This is run by a staunch Royalist: Lord Comptroller Tetukel hiBurutla of the Jade Diadem Clan (aged 60, XVIIth Circle). White-haired and handsome, Lord Tetukel could be said to rule his department with the archetypal iron fist in a velvet glove - except that the wearing of gloves is considered undignified by the Tsolyani upper classes because of the association with manual labour! Lord Tetukel is an expert falconer with many splendid küni. His daughter is a rising star in the temple of Lamelish.

The sub-departments under him are:

**The Battalions of Kaija Province** is responsible for the organization of the militia in Jakálla and elsewhere in the province. These amount to some 7000 men in all - effectively an entire legion whose titular general is the Provincial Governor. The militia are drilled as medium infantry, but are unlikely to see battle unless civil war should break out. More often their duties are to act as police (including market police, but not prison or tomb guards), fire wardens and nightwatchmen.

**The Supervisorship of the Arena** deals mainly with Imperial ceremonies to be held at the Hililakte. These are held to celebrate military victories and are useful in creating a sense of national unity which is not a natural part of the Tsolyani psyche. Other impromptu entertainments may be needed to distract a restless populace, and it is important to move quickly on such occasions.

**The Office of Imperial Benevolence** contracts civic work out to the clans - for example, the recent renovation of the abandoned temple of the Unknown One.

**The Office of Imperial Puissance** deals with the rental of state resources and also (more often) the co-option of labour for huge projects such as the erection of Imperial monuments or the rebuilding of a city through Dítlana ("renewal"). In theory all property belongs to the Imperium and it has the right to co opt labour without payment. In practice only about 30% of the economy is directly controlled and administered by the state, and "compulsory" labour has to be paid for by favours and behind-the-scenes agreements with the chiefs of the clans.

**The Colonnade of Illumination** sees to the hiring of scholars (usually lay-priests of the various temples) as expert advisors, who are then assigned to department as needed.

### **The Department of Accession and Embarkation**

This is run by High Prefect Gamulu hiMraktine of the Sea Blue Clan (aged 44, XVth Circle). He is an Imperialist with a special loathing for the Vriddi Clan. One of his uncles is chief of the Mraktine lineage in Bey Sü. An Avante worshipper, Gamulu is cold and aloof and is just biding his time until posted up north, safely away from Jakálla and its frivolous and languid lifestyle. He likes mistreating women, but has yet to get into trouble for it. The sub-departments in his charge are:

**The Collectorship of Gate Tolls** supervises the issuance of travel permits. (It is necessary to have an official document stating your clan if you travel outside your home city. This can be had for about 2 Kaitars. You might have to wait a week or two.) This office sees to the levying of tolls, not just at the main city gates but at certain bridges and by-ways of historical privilege throughout Jakálla.

**The Office of Harbour Maintenance** oversees maritime matters in the Equ'noyel and Missuma estuaries, being responsible for the harbour defences, port security, and the proclamation of storm warnings. (For the last of these, a priest of Karakan is always on hand to cast divinations.)

### **The Hallway of the Twelve Columns**

This is run by Lord Prefect Meshmuyel hiVrozhimü of the Standing Stone Clan (aged 63, XVth Circle). Slightly doddering, bald, heavily wheezing, Lord Meshmuyel showers everyone with gobbets of saliva when he speaks. A phenomenal grasp of languages and first-hand knowledge of

### **Matters pending**

Concerning the other departments, these events are current:

The registration of quadruplets, twice in one month, by members of the Flowering Life Clan.

The disappearance of Zaren hiBalam of the Clan of the Purple Gem, a up-and-coming young bureaucrat who has not been seen for a month. He was quiet and unassuming, giving no hint of anything untoward prior to his disappearance. Has he been kidnapped? Murdered by foreign agents? Has he become addicted to Zu'ur or Tshoridu? Or fallen madly in love with some foreign lady and followed her home to a distant land?

So far only the regular police are investigating, but the longer they go without turning anything up, the more likely the Omnipotent Azure Legion will take an interest.

Officials of the Department of the Seven Commissioners are looking into the unique case of the sorcerer Klanektu hiBarada, formerly of the Black Stone Clan, a lay priest of Ksarul. He has moved into the derelict tower of Mnettukeng the Sorcerer just outside Jakálla, and now styles himself "Magister Mnettukeng". (There are precedents for this among the mightiest wizards, the theory apparently being that taking on the mantle of an ancient master will lend a "residue" of his magical power.)

Count Chushel hiSsanmiren has ordered his sub department to investigate Klanektu's current status. If he is indeed to be regarded as the heir and modern incarnation of the Bednalljan wizard Mnettukeng, he may be liable for tax on the property over the last fifteen thousand years.

The promotion of Chargesh hiSsandagash of the Clan of the Plume of White to the rank of Senior Scribe in the Department of the Third Courtyard. This is an unheard-of rank for one of his lowly background. His sly ways and unctuous manner should have prevented his promotion to such an august post. Did he blackmail somebody? (He had been very involved in the Clan of the Azure Gems lawsuit against the son of a senior Omnipotent Azure Legion officer, which, much against expectations, was settled in their favour.)

The assumption of Aridani status by Elena hiSsankolun of the Clan of Sea

Blue will be held in two days time: the cooks are preparing a great feast and you can smell the aromas if you just walk down the corridor over there. Her mother is a Tlakotani from upriver – and ugly as a chlen-beast! Prince Rereshqala might be coming!

The attempt to locate Meshmuyel hiTengetlaku of the Clan of the Red Sword, who had fled Jakálla with a tax debt of 25,000 Kaitars (massive owing to fines for non-payment) seems to have traced his flight to Heru in Salarvya. He personally insulted the Grand Sequestrator, Count Chushel hiSsanmirin, arranging for the display of a Meshqu plaque denoting engagement with a Chlen (the Badge of Expression of Animalistic Passion - described in the Paean of Psankothoth of Nirukkai) outside his apartment door. The resulting arousal of hilarity within his clan severely discomfited the grand sequestrator in a manner hitherto unseen since his first wife left him for a tattooed Livyani.

The constant presence of Messiliu Giyo, a Mu'ugalavyani potter, seeking to evade taxation on an antique vase found amongst his wares by the inspectorate. Its value far exceeded that of the rest of his stock and, he claims, was stolen by thieves after the inspection. He claims that the resulting levy of taxes will utterly beggar him. He further claims that it was not his, having been planted amongst his goods by those thieves the previous day - he knows not why.

several countries make him an interesting companion. He has a mild temperament except when he starts discussing the temple of Sarku; he himself is a (disinterested) devotee of Dlamelish.

His sub-departments (all self-explanatory) are **the Office of Maintenance of the Roads, the Office of Maintenance of the City Walls and the Office of Maintenance of the Prisons.**

### **The Department of the City of Lasting Repose**

This is run by Grand Officer Meshmuyel vuNaoma of the Clan of the Joyous of Vra (aged 63, XVth Circle). His sister is a member of the Court of Purple Robes in Avanthar. Often unwell, Meshmuyel has an increasingly shaky grip on his department, which usually has to muddle along without him. He is a keen Belkhanu worshipper and co operates closely with that temple. He is tall, still handsome, and a keen marotlan spectator when he is able to make the trip to the Hirilakte. The sub-departments under his jurisdiction are:

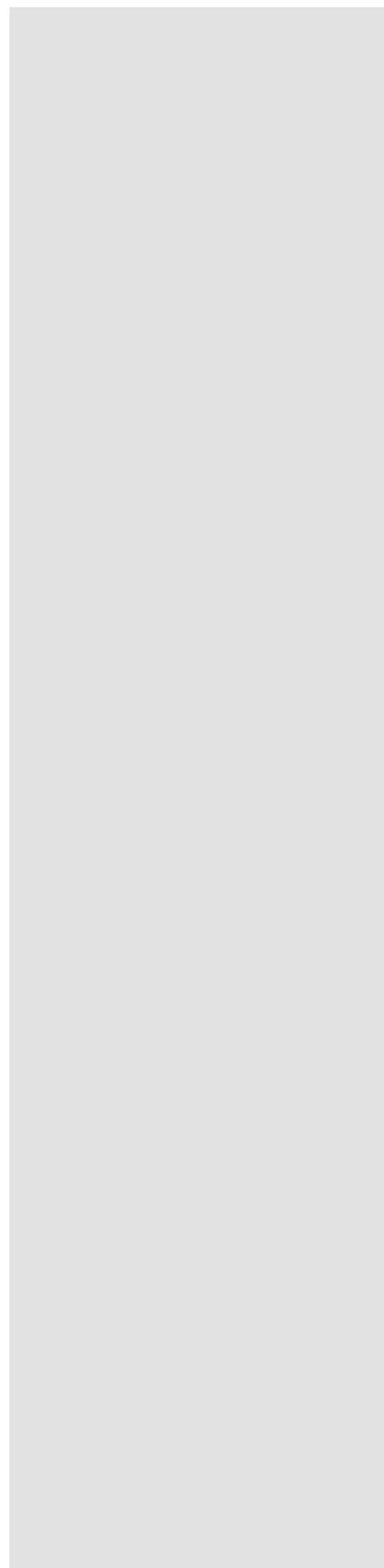
**The Office for the Erection of Tombs and Monuments**, which evaluates the cost of works decreed by Avanthar and then passes on its requirements to the Department of Agency and Exertion.

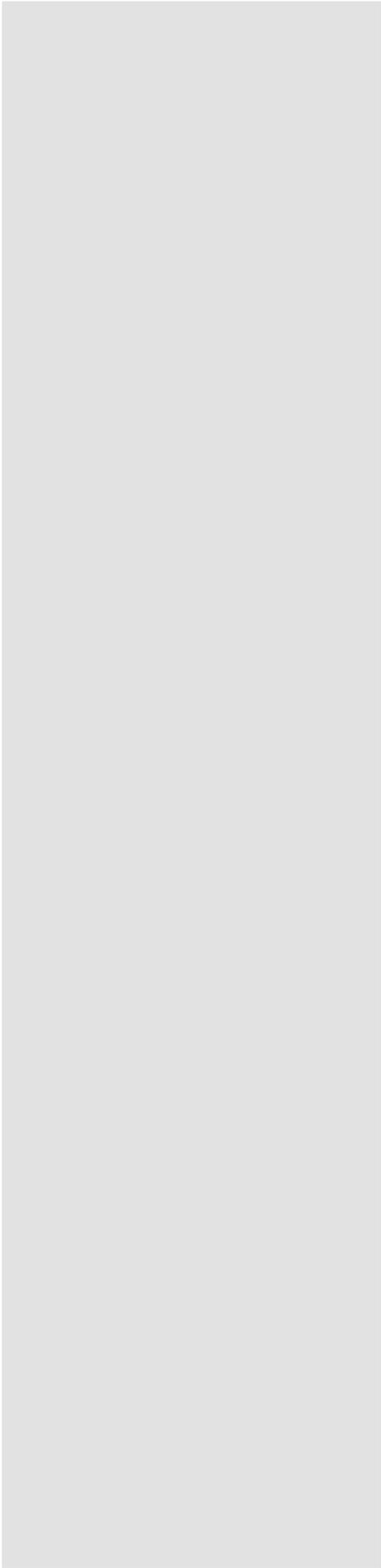
**The Office for the Recovery of Stolen Materials** has charge of a unit of the city militia whose special responsibility is the tracing of items stolen from the nobility or from the Imperium itself. Items stolen from tombs are not within this office's purview, falling instead under the jurisdiction of the tomb police.

### **The Omnipotent Azure Legion**

The offices of the Omnipotent Azure Legion in Jakálla are situated within the Governor's Palace itself, north of the Palace of the Realm. About thirty officers of the intelligence arm of the Legion deal with matters of the highest state security: treason, zu'ur smuggling, espionage, diabolism, mutiny and rioting. This department also keeps a close watch on bureaucrats and police. As OAL Captain Arodai hiNaqumar says: "Who watches the watchmen? We do, pal, and don't you forget it!"

# Appendix





# Skein of Destiny RPG

The Tsolyáni believe that a person has five selves: Body (bakte), Mind (hlakme), Passion (pedhetl), Dream (chusetl) and Spirit (baletl). This is an alternative set of simple roleplaying rules based on that premise.

## Attributes

Roll 2d10 for each attribute: Body, Mind, Passion, Dream and Spirit. It is up to you how you interpret a high score. For instance, high Body could mean you're strong, wiry, big, dextrous, etc.

Initial attribute scores are modified by social class. Nobles get +1 Spirit, townsmen get +1 Mind, and peasants get +1 Passion.

## Abilities

Abilities are divided into skills (which can be trained) and talents (which can only be improved by experience). Abilities of either type are based on a primary and a modifying attribute. The sum of these attributes determines your maximum possible score in that ability.

## Skills

<i>Skill</i>	<i>Based On</i>
Agility	Body + Spirit
Brawling	Body + Body
Etiquette	Spirit + Mind
Magic	Mind + Dream
Medicine	Mind + Spirit
Missile Use	Mind + Body
Priestcraft	Spirit + Dream
Scholarship	Mind + Mind
Seamanship	Body + Mind
Singing	Spirit + Dream
Spellcasting	Passion + Mind
Thievery	Dream + Mind
Tracking	Mind + Body
Weapon Attack	Body + Passion
Weapon Parry	Body + Dream

## Talents

<i>Talent</i>	<i>Based On</i>
Authority	Passion + Mind
Charm	Passion + Spirit
Perception	Dream + Mind
Sex Appeal	Body + Passion
Stealth	Dream + Spirit
Streetwise	Mind + Dream
Survival	Body + Mind

You begin with two skills at half maximum possible value, three skills at one third maximum value, and four skills at one quarter maximum value. (Round fractions up in your favour.)

## Using Abilities

To use an ability, roll 2d10. Success is indicated by a roll equal to or less than your score in the skill. The degree of success is equal to the higher of the two dice in the case of skills and the lower of the dice in the case of talents. If you roll a double then add another 1d10 to either number to get the final degree of success.

For more on this topic, see Patrick Brady's article ["The Five Parts of the Self"](#) in *The Eye of All-Seeing Wonder* #4.

**example:** Rasunra has a Perception score of 9. He rolls, getting a 3 and a 5 on the dice. The total of the dice is 8, which is less than his Perception score so he has succeeded. Perception is a talent, so the degree of success is the lower number rolled: a 3.

### **Voluntary modifiers**

Instead of making a straight skill roll, you can choose to “play safe” or “make an effort”. To do this, apply a modifier ranging from -5 to +5 to the total roll (announced, of course, before you throw the dice). If successful, you must apply the same modifier to the degree of success, to a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 15. (Note that voluntary modifiers cannot be applied to talents, only to skills.)

**example:** Tu'unme is asked to entertain Prince Taksuru. He decides to try and impress the prince by attempting a particularly difficult song. He opts for a modifier of +5 to the dice roll. His Singing score is 13 and he rolls 6 and 2, giving an 8. With the +5 modifier he just succeeds, and he also gets to add 5 for a total degree of success of 11.

### **Attribute rolls**

Sometimes you will need to roll against an attribute directly. This works exactly like using a talent, ie voluntary modifiers cannot be applied. Some common uses of attributes are:

Match Mind against another person's Charm to see if you have the good sense to resist them (Assuming you want to). The higher degree of success wins out.

Match Passion against another person's Authority roll if you want to resist giving in to them.

Match Spirit against a dishonourable suggestion to see if you have the nobility to refuse to go along with it. (The Referee will assign an arbitrary value measuring how dishonourable the suggestion is.)

Some examples of competitive use of attributes are:

- Body vs Body in a contest of strength.
- Mind vs Mind to outwit someone in a game of skill.
- Passion vs Passion to intimidate a foe.
- Dream vs Dream to win a game of chance.
- Spirit vs Spirit when vying for respect or promotion.

### **Loss of attribute points**

Attribute losses can be brought about by magic. In most cases losses will only be temporary.

- Body is reduced by wounds, poison and disease.
- Mind can be reduced by terrible experiences.
- Passion is reduced by release of emotion and by casting spells.
- Dream is reduced by supernatural encounters or sleeplessness.
- Spirit is reduced by disgrace or failure.

Reduction of an attribute to 0 has the following effect:

Body	death
Mind	insanity
Passion	apathy
Dream	undeath
Spirit	annihilation

Ability scores are affected by the loss or gain of points in the primary attribute, but not the modifying attribute. If you lose Body during a fight, for instance, you also lose the same number off your Weapon Attack and Weapon Parry scores.

### Recovering attribute points

Attributes recover at different rates:

- Body: roll Spirit or less each day to recover a point; a Medicine roll at least equal to your current lost points adds 1 extra point a day.
- Mind: roll Spirit or less each week to recover a point.
- Passion: recover all lost points in one night on a successful Dream roll.
- Dream: roll Dream or less each week to recover a point.
- Spirit: noble action will restore lost points at the Referee's discretion.

### Improving ability scores

Both skills and talents can be increased by experience. You are eligible for an ability increase in any month in which you got a degree of success of 10 or more with the ability. To increase the ability you must make a Dream roll. To the degree of success of this roll, add the number of uses of the ability for which you are eligible. You need a final total higher than half your current score to increase the ability by 1.

***example:** Muresh twice got a degree of success of 10+ when using his Priestcraft skill this month. At the end of the month he makes a Mind roll and gets a degree of success of 7. Adding 2 to this gives a result of 9. This is higher than half his current Priestcraft score, so it goes up by 1.*

Training can also be used to increase skills. Typically the Referee will first require a Spirit roll to see if the teacher is impressed enough to take you on as a pupil. (In Tsolyánu, money alone can't buy everything.) At the end of each month, the teacher makes a skill roll and you make a Mind roll. If the total degree of success exceeds half your current score in the skill, increase it by 1. You can only train in two skills at a time.

### Combat

Combatants act each round in descending order of Mind score. You can take one action, either an attack or a parry. The attacker's degree of success minus the defender's degree of success is the amount of damage that gets through to the defender's armour. The defender can then make an armour roll, and the degree of success of this roll is how much of the damage the armour absorbs.

<i>armour</i>	<i>value</i>
leather	5
light chlen-hide	7
medium chlen-hide	8
heavy chlen-hide	9
shield	+2
ordinary steel	+1
excellent steel	+3
enchanted steel	+4

Use the higher of the dice scores for the degree of success of an armour roll. Unlike an ability roll, the armour roll cannot be optionally modified.

### Spellcasting

Spells can be based on Gardásiyal or Tirikelu. To attempt a spell you first make a Magic roll to see how much you remember of it at that moment. Time is a factor, so if you attempt the roll after only one round you must take a voluntary modifier of -5, after two rounds a voluntary modifier of -4

and so on. (If you have a book or scroll containing the spell then the roll is a little easier, beginning at -3, etc.) The degree of success of the Magic roll is the maximum level of the spell that you can then attempt to cast.

You then attempt a Spellcasting roll, subject to normal voluntary modifiers if you wish. The attempt costs 1 point of Passion. The degree of success of the roll is the strength of the spell. The target can attempt a Dream roll, and must get a higher degree of success to avoid the effects of the spell.

If you then want to cast the same spell again there is no need to repeat the Magic roll. You already have that spell in mind and can cast it in just one round. Only make a new Magic roll if you want to attempt a different spell.

### Other magic

It is possible to learn Magic and not Spellcasting. The Magic skill on its own is used for preparing horoscopes, making talismans, brewing love philtres, and so on.

### Insults

Insults can cause the loss of Spirit. The severity of the insult ranges from 2 to 20. If in doubt roll 3d6 for this. (Calling somebody clanless is always severity 20.) A 2d10 roll of equal to or less than the severity of the insults causes the insulted party to lose 1 Spirit point.

Normally it is possible to prevent the loss of Spirit by extracting a payment of shamtla or by issuing a challenge to duel. However, if the character making the insult gets a degree of success with Etiquette at least equal to the insult's severity then you have no legal recourse.

***example.** Hetle insults his friend Gedan, calling him an oaf. The Referee rules this is severity 9. Hetle gets a degree of success of 11 on his Etiquette roll – greater than the insult's severity, so Gedan cannot demand shamtla. On a roll of 9 or less on 2d10 Gedan must lose a point of Spirit. (If shamtla had been paid it would have cancelled out the insult, meaning that Gedan did not have to roll.)*

### Other rules systems

[The Petal Hack](#) is a highly streamlined set of rules that uses *The Black Hack*, a more rational rebuild of early D&D mechanics.

[Fate of Tékumel](#) uses the FATE system to evoke a “Barsoomian” science fantasy vibe.

[Savage Tékumel](#) adapts the mechanics of the *Savage Worlds* RPG and provides a good overview for beginners.

[Swords of Tékumel](#) is an Old School style game by Kevin Crawford intended for players new to Professor Barker's world.

[Simple World](#) is a core-rules version of *Powered By The Apocalypse*. Although not designed for *Tékumel*, its five-attribute system would make a good fit and indeed has close similarities to the [Skein of Destiny](#) rules presented here.

### Wealth

The clan system means that most Tsolyáni do not use cash as such. To save the usual bother of keeping a “bank balance” of Kaitars on your character sheet, which in any case is not authentic in a Tsolyáni setting, characters are simply assigned a Wealth score ranging from 1 (pauper) to 20 (very rich). Wealth is used like a skill.

***example.** Shokesh wants to buy a steel sword, for which a degree of success of 12 on his Wealth roll is required. His Wealth is 14 and he attempts the roll with a voluntary modifier of +5. (He's really wheedling his uncles for this.) Rolling a 6 and a 3 gives success even with the modifier, but only with a degree of success of 11. The Referee announces that Shokesh was outbid by someone from a rival clan.*