



The Raian World Primer

Player Release Version

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The World of Raia

The Raian Calendar

Current Year- 2008 AF [After Founding] [2008 Real Time] 15748 ER [Elder Reckoning, as measured by the elves, first among the demihuman races]

Raia has a 365-day year, divided into 13 months of 28 days each, plus a day at the turning of the year for 'Raiasdaea' or 'Creation Day', a day when the people of Raia celebrate the deities and the creation of the world.

The months and seasons of Raia are:

Firstmonth – **Ardras**

Secondmonth – **Desara**

Thridmonth – **Aylar**, The 15th day of Aylar is the Spring Equinox

Fourthmonth – **Pieran**

Fifthmonth – **Emyr**

Sixmonth – **Sores**, The 23rd day of Sores is the Summer Solstice

Sevenmonth – **Lorath**

Eighthmonth – **Zarath**

Ninmonth – **Pelis**

Tenmonth – **Ceris**, The 2nd day of Ceris is the Autumn Equinox

Eleventhmonth – **Rath**

Twelfthmonth – **Mennor**

Lastmonth – **Kohron**, The 9th day of Kohron is the Winter Solstice

Raiasdaea – The final day of the year, when the gods are celebrated, prayers of thanks are offered for the blessings that have been received, and prayers of hope are offered for the coming year.

The days of the week are referred to by the primary activity that commonly takes place on that day, though for ease of reference for foreigners they are sometimes referred to by their order during the week. They are:

- **Restday** (Firstday) – The day commonly spent at rest or with family. Government offices and some businesses are closed on Firstday. Servants with benevolent employers are commonly given this day off.
- **Worshipday** (Secondday) – Amthydor's temples conduct their primary weekly religious services on the second day of the week. Government offices, schools, moneychangers and other businesses are open on this day.

- **Tradesday, also known as Commonsday** (Thirdday) – This third day of the week is the busiest for the tradesmen and common laborers of any sizable city and Amthydor is no exception. Special events are seldom scheduled for this day, when the common and merchant classes are hard at work and have no free time to enjoy them. Government offices, schools, moneychangers and other businesses are open on this day.
- **Pleasday, also known as Judgesday** (Fourthday) – Petitions and pleas to the Lord Monarch and the noble Houses are heard today. This is also the day when major legal issues are resolved and court judgments are delivered. Government offices, schools, moneychangers and other businesses are open on this day. Many businesses keep longer hours on this middle day of the week.
- **Serviceday** (Fifthday) – Amthydor's more civic-minded citizens frequently volunteer on this day, performing acts of kindness and service to the community and those in need. This is also the day when tenant farmers typically labor in their lords' fields. Government offices, schools, moneychangers and other businesses are open on this day.
- **Marketday** (Sixthday) – This is the busiest day for farmers and craftsmen bringing produce, livestock and other goods to market. Government offices, schools, moneychangers and other businesses are open on this day.
- **Faireday** (Lastday) – The day when faires, celebrations and sporting contests commonly occur. Government offices, schools and some businesses are typically closed on this day.

The Skies of Raia

Raia orbits a single yellow sun, and is in turn orbited by a single moon that completes a revolution every 28 days.

The night skies are filled with countless stars that form the shapes of mythic creatures and figures from Raian history.

Glossary

Autocracy – An Autocracy is governed by a hereditary ruler who wields absolute, unlimited power.

Confederacy – A Confederacy is a collection of cities or towns with a common purpose, such as defense or trade, united to form a single ‘nation’.

Democracy – A Democracy is government by the governed, either directly or through elected representatives.

Dictatorship – A Dictatorship is governed by a single, absolute ruler, though the position is not necessarily hereditary.

Feudalism – A Feudal system is governed by ranks of lords and nobles, with varying degrees of importance and responsibility.

Gynarchy – A Gynarchy is governed only by females.

Hierarchy – A Hierarchy is government operated through the various levels of a religious body or church.

Magocracy – A Magocracy is governed by arcane spellcasters.

Matriarchy – A Matriarchy is governed by the eldest or most important females in the community.

Militocracy – A Militocracy is government by martial law.

Monarchy – Government by a single, hereditary ruler, with specifically defined and limited power.

Oligarchy – In an Oligarchy, absolute power is shared by a group of rulers, such as mercenaries that form their own city, or a group of lords who each command a separate district of a nation.

Pedocracy – A Pedocracy is governed by the most learned, such as sages or scholars.

Plutocracy – A Plutocracy is governed by the wealthy.

Republic – In a Republic, representatives rule on behalf the populace.

Satrapy – In a Satrapy, a conquering force governs a region or nation.

Syndicracy – A Syndicracy is governed by guilds and/or syndicates.

Theocracy – A Theocracy is government by Divine Authority.

Pronunciation Guide

Abaris	a-BAR-us
Aedar	AY-dar
Amthydor	AM-thih-dor
Ancarus	an-CAR-us
Athyr	ATH-ir
Baris	BARE-iss
Brexton	BREX-ton
Brithyr	brith-EER
Caligar	cal-i-GAR
Cellor	SELL-or
Cerrid	SER-id
Chemras	KEM-ras
Choal	KOL
Corothia	kor-OH-thee-a
Dabrek	dah-BREK
Daigou	DI-gow
D’Gar	d-GAR
Drupir	dru-PEER
Eiosia	ee-OH-sha
Ellora	el-LOR-a
Exan	EX-an
Falgoth	FAL-goth
Feldspar	FELD-spar
Grihastha	gri-HAS-tha
Halidorn	HAL-i-dorn
Harrek	HAR-rek
Hur’Resa	hur-REE-sa
Ibarra	I-BAR-a
Ihnall	in-ALL
Ilsinor	ILL-sin-or
Iysishun	is-ISH-un
Jadenspur	JAY-den-spur
Jaedara	ja-DAR-a
Kassanor Isles	KASS-an-or
Kehron	KEY-ron
Khadar	KAY-dar
Khadros	KAD-ros
Kozuru	ko-ZOO-roo
Landseer Isles	LAND-seer
League of Eagsin	EG-sin
Llynvale	LIN-vale
Lovisterre	low-vis-TERR
Lumwani	lum-WAN-ee
Mennier	men-EER
Miros	MEER-os
Moor Mirkhan	MOR MUR-kan
Myr	MEER
Nadera	na-DER-ah
Naefar	nay-FAR
Nestrell	NES-trel
Nezrin	NEZ-rin
Numbor	NUM-bor
Orosol	or-oh-SOL

Perralin	per-RAL-in
Pyroth	PEER-oth
Ramanth-Tor	RAM-anth TOR
Ranguo	ran-GOW
Sadahar	sa-da-HAR
Sadaris	sa-DAR-is
Salindaer	sal-in-DAYR
Sarrif	SAR-rif
Sellenna	sel-LEN-na
Shoji Republic	SO-gee
Sianmar	see-AN-mar
Sovraiin	sov-RAIN
Takaruan	tak-a-RU-an
Talis	TAL-iss
Tarbisten	TAR-bis-ten
Tarsier	TAR-seer
Thyras	THEER-as
Thyrgol	THEER-gol
Torahn	TOR-an
Tranthus	tran-THUS
Treaty States of Sadranal	SAD-ran-al
Tressyn	tres-SIN
Urund	UR-und
Valistar	val-i-STAR
Vanyr	VAN-ir
Very	VAY-r
Waern	WAY-ern
Ysara	ee-SAR-ah
Ziaph	ZI-aff
Zur'Oun	zur-OWN

History and Legends of Raia

Eons before the first humanoids would walk across the land or sail the seas, before time was measured, the gods made the world. Each in turn, they created seas and continents teeming with life, or barren deserts that hide secrets beneath the burning sands. They raised mountains spouting great pillars of fire, and coated towering peaks with ice and snow. For eons the land flourished, and plants and wild beasts were plentiful, but without worshipers, the gods were not content.

The gods set out to create races of being who would honor them – elves, gnomes, dwarves, halflings, orcs, humans, and intelligent monsters.

The Lands of Raia

Continent of Salindaer

Only three of Raia's continents have been explored, though contact has recently been made with a fourth. The main continent, Salindaer, is the largest, and is home to over half of Raia's population. The continent of Salindaer is divided into five regions: The Western Lands, The Central Kingdoms, The Free Lands, The Eastern Provinces and the Southern Domains.

The Western Lands

The **Western Lands** extend westward from the **Whitethorn Mountains** to the **Sea of Imbrium**.

Aedar

Ruler: Mage-King Laeros Stormsinger

Government: Autocracy, with an elected advisory council

Capital: Summervale

Resources: Wool, leather, livestock, timber, books, magic items

Population: 1,175,000 (humans 73%, half-elves 20%, forest elves 6%)

Alignment: LG, LN, N, NG, CG

Language: Aedaran, Common, Rhenese

Deities: Destine, Emerys, Pietos

Description: Where the mages of Pyrroth focus on the use (or mis-use) of magic to gain power and domination, those of Aedar are dedicated to guarding against the abuse of arcane power. Aedar stands guard against the corruption of arcane power in general, and Pyrroth in particular. Conflict between the two nations is intense, and ongoing. A strong army and a host of more natural defenses keep Pyrroth's physical threat to a minimum, while arcane vigilance guards against a magical threat.

Wizards in Aedar are few, and willingly submit to long and rigorous training and strict ethical guidelines, and sorcerers are virtually non-existent. Those arcane spell-casters who call Aedar home often dedicate themselves to the service of the kingdom and the cause. Law requires that the ruler be a wizard, as the royal crown is also an artifact which binds the ruler to the land, granting the ability to sense subtle disturbances in the magical fields which permeate the land.

The Aedarans are practical people, serious and hardworking, and slow to warm up to strangers. Natives of Aedar commonly have light to medium complexions, blonde to dark brown or black hair and brown, black or green eyes. They favor functional, unadorned clothing in darker shades of blue, green and grey.

➤ **Summervale:** (Metropolis, 31,067) The fortified capital city of Summervale sits upon a high plateau. An artistic combination of native stone and well-crafted wood, the city is home to the premier Weavers Guild in the Western Lands.

Athyr

Ruler: Queen Irisena I

Government: Monarchy (Gynarchy)

Capital: Amatria

Resources: Silk, cloth, clothing, artwork, seafood, cheese

Population: 985,000 (humans 82%, dwarves 6%, gnomes 4%, halflings 3%, high elves 2%, half-elves 1%, half-orcs 1%)

Alignment: LG, LN, N, NG

Language: Athyran, Common

Deities: Ardra, Destine, Elianna, Peliron, Pietos, Sorena

Description: Since 14850 ER (1080 AF), Athyr has had only female rulers. In that time, no son has ever been born into the royal family, and no one knows why. Countless prayers, spells and rituals have been attempted, and numerous sages and scholars have sought answers to the mystery, to no avail. The neighboring nations of Jaedara and Baris have sought to exploit this perceived weakness by attacking Athyr, only to learn that the country, while ruled by women, is not without intelligent and loyal men, and boasts a well trained army that is utterly devoted to the protection of country, queen, and citizens. Athyr's queens, strong willed, intelligent, far-

seeing women, have historically been much loved and respected by their people, and have never hesitated to acknowledge and promote those capable of high achievement, regardless of gender.

In 15190 ER (1450 AF), members of the noble House Pariasan allied themselves with a faction of the Jaedaran government and attempted to overthrow the Royal Family and seize control of the country. They succeeded in capturing Crown Princess Elinara, but quick action by the military ended the rebellion before she could be harmed, and House Pariasan was stripped of all land and title and declared Exile.

Native Athyrans tend to have dark hair and eyes and dark honey-colored complexions. They favor brightly colored, lightweight garments, mostly made of silk.

- **Amatria:** (Large city, 23,470) The capital city of Amatria is Athyr in miniature, a mix of social classes, religions and lifestyles working together for the benefit of everyone. All but the poorest of the city's buildings have been crafted of white stone brought overland from the southern seacoast, making the city a brilliant ornament on the green landscape of the countryside.

Baris

Ruler: King Mordec Ruuvan

Government: Hereditary Autocracy

Capital: Caer Barisol

Resources: Mercenaries, weapons, armor, metals

Population: 887,960 (humans 83%, dwarves 7%, half-orcs 3%, goblins 2%, gnomes 2%, kobolds 2%)

Alignment: CE, CN, NE, N

Language: Common, Ramanthan

Deities: Belatrix, Illudra, Kohl, Lucor, Mordana, Oblivion, Zara

Description: The militant nation of Baris was founded around 14778 ER (1038 AF), by mercenaries left with nothing to do following the union of Ramanth and Torryn and the resultant peace. The most prominent of the mercenary companies following the Ramanth-Torryn war was the Nighthawks, led by Captain Keroth Baris. Baris and the Nighthawks were deeded the small frontier town and keep that were renamed Caer Barisol. Over time, Baris, the members of his mercenary company, and his descendants gradually expanded the town and claimed more of the surrounding (and previously

unclaimed) area. By 14912 ER (1172 AF) the kingdom of Baris had expanded to its present-day borders. However, the country and its leaders have seldom been content with what they have, and aggression against perceived weaker neighbors, such as Athyr, is common.

Baris has few true 'natives', as it draws its population of wandering mercenaries from as far north as Ancarus and the Northern Wastes and as far south as Nezzrin. Those citizens descended from the original inhabitants tend to closely resemble their Athyran or Ramanthan neighbors, with honey-toned complexions, dark hair and dark eyes.

- **Caer Barisol:** (Large city, 22,410) The capital city of Caer Barisol has grown up over the years around the original town and central keep, and fortified to withstand the assault of even the most determined force.

Free Kingdom of Choal

Ruler: King Rosten II

Government: Monarchy

Capital: Samaer

Resources: Metals, minerals, gems, mining

Population: 1,185,350 (humans 83%, dwarves 8%, gnomes 6%, halfling 2%)

Alignment: CG, N, NG

Language: Common, Rhenese

Deities: Ardra, Aurelian, Cerion, Kalek, Lohm

Description: This rugged land matches its harsh history. It is only since about 15245 ER (1505 AF) that Choal has become a nation in its own right. Years of struggle and war against the evil humanoids of the bordering mountains, as well as its aggressive neighboring nation of Pyrroth and the raiders of the Northern Wastes, have forged a nation of people prepared to weather any challenge. What they cannot grow or make for themselves, they trade the rich bounty of their mines to obtain. The people of Choal work side by side to rebuild their nation, without regard to race or religion, and welcome travelers from all lands. Continuing skirmishes with orcs, goblins, gnolls and bugbears provide ample opportunities for adventurers and mercenaries, and ancient ruins hold the promise of reward for those brave enough to seek it.

Few people not born in Choal choose to live there, and those born in this rugged nation seldom choose to leave it for very long. Natives tend to be tall and strongly built, with fair hair and light eyes, the legacy of ancestors from the Northern Wastes. They favor practical and

unadorned clothing, made from simple but sturdy materials such as leather and wool.

- **Samaer:** (Metropolis, 27,035) A history of being subjected to siege by aggressive neighbors has led to laws requiring that all buildings in the capital be constructed of stone rather than wood, to prevent a fire from ravaging the city. Only official government buildings stand higher than three stories, and even those are not built above five stories.

Republic of Halidorn

Ruler: Esteemed Tesman Mishkor

Government: Republic

Capital: Hashrin

Resources: Armor, foodstuffs, grain, lumber, iron, mercenaries, salt, weapons, wine, wool

Population: 994,730 (humans 77%, dwarves 7%, halflings 5%, gnomes 4%, forest elves 3%, half-elves 2%, half-orcs 1%)

Alignment: LN, N, NG

Language: Common, Tarsien

Deities: Ardra, Ayla, Cerion, Kalek, Lucor

Description: The population of Halidorn is much smaller than what the land could support. Its cities are few and far between, and tend to be small. Most of the population resides in small towns and farming communities. The land is rich, and well suited to farming. Halidorn's wines are prized near and far. Fine armor and weapons are another source of pride for Halidorn's craftsmen.

The merchants of this small nation are considered to be among the most honest and trustworthy on Raia. In sensitive transactions where they are not a participant, they are often asked to stand as neutral observers and verify that all parties have met their contractual obligations.

Peaceful Halidorn has no standing army; rather it utilizes a citizen militia to defend its borders and to deal with the occasional bandit raid.

Halidornans vary greatly in appearance, from the once-fair farmers of the plains, weathered by the sun, to hearty, medium-skinned mountain dwellers with dark blonde to brown hair and green or brown eyes. They are a tall and athletic people, with a deep appreciation for the natural world around them.

- **Hashrin:** (Large city, 24,185) When it is first seen from a distance, the city of Hashrin is deceptive. Consisting half of permanent structures and half of transient

merchant dwellings, a sea of brightly colored tents surrounds the smaller core of the main city. This massive collection of semi-permanent structures forms the foundation of the largest year-round open-air market on the continent.

Jaedara

Ruler: High King Garimann

Government: Monarchial city-states joined into a single nation

Capital: Kelvanie (currently designated)

Resources: Lumber, mineral, farming

Population: 1,150,000 (humans 63%, goblin-kind 18%, fey 15%, dwarves 2%, gnomes 1%)

Alignment: Any

Language: Common, Sadaharan, Tarsien

Deities: All

Description: According to ancient legends, Jaedara once had a single ruler, an ambitious overlord calling himself Jaedara the Great, intent upon constructing an everlasting dynasty. Although he fathered over thirty children, none survived past the age of ten, leaving Jaedara without an heir to his kingdom. Unwilling to see what he had built torn apart by the bickering of his advisors and military leaders, he declared that upon his death each of the country's six great cities would fall under the leadership of one of his most trusted followers. Each was presented with an enspelled *Sceptre of Rulership* as a symbol of their new authority, but with that gift Jaedara also burdened them with a powerful curse. To prevent these new monarchial city-states from warring against each other, and to ensure that his kingdom stayed united against all enemies, Jaedara declared that should any of the six scepters be lost, or fail to be passed to a direct descendant of its original recipient, then the entire kingdom would be swallowed by the earth and then flooded beneath the waters of the ocean as it flowed back up the river that crossed the countryside. Despite their differences, the six have maintained this unusual alliance against all invaders. Together the leaders form Jaedara's Monarchial Council. The capital city moves every twenty years, with the ruler of that city holding the position of High King. The High King holds veto power over the Monarchial Council, which consists of the remaining five rulers who establish legislation governing the nation.

High King Garimann leads the coastal merchant city-state and current capital of Kelvanie. The half-elven Queen Erallinia ably governs Astora.

King Zalberg of Peliron, a respected human paladin, leads the city-state of Cavalon. King Gritz rules over the city-state of Mulvarn, known for turning a blind eye to the less honorable business dealings of many of its citizens. King Gorth leads Ophran, the easternmost of the six city-states and the center of Jaedara's mining resources. The Wizard King Verros oversees the city of Volcora.

- **Astora:** (Large city, 18,146) Located near the Halidor-Jaedara-Tarsier border, the city of Astora clearly reflect, and honors, the influence of its traditionally elven or half-elven rulers. A graceful combination of wood and stone architecture blends almost seamlessly with the surrounding countryside, and a collection of public gardens and elaborate fountains help merge the needs of civilization with an appreciation of the natural world.
- **Cavalon:** (Large city, 17,819) Centrally located at the nation's geographic heart, the city of Cavalon is the picture of a military stronghold. Thick walls surround the city proper and crenellated towers stand watch over the land.
- **Kelvanie:** (Large city, 19,659) The bustling coastal merchant city of Kelvanie is a curious blending of languages, religions and styles, to serve the wide variety of visitors who pass through by both land and sea.
- **Mulvarn:** (Large city, 15,327) The city of Mulvarn sits less than a half day's ride from the Halidorn border, midway between the cities of Astora and Ophran. Where crime is virtually unknown in Kelvanie, it is accepted as a part of daily life in Mulvarn. Bribery of officials is commonplace, and a wide variety of less than legal items are available in the thriving black market atmosphere.
- **Ophran:** (Medium city, 11,708) Located near the Athyr-Halidorn-Jaedara border, the city of Ophran is the center of Jaedara's mining wealth. Its ornately carved buildings, formed of local stone, house the nation's most skilled miners, stonemasons, gemcutters and metalsmiths.
- **Volcora:** (Large city, 16,043) Located near the Tarsier-Sadahar-Jaedara border, the city of Volcora has little to offer for visitors not interested in the pursuit of knowledge. The majority of Volcora's population of merchants, farmers and laborers are employed to serve the needs of the city's academics. While Volcora lacks the status

of Raia's great library cities, it remains a center of knowledge and higher learning.

Kehron

Ruler: High Queen Selice

Government: Monarchy

Capital: Ramallas

Resources: Cheese, cloth, furs, mountain ponies, wine, wool

Population: 819,570 (humans 85%, half-elves 6%, other fey 6%, forest elves 2%)

Alignment: NG, N, CG

Language: Common, Rhenese

Deities: Ardra, Aurelian, Ayla, Brianna, Cerion, Cyrene, Destine, Elianna, Emerys, Meneon, Pietos, Sorena

Description: The people of the rolling plains and rugged hills of Kehron have close ties to their land and consider it to be a living, breathing entity. Arcane practitioners in Kehron tend to be sorcerers rather than wizards, drawing their power from their connection to the land (though without causing harm to it).

Kehron has no army in the traditional sense. Rather, it is defended by a civilian militia made up of units of warriors mounted on sturdy hill ponies or gypsy-bred horses. The land itself plays a role in defending Kehron. The earth rises up to block the passage of invading forces, or opens gaping chasms beneath their feet. Plants seem to reach out and entangle men and mounts. Animals sneak into enemy camps at night, to sabotage invaders by chewing through ropes and saddle girths or to steal food, weapons and other smaller objects.

Few rulers are as accessible to their people as the monarchs of Kehron. The people of Kehron are fanatically loyal to their rulers, not out of fear, but out of respect and genuine affection. People, land, and monarch thrive as one, and what is good for one is good for all.

Kehron frequently finds itself the target of Pyrroth's aggressions, as the mages of that nation covet whatever mysterious power they believe to be hidden there.

The Kheronese people commonly have fair to medium complexions, blonde to brown hair and blue, green or grey eyes. They favor garments of fur, leather and wool that are suited to the often-chilly climate. There are no finer horsemen to be found on the continent.

- **Ramallas:** (Large city, 23,850) The capital city of Ramallas is a seemingly random mix of wood and stone, famed for hosting the

largest animal market and horse fair in the Western Lands.

plated roofs make the city of Kartalan a shining beacon to welcome home the vessels of the Myran trade fleet.

Exalted Trade Nation of Myr

Ruler: The Covenant (Nine member ruling council, who rule anonymously)

Government: Plutocracy

Capital: Kartalan

Resources: Ale, exotic goods, jewelry, paper, wine

Population: 2,700,650 (humans 81%, gnomes 9%, halflings 6%, half-orcs 3%)

Alignment: LE, LN, N, NE

Language: Common, Myran

Deities: Destine, Dymora, Lucor

Description: The wealthy and the guilds control power in Myr, a land of merchants who are ever in search of new markets and new sources of trade goods.

Wealth is everything to the people of Myr, and everything that they do is for some sort of profit, either political or monetary. Even in acts of philanthropy they gain something. Myrans are neither frivolous nor wasteful even in the smallest aspect of their lives. EVERYTHING is for a reason, and that reason is POWER and WEALTH.

While Myr resents Amthydor's growing economic status, business is business and they do not wish to offend a trading partner. Amthydor is at the gateway to the lands east of the Delambir Mountains, a potentially lucrative market for Myr's merchant elite.

The people of Myr have little use for those who dabble in the arcane, seeing it as wasteful and without profit. Religion is often an afterthought in Myr, but among the religious, worship of Lucor is the predominant faith.

Recently, a Myran trade fleet succeeded in reestablishing contact with the continent of Hur'Resa. Rumors of what they discovered range from the mundane (gold and gems) to a race of highly civilized natives who do not tolerate trespassers to their lands.

The people of Myr tend to be tall and thin, with medium-dark mahogany skin, black hair and dark brown or black eyes. They favor rich fabrics and flowing garments that set them apart from the many foreign merchants that visit their ports.

➤ **Kartalan:** (Metropolis, 60,935) Distinctive imported white stone buildings and gold

High Magocracy of Pyrroth

Ruler: Grand High Mage Chrisor and the Lyarch (High Council)

Government: Magocracy

Capital: Lethyr

Resources: Magic items, artwork, timber, metals, books

Population: 3,880,600 (humans 99%)

Alignment: LE, LN, N, NE

Language: Common, Pyrrothan

Deities: Destine, Dymora, Emerys, Oblivion, Zara

Description: Founded by survivors of Thyras, Pyrroth is home to the most evil of evil wizards. The rule in Pyrroth is 'survival of the fittest', and only the strong survive in this nation almost entirely devoted to the pursuit of magic. Rank in this strict Magocracy is based upon ability and those without arcane talent are considered second-class citizens. Children with strong magical talent are taken from their parents and raised in 'academy schools'. Parents with arcane talent, or who have produced talented offspring, are encouraged to have many children. It is not uncommon for parents to 'do away' with untalented children, casting them out into the streets, selling them into slavery or even drowning them. Arranged marriages are common, both to cement political alliances and in an attempt to breed children with strong magical aptitude. Pyrroth has a history of aggression against its neighboring nations. Choal and Kehron have succeeded in resisting by force, though at a high price, while Aedar has raised magical forces of its own, trained for good to counter the evil practices of Pyrroth.

Those Pyrrothians descended from the survivors of distant Thyras have dark mahogany skin, dark hair and dark eyes. Descendants of the original population tend to be fairer skinned, with brown hair and brown, blue or hazel eyes.

➤ **Lethyr:** (Metropolis, 41,380) All but the poorest structures here are raised and maintained by magic. These architectural wonders contrast sharply with the homes of those citizens who lack the arcane skills that are the true power in Pyrroth.

Enlightened Republic of Ramanth-Tor

Ruler: Council Sentorum

Government: Republic

Capital: Tor-Tevvyn, built on what was once the original border between the two nations

Resources: Glass, pottery, wine, rope, rugs, wool, trade goods, iron ore

Population: 1,000,350 (humans 74%, dwarves 6%, gnomes 5%, half-orcs 4%, half-elves 3%, halflings 3%, forest elves 1%, goblins 1%, kobolds 1%, orcs 1%)

Alignment: LN, N, NG

Language: Common, Ramanthan

Deities: Ardra, Ayla, Cerion, Glissande, Kalek, Lohm, Meneon, Peliron, Pietos

Description: Once two separate nations, Ramanth and Torryn suffered from years of conflict as each sought to overpower the other. When their own armies proved insufficient, the two warring kings hired companies of foreign mercenaries to fight for them. Unlike the armies who called the embattled lands home, the mercenaries cared little for the lands or people caught up in the conflict. They cared only for their pay, and turned to looting and pillaging as compensation for their swords and skills.

In 14772 ER (1032 AF), weary of decades of war, of trampled fields, of conscripted husbands, brothers and sons, the common people of the two kingdoms rose up and demanded peace. The kings of the two nations were driven into exile by their own subjects, and the people of the two lands united, declaring that they would be a law unto themselves, and never suffer the arrogance of a single leader again. Guided by wise and learned minds, they united the two kingdoms, and formed a new republic, giving all a voice through elected representation. The mercenaries were driven out, and the people began to rebuild. The finest quality glass and pottery on the continent are produced here, as well as exquisite ornamental rugs.

The people of Ramanth-Tor tend to have warm, honey-colored skin and brown or black hair. They favor a variety of garments in light colors.

- **Tor-Tevvyn:** (Metropolis, 52,871) Like the nation as a whole, the city of Tor-Tevvyn is a curious blending of cultures, attitudes and ideas. Traders from the Urundi city of Lumwani are common, as well as those from the distant nations of Cardiz, Cerrid, Phaeros and Zumaer.

Sadahar

Ruler: Archein Tammest al-Hasir

Government: Autocracy

Capital: Treviis

Resources: Armor, herbs, ships, silk, spices

Population: 3,892,180 (humans 88%, halflings 4%, elem 3%, half-elves 3%, doppelgangers 1%)

Alignment: LE, LN, N, NE

Language: Common, Sadaharan

Deities: Dymora, Lucor

Description: Sadahar is an ancient and mystical land filled with corruption and decadence. The citizens of Sadahar are motivated by the accumulation and display of wealth, status and power. Nearly everyone is involved in some way with the country's mercantile economy. Slavery is common practice, as is the keeping of harems. Sadahar has a strict caste system, and elaborate rituals of courtesy, even among blood enemies. Penalties for slaves or lower class citizen who speak or act inappropriately towards their betters are severe. Women are treated as little more than property in Sadahar, and have few rights except those granted by their husbands or fathers.

Guilds exert a great deal of influence in Sadahar, including those dedicated to thieves and assassins. In games of power, there are no rules. The people of Sadahar generally have dark honey-colored complexions, black hair and dark eyes. They tend to favor extravagant garments with heavy embroidery, especially silks, as well as gems and jewelry. Extravagant displays of wealth are common, and political intrigue is the coin of the realm.

- **Treviis:** (Metropolis, 37,209) Decadence is the rule in Sadahar, and the prominent and obvious display of wealth makes Treviis a popular destination for those wishing to see and be seen.

Tarsier

Ruler: Sovereign King Ethran I

Government: Feudal Monarchy, advised by a representative council

Capital: Cinnar

Resources: Cheese, cloth, pipe weed, rugs, silk, tea, wine, wood products

Population: 1,846,350 (humans 80%, half-elves 8%, halflings 6%, dwarves 5%, forest elves 5%)

Alignment: LG, LN, N, NG, CG

Language: Common, Tarsien

Deities: Ardra, Cerion, Galvandt, Glissande, Hyperion, Peliron, Pietos

Description: Tarsier's population is small considering its size. This nation of merchants and craftsmen has suffered from a history of civil war, internal strife and humanoid threats. Slavery is not permitted in Tarsier, and the penalties for trafficking in intelligent creatures of any race are harsh. While most noble titles are hereditary, some are elevated to the peerage through merit. Rich farmland provides for most of Tarsier's food requirements, and the extensive Ajer Forest provides plentiful natural resources for the thriving woodcraft industry.

Appearances vary, as the country's stands of fine woods draw craftsmen from across the continent who often stay to make their homes close to the nation's abundant natural resources. Tarsierans favor comfortable clothing, in a variety of styles, fabrics and colors, reflecting the influence of their many neighbors and wide range of visiting artisans.

➤ **Cinnar:** (Metropolis, 27,506) Cinnar is unusual among major cities in that it has no outer defensive wall. The earthen curtain wall which once surrounded the city was torn down following the last civil war, in an effort to foster a feeling of openness and accessibility between the common people and their rulers.

Whitethorn Mountains

Resources: Copper, gold, iron, rough gems, silver, timber.

Population: Unknown. While the lower range is known to be home to dwarves, gnomes, orcs, kobolds and other humanoids, it is impossible to guess what creatures may make their homes in the northern stretches of the range.

Description: The towering peaks of this mountain range reach north to south across the western portion of Raia's main continent, nearly 6000 miles in length. The Whitethorn Mountains form a major geographical division of Raia's main continent, separating the Western Lands from the Central Kingdoms. Travel across the mountains is difficult at the best of times, and most travelers take advantage of the White Wurm Gap, where the Great Trade Road winds between the northern and southern ranges. Legend has it that a great dragon battle took place thousands of years ago, on the spot which is now a great gap in the Whitethorn Range. According to the bards' tales, this opening in the mountains, several miles wide, was formed when a clan of white dragons banded together to challenge Prism, the legendary First Wurm, for supremacy over Raia's dragons. In the battle, the mountains were crushed by the impact of the defeated white dragons falling to earth.

The Central Kingdoms

The **Central Kingdoms** encompass the vast region between the Whitethorn and Delambir Mountain ranges.

Ancarus

Ruler: Tribal clans, each led by its strongest warrior. Currently, the strongest of these clan leaders is Torbald Stormblade, of Clan Bloodstone.

Government: While not sufficiently organized to be called a dictatorship, power is held by force of arms, with the strongest leader rallying the rest and giving orders. Conflict between tribes is common, which is a good thing, for if all of the tribes ever united, they would truly be a force to be reckoned with.

Capital: Rimmersdell.

Resources: Horses, whatever else they steal.

Population: 34,670 (humans 92%, half-orcs 6%, orcs 1%)

Alignment: N, NE, CN, CE

Language: Common

Deities: Brianna, Illudra, Karios, Kohr, Krayve, Oblivion, Zara

Description: The raiders of Ancarus approach life, and battle, with a 'take no prisoners' attitude. They are consummate horsemen, and specialize in rapid-strike raids and mounted skirmishing. They are fierce fighters, and fear nothing. While their women are seldom seen on the battlefield, they are as savage as the men in combat. The land is ill suited for farming or grazing, and has few natural resources. Much of what the Ancarusites have, they steal. The people of Ancarus are hearty and muscular, well-suited to life in their rugged homeland. They are generally fair skinned, and have blonde or reddish hair and blue eyes.

- **Rimmersdell:** (Large town, 4,800) In summer the tribes gather on Rimmersdell Plain, at the town of Rimmersdell, to negotiate inter-klan agreements. Winters are too harsh for the clans to remain year-round, so many of them migrate south to raid, before returning home in the spring. The buildings are all of stone, as wood is far too precious a commodity here to be used for construction.

Republican Magocracy of Caligar

Ruler: Head of the Council of Magi (Changes every three years, currently Lady Margail Domascrin, head of the College of Transformation)

Government: The Council of Magi - one Generalist Mage and one "specialist" representative of each School of Magic (Necromancy, Enchantment/Charm, Alteration, Illusion, Conjunction/Summoning, Evocation, Abjuration, Divination). Council members are the "most powerful" representatives of their school in the land; a member remains in office until "bested" or voluntarily retired. Every three years one of the Council Members is voted into the position of Council Head.

Capital: Caligar City

Resources: Fish, extensive mineral resources, magic.

Population: 86,497 scattered throughout the three islands, most living on the larger island, in Caligar City itself. (humans 83%, gnomes 5%, half-elves 4%, high elves 3%, forest elves 2%, dwarves 2%)

Alignment: NG, N, CG

Language: Caligaran, Common

Deities: Destine, Emerys, Meneon, Pietos, Sorena

Description: Founded in 13545 ER (-195 AF) as a center for the study of magic, the central island of Caligar is home to one of the world's oldest universities. Settled by descendants of the survivors of Thyras, the Caligaran mages have been careful to learn from the worst mistakes of their forbearers. Initially the land had no formal government, but the need for leadership resulted in the formation of a "meritocracy," led by those who showed the greatest level of learning. This idea grew into a leadership by the most "powerful" magic-users (often this is the mage who performs best in a series of tests devised by the head of the rival school, but sometimes is determined by all-out combat), with an elected head.

The nation earns most of its wealth by hiring out mages to other nations; many rulers have Caligaran Diviners or Generalist wizards amongst their advisors.

Native Caligarans tend to be tall and slender, with golden or light brown skin and dark hair and eyes.

- **Caligar City:** (Large City, 23,370) The famed Collegium Arcanum occupies nearly one fourth of this sprawling city of elegant pale pink stone buildings and fragile towering spires. Another fourth is devoted to the merchants and services that support the vast Collegium, its staff and students. Visitors with no interest in the arcane arts will find little else to entertain them here.

Dabrek (Orcland)

Ruler: General Silt Proahak; this thirty-five year old half-orc successfully captured the monarchy in 15734 ER (1994 AF). He has re-emphasized the anti-elven policies of his forbearers, successfully using them as a common cause to unite the tribes and people of Dabrek.

Government: Military (Monarchy)

Capital: New Garrogunt

Resources: Mines, mercenaries, slaves.
Population: 1,000,000. (Orcs 50%, half-orcs 25%, humans 24%)

Alignment: LE, NE, N

Language: Ancaran, Common, Orcish

Deities: Belatrix, Dymora, Graala, Karios, Kohr, Krayve, Mordana, Oblivion

Description: Dabrek was created by a group of adventurers in 15590 ER (1850 AF). Orcish attacks resurged in the following generations, so much so that Dabrek sued for peace in 15679 ER (1939 AF) and united with the orcish tribes.

Dabrek combined its own pro-human sentiment with orcish prejudices to create a unified national outlook: Elves and elvenkind are dangerous people who deceive and subtly weaken other races to keep them from fulfilling their rightful destiny. Compassion, reverence for nature, and facility in arts are elven distractions. Only through direct force and constant vigilance will Dabrek's destiny be fulfilled.

Technically a monarchy, no direct bloodline heir has successfully kept the throne since 15701 ER (1961 AF). The people of Dabrek respect power more than tradition.

Dabrek's constant anti-elven stance is not simply rhetoric: It has funded assassination of prominent elves and maintains a constant state of war against elven or pro-elven nations.

Appearance varies among Dabrek's small human population. Regardless of race, all but the most wild and uncivilized tend to wear sturdy clothing of leather and wool, suited to the harsh weather and rugged depths of the nation's mines.

- **New Garrogunt:** (Metropolis, 39,345)
New Garrogunt is a somber city, built of rough stone taken from the nation's mines during the search for more valuable resources. The city lacks the graceful lines and ornamentation common to cities to the west and south, reflecting in its architecture the unwelcoming attitude of its people.

Delambir Mountains

Resources: Gold, silver, copper, iron ore, gems
Population: The Delambir Mountains are home to a continually shifting population of non-humans (dwarves, gnomes, orcs, half-orcs, goblins, etc).

Description: This mountain chain extends over 4000 miles north south across Raia's main continent. The northern reaches of the Delambir Mountains are a harsh and dangerous place. Avalanches are common, and the highest peaks are never free of snow and ice, even in the heat of summer. The mountains near the ruined city of Thyras are rumored to hold countless strange and dangerous magical beasts, believed to be the result of failed experiments by the Thyrans mages.

Eternal Empire of Sacred D'Gar

Ruler: Emperor Hamid D'Gar

Government: Theocracy

Capital: Felshariz

Resources: Fertile but poorly managed farmland, some small mines. Most resources are obtained via trade or simply taking what they need.

Population: 78,000 (Humans 86%, dwarves 7%, half-elves 2%, halflings 2%, gnomes 2%)

The majority of the population is distributed among five over-crowded, filthy cities separated by large, poorly run 'state' farms.

Alignment: LE, NE

Language: Common, Orc

Deities: Suulthah

Description: Founded in 15621 ER (1881 AF) by the great grandfather of the current ruler, this land was originally "The Sacred Kingdom of D'Gar;" and the founding king claimed to rule by virtue of a contract forged with his evil patron. The nation has a repressive hierarchical government with the "Emperor" at the top,

followed by a class of "Lawyer / Priests" who interpret and enforce his dictates. Below them is the extensive army with mandatory military service for all fit males and optional service for females.

Slavery is common practice, with the number of slaves approximately equal to the number of citizens.

The current ruler has only been in power for fifteen years; three months after claiming the throne, he "upgraded" his title to Emperor.

The people of D'Gar tend to have pale skin, dark hair and eyes, and be slightly shorter and stockier than average humans. They favor somber colors and simple, rough fabrics.

- **Felshariz:** (Large City, 18,500, equally divided between citizens and slaves) The capital city of D'Gar is as oppressive and unwelcoming as the mountains in whose shadow it sits. There is a constant feeling of tension and an undertone of fear among the locals, and visitors are not encouraged to linger for long.

Kingdom of Harrek (Mountain Home)

Ruler: Agmar Thunderfist

Government: Hereditary ruler of all the clans with a Council of Clan Elders providing guidance and counter-balance). In public Agmar and the Clan Elders appear in complete agreement. In the closed Meeting Hall, things are often strained.

Capital: Harrekholm (known to the populace as the Redoubt)

Resources: Mining (iron, precious metals (silver, gold, platinum), precious stones (diamonds, amethyst, and various opals), Mithril, and Adamantine

Population: 1,200,000 Million (dwarves 97 %, gnomes 1%, humans 1%)

Alignment: LG, LN

Language: Common, Dwarven, Terran

Deities: Kalek, Lohm

Description: The Kingdom of Harrek is the ancestral home of Raia's Dwarven population. There is a vast underground network of roadways and population centers (which initially started as either guard posts or mining settlements) all connecting with Harrekholm. Harrekholm itself is both an underground city and a city built into the sides of Mount Harrek. While the Redoubt is not closed to visitors, it is not an easy journey. Harrek is Raia's sole provider of Mithril and Adamantine. The dwarves have recently finished another very

bloody, costly war with their traditional enemies, the Goblins and Orcs. There are remnants of those forces still in the area.

The dwarves are a lawful and good society. Chaotic behavior, while not against the “law” is considered a social problem and dwarven moralities and sensibilities are offended by it. Consequently there are severe social penalties against it. Those dwarves who exhibit “rogue-like tendencies” are not tolerated by the Kingdom and population. These unfortunates are either ostracized by their clan or banished by the Kingdom, depending on the severity of their actions. Those banned are branded on the forehead so that they will be identified to all. While a majority of the dwarves worship Lohm and Kalek, all non-evil deities are worshipped. Each dwarf upon reaching adulthood must undergo a “Rite of Passage”. This involves making a five year journey throughout the lands, learning both how to survive outside of Harrek and about the world around them. While dwarves who are in the process of their Rite are able to return to the Kingdom at anytime, their stays in the homeland must be of short duration or else they will face societal disapproval.

➤ **Harrekholm:** (Large city, 20,450) Primarily a sprawling underground city, only those portions of Harrekholm which lay above the surface are open to visitors. Carved into the side of the towering Mount Harrek, Harrekholm is the epitome of a stone carver’s art. The ornamented stone buildings have been made into a canvas covered with representations of events from Raia’s dwarven history.

Ilsinor

Ruler: High King Makir IV

Government: Monarchy

Capital: Solears

Resources: Copper, silver, gems (opals), northern trade goods

Population: 1,050,000 (humans 86%, dwarves 6%, gnomes 4%, halflings 3%)

Alignment: NG, N, CG

Language: Common, Ilsinoran

Deities: Destine, Kalek, Lohm, Lucor

Description: The trade nation of Ilsinor maintains a strict policy of neutrality in all of its dealings. It has no more interest in the wars or petty squabbles of its neighbors than in those half a world away—that is to say, none at all.

Ilsinor maintains a strong army to guard its caravans and to purge its countryside of

marauding monsters and brigands, but other than that they are a peaceful people.

High King Makir is growing quite old, and nearing the end of his reign. His eldest son, Desmor, renounced his claim to the throne in favor of becoming a paladin of Peliron. Makir now faces the task of choosing his heir from among his 6 remaining children. It is the fervent prayer of his people that he is able to come to a decision before passing from this life and into Meneon’s realm.

Often descended from the raiders of the Northern Wastes, the people of Ilsinor tend to have fair skin, reddish, light brown or blonde hair, and blue or hazel eyes. They favor earthy colors and comfortable clothing.

➤ **Solears:** (Metropolis, 38,571) This moderate sized city takes advantage of the proximity of the Great Trade Road and the merchant opportunities that thoroughfare represents to pursue a number of mercantile enterprises. Trade in precious metals and gems has made Solears into a thriving trade city.

Khadros

Ruler: High Warden Dolmarr Argenthand

Government: Technocracy—Part Syndicracy, part Pedocracy, and part Theocracy, the government of Khadros is often incomprehensible to outsiders, while citizens accept it as quite natural and very fair.

Capital: Lemier

Resources: Silver, iron, copper, weapons, clockwork items, gems

Population: 968,450 (gnomes 68%, humans 23%, dwarves 8%)

Alignment: NG, N

Language: Common, Dwarven, Gnome, Terran

Deities: Destine, Emerys, Hyperion, Kalek, Sorena

Description: The people of Khadros do nothing in half measures. Anything that they start, they finish, and to the best of their ability. Their skills as craftsmen and artisans are rivaled only by Tranthus. While Tranthus disdains all use of magic, the master artificers of Khadros often take advantage of the arcane arts to further enhance and improve their incredible machines. Khadros’ population is as diverse as the inventions that these clever minds create. They prefer practical clothing that does not interfere with the national obsession of invention and discovery.

- **Lemier:** (Metropolis, 60,438) First time visitors to Lemier are often left speechless with wonder at the incredible variety of gadgets and gizmos in use throughout the city. From floating barges to complex water systems, wondrous inventions are everywhere, and are regarded by the locals as commonplace occurrences.

League of Eagsin

Ruler: Vigilant Council

Government: Oligarchy

Capital: Shared capital

Resources: Cloth, copper, fish, furs, gold, iron, livestock, produce, silver, timber

Population: 1,870,640 (humans 58%, dwarves 11%, half-elves 9%, gnomes 7%, halflings 7%, forest elves 4%, half-orcs 2%, high elves 1%)

Alignment: All

Language: Common

Deities: Ardra, Ayla, Brianna, Cerion, Cyrene, Lohm, Meneon, Peliron, Pietos, Sorena

Description: Eagsin is not, as many 'foreigners' believe, a confederation of city-states. It was founded around 14760 ER (1020 ER) when the Vigilant Hand, a group of adventurers weary from their many years of campaigning, decided to retire and build a great keep. As each one wanted something different in a place to settle down (beach, lakefront, river, hills, forest and plains), they decided to build separate keeps in an unclaimed region south of the Lovisterre. The six friends each built his or her keep at the location of their choice, and all of the land that lay between they claimed for their shared country. They named this new 'nation' for themselves (their names were Elshira Greywind, Ardeth Wyrmbane, Gorson Stormhammer, Savryl Nightfeather, Iver Sunsworn and Nikos Swiftsure), calling it 'Eagsin'.

Over time, word of the Vigilant and their nation spread, attracting those escaping oppression or seeking new opportunity. Towns rose up around the six keeps, and in time the towns grew into cities.

Eagsin's citizens range from the descendants of dark-skinned Urundi natives to fair-haired travelers from the north who have chosen to settle here and follow the Vigilant's example of cooperation and acceptance. Their dress is as varied as their origins, and is often a mix of multiple cultures blended into a truly unique style.

To ensure that all six founders remained on equal footing, each city holds place as the capital for three years, and all meetings of the council are conducted in that city. At the end of each term, the capital and its vital personnel move on to the next city. Of the original six adventurers, only the elven mage Elshira Greywind remains. The other five cities are governed by the descendants of their founders.

- **Hawkgate:** This small city at the edge of the Ravenwood was founded by Savryl Nightfeather, a half-elven druid of Ayla. Her great-great-great grandson Loreth Nightfeather now leads the city.

- **Skyvale:** Located on an island in Sky Lake, this city of knowledge and learning was founded by the elven mage Elshira Greywind. She continues to rule the city from a towering spire of white and blue stone that rises two hundred feet above the crystal waters of the lake. Her son Tarjan Greywind is thought to be her eventual successor.

- **Stonehold:** The Dwarven warrior Gorson Stormhammer founded this walled city deep in the stony Blackrock Hills near Eagsin's northern border. Brock Stormhammer now governs the city founded by his great grandfather.

- **Merrimor:** Nikos Swiftsure, a halfling rogue, chose to settle down and farm on Eagsin's western plains and founded the city of Merrimor. Nikos' great-great-great grand nephew Kivas Swiftsure is Merrimor's current leader.

- **Hysdor:** Ardeth Wyrmbane, a human ranger of Brianna, sought a peaceful life of fishing and founded Hysdor on the banks of the Raine River. Her great-great-great-great grandson Daymar now protects the lands and creatures of Hysdor.

- **Thermastra:** Iver Sunsworn, a human cleric of Sorena, sought to build a city reminiscent of his native Landseer Isles and founded Thermastra on the white beaches of Eagsin's seacoast. His great-great-great granddaughter Aurora Sunsworn, a paladin of Sorena, now governs this quiet coastal city.

Lovisterre ("The Plain of Peace")

Ruler: Varies

Government: Varies

Capital: None

Resources: Ale, cloth, foodstuffs, grain, iron, leather goods, livestock, pottery, wine

Population: 2,394,620 (humans 71%, forest elves 6%, half-elves 6%, halflings 5%, half-orcs 4%, dwarves 3%, gnomes 3%, high elves 1%)

Alignment: All

Language: Common

Deities: All

Description: Despite what its name implies, the Lovisterre is much more than just a plain. The terrain is a mix of rich grassland, gently rolling hills, swampy marshes and verdant forests. The population of the Lovisterre is scattered among small villages, farming communes, independent keeps, non-human enclaves and religious sanctuaries.

The Lovisterre is divided by the Great Trade Road, the primary east-west route for travelers and trade caravans. An unofficial truce governs travel on the Great Trade Road, and for a distance of five miles on either side of it. No government, race or organization claims ownership of this vital gateway across Raia's main continent, and none will block access to it as part of any feud or conflict.

Historically a great stone arch erected at the center of the plains has served as a neutral meeting place for warring groups to meet to negotiate peace treaties or for traveling traders to meet and exchange goods.

Northern Wastes

(The Waste—usually intended as derogatory, but not often understood as derogatory by the inhabitants)

Ruler: High Priest Potin Strayblade

Government: None; unlike Ancarus, there is no attempt to form any sort of formal government.

Capital: None

Resources: Minerals and furs. Largely unexploited.

Population: 245,000 (humans 94%, half-orcs 5%)

Alignment: CE, CN, NE

Language: Ancaran, Common

Deities: Graala, Illudra, Karios, Kohr, Krayve, Oblivion, Zara

Description: Little distinguishes the Northern Wastes from Ancarus to the east, except for the devotion of its people to the god Krayve.

The stories and songs in the Northern Wastes speak of a long history of fighting, though against whom is unknown. With a frozen wasteland as their home and a relatively

burgeoning population, the people in the Wastes are generally no match, one-for-one, with an average warrior from Ancarus to the east. Attempts at sea-faring piracy have been mediocre at best – not much trade travels past the Northern Wastes. Attacks against a revitalized Choal have been very poor – Choal's soldiers have grown more than capable enough to match the Wastemen's poor military tactics.

Therefore, the people of the Northern Wastes seem dispirited and empty – their history has taught them to war against something, but circumstances seem to prevent them from successfully warring against any of their neighbors. In spite of that, knowing no other course, they continue their unsuccessful raiding and warfare. The devotion to Krayve, however, remains unabated – adherents to any other deity are violently discouraged, to say the least. Mercenary companies and assassin guilds find the Northern Wastes excellent recruiting grounds, making the brutes of the Northern Wastes fairly common in certain circles across Raia.

Otherwise, visitors are advised to stay away from the region, as the hunger for violence quite often spills to immediate neighbors, let alone strangers. Rumors of cannibalism have large basis in fact; halflings are to be especially cautioned that they will be considered highly edible by those from the Wastes.

The people of the Northern Wastes are divided into two groups. Those from the north are stocky and muscular, with weathered medium-fair complexions, blonde, red or brown hair, and blue or brown eyes. Those from closer to the region's southern border are wiry and slender, with pale skin, white or light blonde hair and pale blue or grey eyes.

Sadaris

Ruler: Sadar Szalzer Fesorn

Government: Theocracy (Peliron)

Capital: Sadar City

Resources: Books, foodstuffs, gemstones, law text, precious metals.

Population: 2,440,000 (humans 66%, dwarves 20%, gnomes 7%, forest elves 1%, gnolls 1%, goblins 1%, halflings 1%, half-elves 1%, half-orcs 1%)

Alignment: LG, LN, NG

Language: Ancaran, Common

Deities: Ardra, Ayla, Brianna, Cerion, Cyrene, Destine, Emerys, Lohm, Meneon, Peliron,

Pietos, Sorena

Description: Sadaris was founded in 14777 ER (1037 AF) by a band of religious separatists from the barbarian tribes to the north of Sadaris. Valuing and believing in law and altruism above all else, the original band of seventy-seven able-bodied men and women traveled through the Gap of Peliron to the modern day Kolm Plain, and on to the Bourne Soar, a sheer rock steppe nearly seventy feet tall and just over a mile across. What is now the capital city of Sadar was founded at the top of the Bourne Soar, atop the crumbling ruins of a long-abandoned former city. The people of Sadaris value the number seven very highly for the incredible number of instances (through either coincidence or divine influence) in which that number is associated with the founding of their nation. The travelers set out from their homeland on the 7th day of the 7th month, with 77 souls (34 men, 34 women, 5 boys and 4 girls). By the time they arrived 7 months to the day later at the Bourne Soar, only 7 members of the group had been lost, leaving 70 to found the new nation. Since then, the people of Sadaris have gone to great lengths to integrate the number 7 into their daily lives, measuring time, weight, length, distance, etc in 7's. This has expanded to their foreign trade policy (much to many nations' chagrin) and a unit of measure which never caught on outside of Sadaris (a Bourne being 7 inches).

Seven years after the founding of Sadar, a legendary dwarven traveler and scribe, Daodor Helmsfast, found the thriving city on top of the steppe which had appeared in a vision to him from his God, Peliron. He discovered the purpose and inclination of the city, determining them to be sufficiently just and good, and left again to spread the word of the new Holy City of Peliron. Within a week, the rest of Daodor Helmsfast's original clan appeared and joined the human settlement, nearly tripling the city's total population. Excavation began shortly after that, with the dwarves building a warren under the city proper for the clan to live without interrupting the human cultivation projects.

Over the next century thousands of people arrived from far and wide on pilgrimage to Sadar, believing it to be a holy place (coupled with the vision from Daodor and the coincidences of the Sadarisans finding the city, that's probably not far from the truth). It didn't take long for Sadar to outgrow its home and force many of its peoples to live off of the steppe on the plains directly around the city.

Once Sadar Fesorn died (62 years after the founding of the city which bears his name), his heir was his first son Dai Fesorn, an oafish and stubborn man. He expanded the boundaries of Sadaris to where they lay now through a misinterpretation of Peliron's scripture and quite a few wars, thinking that Peliron wanted law and justice brought to everyone with force if necessary.

After Dai Fesorn, there haven't been any truly bad rulers. Before the current Sadar (the title of the ruler, in honor of the first) dies he or she, as a rule, writes up a list of 3 men or women to succeed them. After the death, there is a general election held which determines which of the three candidates becomes the new Sadar. The Sadar, as an unwritten rule, is almost always a Cleric of Peliron. Sadar Fesorn is the only one not to be a Cleric of Peliron, dedicating himself instead as a Paladin of that deity.

Now the city is truly huge, sprawling to cover the entire steppe and most of the Kolm plain around it.

Szalzer Fesorn has never personally liked Amthydor for an unknown reason, but Sadaris' policies are generally friendly. Sadaris sends a representative once every seven months (when their contracts run out) to renegotiate their prices and quotas with all of the nations they trade with, including Amthydor. Every seven months Szalzer quiets down about his dislike of Amthydor, until the negotiations can be concluded.

- **Fesorn's Lift:** When the people of the city outgrew the founding steppe, many people were forced down to the plain around Sadar. Soon after, Sadar Fesorn's fifth son (of seven) devised a complex rope and pulley system to transport people from the plain around the steppe up to the steppe without the very long climb. There are now 70 lifts around the outer edge of the Bourne Soar, all independent of each other. 7 of them are even magically reinforced for carrying heavy goods to the steppe. It costs 2 silver for a round trip on any of the Lifts, 1 gold for a round trip on the magically reinforced lifts.
- **Peliron's Law Texts:** The law interpretation and writing section of the Church of Peliron in Sadaris are available on commission to write laws for other nations which contain as few loopholes as possible (most of the time, all loopholes are avoided). This service is available for 100 gold crowns per page of

law and 20 gold crowns per page of appendix required to remove loopholes. Amthydor uses these services when writing laws which may adversely affect Nobles or Noble Houses - and it has paid off.

Natives of Sadaris tend to have fair to medium complexions, blonde or light brown hair and light colored eyes.

- **Sadar City:** (Metropolis, 89,627) Sadar City is as ordered and organized as any citizen, or any ruler, could wish. Crimes are few, and punishments are swift, certain and fair. The streets are clean and orderly, the buildings well maintained, and the populace law-abiding. The most prominent feature in the city, and in the lives of its citizens, is the grand temple of Peliron, which outshines even the royal palace in its grandeur.

Enlightened Technocracy of

Tranthus (City-state)

Ruler: Guildmaster Berin Kroen (Gnome)

Government: Guild Council

Resources: Mining, masterwork goods, clockwork items

Population: 15,000 (humans 30%, dwarves 30%, gnome 25%, halflings 10%, half-orc 4%)

Cultural type: **Alignment:** LN, LG, N

Language: Common, Dwarven, Gnome

Deities: Destine, Kalek

Description: Stoic and grim, the people of Tranthus are a practical lot who believe that all events have a scientific explanation and that 'magic' is nothing more than parlor tricks. Creatures that the rest of Raia considers wondrous or magical are regarded by Tranthans as genetic anomalies, evolutionary oddities or crossbreeds. To Tranthans, invention is everything. If something is not mechanical, if it cannot be taken apart to see how it works, or if it cannot be made more efficient, they have little interest in it.

The absence of magic from the community has led to the developing some novel inventions, most using the raw power of the waterfall nearby or complicated wind-up mechanisms. The city survives primarily due to its manufacturing industry - it produces some of the finest siege weapons and similar devices known, and is constantly innovating. They also produce vast quantities of armor and more mundane weaponry. The number of craftsmen capable of producing Masterwork and Greater Masterwork items living in Tranthus is said to be truly

impressive, and many travel here simply to learn from their techniques, a traffic that keeps the coffers of the city solvent. Tranthus maintains a close relationship with nearby gnome and Dwarven settlements, as a source of ore. The Guild that runs Tranthus started as an alliance between local craftsmen to standardize rules of commerce in the community. Over time, the Guild gained power and became the de facto government of the community. Membership in the Guild is by invitation and invitations are generally only extended to those who have shown exceptional skill in a craft and have resided in the city for at least a decade. The Guild is made up of almost equal numbers of humans and dwarves, and three gnomes, one of whom is the current Mayor. A Mayor is chosen by a hidden vote of all Guild Members every ten years, and an individual may only serve as Mayor once in their lifetime.

Religious worship in Tranthus is superficial at best, as they believe that even divine magic such as healing is nothing more than a sideshow trick. The dead in Tranthus stay dead, as there are no temples with priests of sufficient rank to perform *raise dead* or *resurrection*, and few of the citizens themselves acknowledge the possibility of being restored to life.

Urund

Ruler: High Priest Ishand

Government: Theocracy

Capital: Lumwani-City of Spice

Resources: Exotic foods, knowledge, trade goods.

Population: 481,000 (human 76%, centaurs 10%, tybex 8%, dwarves 3%, gnomes 2%).

Alignment: NG, N, LN

Language: Common, Urundi

Deities: Ardra, Cerion, Lucor, Meneon, Pietos, Sorena

Description: The people of Urund call themselves the Dek'Uru. There are seven main Dek'Uru tribes, each led by a 'King'. The tribes have a long history of conflict with each other, and hostilities were frequent and bloody before the Lumwani Truce in 14841 ER (1101 AF).

The truce began when the Seven Kings of the Dek'Uru met with the priesthood of Pietos in 14841 ER (1101 AF). A peace established then eventually came to include any visitor to the area. To this day, Lumwani allows all visitors, without care for creed, race, or nationality, as long as the peace of the city is maintained.

The surrounding area, however, is another matter, dependent upon the varied policies of the seven tribal 'kings' and their subjects. Explorers are not welcome; travelers heading directly for Lumwani are usually unmolested, at least by humans. Other creatures roam the vast savannahs of Urund – centaurs and the like – that may or may not welcome trespassers.

Little bulk trade exists between Lumwani and Amthydor. However, trade in Lumwani chocolates, kola nuts, and books are very lucrative. Similarly, Lumwani greatly value Amthydor gold work. A fad for Amthydor paper has recently increased trade in that item. The Urundi are black-skinned, with dark hair and dark eyes. They favor minimal clothing, in bright colors. They often wear jewelry of their own making.

- **Lumwani, City of Spice:** (Metropolis, 60,000) Smaller than the southern trade city of Westmarch, Lumwani is more exotic, if only because of the native Urundi and the wide variety of wild creatures and exotic goods that can be found nowhere else.

Free Trade City of Westmarch

Ruler: High Lord Xeros Morsall

Government: Plutocracy

Resources: Cloth, leather goods, trade goods, wine

Population: 28,740 (humans 82%, half-elves 5%, gnomes 4%, high elves 4%, forest elves 3%, tabreen 1%)

Alignment: NG, N, CG

Language: Common

Deities: Ardra, Hyperion, Lucor, Meneon, Pietos, Sorena

Description: Westmarch is the trade gateway for ships and goods coming from Cardiz, Cerrid, Phaeros and Zumaer. Surrounded by the League of Eagsin, Westmarch remains a free, independent and neutral city. Though it is a plutocracy, the same family has actually governed the city for four generations. The Morsall's family's willingness to use its wealth for the benefit of the city has made them popular leaders, and has insured that no member of the 20 person Council of Lords is willing to attempt to claim the seat of power for his or her own.

Ysara

Ruler: The Council of the Twelve, a ruling council of the twelve wisest and most learned men in the land, chosen by their peers. The Twelve serve for life, or until they choose to

retire to a life of research. Among themselves they choose a Voice, who is the leader of the council for a term of 4 years.

Government: Pedocracy

Capital: Xanastra

Resources: Books, knowledge, crafts

Population: 739,410 (humans 93%, dwarves 3%, gnomes 2%, half-elves 1%)

Alignment: LN, NG, N

Language: Common, Urundi

Deities: Ardra, Destine, Emerys, Meneon, Pietos, Sorena

Description: Ysara is a great repository of scholarship and knowledge, founded by survivors (and victims) of the ancient magocracy of Thyras. The capital city of Xanastra is dedicated to a massive university and library, and is rumored to contain the collected histories of all mankind. Perhaps because of all this knowledge, and because the people of Ysara remember well the story of Thyras, they know what problems magic can cause and all use of arcane magic is prohibited within the borders of the nation. Even items enchanted using arcane powers are not permitted. The churches of Peliron and Destine are strong in Ysara, and these two deities have answered the prayers of their followers by granting them the power to detect any use of arcane power in the region. The penalty for possessing proscribed magic items is seizure and destruction of said item, plus a fine and possible imprisonment. The penalty for use of arcane magic varies according to the spell, and for extreme cases the penalty is death. Ysara draws visitors and scholars from across Raia, leading to a rich ethnic diversity among its citizens. The native population is mostly of medium complexion, with dark blonde to black hair and blue, green or brown eyes, with a smattering of black-skinned Urundi.

- **Xanastra:** (Large city, 19,436) There are no grand towers here, and even the Great Library stands only three stories high. Reliance on magic, even for necessary construction, is not tolerated. If a structure cannot be raised and maintained through ingenuity and purely physical effort then it simply is not built.

Ziaph

Ruler: Learned Master Coralus Grayton

Government: Pedocracy

Capital: Lyastra

Resources: Information, knowledge, maps

Population: 1,129,465 (humans 59%, forest elves 11%, half-elves 9%, gnomes 7%, dwarves 6%, high elves 4%, halflings 3%)

Alignment: NG, N, LN

Language: Common

Deities: Destine, Emerys

Description: Knowledge is everything to the people of Ziaph. They seek it as a plant seeks the sun or a thirsting man seeks water. It is their obsession and their joy. Ziaph's sages have made it the work of a nation to seek knowledge of every type and description, in the hope that it may be preserved and not lost to the ages. No kernel of knowledge is too small, obscure or insignificant. Ziaphans believe that the smallest detail may someday hold the key to a great mystery. They willingly share what they know with others, for a price. There are few secrets from this nation of scholars. Ziaphan maps are

the most detailed and accurate to be found on Raia, and are much prized by explorers.

Ziaph is a nation formed mostly of immigrants, drawn by the quest for knowledge. Natives tend to be slender, of average height, with medium-fair skin, brown hair and blue or brown eyes.

➤ **Lyastra:** (Metropolis, 53,897) The pride of Lyastra is its sprawling library complex which takes up nearly one quarter of the city. Most manufacturing in the city revolves around the production of paper, books, inks and other scholarly items. Illiteracy is virtually unknown here. Even the poorest hovel in this city boasts a 'library', even if it is only a single shelf with a single book.

The Free Lands

The Free Lands encompass a large area, from Amthydor north to the fringes of the Sea of Fire and east from the Delambir Mountains, along the southern edge of the Mystwood to the Tasman Sea.

Capital: None

Resources: Livestock, textiles, parchment, grain, precious metals

Population: Excluding the major city-states—1,690,245 (humans 73%, dwarves 10%, halflings 6%, forest elves 4%, gnomes 3%, half-elves 2%, half-orcs 1%)

Alignment: All

Language: Common

Deities: All

Description: Settlement of the Free Lands has been somewhat haphazard through the years, as brave souls dared to carve homes and cities out of lands once the domain of orcs and their kin.

The Free Lands are a vast area of rich farmland, woodland plots and gentle rolling hills. The major cities all contribute to the maintenance of the major roads, as it is in their best interest to see to it that travelers have easy access to their markets. The Free Lands enjoy a mild climate, plentiful wildlife, and abundant natural resources.

Bands of raiding orcs, kobolds and other non-humans keep the rural population to a minimum.

Most of the population prefers the safety of residing in the large independent city-states or numerous small villages.

Abaris (The Sunken City)

Ruler: The Council of Abaris

Government: Republic

Capital: None

Resources: Coral, fish, pearls, shells, stone, underwater plants

Population: 8,500 (sea elves 53%, merfolk 28%, locathah 9%, tritons 8%, humans 1%)

Alignment: N, NG, CG

Language: Common, Aquan

Deities: Cyrene, Destine

Description: Beneath the warm waters of the Tasman Sea is the city of Abaris, where sea elves, locathah, merfolk and tritons band together in a single community, to present a unified front to the surface dwellers with whom they trade. They find safety in numbers, to combat the sahuagin that also inhabit the area.

Few air-breathers visit this beautiful city with its vast undersea gardens and shell-encrusted spires, but special chambers are kept ready for those who visit regularly on matters of trade.

Abaris is the sworn enemy of Iysishun, and is continually working to counter that city's efforts to sabotage trade and shipping in the Tasman Sea by warning ships and rescuing survivors and prisoners.

Coral Valley (Protectorate of Abaris)

Ruler: The Council of Abaris

Government: Republic

Capital: None

Resources: Coral, fish, labor, pearls, shells, underwater plants

Population: 4,500 (merfolk 78%, sea elves 20%, other 2%)

Alignment: N, NG, CG

Language: Common, Aquan

Deities: Cyrene, Destine

Description: Near the city of Abaris is a community of merfolk known as the Coral Valley. The community is a protectorate of the Sunken City due to its proximity. The community is one of the largest food suppliers for Abaris as well as a good part of that city's labor. Of the thirteen seats on the Council of Abaris, only one merman sits for the Coral Valley. The community also maintains a constable to keep the peace within the community. He answers to the Council of Abaris. While the community owes its continued existence to Abaris, there are those within the Coral Valley who feel they are being treated as second class citizens. A group calling themselves Those-Who-Speak have arisen among the community to give voice to such concerns.

The mermen of the Coral Valley serve as part of the Abaris military and participate in the militia. The community is open to trade and maintains an inn and trading post for the underwater denizens of the region.

Amthydor (The Shining Jewel)

Ruler: Lord Monarch Raphe Torestyn

Government: Hereditary Monarchy

Resources: Gold, mithral, precious gems, adventurers, trade goods

Population: 75,000 (humans 93%, dwarves 2%, half elves 2%, high elves 1%, other 2%)

Alignment: LG, LN, N, NG

Language: Common

Deities: Ardra, Ayla, Brianns, Cerion, Cyrene, Destine, Dymora, Emerys, Galvandt, Glissande, Hyperion, Kalek, Lucor, Menion, Peliron, Pietos, Sorena

Description: The city of Amthydor was founded in 13740 ER (0 AF), as a colony of the distant and now fallen Chaldean Empire. Amthydor declared its independence from the empire in 13931 ER (191 AF), and solidified its position by repelling an imperial fleet in 13934 ER (194 AF). For over 2000 years the city has

stood as an example of enlightened rule and civic responsibility, encouraging religious and racial tolerance and opportunity regardless of social class. Three-fourths of the population is able to read and write, and even the poorest citizens are guaranteed the right to an education. From the poorest citizen to the twenty-one Noble Houses, all of Amthydor and its protectorate communities owe fealty to the Lord Monarch and House Torestyn. The current Lord Monarch, Raphe Torestyn, is the 93rd ruler of his line, descending directly from Vander Torestyn, the first Imperial Governor of Amthydor.

The city proper is separated into twenty-one districts, each surrounded by fifteen foot walls. The districts serve to divide the city not by social status or wealth, but according to each district's designated purpose. Amthydor claims an area extending 48 miles from the city walls in each direction.

The Amthydor Protectorates

These six settlements and the Darkwood lay within the 48 mile territorial limit and are considered to be extensions of Amthydor itself. As Protectorates of Amthydor, they are under the protection of the city and the Diamond Legion. Each community elects a Speaker, to represent them before the Lord Monarch and to see that the community runs smoothly. Day to day governing of the communities takes place at the local level, but all are ultimately answerable to Amthydor.

Rosewood and the Shrine of Cerion

(Rosewood, The Grove, Druid's Grove)

Leader: Speaker Bosrac Cooper

Resources: Fruits, vegetables, grain, livestock, dairy products, wool

Population: 93 (humans 81, halflings 4, half-elves 3, gnomes 2, dwarves 2, half-orcs 1)

Alignment: N, NG, LG, LN

Language: Common

Deities: Quorum of Faith, especially Cerion

Description: The Shrine of Cerion is located an hour's walk south of the city walls, next to the tiny farming hamlet of Rosewood. This serene collection of about 30 structures and the adjacent grove are under the protection of the Diamond Legion. The structures are small and tidy, many with shade or fruit trees and neat, colorful gardens. There is an attitude of cheerful industry wherever you look. People whistle and hum as they weed vegetable plots or paint fences. Old folks sit on the wide porch of the inn, telling

stories to a group of children listening in rapt attention. Strangers nod welcome as you pass, and give directions with a smile. The path to the grove proper is paved with flat stones and lined on each side with shrubs and bright flowers.

The village is small, and has little to offer in the way of goods and services. There is a single inn and tavern with 4 rooms, a blacksmith and farrier, a small meeting hall, a baker, a tanner and harness maker, and a Diamond Legion post staffed by two men who live in the village. Nearly all of the villagers also farm small plots of land. There are plenty of excellent fresh fruits and vegetables for sale.

Two treants are also never far from the grove and nearby village, keeping close watch over everything that happens there. If they have names, no one speaks of them.

Thornwater Village and Garrison

Leader: Speaker Devlin Ormhurst, elected representative to the Lord Monarch (civilian residents), Captain Dolan Tanric (Diamond Legion garrison)

Resources: Fish, grains, produce, rice.

Population: 200 (including Diamond Legion) (humans 93%, halflings 4%, dwarves 1%, gnomes 1%)

Alignment: N, NG, LG, LN

Language: Common

Deities: Quorum of Faith

Description: The small settlement of Thornwater is half hamlet and half Diamond Legion garrison. Goods coming overland from the south cross the River Lestra via ferry from Thornwater's docks. The presence of the Diamond Legion guards against attacks from unfriendly creatures in the nearby marshes, as well as protecting the southern approach to the city.

Llynvale

Leader: Speaker Niles Doros

Resources: Fruits, vegetables, grain, livestock, beef, mutton, pork, poultry, dairy products, wool

Population: 196 (humans 134, halflings 41, half-elves 8, gnomes 6, dwarves 4, forest elves 3, half-orcs 1)

Alignment: N, NG, LG, LN

Language: Common

Deities: Quorum of Faith, especially Ayla and Cerion

Description: The farming community of Llynvale provides foodstuffs for Amthydor and the surrounding communities.

Feldspar

Leader: Speaker Roryn Stonefist (Dwarf)

Resources: Precious metals (copper, gold, silver), iron, gems (diamonds, emeralds, opals, sapphires)

Population: 223 (humans 106, dwarves 92, gnomes 18, half-orcs 7)

Alignment: N, NG, LG, LN

Language: Common

Deities: Quorum of Faith, Lohm

Description: The mining community of Feldspar, 15 miles north of Amthydor, is the source of much of the city's mining income. Feldspar's mines belong to the city as a whole, unlike smaller nearby mines that are controlled by individual Noble Houses.

Rainsford

Leader: Speaker Kitryn

Resources: Fish, weaving, cloth, produce, grains, rice, pottery

Population: 300 (humans 65%, halflings 21%, half-elves 6%, gnomes 4%, forest elves 2%, dwarves 1%)

Alignment: N, NG, LG, LN

Language: Common

Deities: Quorum of Faith, especially Cyrene

Description: The river community of Rainsford is home to fishermen, millers and craftsmen. Rainsford's artisans produce cloth and fine pottery, and its river-driven mills process wheat, corn, barley and rye from nearby farming communities. A few dedicated farmers raise grains and rice.

Sweetwater

Ruler: Mayor Amester Kennyson

Government: Elected mayor, under the protection of Amthydor

Resources: Grains, vegetables, fruits, mutton, pork, beef, poultry, small crafts and trade goods

Population: 230 (humans 148, halflings 26, gnomes 19, dwarves 17, half-elves 11, forest elves 6, half-orcs 3)

Alignment: NG, N, CG

Language: Common

Deities: Ardra, Ayla, Brianna, Cerion, Cyrene, Lohm, Meneon, Pietos, Sorena

Description: Sweetwater sits on the south bank of the River Lestra, where the smaller Forell River joins it after winding its way down from high in the Delambir Mountains. Situated just below the Blackrock Rapids, Sweetwater enjoys a lucrative fishing trade, thanks to the annual run

of salmon swimming upstream to spawn. The village is a collection of farmers, herdsmen, craftsmen and artists. Sweetwater is within the territorial boundary of Amthydor, and is therefore under the authority of the Lord Monarch and protection of the Diamond Legion. Its distance from the city (35 miles) grants it a level of autonomy and self-government not found in communities closer to the city.

Brexton

Ruler: Mayor Anders Brexton

Government: Elected mayor and council

Resources: Farming, livestock

Population: 571 (humans 83%, halflings 11%, half-elves 3%, gnomes 1%, half-orcs 1%)

Alignment: N, NG, LG, LN

Language: Common

Deities: Ardra, Ayla, Brianna, Cerion, Elianna, Sorena

Description: Located four days travel north of Amthydor, the village began in 15260 ER (1520 AF) as the Brexton family farm. As the family grew over nine generations, so did the village, as travelers settled down or nearby smaller farmers sought safety in numbers. The Brexton family operates the village's only inn, the Merry Manticore. Approximately 40% of the village claims some relation to the Brexton family.

United People of Drupir

(City-state, pronounced "Drerper;" proper local pronunciation uncommon elsewhere)

Ruler: The Sultan of Drupir

Government: Sultanate

Resources: Mineral water, dried fruit and nuts, curios

Population: 35,000 total (humans 79%, high elves 14%, half-elves 6%); (15,000 in city itself)

Alignment: LN, N, NG

Language: Common

Deities: Karios, Pietos

Description: The common view of Drupir is that of a virulently conservative, xenophobic society. The few trade contacts between Drupir and other communities does little to dissuade those from this picture. Foreigners are discouraged from travel here.

Only slightly less commonly known is that the people of Drupir have been shaped by a disease known as "the Curse," which rots the flesh of any who touch an infected person. This disease comes in several strains, all of which, at the least, disfigure the skin. It is typically fatal or crippling to any victim under the age of ten. It is

rare to find a non-human vulnerable to it, although half-elves and half-orcs can contract it. Unfortunately, those who wield or have the potential to wield magic, regardless of race, appear to be particularly vulnerable to the Curse. The Sultan, by royal edict, has required all such persons to wear heavy, identifying over-ropes within city limits, both for their own protection and that of others. The Curse has spread to other cities at other times, but as of yet has not passed the tipping point of self-maintenance elsewhere. Academics who have studied the Curse see how it has impacted the people of Drupir. Physical contact amongst strangers is shunned. Touching a child without explicit permission by a family member is a crime, which may be severely punished. To hide their skin, to prevent the spread of the Curse, or to show solidarity with those who are under its affect, men and women commonly wear robes that cover everything from the top of their heads to their feet, except for their eyes.

As a major source of clean water, trade between Drupir and the tribes of the Sea of Fire carries on. Legend has it that the Curse came to Drupir because it sheltered a tribe from the Sea of Fire which "had gone to places which it should not have gone." Healthy children of Drupir, when their parents are desperate enough to do so, are allowed to be fostered or adopted out to the nomadic desert tribes in the hopes they will have a more normal life. This has had the effect of creating numerous blood alliances between the tribes and the families of the city-state.

The current Sultan chooses to remain anonymous, his face unseen, as he holds court upon the throne of the Summer Tower. Like those of the many mourners in the city, his robes are of unadorned black. He is considered a wise and just ruler.

New trouble has come with a promised cure by priests of Karios. They do not wear the robes, just gloves – the basic minimum under the law for those going outside their homes. They stand in Petitioners' Square, where by tradition anyone can exhort, saying any in Drupir can be as beautiful as they, if they propitiate Karios with the sacrifice of two other lives. The Sultan actively opposes their message.

Ironically, Drupir controls a series of natural hot springs that are known for producing miraculous cures in those who bathe in the steaming waters. Sadly, the springs do nothing for the 'Curse' that afflicts the people of Drupir.

Drupirans share the olive or dark skin, black hair and dark eyes of their desert nomad cousins from the Zur'Oun (Sea of Fire). They wear concealing desert robes, usually black in color.

Eiosia

Ruler: N/A

Government: N/A

Approximate size: Large City, believed to have been abandoned over 3500 years ago

Resources: Unknown

Population: None (Abandoned. Once home to a population of 20,000 souls)

Alignment: Evil

Language: None

Deities: None

Description: The abandoned walled city of Eiosia sits at the edge of a towering cliff, overlooking the sea. The mirror polished black stone blocks that make up the walls and buildings of this mysterious city are found nowhere else in the explored lands, and no clue remains to tell who built this once glorious city...or how. The empty buildings contain no drawings to reveal who or what once lived here. There are no writings, no remains, nothing. The only clues lie in stories so old that they are legend, with no means of separating fact from imagination. Every structure is built of the same black stone, and the streets are paved in the same substance. The only color to be found is deep within the structures, in the form of rich mosaics, as brilliant and bright as the day they were created, depicting pristine mountains, tumbling waterfalls, glorious sunsets and lush valleys. The only living things present are the exotic and beautiful plants growing in a large greenhouse, which appear to be lovingly tended, even though there is no sign of another living soul. The reason that the city was abandoned is a complete mystery. There is no damage to the walls or buildings, no sign of a siege, no evidence of disease and no bodies.

If a building is raised elsewhere using even a single stone or block from the city, that building will not stand past the next new moon, even if the offending stone is removed. All of the other 'normal' stones or blocks which were used in the attempted construction are tainted, and must be destroyed, the site purified, and construction begun again with new materials.

Except in the single greenhouse, plants do not prosper within a 10 mile radius of the city, and nearby free farmers and their families avoid the place. Good creatures must bring their force of

will to bear or be too revolted by the feeling of evil and despair which permeate the place to pass through the city gates. Some travelers who wander too close speak of companions who claim to be 'called' by the city, and who will go to any lengths to reach it. When restrained, these poor souls struggle against their bonds, thrash about, and refuse all food and drink until they are either released to answer the silent call or they pine away and die. Dwarves will not tunnel or mine within ten miles of the city, and Elves do not speak the city's name. Perhaps the Elves, first among the children of the gods, and with their vast stores of knowledge, know the secrets if Eiosia, but if they do they are keeping that knowledge to themselves.

Free City of Falgoth

Ruler: Flox Rienne and Zizelle Rienne (aka House Rienne)

Government: Benevolent Dictatorship

Resources: Glass, ceramics, shipbuilding, perfume, cosmetics

Population: 36,250 (humans 88%, dwarves 6%, gnomes 3%, high elves 1%, half-elves 1%)

Alignment: LE, LN, N, NE

Language: Common

Deities: Destine, Dymora, Emerys, Galvandt

Description: The Riennes swept in on the skyship Vintarian Speed twenty years ago, in 15728 ER (1988 AF), blasting away the last remnants of the previous dictator/mayor of Falgoth. Taking residence in the inner city, they rule Falgoth haphazardly but kindly.

Flox Rienne manages civic planning and defenses, organizing the chaos of streets in the outer city, managing the militia, and – when necessary – commanding the Vintarian's weapons at threats to Falgoth.

The less public Zizelle manages both trade and foreign relations for Falgoth. She has expanded Falgoth's traditional industries towards expensive luxuries, the success of which has increased Falgoth's prosperity. Zizelle's considered the force behind Falgoth's moves towards moralistic political policy – financing and hosting privateers and other acts against nations she considers oppressive.

This has largely placed Zizelle in opposition to Amthydor's more commercial outlook in policy; however, a large gift of aid during Amthydor's recent problems, have left relations warmer than they've been for some time.

Law in the city, other than not opposing the plans of the Riennes, is largely left, for better or worse, for the citizens to work out amongst themselves. With a strong set of tradition and the backing of Flox's militia, when necessary, Falgoth gets by.

Village of Freereign

Ruler: Mayor Istavan Turos, who has been unanimously elected every three years for the last 15 years. A 'retired' gypsy, he is a wise, fair and extremely popular man, who maintains a comfortable peace between the permanent residents and the more transient seasonal occupants.

Government: Elected Mayor and Village Council

Resources: Farming, livestock, musical instruments

Population: 450 (human 66%, half-elf 21%, halfling 6%, gnome 4%, dwarf 1%, elf 1%)

Alignment: CG, NG, N

Language: Common

Deities: Ardra, Ayla, Brianna, Cerion, Destine, Elianna, Emerys, Glissande, Kalek, Meneon, Peliron, Sorena

Description: Freereign is a small village of some 45 permanent structures, supplemented by a varying number sturdy tents and enclosed travel wagons. Since 15720 ER (1920 AF) this village has served as a rest stop and haven for gypsies, bards and other free spirits. The village's permanent residents include farmers, craftsmen and gypsies who have retired from the rigors of traveling. Begun with only a handful of permanent buildings and used primarily as a winter residence when roads and weather made travel difficult, over the years the village has grown into a thriving and self-sufficient community that is fiercely proud of its independence. It exists outside the borders of any nation or city-state, policing its own citizens and fighting its own (rare) battles. While relations with the Shining Jewel are friendly, the residents of Freereign have so far declined to be annexed by nearby Amthydor, preferring autonomy to membership in the Protectorates.

Town of Greenstand

Ruler: Mayor Andurs Enbrelson

Government: Town Council

Resources: Timber, woodcrafts, wool, weaving, livestock

Population: 1200 (humans 77%, halflings 11%,

gnomes 4%, half-elves 3%, dwarves 2%, half-orcs 2%)

Alignment: CG, NG, N

Language: Common, Elven, Sylvan

Deities: Ardra, Ayla, Brianna, Cerion, Destine, Elianna, Emerys, Glissande, Kalek, Meneon, Peliron, Sorena

Description: The town of Greenstand was founded in 15684 ER, in the shadow of the Singing Wood. In spite of its precarious location, or perhaps because of it, it has suffered surprisingly few attacks from bandits or raiders. Located just off the Free Trade Road, the people of this quiet town raise sheep, spin wool, weave much-desired blankets and rugs, and carve exquisite items of wood.

➤ **Singing Wood:** This grove of oak, ash, birch, elm, maple and cedar is thought by some to be haunted. Legends claim that a common-born bard, spurned by the high-born lady he adored, retreated into the wood to spend his remaining days alone, singing of his love to the trees and animals of the wood. It is said that he died there, of a broken heart, and that his ghost still sings his mournful lament. Whatever the cause, on dark nights the wood seems to be filled with the soft sound of singing or a softly played flute or harp, though no musician can be found.

Dwarvenhold of Hearthstone

Ruler: Holdmaster Dagmar Stormblade and Lorekeeper Dorsalia Stormblade

Government: Clan system (direct democracy on the village level), which in turn pays fealty to the Mountain King.

Resources: Gold, silver, copper, iron, coal, precious gems, fine metalwork, weapons, armor.

Population: 875 (dwarves 99%)

Alignment: LG, LN, NG

Language: Common, Dwarven, Terran

Deities: Kalek, Lohm

Description: The village of Hearthstone predates the city of Amthydor, and the dwarves there were the first to welcome the human founders of the Shining Jewel to their new home. Human visitors are almost never allowed into the subterranean portions of the village, though the dwarves of Hearthstone have been known to hire themselves out as consultants and engineers to Amthydor's mining enterprises. Most of the residents of this 'village' are members of Clan Stormblade, and are somehow related to the Holdmaster and his Lorekeeper wife. Each

resident contributes in his or her own way to the well-being and upkeep of the village, and barter between residents is the common form of commerce.

Ihnall

Ruler: Gus Donis (High King Gus Donis)

Government: Hereditary Monarchy

Resources: No major resources. Ihnall's temples draw resources and pilgrims from all of Raia.

Population: 31,000 (humans 49%, half-elves 12%, gnomes 9%, dwarves 8%, halflings 7%, half-orcs 7%, high elves 3%, 'other' 5%)

Cultural type: Theocratic oligarchy

Alignment: N, NG, LN

Language: Common

Deities: All

Description: Ihnall is a small village surrounded by a large city. The city holds the largest concentration of temples in Raia. All faiths are represented, from the happy halls of Ardra to the dark demesnes of Kohr. The temples jockey for position and power against one another, sometimes subtly and sometimes overtly. Indeed, forgetting the central village, Ihnall operates more like a collection of distinct religious districts rather than as one city.

The temples and pilgrims come primarily for this reason: With permission of the line of Donis, one may activate an ancient artifact located in Ihnall, the Chamber of Silence. The last to gain access was from the faith of Galvandt, in 15145 ER (1405 AF). From their High Priest's time in the Chamber, Algaric's Book of Honors, one of the core texts of Galvandt, was formed.

Permission derived from magical or nonmagical coercion seems unable to activate the artifact – the permission of the Donis line must be given voluntarily. As a result, the Temples have tried almost everything except magical means for the nod to use the Chamber. Gus Donis has been subject to petitions from across Raia, offered inducements – financial, political, monetary, and more. Like his recent predecessors, he has not been swayed by argument or bribes.

When the security of Ihnall is threatened, the temples are forced to field their troops as one army. This leads to some of the oddest allied forces to be seen together on a battlefield.

The Chamber of Silence is a small stone structure, twenty feet in diameter, at the outskirts of Ihnall village. Dependent on the latest consensus of the priesthoods, it varies from easy to visit to strictly guarded. The Chamber appears

ordinary and radiates no magic. Historians recall that the particular structure seems unimportant, as this incarnation was reconstructed several hundred feet away from where the last Chamber collapsed back in 14703 ER (963 AF).

When Algaric was permitted to use the Chamber, he described the space inside blossoming to a magnificent hall, lined with the wise of Galvandt from the ages, whispering words of advice as he walked to the far side. His god Galvandt greeted him with open arms as a friend.

From those who have studied the topic, this is typical of Chamber experiences: They are greeted by their patron deity – each in their own particular ways – as a friend and ally. (As a postscript, it should be noted that Algaric and Valere Donis, who permitted him the use, were assassinated a year to the day of Algaric's use of the Chamber, presumably by priesthoods motivated by envy or jealousy.)

Gus Donis seems to be an average, middle-aged human male, with no wife, no children, and no apparent interest in continuing the Donis line. He has not spoken a word in twenty years, with his last known words being, "Leave me alone!" He seems to prefer written communication to speech, and prefers living in seclusion in Ihnall. The title "High King" was granted to the Donis line by unanimous affirmation of the Temples several decades ago.

Watching and interpreting what the High King thinks or feels has become a major occupation at Ihnall. The chance that he is the last Donis is a matter of intense debate and concern within the Temples.

Iysishun

Ruler: Lair Master Ssearess (Male Sahuagin)

Government: Tribal

Capital: Aygah

Resources: Fish, shells, slaves, captured ships and cargo

Population: 6,000

Alignment: LE, NE

Language: Aquan, Common

Deities: Graala, Krayve

Description: While Iysishun claims the entire Tasman Sea as its own domain, practically speaking, it rules an area only five miles out of the city of Aygah, or wherever some of its forces happen to be at any given moment. Iysishun and Abaris are sworn enemies, and the highest goal of each is the destruction of the other.

Of the enigmatic sea kingdoms, at least of those that have made themselves known, Iysishun is counted as one of the most unfriendly towards surface dwellers. The kingdom lies at the bottom of a deep trench, far below the surface. Primarily a sahuagin territory, Iysishun is home to small populations of evil members of other intelligent aquatic species.

Iysishun is responsible for frequent vicious attacks on ships in the Tasman Sea. Crews and passengers that are not killed outright are often held for ransom or kept as slaves. Abaris attempts to counter Iysishun aggressions against the air-breathers, and stages frequent counter-raids to rescue prisoners.

- **Aygah:** (Small city 5,000) Decorated by the broken wrecks of the ships they have defeated, Aygah is a somber contrast to the bright coral spires of its enemy city Abaris. No sunlight reaches the great depths of the trench where the city is located, and strange phosphorescent fish give the impression of ghost-lights as they swim among the kelp forests and eerie shipwrecks.

Free City of Jadenspur

Ruler: Mayor Ehgert Bosori, Chair of the Advisory Council

Government: Theoretically, authority lies with the Mayor and the Advisory Council (see below)

Resources: Magic, mercenaries, antiques, curios

Population: 21,000 (humans 81%, half-elves 5%, dwarves 4%, gnomes 3%, half-orcs 3%, halflings 2%, forest elves 1%)

Alignment: CG, CN, N

Language: Common

Deities: All

Description: The ruined city of Jadenspur rises up to a mound five hundred feet high, on the shores of the Tasman Sea. Very much like Eiosia, it was a well-known fact that buildings could not be constructed without collapsing or even vanishing.

In 15723 ER (1963 AF), Ehgert Bosori shipwrecked in Jadenspur's ruined harbor. He was first the to discover that whatever effect prevented construction had vanished. After building a hut to claim Jadenspur for his own, he picked up what relics he could find and sold them throughout the Free Lands.

Two more short but lucrative trips from Jadenspur, and news spread. Throwing caution to the wind, treasure-hunters and magic-seekers descended upon Jadenspur's ruins en masse.

They found some vaults containing powerful magics and piles of gold. Several groups went missing, presumed lost somewhere in the crumbling remains of the city or fallen prey to the powerful creatures and curses present in the ruins. Yet the treasure was good enough to keep a steady flow of people coming to find their fortune.

Today, Jadenspur is a chaotic boomtown whose residents are largely out of control. Self-important warriors, mages, priests, mercenaries, and others constantly challenge the authority of Bosori's timid City Guard's enforcement of the laws with impunity. Lucky folks, instantly powerful through their finds, built elaborate inns, mansions, or do whatever they fancy, until their luck or fortunes run out. Hangers on, merchants to serve them, and other elements followed.

Ehgert Bosori has attempted to maintain control by appointing some of the most prominent of these folks as Advisors to Jadenspur. A difficult proposition, as even these Advisors are not immune to having their fortunes made and gone in weeks. He has attempted to create some streets and attempted to form a more normal city of its size.

The attitude of high-ranking visitors to Amthydor hasn't created a positive impression. Additionally, Jadenspur has a habit of ignoring previously arranged agreements and understandings whenever it feels like it.

The saving grace of Jadenspur is a spirit of civic pride – there is a sense that the great freedom enjoyed by everyone should not be abused. Folk who wish Jadenspur well think of this. Others wait expectantly for the city to self-destruct, either by action or accident.

Guild City of Perralin

Ruler: Guildmistress Mayara Weaversdotter and the Guild Council

Government: Syndicracy

Approximate size: City State (Metropolis)

Perralin exerts its influence over an area extending 10 miles from the city walls.

Resources: Trade goods, anything that they can manufacture

Population: 29,720 (humans 74%, gnomes 6%, dwarves 5%, half-elves 5%, halflings 4%, half-orcs 3%, forest elves 2%)

Alignment: N, NG, LN

Language: Common

Deities: Lucor

Description: Perralin was founded in 15144 ER (1404 AF) to promote manufacturing, trade and commerce. It is home to branches of nearly all of the major guilds and many aspiring craftsmen come to the city seeking to become apprentices or to seek further training as journeymen and master craftsman candidates. Perralin is a common starting point for caravans crossing the Free Lands. Of all of the major cities on the Tasman Sea, only Amthydor and Ibarra see more foreign visitors and merchants.

Valistar

Ruler: Madame Mayor Kelyn Greymorn

Government: Direct Democracy

Resources: Timber, trade goods, cheese

Population: 3500 (humans 83%, gnomes 8%, halflings 4%, dwarves 2%, half-elves 2%)

Alignment: NG, N, CG

Language: Common

Deities: Cerion, Kalek, Lohm, Lucor

Description: Situated at a crossroads in the western edge of the Free Lands, Valistar was originally founded as a secure rest and watering stop for merchant caravans traveling across the region. The people of Valistar depend upon the presence of trade caravans and travelers for their livelihood, and welcome most visitors.

The town boasts a sturdy 20 ft tall wood and stone wall, and a well-trained militia. It has nearly been overrun several times since its founding in 15306 ER (1606 AF), but each time the militia, with the help of the residents, has driven back the raiders and upheld Valistar's reputation as a safe haven.

The Eastern Provinces

The **Eastern Provinces** are those lands east of the Delambir Mountains, except for the Free Lands, extending to the Burning Sea.

Forest of Shadows

Resources: Timber

Population: Unknown

Description: To many who live in the region, the Forest of Sorrows is a dark and terrifying place, filled with mysterious bloodthirsty beasts, magic wielding monsters and unseen hunters. Few are willing to brave this wood even in the light of day, for the canopy of leaves is thick even in winter and little sunlight penetrates to the forest floor. Many who venture into the heart of the wood never come out again. Those who do return are often driven mad by what they find among the trees.

Some consider this wood to be part of the Treaty States of Sadranal, but even the bravest explorers of that nation seldom venture there.

Kassanor Isles (Reaver Isles)

Ruler: None

Government: Armed anarchy

Capital: None

Resources: Ships, mercenaries, slaves, stolen goods

Population: 3,960 (humans 39%, orcs 22%,

half-orcs 19%, ogres 13%, humanoids 5%, doppelgangers 1%)

Alignment: NE, CN, CE

Language: Common, Orc

Deities: Belatrix, Dymora, Graala, Kohr, Suulthuh

Description: The Kassanor Isles sit at the western edge of the Burning Sea. A region of ocean located over deep thermal vents, the water is unusually warm, and filled with bizarre and dangerous sea creatures. Only the reavers and fishermen of the Kassanor Islands sail the area with impunity, and even then only the westernmost edge. The pirates of Kassanor raid ports and sea channels from Sovraiin to Vanyr, and occasionally venture into the Tasman Sea. They are a motley lot, consisting of outcasts and troublemakers from a dozen races and even more countries. Humans, while having the greatest representation of any single race, are in the minority here.

Landseer Isles

Ruler: King Denoras V

Government: Hereditary Monarchy

Capital: Insmere

Resources: Art objects, jewelry, weapons

Population: 590,000 (humans 84%, forest elves 7%, half-elves 3%, dwarves 2%, gnomes 2%, halflings 1%)

Alignment: LG, LN, NG, N

Language: Common, Tasmarr

Deities: Ardra, Aurelian, Ayla, Brianna, Cerion, Cyrene, Destine Elianna, Emerys, Glissande, Lohm, Meneon, Pietos, Peliron, Sorena

Description: The geography of the islands varies from rocky outcroppings barely fit for farming to stands of thick forest.

Historically the people of the islands traded with each other out of need, but were not closely allied. Disagreements were frequent, and sometimes violent. The people of the Landseer Isles were brought together in 14981 ER (1241 AF), when Kasen Sabren negotiated a truce and brought an end to generations of quarreling between the four smaller islands. Under his guidance, trade flourished and art objects from the islands became some of the most sought after in the explored lands. In 14987 ER (1247 AF), Kasen bowed to the will of the people and accepted the title of King, taking the name of Kasen I, and beginning a peaceful and prosperous new era for the islands. The family has ruled as monarchs ever since. The islands are home to some of the world's finest artists and craftsmen. A love and appreciation of nature is shared by most of the islands' inhabitants, and undisturbed groves and natural places abound. Several mineral hot springs scattered across the islands are reported to have wondrous healing properties, and pilgrimages to bathe in these shallow pools are common.

The people of the Landseer Isles are generally fair to medium skinned, with dark blonde, brown or red hair and green, grey or blue eyes.

- **Insmere** (Metropolis, 48,381) The city of Insmere is a harmonious blending of refined civilization and the natural world. Rooftop gardens and trailing vines help to soften the lines of the pale green stones use in the construction of nearly every building in the city. Privacy walls are covered with ivy and vines, and small parks are present in every neighborhood.

Mystwood

Resources: Rare plants and herbs, elven artifacts, timber

Population: 40,275 (forest elves 40%, high elves 11%, humans 9%, half-elves 8%, orcs 6%, centaurs 5%, half-orcs 5%, dryads 4%, satyrs 4%, other fey 3%, halflings 2%, treants 2%)

Description: The Mystwood is one of Raia's three 'Great Forests', unspoiled ancient growth forests that stand as a haven for nature's creatures. Nowhere is the guarding hand of the elves more obvious than deep within these great

arboreal realms. Incursions of orcs, gnolls, goblins and even humans into the border areas meet continuous resistance from the 'native' residents of the Mystwood. The forest gets its name from the dense mists that often seem to rise up, confusing trespassers.

Nestrell (The Godless Land)

Ruler: Archduke Nihlsor II

Government: Feudal

Capital: Fargos

Resources: Art objects, pottery, sugar, tea, herbs, weapons, fish

Population: 1,934,025 (humans 99%)

Alignment: LN, NG, N

Language: Common, Drosian

Deities: None

Description: Little is known of Nestrell, as it has only minimal contact with other nations. While citizens of Nestrell do travel and conduct trade, few outsiders visit this coastal nation. One fact that all reports can agree on – The people of Nestrell have no Faith. There are no temples, no shrines, no holy places whatsoever, and visitors who are blessed with divine gifts (clerics, druids, paladins, rangers, etc) find themselves oddly cut off from their deities, and their gifts, while within Nestrell's borders. The deities venerated by the rest of Raia are unknown in Nestrell.

The Nestrellese are generally of fair to medium complexion, with varying hair and eye color.

- **Fargos:** (Metropolis, 81,562) At first glance Fargos is no different from any other coastal city. Its buildings are a combination of dark red native stone and wood from the nearby Mystwood. Its people are as industrious and hard working as any other, but they believe only in themselves and their own free will. There are no places of divine worship, no merchants selling icons of faith, and no gambling halls or games of chance (for luck is a deity in its own way).

Sellenna

Ruler: King Oler Queven

Government: Loose Monarchy

Capital: Raedara

Resources: Furs, lumber

Population: 810,630 (humans 61%, half-elves 21%, forest elves 9%, halflings 6%, dwarves 1%, gnomes 1%)

Alignment: NG, N, CG

Language: Common, Drosian, Elven, Sylvan

Deities: Ardra, Aurelian, Ayla, Brianna, Cerion

Description: The story of Sellenna is the story of one known to legends as the Lady of Winter, an elven maiden said to be of the House Dawnflower. In the far past, even as elves count it, she fell in love with the human warrior Raedar Kall. When the elves came to see their teaching of humans as a failure and prepared to withdraw to the haven of Torahn, she chose Raedar over her family and people. Exiled to Sellenna, she lived with him until the end of his days.

Saddened, but still committed to the older ideals, she founded the city of Raedara in his name, and opened Sellenna to human settlement. She taught what she knew, finding followers willing to listen and heed. Upon her death she was buried with him. A structure said to be their tomb lies within the city limits; and it is said that even from beyond the grave the Lady of Winter may still help any troubled person of good heart who suffers in these lands.

The young King Queven doesn't know whether the legend has any truth to it. (Some people, he knows, take it quite seriously – thinking of the Rangers and the Knights of Sellenna - fighting all the harder to defend Sellenna in times of danger.) To him, it provides a conveniently glamorous gloss to what otherwise seems a poor human kingdom. Sellenna seems to have little in the way of pretty elven magic or valuable fey resources. It remains a largely wild and unexplored territory, subject to an occasional outbreak of giants. Tradition in the kingdom, law it could be said, holds that these vast lands should remain undeveloped until such time as the city requires use of it. In the mind of his advisors, he does agree with a little regret, not being really rich doesn't seem to be a good reason.

In any case, King Queven finds Raedara pretty much runs itself. He's a cheerful, teenaged human, extremely multilingual, who enjoys reading. When called upon, he's happy to discuss matters with visitors, and offer small bits of advice or assistance. King Queven can often be found walking in the streets of Raedara, discussing various and sundry matters with people he comes across. He is currently looking for a suitable woman to be his Queen, which has motivated him to send friendly missives to various nations across the continent.

His parents, the former King Maroh Queven and Queen Eiaya, have retired from rule, leaving the lands in the hands of their only child. They are currently enjoying a grand tour of Raia (with a

small entourage of two), something they've always meant to do but have put off for a long time. Their current location is uncertain. Oler keeps up an irregular correspondence with them. Much of Sellenna's population tends to be graceful and fine boned, as even those who claim human parentage have some measure of elven blood in their veins.

➤ **Raedara:** (Large city, 15,000) Raedara has a large, still expanding, and well guarded library of several thousand volumes, including dozens of rare elven texts. It has a good theater district, some nice galleries, and holds very nice concerts. It boasts small parks filled with rare trees and flowers, and carved fountains spouting clear water. Otherwise, its streets and people are humble and practical minded.

Sovraín

Ruler: 'Merchant' Council

Government: Syndicracy

Resources: Ambergris, fish, pearls, trade goods, whale oil

Population: 4,180 (humans 85%, orcs 7%, goblins 5%, half-orcs 2%)

Alignment: N, CN, CE, NE

Language: Common, Drosian, Elven

Deities: Graala, Illudra, Kohr, Krayve, Oblivion

Description: Once the 'public face' of the elves of Torahn, the town of Sovraiin is now home to smugglers, pirates and brigands. The former elven city lies mostly in ruins around the current town. Ner'-do-wells of all types find haven in Sovraiin, and the town maintains a 'friendly' relationship with both the Kassanor Isles and the Treaty States of Sadranal.

Telsigir Mountains

Resources: Metals, minerals, timber

Population: Unknown

Description: The Telsigir Mountains are a chain of steep, rocky peaks, the northernmost of which are covered with snow year round. The range shelters the elven haven of Torahn, in a virtually inaccessible valley far to the north. Other inhabitants of the mountains are less hospitable, from orcs and goblins to trolls, bugbears and even, according to some legends, dragons.

Thyras

Ruler: N/A

Government: N/A (Former Magocracy)

Resources: Arcane Knowledge

Population: None

Alignment: Evil

Language: Common, unknown ancient language

Deities: None

Description: Around 11690 ER (-2050 AF), a small group of humans first settled the verdant lands on the eastern side of the Delambir Mountains. The elves living there welcomed them, offering friendship and guidance to the fledgling human race. Not wishing to influence the humans' natural development as a species, the elves at first withheld the knowledge of arcane magic, believing their decision to be for the best.

There were those among the humans who were resentful of the long lived elves, who secretly coveted the elves natural power and sought to steal the elven knowledge for themselves.

A handful of humans with an affinity for the arcane and a thirst for power began a campaign of deception designed to acquire the knowledge of magic that they believed the elves unfairly kept from them. Within a century humans had seized knowledge that the elves had spent thousands of years perfecting. But the possession of such knowledge did not automatically bring control of the power that accompanied its use. The humans' grasp of magic was at first imperfect and they resisted, sometimes with violence, the elves attempts to direct them in its proper use.

Unable to contain the knowledge, and prevented from guiding the humans in its use, the elves were forced to watch sadly from afar as their knowledge was corrupted by those humans intent upon the quest for unlimited power. In 11775 ER (-1965 AF), these human mages used their power to raise the city of Thyras from the very fabric of Raia. In an effort to maintain a balance and reduce the damage done, other human settlements were given the foundations of arcane knowledge, and tutored in its use, and all contact between the elves and the humans of Thyras was abandoned. For nearly a thousand years the human mages of Thyras perfected their stolen art without ever truly appreciating or respecting the vast power behind it. Twisting and warping arcane forces in their constant search for greater power, discovering a means to power their greatest magic with the very life force of the land itself. Blinded by what they had accomplished, the mages of Thyras forgot that such forces could never be completely controlled or possessed.

In 12753 ER (-987 AF), the Thyran archmage Morsipheran, who had been secretly researching a spell to achieve godhood for himself, was challenged by the other great mages of the city who wanted his discoveries for themselves. For seven days and nights the wizards battled, drawing life from the land and raining destruction on the city. When the smoke cleared at dawn on the 8th day the surrounding lands were reduced to desert, many of the city's inhabitants and lesser wizards were either dead or fled, and only Morsipheran and his greatest rival, the half elven mage Delphinae Stormriven, remained. In a final blazing exchange of magic the pair called upon the last vestiges of natural power sustaining the ground beneath the city, and a great chasm opened beneath them, swallowing the city and the combatants alike and burying them beneath the burning sands of the new desert.

For all the years since, the elves have nurtured the desert born from the conflict (known as The Sea of Fire in present times) and guarded the city against those who seek the forbidden arcane knowledge buried within. No outsider has entered the city and come out alive though many have tried.

Elven Kingdom of Torahn

Ruler: High King Praes Dawnflower

Government: Monarchy

Capital: Torahnas City

Resources: elven items, jewelry, magic

Population: 1,732,540 (forest elves 57%, high elves 29%, sky elves 12%, desert elves 1%)

Alignment: NG, N, CG

Language: Common, Elven, Sylvan

Deities: Ardra, Ayla, Brianna, Cerion, Cyrene, Destine, Elianna, Emerys, Sorena

Description: Pained by their failures in guiding mankind, the elves of Raia have retreated into their duty to protect the planet and its creatures. Those who do not desire or are not suited to live in the scattered elven guardian enclaves make their stand here, in this secluded valley, preserving the heritage and knowledge of their people. This valley is the only place where the elves have never been attacked or threatened, and they guard this final sanctuary with their lives.

By all appearances Torahn is nothing more than a large valley. However, magic has expanded the realm beyond the physical boundaries of the valley. Located high in the Telsigir Mountains, it is virtually inaccessible to outsiders, and its

inhabitants remain apart from the rest of Raia. Contact with non-elves and the outside world is virtually non-existent.

Non-elven visitors are allowed within the valley only under the most extreme circumstances (perhaps once in five centuries).

- **Torahnas City:** (Large city, 20,000) This last true haven of Raia's elves is a living work of art. Fragile crystal spires reach skyward, and entire complexes of rooms have been grown from the living wood of ancient towering trees. Graceful arching bridges adorn the heights, leading from tree to tree; and gossamer waterfalls and singing fountains fill the air with dancing motes of rainbow light.

Treaty States of Sadranal

Ruler: Overking Progaskan Talmor

Government: Alliance

Capital: Polretheon

Resources: Gold, lumber, iron, weapons

Population: 2,148,000 concentrated in several large city states (humans 78%, half-orcs 7%, dwarves 6%, orcs 5%, goblins 3%)

Alignment: N, NE, CN

Language: Common, Drosian

Deities: Illudra, Lucor, Zara

Description: This land was historically comprised of many domains. In 15237 ER (1497 AF), a monstrosly large figure, encased from head to toe in obsidian armor and wielding the sword "Heartseeker" came to Sadranal. He declared that he would unite these lands into the mightiest empire the world had ever seen. This was the Black King. By the sword, the lands were brought together under his iron rule. He called it the Empire of Sadranal.

For twenty years no one ever saw his face. The States of the Sadranal Empire grew restless as he taxed, mined, cut, sowed, and gathered the resources for an overwhelming expansion of the Empire. He prophesized to his people that the entire world would be his.

Yet one day, in 15260 ER (1520 AF), the Black King's rule came to an ending as mysterious as its beginning. For on that day, when the sun rose, Sadranal Citadel's gates were found shattered, the throne room a disaster.

A human wielding a magical axe cut down at least a score of the Black King's Guard to reach the King. Then, the Black King came to meet him. The two engaged in a titanic battle that spanned the length of the castle, finally ending in

the throne room with a loud explosion that seemingly destroyed both of the combatants.

For decades, the land was again in complete turmoil. States declared their independence, and were again overthrown by rebels. Massive tracts of land, forcibly worked for the needs of a soon-to-expand Empire, were abandoned to the wilds. Monsters and more disturbing things, kept under control during the Black King's reign, gained freedom and thrived. The Black King's Guard began reasserting its influence, naming themselves the rightful heirs to the Black King. In 15303 ER (1563 AF), a man dubbing himself the "Assassin King," claiming to be the son of the Black King's killer, and brandishing a magical axe akin to the one born by the Black King's slayer, fought fanatically and nearly single-handedly against the Black King's forces, and won. A frightening thought, that such power to destroy whirled through the lands again.

It was with these problems in mind that the remnant States, in whatever current form, allied. They could not agree unify, so agreed to guarantee their disunity. So assuaging his pride and recognizing his power, the Assassin King's line would be called ruler of Sadranal (named "the Overking"), to bear the responsibility for maintaining their separate ways.

The land is littered with abandoned fortifications and ruins. Below are a few of the major towns and their stances.

- **Blackgate Keep & Sadranal:** The forces of the Black King's Guard hold sway over this town, largely with the cooperation of the people. They feel they are the inheritors of a great destiny, if outside meddlers would leave them to gain it. The Blackguards do not hold power directly, however, preferring to place the "elected" Mayor Corongin as figurehead. Nearby Blackgate Keep is entitled the headquarters of the "Blackgate Coster," a far-reaching trading network. Pop: 35,000. Policy – Evil, Lawful
- **Fahleigh:** Situated between Sadranal and Inn Rathan, Fahleigh attempts to balance the conflicting forces swirling in and around it. The Council of Eight rules the city, one of the few in the area that welcomes foreign visitors with some measure of personal safety. Its mines and metalworking are renowned through the region. Pop: 20,000. Policy – Neutral
- **Inn Rathan:** Organized priesthoods fled to this city after the fall of the Black King, overthrowing the nobles to create a regime

more cooperative to their own purposes (Namely, a complex theocracy). They have since created a prosperous, if dangerous, city. They greatly fear a resurgence of the Black King's forces and work against that using whatever means available. They look upon the Blackguards attempt to introduce worship of the Black King with great hostility. Pop: 25,000. Policy – Evil, Lawful.

- **Orbalune:** Poorly situated, Orbalune has fallen several times to vicious, monstrous incursions. Ironically, this makes it prime territory for adventurers; Orbalune knows it depends upon them for some measure of safety. Located nearest to the Forest of Sorrows, most of the structures in the city are wooden, leading to easy destruction, but easy rebuilding. Orbalune is ruled by the Osention family, first amongst the six noble houses. It is also one of the few States with a notable elven population. Pop 20,000. Policy – Good, Chaotic.
- **Polretheon:** A small town of little note, except as the seat of the Overking. The current Overking, Progaskan Talmor, maintains the traditionally lax and barbaric customs of his predecessor. Carousing and gambling dominate the “court customs.” However, Overking Talmor is the single most powerful warrior in all the Treaty States, single-handedly defeating some of the most powerful and dangerous creatures of the lands. Pop 1,450. Policy – Neutral, Chaotic.
- **Umn Manis:** As a former home of the Black King's army, Umn Manis was laid waste by conflicting forces during the troubles following his death. However, despite the bloodshed, Umn Manis's fortress-like outer walls were never breached. Under the rule of its new Council and mayor, rebuilding proceeds within those confines, with the wreckage of the old city, just outside the walls, abandoned to whoever or whatever wants it. Pop 15,000. Policy – Neutral, Chaotic.

The Sadranese often have fair to medium complexions, with light hair and eyes. The nation in general is not a wealthy one, and most citizens wear simple homespun garments of no particular cut or style.

Unclaimed Lands

Ruler: Independent, self-proclaimed lords

Government: Varies

Capital: None

Resources: Horses, leather goods, livestock, produce, wagons, weapons

Population: Scattered. No official census has ever been taken.

Alignment: N, NE, CN, CE

Language: Common, Drosian, Orc

Deities: All

Description: The unclaimed lands have no single cohesive or definable government. They are home to wandering humanoid bands, small farms, outcasts, bandit gangs and small, self-appointed lords who have built ‘strongholds’ to varying degrees. Some are little more than small wooden stockades, while others are small stone keeps, where men calling themselves ‘generals’, ‘dukes’, ‘barons’, ‘lords’, or ‘knights’ command whatever caliber of folk will flock to their banner.

Republic of Veyr

Ruler: High Lady Resina Torvas and the Landsdor Council

Government: Republic

Capital: Pasdar

Resources: Food, iron, perfume, Sianmar trade goods, weapons, wool

Population: 1,296,320 (humans 70%, gnomes 9%, halflings 8%, half-orcs 7%, orcs 5%)

Alignment: NG, N, CG

Language: Common, Drosian, Veyran

Deities: Ardra, Cerion, Elianna, Glissande, Kalek, Lucor, Meneon, Pietos, Sorena

Description: Something more than a confederation of city-states, and not quite a true nation, the farmers and merchants of Veyr have managed to build a country that has survived repeated incursions from the Kassanor Isles and enjoys a lucrative trade with the Sianmar nations. While Veyr cannot hope to conduct trade on the scale of Ibarra, Perallin and Amthydor, the merchants there hold their own against fierce competition. Wool from Veyran sheep is highly prized across Raia.

Founded in 15297 ER (1557 AF) by a group of free farmers seeking to escape the harsh life and oppression of the Treaty States of Sadranal, Veyr began as little more than a few scattered farms and communes. By 15340 ER (1600 AF), the city of Pasdar had been established and a flow of immigrants had begun, drawn by the idea of a nation that decried slavery, and where anyone who owned either land or business could vote for their government representatives.

Veyr is a nation of immigrants, with a variety of languages, customs and styles.

- **Pasdar:** (Metropolis, 39,786) Pasdar is as diverse as the people who call it home. Unlike Amthydor, there are no walls to divide rich from poor or homes from businesses, though the layout of the city is not without a sense of order. Each street in the city contains only one type establishment, whether it is homes, taverns, bakers or chandlers. The residents are seldom surprised by unusual species, and unless a creature is truly unique it is unlikely to attract notice.

Zur'Oun (Sea of Fire)

Ruler: Tribal Sheiks (M'Jir); Elected Council (City of Al-Serai)

Capital: Al-Serai (None for the M'Jir)

Resources: Salt, spices, dates

Population: Al-Serai varies with trade; Desert 117,359 (humans 72%, desert elves 11% , half-elves 12%, eryx 4%)

Alignment: NG, N, LN, NG

Language: Azher (M'Jir), Common, Elven

Deities: Ardra, Brianna, Galvandt, Meneon, Peliron, Pietos, Sorena

Description: Since 12753 ER (-987 AF), the nomadic M'Jir have roamed the great desert they call the Zur'Oun or Sea of Fire.

Al-Serai, the only permanent occupied settlements in the region, is governed by the Imshaar, a council of 5 men elected every 7 years, who insure that the city remains a safe and neutral staging point for caravans entering or returning from the deep desert. The Imshaar sets exchange rates and prices for goods sold in the

local market, collect fees and fines from merchants and traders, and negotiate treaties and rights of passage through the desert with the M'Jir.

The M'Jir refer to visitors as 'Taar'idj' or outsiders. While not openly hostile to travelers, they are private people and distrust strangers. Anyone passing through M'Jir lands is closely watched, though the watchers themselves may never be seen. They are slow to trust those that they do not know, and keep even those they deal with regularly, such as caravan merchants, at a distance. However, in those rare instances when someone is truly accepted among the M'Jir, they become part of the tribe. In spite of this distant attitude, the M'Jir take their honor seriously, and if a visitor is welcomed into the temporary protection of the tribe then none will permit him to come to harm. They have elaborate rules regarding hospitality and the treatment of guests. A strict honor code makes the proud M'Jir more lawful than one might expect of a nomadic people, but these desert warriors are a law unto themselves.

Arcane spellcasters are rare among the M'Jir, perhaps due in part to a distant racial memory of the fall of Thyras and the creation of their desert home.

Beneath the sands of the Zur'Oun live the Eryx, an evil race of desert dwelling reptilian humanoids that prey on unsuspecting travelers as well as the M'Jir.

The nomads of the Zur'Oun are olive or dark skinned, with black hair and dark eyes. They favor flowing desert robes, in pale colors to blend with the sand around them.

The Southern Domains

The **Southern Domains** are those lands extending south from the Tasman Sea.

The Confederation of Brithyr

(Brithyr, Brithyr Confederation)

Ruler: Council of Sheriffs; Chaired in rotating fashion amongst the six Sheriffs.

Government: Confederation

Capital: New Brithyr City

Resources: An amazingly large and reliable surplus of grain and foodstuffs.

Population: 280,390 (halflings, 84%, kobold 6%, humans 5%, dwarves 3%, forest elves 1%)

Alignment: LN, N, NG

Language: Common, Halfling

Deities: Ardra, Cerion, Elianna, Meneon, Peliron, Pietos

Description: The halfling nation soon followed the creation of the race thousands of years ago. Unlike the other races, but with individual exceptions, they didn't feel a need to wander, and found that their initial demesne supplied everything that they needed to survive. Without the need or desire to travel elsewhere, they

quickly settled in., satisfied to develop the land they first found.

Soon their homes grew to small communities, then to towns. Towns grew to cantons, as connections grew between neighboring halfling communities. At the level of the Cantons - led by a Sheriff - political organization stopped. Further organization, at that point, meant creating more Cantons rather than a single, large Canton.

Eventually, other nations began to grow on the borders of the halfling territorial claims. When approached in a friendly manner, the Cantons were willing to trade land for peace and friendship. When approached in a hostile manner, the Cantons seemed to depend on these friends for assistance against the threat. This was often interpreted as cowardice on the part of outsiders, while it was thought by most residents to be a matter of keeping proper priorities. There had not been a threat that could not be bought off with the products of the Cantons' labor. So while it's not true to say that their hard worked, green lands had no one attempting to take them, those enemies were generally handled, out lived, or outsmarted.

The events that led to the modern halfling nation began further south, in three competing human kingdoms collectively called the Niverange. Soldiers and adventurers, pursuing treasure and lands, began clearing the swamps south to their territory, systematically destroying humanoid, druidic and monstrous creatures as they met them. Representatives from the swamps, who centuries earlier had reached an understanding with the ancestors of the Cantons, were not heard by the Niverange.

After two centuries of these incursions, the swamp residents, vowing revenge, fell under the sway of a clan of dark naga. They organized and struck back hard. This was the birth of Moor Mirkhan.

The Niverange initially dismissed the threat. As the naga clan commanded hordes of powerful magic wielding kobolds successfully razed three border forts and laid siege to the southernmost capital, the Niverange called upon every ally they could muster to fight.

The Cantons generally refused, lacking interest in matters relating to war. Thousands of troops from Corothia, the newly established Niverangean colony of Nadera, and further afield were allowed passage through halfling territory.

For this account, suffice it to say that they lost after thirty years of fighting.

Negotiations with the Moors reduced, but did not eliminate their intent to invade the Cantons. Corothia, tired of war, refused further assistance, instead offering evacuation of the lands as an option. Most remnants of the Niverange accepted, spreading far and wide across Raia.

The Moors declared war. Nadera, alone among the remaining countries, and in opposition to their Niverangean Imperial commands, threw in their lot with the Cantons, vowing to fight Moor Mirkhan to the last.

Two weeks after the declaration, assassins struck the Sheriffs of the six Cantons and their assistants. Kobold led forces crossed into Mervee Canton.

However, the deaths if the Sheriffs did not throw the Cantons into turmoil. To outsiders, even the Naderans, this was luck. Political organization was only the smallest part if the connections between the halflings of the Cantons - food networks, family networks, social networks organized halfling society no less strongly even if invisibly.

These hidden leaders reacted rapidly. The people of Mervee Canton were evacuated in time to escape advancing forces. The reins of the remaining five Cantons were handed to capable interim administrators. And, in the greatest departure from the past, Kidin Hottup, a noted halfling knight, was named King of the Cantons. His first act was to form a defensive line with the Cantons' militia, a sprinkling of Naderan knights, and Niverangean refugees. Over six months, one drawn and two won battles, the line held.

King Hottup called upon the aid of all friends of the Cantons to send assistance. Halflings across Salindaer returned to help man the borders. Funds and other resources began to flow, as other countries gained confidence in the new King. Elves from the nearby Heartwood came to the aid of their halfling neighbors.

It took thirty years of fighting. Kidin Hottup, slain while in turn slaying the dark naga leader Kkraichakar, gave pause to the creature's peers in Moor Mirkhan. A treaty was arranged defining borders. The western part of the Niverange was declared neutral territory. Mervee Canton was returned, worse for the wear, and with some kobold residents.

The Cantons slowly recovered. The land grew green again, and some measure of the prior peace was restored. Some things changed – while there was no other King, a Council of Sheriffs took up the remnants of the King’s authority in the King’s name. Nadera’s staunch assistance in the Canton’s time of greatest need was rewarded by very favorable trade terms. Kobolds, with their quick generations (and it must be said, against the advice of the Naderans) slowly assimilated into the society of the Cantons.

- **New Brithyr City:** (Large city, 24,150)
- **Fergen Canton:** Bordering Nadera, Fergen contains many gigantic silos and well-traveled trade routes for Naderan grain caravans.
- **Given Canton:** The most centrally located of the six Cantons, Given Canton holds the institutions of the late King Hottup – the Canton Knights, the School of Wizards, and a handful of embassies.
- **Mervee Canton:** Home of the largest kobold population in the Cantons. Most damaged by the war, “rogue agents” from the Moors have been known to stir up trouble now and again.
- **Moomos Canton:** A green and pleasant place, Moomos holds little of value. Considered the best of the Cantons for an extended visit, with the best food, music, and entertainment.
- **Poorridge Canton:** The most “rugged” of the Cantons still finds no one wanting for food. Small iron and other mines dot the landscape.
- **Vit Canton:** Dried and jammed fruit are a Vit Canton staple. Sweets from Vit are considered the best in the Cantons. This northern outpost contains a few forts.

Cellor

Ruler: King Xandros Meliron (in exile)

Government: Feudal Monarchy

Capital: Kesmar (fallen)

Resources: Art objects, foodstuffs, paintings, pottery, precious and semi-precious gems, precious metals

Population: 1,298,630 (humans 73%, dwarves 8%, gnomes 7%, halflings 6%, half-elves 3%, forest elves 2%)

Alignment: N, NE, LN, LE

Language: Common, Corsian, Tasmar

Deities: Ardra, Aurelian, Belatrix, Destine, Dymora, Emerys, Galvandt, Hyperion, Kalek,

Karios, Krayve, Meneon, Mordana, Peliron, Pietos

Description: Cellor is a nation torn by years of civil war. Throughout its history, the rulers of Cellor have been harsh, and even cruel, with little regard for the well being of their common subjects while the nobility lived in pampered luxury. While there have been benevolent monarchs, they have been few and far between, and positive changes have been short-lived. King Xandros claimed the throne in 15741 ER (2001 AF) after a small (and very quiet) revolution of his own, to prevent his tyrannical older brother Xedrek from ascending to power following the suspicious death of their father. Xandros sought to be a better ruler than his predecessors, and wished bring new prosperity to his people. He instituted his changes gradually, reducing the burdens placed upon the poor, while establishing programs to benefit them. For all of his good intentions, his reforms did not come quickly enough. In 15746 ER (2006 AF) a peasant uprising resulted in the burning of the Palace and the destruction of nearly half of the capital city of Kesmar. The royal family and many of the ranking nobles fled north through the rugged Laeran Hills into Corothia. Some nobles and courtiers remain in hiding in Cellor, while the fate of others is unknown. Xandros continues to attempt to regain his throne, believing that he can serve for the good of his people, if only they are willing to listen to his plans.

Most Cellorites have sharp, angular features, medium complexions, brown or black hair and blue or brown eyes.

- **Kesmar:** (Metropolis, 31,682) Kesmar, like much of Cellor, is a city divided, economically, politically and socially. With wealth and rank come security and comfort, while the common people live a meager and uncertain existence. Much of the damage caused during the civil war to the wealthier parts of the city has been repaired, and fancy parties are held nightly in the stately manors of the wealthy. Repairs to other areas of the city have been haphazard at best, and with no homes and businesses to return to, poverty and unemployment are at their highest levels in the city’s history.

Chemras Marches (The Marches)

Ruler: Hierophant (Navalla) Shionessha

Government: None

Capital: None

Population: 560,135 (humans 57%, forest elves 19%, half-elves 10%, halflings 7%, high elves 3%, other fey 3%)

Alignment: CG, N, NG

Language: Common, Elven, Sylvan

Deities: Ayla

Description: The Archmage Chemras was defeated by the druid Shionessha in 15724 ER (1984 AF). Long ago, when they were young, they were a couple. However, this appears to have ended in the worst way possible, as it added a personal grievance to their unrelenting rivalry over the next several decades; a philosophical difference which ultimately descended to open warfare.

Considered the single most powerful mage of his generation, Chemras wished to recreate the civilization of Thyras corrected by modern ideals and understandings, within the largely empty Marches. Chemras opened portals to other planes, summoning Inevitables and others, to help create his new Thyras. In a corner of the Marches, he planned to raise a floating city as a beacon to all mages across Raia. An ambitious, yet judicious man, for onlookers observing the care in which he prepared his moves, it seemed quite possible for him to achieve his goals.

While long aware of his aim, as he began his work to achieve them, Shionessha became convinced he was a threat to nature. He was a threat of the past, ignorant magocracies resurgent once more. He was a symbol of mankind, ignorantly throwing aside the wisdom of the elves. He was a threat to the forest and plains as he reworked them to his plans.

Their conflict was wide-ranging and epic; enough so that the few who lived in the Marches left as rapidly as possible.

Chemras has since vanished; Shionessha claims to have slain him. Leaving no more than his name on the Marches, Shionessha has demanded no interference or trespass by any individual “for a period of time as long as necessary for the land to heal itself.” Knowing of her great power, neighbors of the Chemras Marches have scrupulously heeded this warning.

Small bands have been known to cross the Chemras Marches safely. While most have described it as empty, some have heard “unearthly sounds in the distance.” Large bands, like trade caravans, generally do not return from the Chemras Marches at all.

While not exactly welcome, a few monasteries and structures pre-dating Chemras’s rule have been allowed to stand. With no right to trade or accept more visitors than the occasional new convert or family member (and under specific warning against use of any kind of magecraft), they are forced to live very ascetic, isolated lives.

Sovereign Kingdom of Corothia

Ruler: Her Majesty Queen Eleanne III

Government: Hereditary Monarchy

Capital: Saboen

Resources: Cloth, timber, foodstuffs, weapons, armor

Population: 1,492,500 (humans 82%, half-elves 11%, forest elves 4%, dwarves 2%)

Alignment: LG, LN, N, NG

Language: Common, Corosian, Tasmar

Deities: Ardra, Destine, Emerys, Galvandt, Glissande, Hyperion, Peliron, Pietos, Sorena

Description: Founded in 13904 ER (164 AF), Corothia is a prosperous kingdom filled with hearty, steadfast, hard-working and honest citizens. Corothia has greatly benefited from a series of wise and capable rulers, standing as a bastion of law and justice. The kingdom maintains a large standing army, the Corothian Guard, in which all male citizens must serve for a minimum of 3 years, beginning at age 16. Elite Sentinel Knights command the Corothian Guard units.

Eleanne III is a relatively new monarch, gaining the crown after the assassination of her father and four older brothers by the Sandoran Conspiracy (Led by members of the now-defunct Corothian Noble Houses of Sandor, Melchor and Whalen) in 15743 ER (2003 AF). She is guided in her rule by a council of capable advisors, and her stepmother, a half-elven noblewoman named Alethia Kalluna. With strong support shown by her nobles and her sympathetic populace, her reign looks to be a long and benevolent one.

In spite of the recent assassinations, Corothia has proven capable of remaining a stable, prosperous kingdom.

Corothians favor elegant simplicity in everything from their loose, flowing clothing to their art and architecture. Most have medium complexions, with brown or black hair, blue or brown eyes and angular features.

➤ **Saboen:** (Metropolis, 52,945) The largest city in Corothia and Queen Eleanne’s seat of power, Saboen is the nation in miniature. It is home to the central headquarters of the Corothian Guard and the Sentinel Knights,

as well as the famed Forstil Academy, the most prestigious war college on all of Raia.

Exan (City-state)

Ruler: Mayor Elarat Freeport (aka “the Slaughterer”)

Government: Oligarchy

Resources: Mines, slaves, magic, mercenaries, timber

Population: Approximately 1,500 permanent inhabitants; perhaps five or six times that in the surrounding area. (humans 43%, half-orcs 42%, half-elves 14%)

Alignment: CE, CN, NE, N

Language: Common

Deities: Belatrix, Graala, Illudra, Kohr, Krayve

Description: Exan was a notable human / dwarven mining town in the Delambir Mountains. Increasing incursions by humanoid tribes led to security concerns by the Exan’s citizens. Unfortunately, they hired a treacherous group of adventurers since known as “The Vile Seven” to assist them. Under the guise of strengthening and protecting Exan, the Seven weakened and suborned its defenses. When the humanoid hordes attacked, the city gates were open and its people easy prey.

As reward, the humanoid forces granted the Seven Exan’s citadel as their personal stronghold and a significant portion of the spoils. Descendants and allies of the Vile Seven continued under the name Exan, but a treacherous, evil Exan much unlike the namesake it replaced.

Exan and the orcs have a predatory yet symbiotic relationship. Exan’s leaders focus the orcs on plunder elsewhere, while the orcs depend on Exan for high value trade goods and trade of their captured prisoners. Skill at both have the effect of keeping a possible orcish threat against Exan relatively low.

Havens

Ruler: Various (see below)

Government: None; Each community is self-governed.

Capital: None

Resources: Food, weapons, cloth, lumber

Population: 1,300,520 (humans 70%, halflings 8%, gnomes 6%, half-elves 6%, dwarves 4%, half-orcs 3%, forest elves 2%)

Alignment: LG, N, NG, CG

Language: Common, Tasmar

Deities: Ardra, Ayla, Aurelian, Brianna, Cerion, Cyrene, Destine, Emerys, Galvandt, Glissande, Hyperion, Kalek, Lohm, Meneon, Peliron, Pietos, Sorena

Description: Formerly part of the Thyrgol Confederacy, the Havens have become a collection of independent rural communities capable of standing against the influence of their former nation. Thyrgol’s attacks on its own people could not pass without consequence. Slowly, the bloodshed had spread from dwarves to elves, and had begun to proceed against “human sympathizers suspected of treasonous behavior.” Large population centers were laid waste.

It soon became clear to the remaining people in the area that Thyrgol was intent on scapegoating and eradicating everyone in this “marginal frontier territory” which was not so long ago an integral part of Thyrgol.

Fairton, or Fairtown, the largest settlement, was renamed Fairhaven for its willingness to shelter “the falsely persecuted people of Thyrgol”, it was the first to declare independence. In rapid succession, groupings of towns calling themselves Stonehaven, Seahaven, and Foxhaven followed. Thyrgol was in an uproar, claiming all its suspicions regarding the region confirmed. While the same size in territory, Thyrgol possessed more than ten times the population in the Havens combined. Thyrgol declared war against the Havens, promising slow death to the “vile conspirators against our great nation.” Over the next three years, they mustered a small army and began moving north against Fairhaven.

Repulsed by the brutality of their orders, many of the military units stationed to carry out attacks against the people of the area repented their prior acts and joined with the Havens. Fairhaven, most prepared for independence, fielded an army led by General Aaryn Wergreg Feraciptian to meet the Thyrgol force. Stonehaven, containing the largest portion of dwarven refugees, armed it with the best work they could manufacture, and hid as Thyrgol’s army passed. Seahaven harried Thyrgol trade and shipping. Foxhaven, with the largest portion of elven refugees, supplied Fairhaven with ample intelligence of the Thyrgol army’s movements and several powerful mages. The Battle of Three Hills was a long, bloody affair. Militarily, it was a draw. But as a draw, it won the Haven’s independence from Thyrgol. Other nations disgusted with its policies, but remembering its history of power, saw that if

Thyrgol was incapable of putting down an “armed revolt by peasants,” its day had passed. Over the centuries until the present, Thyrgol has attempted invasion with even larger forces, with no greater success.

Though not officially considered part of the Havens, the Heartwood maintains a close and friendly relationship and a policy of mutual protection.

Falgoth has had recent success gaining the friendship of the Havens, at the possible expense of Amthydor.

Havenites tend to be medium complexioned, with blond to dark brown hair and green, hazel or brown eyes.

- **Fairhaven:** Fairhaven is a large seaport ruled by Lord Wy Feraptian. It holds the Council Chamber for official Haven meeting, called in times of Thyrgol invasion. It is a prosperous, open town, welcoming refugees and protecting persecuted individuals from the region. The most cosmopolitan of the Havens, it engages in active diplomacy on their behalf, and acts as the first point of attack against Thyrgol’s foreign influence. It holds the offices of several trading guilds. Pop. – 18,000 in city limits, 40,000 total. Policy – Good, Neutral.
- **Foxhaven:** A loose collection of hamlets bordering the Heartwood, Foxhaven’s elven population creates some of the finest crafts on the continent. Bordering Vanyr, and not completely unaware of its avarice, it has masterfully played upon the greed of Vanyr against any threat of invasion. Of course, as its people know, there is no possibility it would trade through anywhere other than Fairhaven. Maryine Oakenwood represents Foxhaven at the Council Chamber, occasionally visiting Vanyr with a few of her choice words and gifts to keep that border settled. Pop. – 53,000. Policy – Good, Chaotic.
- **Seahaven:** The largest of the Havens in population, Seahaven is a collection of towns along the coast largely engaged in piracy of trade on that sea. It has managed to confound shipping between Thyrgol and Diaguo. In fact, it has become notoriously successful in affecting the trade of evil nations, several of which lie within striking distance of Seahaven’s vessels. Additionally, Seahaven’s captains have proven skillful and numerous enough to defeat fleets attempting to punish its towns

for their acts. As a secondary business, ships from Seahaven engage in smuggling: their trade is known as a lifeline between the Shoji Republic and the outside world. Ships from Seahaven sometimes go to great expense to attack and free those on slave trading vessels – a growing segment of Seahaven’s population are ex-slaves. Pop. – 120,000. Policy – Good, Chaotic.

- **Stonehaven:** A collection of small towns and villages, Stonehaven’s settlements are usually collected around modest veins of minerals or metals. Their generally poor land is offset by their highly skilled metalworkers – both dwarven and human. Human and dwarven clan leaders have joined together to form a single Council representing Stonehaven, regulating intertown matters as well as seating a representative in Fairhaven. Even the smallest town is fortified well enough to hold off a moderately powerful army. Pop. – 58,000. Policy – Good, Lawful.

Heartwood

Ruler: No single leader

Government: No single unifying government

Capital: None

Resources: Rare plants and herbs, elven artifacts, furs, timber, wild game

Population: 98,640 (forest elves 30%, humans 29%, half-elves 13%, halflings 10%, gnolls 5%, high elves 4%, goblins 3%, other fey 3%, treants 2%)

Alignment: N, NG, CG

Language: Common

Deities: Ayla, Brianna, Cerion, Cyrene, Elianna, Emerys, Sorena

Description: Like the Mystwood to the north, the Heartwood is an ancient-growth ‘Great Forest’. The forest’s outer boundaries have suffered from the aggressive incursions of humans from Thyrgol and Vanyr, raiders from Nezzrin and retributive attacks by the black dragons of Moor Mirkhan for elven involvement in the Canton Wars. Once a center of elven culture, most of the Heartwood’s elves have retreated to Torahn and other remote enclaves.

In 14983 ER (1243 AF), the elven city of Saryndor, deep within the heart of the forest, was completely and inexplicably abandoned following a concerted attack by an unknown arcane power. When the smoke cleared, the trees themselves were undamaged, though every elf within the city itself had vanished.

Free City of Ibarra

Ruler: The Quorum of Nine, a ruling council of city lords. When a member dies or steps down, his successor is selected by the remaining members.

Government: Oligarchy

Capital: None

Resources: Cloth, finished trade goods, weapons, wine

Population: 68,900 (humans 58%, dwarves 9%, half-elves 8%, gnomes 8%, halflings 7%, forest elves 6%, half-orcs 3%)

Alignment: N, NG, CG, LN

Language: Common, Tasmar

Deities: Destine, Emerys, Illudra, Lohm, Lucor

Description: The best and worst of Raia can be found in this bustling coastal trade city. Ibarra hosts even more adventurers per capita than Amthydor, and it seems that there is always something for them to do. Even the most jaded traveler can find something new in this ever-changing city. It is often the first stop for ships entering the Tasman Sea from the west, before continuing on to the city-states of Perallin, Falgoth, Numbor or Amthydor, or to the seaports of Nestrell, Vanyr, Corothia, Talis or Waern.

The Dark Empire of Mirkhan

Ruler: Sestekhit, Dark Naga Nest-Mother

Government: Autocracy

Capital: None

Resources: N/A

Population: 580,000 (kobolds 77%, medusa 9%, humans 7%, halflings 3%, dwarves 1%, gnomes 1%, half-elves 1%)

Alignment: LE, LN, NE, N

Language: Common, Draconic, Halfling

Deities: Graala, Illudra, Karios, Krayve, Oblivion, Suulthah, Zara

Description: Moor Mirkhan began in 14769 ER (1029 AF) as a response to human incursions into the swamps to destroy the dark naga and their allies. After the deaths of several of their number, the naga responded by supplementing their powers with medusa and kobold sorcerers. Under the idea of spreading the supremacy of their kind, they successfully fought back. Humans, halflings, dwarves, gnomes and half-elves residing in Moor Mirkhan are quickly became slaves.

Moor Mirkhan lay quiescent for several centuries, fading in memory. However it was in 15272 ER (1532 AF) that it exploded outwards once again – Mirkhan altered the climate of

neighboring states, instantly turning two prosperous human kingdoms into swampland.

Thus it proceeded for several centuries more; the children of the dark naga harnessed this magic, expanding the influence of Moor Mirkhan further.

It was clear to the rest that Moor Mirkhan had gained too much strength. Desperately, all neighbors united against Mirkhan and invaded. Hundreds of thousands perished, yet managed to check Moor Mirkhan for a time.

In 15495 ER (1755 AF), Moor Mirkhan struck again – this time invading Brithyr. The Cantons proved more resilient than expected. With the death of two dark naga nest-mothers leading to an internal power struggle for the leadership, a suitable peace was discussed and finalized in 15544 ER (1804 AF).

Under new leadership, Moor Mirkhan began to emphasize other means of spreading its influence. It now concentrated less on military might and more on magic and subtlety to enlarge its power base.

Nadera (The Peacock Throne)

Ruler: Hanorg Valdaxes; First Amongst Equals, Chosen of the Peacock Council, Valiant Defender of Honor.

Government: Plutocracy (Whigregold Consortium)

Capital: Prasedum

Resources: Overland shipping, grain, mining, timber

Population: 653,100 (humans 82%, halflings 7%, gnomes 4%, dwarves 3%, half-elves 2%, forest elves 1%)

Alignment: LN, LG, N

Language: Common, Niverangan

Deities: Ardra, Destine, Emerys, Galvandt, Glissande, Hyperion, Peliron, Pietos, Sorena

Description: Established by landless sons of the Niverange in an attempt to encircle the Cantons, the Peacock Throne formally broke with the Niverangean kingdoms to ally with the Cantons during the wars of 15491 ER (1751 AF).

Volunteers to the Brithyr Cantons front formed Knightly Orders based on principles of valor, honor, honesty, charity, and humility. These joined together, to unify as the Council of Nadera (also known as the “Peacock Throne,” originally a derisive Niverangean term later adopted by Nadera).

The victory of the halflings in 15631 ER (1891 AF) brought great pride to the people in Nadera, as well as trade concessions by the grateful halfling nation. The Knightly Orders celebrated their success, looking forward to spreading the cause of good and right to different fronts.

No cause was agreed upon. Each Order began separate campaigns. The challenge of supporting and training far-flung groups of knights was serious. Over time, the Orders entered commerce, to help offset those costs.

Trade gained prominence since the difficulty of profitably carrying the substantial grain harvests from Brithyr to the sea required great organization. In 15727 ER (1987 AF), the Order of the White Feather, the Order of the Green Feather, and the Order of the Gold Feather formally unified, mainly as a trade consortium. Half the seats of the Nadera Council fell under the consortium's control.

While currently avaricious, Nadera takes great pride in its history as an honorable and honest state. It is a great insult to suggest otherwise.

Ornamentation and color are signs of wealth and success, even in the simplest aspects of Naderan life. Even the poorest farmer wears bright colors, adorned with whatever embroidery his wife or daughters can manage. Only those who truly have nothing will suffer to wear plain fabric, or such dismal colors as grey, brown or black. Naderans tend to be tall, with sharp features, medium to dark complexions, dark hair and dark eyes.

➤ **Prasedum:** (Metropolis, 71,290) Prasedum was heavily fortified during the conflict with Moor Mirkhan, and the strong defenses remain active to this day, though they seem to have little impact on the life of the average citizen. Martial weapons are permitted only for members of the army and the city guard, and visitors who bring such weapons to the city must register and have them peace-bonded. Prasedum's streets seem to be laid out in a haphazard and winding fashion, but this arrangement is actually intended to prevent an invading force from having an unimpeded path to the heart of the city.

Nezrin

Ruler: Tribal leaders

Government: Tribal

Capital: None

Resources: Cheese, furs, leather, livestock, wool

Population: 216,890 (humans 81%, halflings 8%, half-orcs 4%, orcs 3%, half-elves 2%)

Alignment: CE, CN, N, NE

Language: Common, Nezran

Deities: Belatrix, Kohr, Krayve, Oblivion, Zara

Description: Permanent settlements in Nezrin are small and few. The land is populated by tribes of nomadic raiders who prey not only on each other, but also on neighboring nations. Raids into the Heartwood and Brithyr are common, though Moor Mirkhan is a feared enemy to be avoided. The archery skill of these mounted raiders is unequalled on Raia. Nezrin's people live harsh lives. The rocky soil is ill suited for farming, and vegetation is sparse. In addition to their rough horses, the nomads raise sheep and goats.

Many of the Nezriin are of Sianmar descent, with pale golden or honey colored complexions, black hair and dark eyes.

Crown Colony of Numbor

(Free City of Numbor)

Ruler: Lord Governor Argunt Mayespi Vichinver (Baron Vichinver)

Government: Fief

Resources: Wine, produce, grain, shipbuilding

Population: 23,900 (humans 95%, halflings 4%)

Alignment: LE, LN, NE, N

Language: Common, Wearnish

Deities: Belatrix, Cyrene, Destine, Dymora, Mordana

Description: Numbor was a modest coastal town that, to a large extent, voluntarily joined the Kingdom of Waern as a colony. With the resources and interest of the Kingdom behind it, Numbor has since doubled in size and prosperity. Additionally, it has become a major outlet for emigration from Waern, especially in light of Waern's recent troubles.

That connection was cut off as Baron Vichinver, upon assuming his role as Royal Governor two years ago, unilaterally declared independence. The reasons for doing so are unclear. Yet the reaction from Waern is clear: Any move to support Baron Vichinver's treasonous behavior will someday lead to war with Waern.

This has not deterred Baron Vichinver, who has arrested and executed any in Numbor suspected of disloyalty to him or of opposition to his policies.

He has put feelers towards Falgoth, Amthydor, and – most ominously – Exan for a military alliance. Balancing the risk of Exan gaining sea access with the threat of Waern’s military has become a subject of great debate among Amthydor’s leaders.

Additionally, adding fuel to the fire, Baron Vichinver recently declared slavery and slave trading illegal within the city limits (although remaining silent on the question of Numbor’s outlying estates).

Sarrif

Ruler: No single ruler

Government: Independent holdings, smuggling outposts, and small city-states

Capital: Sarrif is not a unified nation, and has no single capital.

Resources: Ships, smuggled and stolen goods, slaves

Population: 782,500 (humans 91%, halflings 3%, half-elves 2%, half-orcs 2%, gnomes 1%)

Alignment: CE, CN, NE, N

Language: Common

Deities: Belatrix, Cyrene, Dymora, Illudra, Karios, Kohr, Lucor, Mordana, Oblivion

Description: Sarrif produces nothing that it can steal. The rocky coast is home to small outposts of smugglers, pirates, and reavers who prey on shipping from the southern coastal nations, Caligar and Naefar. Mercenaries are common, thanks to a need for ship and warehouse guards, and if they survive are often able to retire wealthy. Honest moneychangers and bankers also find a warm welcome, though dishonest ones most often find themselves at the end of a very short rope. The fate of passengers and crew from captured ships is uncertain. Those who are not killed outright in attacks are usually either ransomed back to their families and countries or are sold as slaves. A few are believed to actually join forces with their captors.

- **Kerridinn:** (Small city, 4.800) Kerridinn is a small yet bustling seaport city, where almost anything can be found for sale, for the right price. There is no force designated to maintain order, and no legal recourse for crime victims. Visitors to the city venture there at their own risk.

Talis

Ruler: Learned Deslyn Hemmran

Government: Magocratic Pedocracy

Capital: Lydor

Resources: Books, knowledge, magic items

Population: 1,879,150 (humans 71%, half-elves 12%, forest elves 9%, gnomes 5%, dwarves 1%, halflings 1%)

Alignment: LN, LG, NG, N

Language: Common, Tasmar

Deities: Ardra, Destine, Elianna, Emerys, Galvandt, Hyperion, Meneon, Peliron, Pietos, Sorena

Description: A staunch ally of Corothia, Talis has made the same study of combat magic that their neighboring nation has made of martial skills. Like its sister nation, the Magocracy of Caligar, Talis has elevated arcane knowledge to a high art. There is little to learn about magic that they do not know. Talis holds no welcome for anyone from Pyrroth, and has forbidden the practice of blood magic (which the Pyrrothan mages make common use of). Military units from Talis and Corothia commonly train together, and the two countries often ‘loan’ each other commanders or even entire units in order to better train their respective forces.

The people of Talis tend to be tall, with sharp aquiline features, fair complexions and blonde, red or brown hair.

- **Lydor:** (Metropolis, 84,596) Lydor is a pleasing and practical blending of the arcane and the mundane. Though much of the activity in the city revolves around the Academie Mystere and the Grand Library, Lydor is also home to skilled craftsman, hearty farmers and mercenaries seeking training or employment. Few criminals are willing to operate in Lydor, where a victim is as likely to respond with magic or martial force as to submit to an attacker’s demands.

Thyrgol Confederacy

Ruler: High Chancellor Medras Illansel and the Confederacy Council

Government: Confederacy, with each city appointing a representative to the Confederacy Council, which oversees relations between the various cities.

Capital: Kallusa

Resources: Timber, metals, salt, mercenaries.

Population: 2,185,950 (humans 99%)

Alignment: CN, NE, N

Language: Common, Corsian, Tasmar

Deities: Belatrix, Dymora, Illudra, Karios, Kohr, Krayve, Oblivion

Description: Thyrgol is a pale shadow of the great nation it once was. Even Corothia and Vanyr, founded and populated by emigrants

from Thyrgol, have little use for the country of their ancestors. An ongoing attitude of arrogance, intolerance and aggression towards neighboring non-human enclaves has left the nation somewhat isolated. The dwarves of the Gryphon Hills were forced to flee in the face of Thyrgol's racist aggression, and a portion of the Heartwood was burned driving elves, already harried and weakened following the conflict with Moor Mirkhan, to flee deeper into the forest or to withdraw completely to the distant haven of Torahn. Non-humans are not welcome in Thyrgol, and the nation has suffered from the loss of dwarven and elven knowledge. Mines are less productive than they should be, and lands used for farming and forestry are less fertile than those of similar regions.

The people of Thyrgol tend to be tall and slender, with sharp features, medium complexions, blonde to dark brown hair and brown or green eyes. They are an insular people, offering strangers a cool welcome.

- **Kallusa:** (Metropolis, 83,500) Once a diverse and multicultural city, Kallusa has been remade over the years to remove all non-human influence in its architecture and design. Buildings that once boasted carved facades and elegant ornamentation are now plain and unadorned. Variety and diversity are virtually non-existent, and visitors find it difficult to blend in with the native populace.

Trade Dominion of Vanyr

Ruler: The current leader of the Anzhar is Sammon Tyrius

Government: Plutocracy (Anzhar--Ruling Merchant Council)

Capital: Ascor

Resources: Shipping, Grain, Timber, whatever trade goods can be obtained from others

Population: 2,653,100 (humans 99%)

Alignment: LE, LN, NE, N

Language: Common, Corsian, Tasmarr

Deities: Belatrix, Cyrene, Destine, Dymora, Lucor, Mordana

Description: Vanyr began as a colony of Thyrgol, in hopes of gaining increased access to new trade markets and additional natural resources. With their parent country 'out of sight, out of mind', the people of Vanyr conveniently 'forgot' their duty to their parent nation and became a power in their own right. Thyrgol, distracted by continuing conflicts with the Havens, who resisted all attempts at takeover,

and driving the dwarves and elves from their lands, had little attention to spare for their wayward offspring.

Strong willed mercenaries, clever merchants, and freethinkers with marketable skills forged a new nation free of allegiances.

Vanyr maintains a strong army, used in the early days of the country to expand its southern and eastern borders by threat and force of arms against the resident elves of the Heartwood, which once stretched all the way to the Tasman Sea, and a large navy for guarding its merchant ships and blockading competing ports. They have also occasionally tested the borders of neighboring Cellor, but that country, long accustomed to dealing with humanoid incursions from its bordering mountains, refuses to be bullied.

Vanyrans live and die by commerce, and think little of other nations who they view as less hard working than themselves, including neighboring Corothia.

Vanyr has made, and failed, repeated invasion attempts against Amthydor since 15510 ER (1770 AF), and is known to still plot against the city in an ongoing effort to seize the dominant trade position on the Tasman Sea.

Vanyr's 'nobility' exists in the form of its hereditary merchant council, the Anzhar. Eighteen Merchant Barons hold their seats by virtue of their business acumen, passing their titles on to their descendants. Only in the face of complete financial ruin can a member of the Anzhar lose his place.

Vanyrans do not openly display their wealth through jewelry or rich clothing, believing that such frivolous use their fortunes is a waste of resources better spent in pursuit of even more riches. As a people they tend to have medium complexions, reddish to dark brown hair and green, hazel or brown eyes.

- **Ascor** (Metropolis, 42,870) Though smaller than the port city of Ramallan, Ascor is the true seat of power in Vanyr and the trade center of the nation. Goods traveling between Ascor and the coast are transported on long narrow wagons set upon iron rails and drawn by teams of draft horses. These railed tracks can be kept clear in any weather, and provide for the smoother and more rapid transport of goods.

Kingdom of Waern

Ruler: Undetermined

Government: Monarchy

Capital: Nymorahnk

Resources: Timber, stone, textiles, wine

Population: 2,685,000 (humans 99%)

Alignment: CN, N, LN

Language: Common, Wearnish

Deities: Destine, Emerys, Hyperion, Kalek, Lohm

Description: King Desalpt, an average monarch in all ways except the length of his rule (seventy years), passed away in 15743 ER (2003 AF) with no direct descendant. He did, however, authorize a Chancellor, one his dearest friends, to choose his heir from among the numerous possible candidates.

Chancellor Giune narrowed the field to four primary candidates: Count Cerieh, brother-in-law to King Desalpt's first wife; Duke Pernonion, half-brother to King Desalpt's second wife; Marceo Larong, a commoner; and Marquessa (Ania) Prian, the King's half-sister.

The candidates were imperfect. Count Cerieh, at eighty, thrust himself forward to promote his peculiar religious views. Duke Pernonion, a mere twenty, had already earned a dark reputation for his vices. Marceo Larong, a powerful, cunning merchant, was illegitimate. The Marquessa, a pampered, vain woman, had intended to make her husband, the notoriously fickle and foppish Marquis Prian, ruler.

Impervious to the typical inducement and with the confidence of Waern's people behind him,

Chancellor Guine delayed his decision, considering each of the contenders at great length. Sadly, he considered too long, and died in 15746 ER (2006 AF) without naming King Desalpt's Heir.

None of the candidates are strong enough to take the throne by force, or clever enough to triumph through subtlety. The desire by the claimants to grandstand have kept things from deteriorating to outright civil war, although Waern slides surely towards that situation as the question of the monarch lies unresolved.

Under apparently contradictory laws, it is legal to trade slaves, although no citizen of Waern may actually own one. The law turns a blind eye to slaves owned by visitors passing through.

Waern's natives tend to favor their natives in appearance, being sharp featured and medium skinned, with dark blonde to black hair and dark eyes.

➤ **Nymorahnk:** (Metropolis, 81,755) The average citizen in Nymorahnk pays little attention to the political goings on and the attempts of the four prospective heirs to gain support for their various claims to the throne. Most people are unaffected by the current power vacuum. Those who had authority in the recent administration, or who hope to gain it once a new ruler is crowned, play an ever-changing game of negotiation and promises, where uncertainty and tense anticipation and the rules of the day.

Continent of Naefar

The continent of Naefar, located to the south of the main continent of Salindaer, is an island continent rich in cultural and geographic variety. It is home to ancient desert kingdoms and exotic jungle tribes, as well as long-forgotten kingdoms that have been lost to history. Of the cultures making their homes on the continent, only the inhabitants of the Desert kingdoms of Cerrid travel and trade freely with foreigners.

Desert Kingdoms of the Cerrid

(Cerrid)

Ruler: Tribal leaders (Bedouin tribes); various (cities)

Government: Tribal (Bedouin); various (cities)

Capital: None

Resources: Gold, copper, opals, emeralds, horses

Population: 1,280,150 (humans 78%, desert elves 9%, lupaari 8%, half-elves 4%)

Alignment: NG, N, LN

Language: Common, Phaerish

Deities: Ardra, Aurelian, Brianna, Destine, Galvandt, Glissande, Meneon, Peliron

Description: The exotic desert land of Cerrid, though known to most Raiaans in the casual sense, is in truth a mystery. It is a land of vast deserts and fertile oasis. The pride of these desert tribes is their spirited horses, said to be the finest on all of Raia. The best of the horses are never sold, and seldom gifted to outsiders. Especially among the nomadic Bedouin tribes, the culture is complex and filled with ritual and superstition. Women are relegated to a secondary role in society, and have no rights except those granted by the male leader of their

family. Women trained in the healing arts are the exception, and are revered among the tribes. It is often difficult to tell men from women, as both genders wear flowing desert robes and head coverings. It is among these desert nomads that the mageborn Lupaari race finds the warmest, and most discreet, welcome.

The nomads of the Cerrid are tall and aristocratic, with chiseled, angular features, mahogany complexions, black hair and black, dark brown or dark blue eyes.

Continent of Sianmar

The Continent of Sianmar, located south of the Burning Sea, is home to only seven countries. These nations have rich cultures and histories, but most do not welcome outsiders. As a result, they are virtually unknown to the rest of Raia.

Daiguo

Ruler: Emperor Kong Fei

Government: Empire (Emperor who sits on the throne and supposedly makes major decisions for the country, however, the current emperor is under the thumb of his mother and her advisors, half of whom are eunuchs. The towns and regions are run by bureaucrats who gain their positions by taking tests on obscure knowledge. The calligraphy on these tests matter as much as the right answers.)

Capital: Shoudu

Resources: Grains, minerals, paper, porcelain, crafts

Population: 15,365,000 (humans 77%, high elves 12%, half-elves 5%, dwarves 3% hobgoblins 2%)

Alignment: LE, LN, NE, N

Language: Common, Marris

Deities: Aurelian, Belatrix, Cyrene, Hyperion

Description: The nation of Daiguo, with its strict caste system, is the parent nation of the breakaway Shoji Republic.

Much of Daiguo's culture is based upon elaborate rituals and complex courtesies. The nation's craftsmen produce fine porcelains and delicate carved gemstones, as well as fine silks.

The people of Daiguo are slightly shorter than the average human, with pale honey-gold complexions, black hair and dark eyes.

➤ **Shoudu:** (Metropolis, 453,890) The Imperial city of Shoudu is nearly as old as human culture on Raia. Grand buildings are topped by elaborately carved statues, and small gardens of exotic flowers and peaceful ponds are a common sight. Life in Shoudu is precise and ordered. Even the oldest buildings are well maintained, the streets are clean, and the everyday tasks necessary to keep things moving smoothly are quickly completed. Everyone works, and those who cannot find regular work are employed by the city to perform menial tasks for the betterment of the community as a whole.

Grihastha

Ruler: Sarvar Magili

Government: Traditional Monarchy

Capital: Perikunas

Resources: Rice, Grain, fish, gems, granite, wood, crystals, spices (cinnamon, cardamom, coriander, paprika, and others)

Population: 1,350,000 (humans 78%, high elves 9%, half-elves 6%, rakshasas 6%)

Alignment: LE, LN, NE, N

Language: Common, Marris

Deities: Destine, Glissande, Kalek, Mordana

Description: The land of Grihastha is a study in differences. It is a large land with mountains in the north and flat lands leading to the sea in the south. They are very artistically and culinarily talented and are kind and generous hosts. However, they are also very provincially minded and it is unusual to have a year where a war between two of the provinces of the lands does not break out. The Sarvar does not consider it

his job to interfere in these conflicts and keeps his army from being involved or being a peace keeping force. Occasionally, one of the battling provinces will hire mercenaries from Tarbisten if they are especially desperate to win.

The people of Grihastha are mahogany skinned, with strong features, black hair and dark eyes. They favor light, neutral colors, which they decorate with bright embroidery.

- **Perikunas:** (Metropolis, 46,392) 95% of the wealth in Perikunas rests in the hands of only 5% of the population. Nevertheless, the residents are an open and giving people, always willing to share whatever they have. It lacks the clean order and elegant lines of other cities on the continent, but the generosity of its people and their zest for life more than make up for that deficit.

Kozuru

Ruler: A hereditary emperor and/or a semi-hereditary general. Most of the time, one has the strength of personality to command the loyalty of the warriors who rule the provinces. However, right now is not one of those times. Both Emperor Matsukina and Warlord Itesuya are trying to gain the support of these warriors but are not having much success.

Government: Feudal monarchy

Capital: Katayama

Resources: Rice, Barley, Weapons

Population: 760,000 (humans 81%, dwarves 6%, high elves 4%, half-elves 3%, ogre mage 2%, oriental fey 2%, kenku 1%)

Alignment: CG, NG, N

Language: Common, Marric

Deities: Belatrix, Cerion, Destine, Sorena, Zara

Description: The lesser warlords / province lords are gathering up strength and attacking neighboring provinces in an attempt to gather power to take the Warlord position. Laws are in place to prevent peasants from holding weapons when not in an army, however, it is up to the warriors to enforce that law and many warriors have lost their lives trying to take a weapon from a peasant who knew how to use it. The land has a class system, and movement between classes is possible.

Rankings in the class system are:

Emperor and Family / Warlord

Warriors/Priests (Some of the Priestly orders are like small armies)

Farmers / Craftsmen (Producers)

Merchants

Untouchables

The people of Kozuru commonly have dark olive skin, black hair and blue or dark eyes. A person's place in society is revealed by the color of their clothing. The lowest of all citizens, the Untouchable caste, wear only garments of black or dark brown, while only the Emperor is permitted to wear white and silver. The lighter a person's clothing, the higher his status in the community.

- **Katayama:** (Large city, 33,476) Katayama is a city divided, not by walls but by the invisible lines of class and culture. It is forbidden to travel in an area of the city designated above your station, and few wish to be seen in an area occupied by those of lesser rank.

Ranguo

Ruler: General Hsein Long

Government: Empire

Capital: Oanbi

Resources: Lumber, shipping, cloth

Population: 2,614,600 (humans 92%, half-elves 4%, half-orcs 3%)

Alignment: CE, CN, NE, N

Language: Common, Marric

Deities: Belatrix, Cerion, Destine, Graala, Illudra, Kohr, Sorena, Zara

Description: It is said that Ranguo and Daiguo used to be united under a single rule. It is believed that they separated under the rule of the semi-mythic Green Emperor, long, long ago.

For centuries, rule of Ranguo depended on holding the Mantle of the Heavens, a golden garment whose access depended on wielding the Imperial regalia of Ranguo: The Yellow Orb of Justice, the Diamond Scepter of Mercy, and the Mei Li Amulet. With these, Ranguo enjoyed a long line of just and compassionate Emperors.

When the line died out in 15583 ER (1843 AF), Graala, Illudra, and Kohr interceded on behalf of their followers: They caused the three pieces of regalia to be with the three worst noble families of Ranguo. War came to Ranguo as each family fought the other two to gain all of the regalia, and thereby control the country.

Until 15712 ER (1972 AF), war still ravaged the country. The nobles who originally held the items have long since died. Fighting occurs among warlords, bandit kings, evil priests, and commoners. The Diamond Scepter of Mercy has not been seen in decades. The Mei Li Amulet is rumored to have been plundered and taken out of

the country. Memory of the Mantle of the Heavens has begun to fade.

Ranguo has been merely disordered since 15712 ER (1972 AF), Military rule within areas General Long controls, complete chaos outside those limits. General Hsien Long possesses the Orb of Justice (although it is known that he is unable to physically handle it for any period of time). With it, he has claimed the right to rule over all of Ranguo. Otherwise no different from the other warlords, he has captured three coastal provinces, and committed his large forces to siege the country until they recognize him as Emperor.

The people of Ranguo are slightly shorter than the average human, with pale honey-gold complexions, black hair and dark eyes.

- **Oanbi:** (Metropolis, 51,386) Oanbi has spent much of the last two centuries under martial law. Restrictions are currently somewhat relaxed, though visitors to the city are closely watched, in case they are spies for enemies of the Warlord.

The Shoji Republic

(Formerly Shoji Imperial Territory)

Ruler: First Minister Sahing

Government: Republic

Capital: Xian Gwa

Resources: Industry

Population: 33,500 (humans 75%, dwarves 15%, gnomes 9%)

Alignment: CG, NG, N

Language: Common, Marris

Deities: Ardra, Kalek, Pietos

Description: Revolt began when Governor Shinchan's Imperial detachment, siding with the Kuomar faction of the Daiguo empire, began investigation and reprisals for Shoji's allegedly rampant support of the opposing Singchou faction. With better knowledge of the territory, and the disorder in Daiguo increasing, Governor Shinchan's forces were forced to concede defeat and retreat in 15728 ER (1988 AF).

Three years of disorder followed as the residents of Shoji attempted to form a unified monarchy following traditional dwarven or human clan leaders. Order became pressing as news of an invading force by Daiguo was being gathered for attack in 15731 ER (1991 AF). A gnomish plan for representative government based off individual vote for representatives to Xian Gwa was adopted as an ad hoc response to the emergency. The invasion never came about. The

system survived and continues on, with its fourth First Minister's election held in 15746 ER (2006 AF).

All factions in Daiguo remain committed to recapture of the territory. Naval blockades of the island remain a constant threat as Shoji relies on food imports.

Shoji is a poor, mountainous island with few natural resources. While its people are talented blacksmiths, weaponsmiths, and armorers, it relies on imports of iron and coal to produce items for trade. It attempts to establish friendly relations with all nations to few replies in kind.

Like its parent nation of Daiguo, life in the Shoji Republic revolves around elaborate rituals and complex courtesies. While the people of Shoji have rejected the politics and policies of their former home, they retain their creative and artistic skills, and a strong work ethic drives them to be a self-sustaining nation.

The people of the Shoji Republic are slightly shorter than the average human, with pale honey-gold complexions, black hair and dark eyes.

- **Xian Gwa:** (Metropolis, 61,325) Though it lacks the stature and prestige of its imperial parent, Xian Gwa is nevertheless a center of commerce and culture for the people of Shoji. It has quickly grown from a small secondary city under the control of Daiguo into a thriving and busy metropolis.

Takaruan

Ruler: Warlord Jarkita Nahm

Government: Tribal Meritocracy

Capital: Takaru

Resources: Minerals, Herbs, Animals (Horses and dogs)

Population: 67,560 (83% Human, 8% Orc, 5% Half Orc, 2% halflings, 2% other)

Alignment: LN, NG, N

Language: Common, Marris

Deities: Ardra, Brianna, Cerion, Destine, Galvandt, Glissande, Graala, Lohm, Pietos

Description: The land of Takaruan is a hilly plains land. The grass is available, but is tough and during the winter non-existent. The tribes travel to where the grazing is good. In the past, there have been warlords who have tried to gain better lands for them, but at this time, the current leader is an enlightened leader. The people are very religious, performing rituals every day. The society is very equalitarian. Other than the leaders of the tribes, there is no caste or class system and there is no discrimination or

separation of jobs by sex. Most jobs are done by those who are best able to do them and many jobs are shared within the tribe, each contributing to the tribe as they can. When a tribe is attacked, everyone picks up a weapon for defense, with the able fighters forming the outer circle and the young, infirmed and those with less fighting ability forming the inner ranks.

The Takaruan are a people shaped by hard work and a harsh life. They have mahogany complexions, often darkened further by sun and weather, dark eyes and black hair.

- **Takaru:** (Small Tent City, population 5,050 but constantly changing) The few permanent structures are low rambling buildings of native stone, housing mostly business that are not easily portable and of course the Warlord's residence.

Tarbisten

Ruler: Prithivi Tazar Suloughu

Government: Loose Confederation

Capital: Denjubi

Resources: Herbs, minerals, gems (diamonds, sapphires, rubies), goats, yaks

Population: 55,000 (humans 65%, yeti 23%, dwarves 7%, gnomes 4%)

Alignment: LN, LG, N

Language: Common, Marris

Deities: Ardra, Brianna, Cerion, Galvandt, Graala, Lohm, Pietos

Description: The land of Tarbisten is a land filled with conflict. The humans and the yetis are constantly at war with each other, raiding each other's lands in a war that no one remembers why it started while the dwarves and gnomes stay neutral. The Yetis control the caves while the surface is controlled by the humans. The humans live mostly in small villages, tending gardens and raising hearty livestock. Everyone is trained in using their kukris from the age of five and is at least a competent fighter with them, with the best fighters able to use two at one time to cut down enemies with ease. They live by a strong moral code, and have no written law as they have not had the need for it. The yetis gather by family units and are quite intelligent for their kind. No one has seen them outside of battle, where they have slowly been using better and better tactics to get inside the walled villages.

Tarbisten's human population tends to be dark haired, with dark eyes and dark honey-gold complexions.

- **Denjubi:** (Small city, 7,460) A stout double curtain wall surrounds the core of the city, with a smaller wall encircling the city as a whole and some of the neighboring farms.

The Lost Continents

Scattered about the seas of Raia, there are several continents that have been unknown until their recent re-discovery. The only information that exists on many of these lands are bards tales, ancient arcane records, and legends.

Ellora

The continent of Ellora was once home to a colony of the Chaldean Empire. The hazards of the Burning Sea make approaching Ellora from the west extremely dangerous, and the violent storms of the Sea of Imbrium hamper approach from the east. As a result, all contact was lost following the fall of the Chaldean Empire in 14016 ER (276 AF). What cultures might remain are unknown.

Khadar

South and west of Naefar, beyond Hur'Resa, is Khadar, a lush island continent virtually unknown to the outside world. Only devout scholars of ancient history pay any attention to this remote continent.

Hur'Resa

Once the home and capital of the vast Chaldean Empire, the jungle has long since reclaimed the four great imperial cities. The roads which once spanned the continent are gone, buried beneath the rich landscape. The interior if the continent is home to the Tabreen, a feline-humanoid race 'bred' by the mages of Thyras as pets and slaves of the decadent Chaldean emperors. The few humans who remain on Hur'Resa live as little better than primitive superstitious animals in small tribal villages on along the southern coast. In 15736 ER (1996 AF) the first merchant ships from Myr braved the violent storms of the Sea of

Imbrium seeking the riches of this mostly uncharted land. They succeeded in making contact with the elusive Tabreen, and have once again opened trade between the inhabitants of the continent and the 'civilized' lands.

The Lost Empire of Chaldea

Founded in 11245 ER (-2505 AF), the empire of Chaldea covered the entirety of a continent, and spread its influence southeast to build cities on the small continent of Mennier and west to the island continents of Ellora and Tressyn. A wealthy empire, rich in natural resources, Chaldea attracted master craftsmen, skilled artisans, powerful mages and learned scholars from around the world. Its cities were architectural wonders of graceful arches, elegant gardens and sky-reaching towers. Its roads did not suffer the depredations of weather and use, defying the jungle to link the cities of an entire continent. The Imperial Capital of Ylsidra was carved from the jungles central to the continent.

Agrin I, the first emperor, was a wise and charismatic man who brought life to his vision of a land where all of the people served the community and their empire, and were served in return. What benefited one benefited all. In 11245 ER (-2505 AF), Agrin I united the petty and warring people of Hur'Resa into a unified empire, bringing an end to almost a century of struggle over land, crops, livestock and natural resources. Enlightened in concept and intention, the early days of the empire were marked by social awareness and a sense of purpose that all citizens should aspire to improve themselves to the benefit of their families, their community and the empire. Education and basic health care were provided to all citizens, regardless of rank or station. Poverty was minimal, with the basic necessities of life provided to those in true need. The reign of Agrin I, called 'Agrin the Just', was long and prosperous, marked by the construction of four great cities and peace across the continent. A citizen of Chaldea could travel in safety across the continent, without fear or concern, for the full force of imperial justice would fall upon any who harmed a single hair upon his head.

The reign of his son, Beragil I, was no less bright. From the moment of his coronation in 11312 ER (-2428 AF), Beragil I continued to pursue the goals laid down by his father. The Imperial University and Library in Ylsidra were completed in 11319 ER (-2421 AF) and made available to all citizens. In 11322 ER (-2418

AF) the Imperial Menagerie and Preserve was created to study, understand and preserve the exotic creatures of the world in a semblance of their natural habitat. Over 3000 species of bird, beast, insect and fish, and countless species of plants, were gathered and lovingly cared for in elaborate exhibits. Beragil's reign as emperor saw the expansion of his domain, first to the neighboring continent of Mennier, then west to the island of Tressyn. Like his father, Beragil I was loved and respected by his people, and they thrived under his rule. Even the poorest citizens of the empire do not lack for food, shelter and the opportunity to work for an honest and reasonable wage.

A third generation would take the imperial throne in 11369 ER (-2371 AF), when Beragil's son was crowned Teppes I. Raised to rule wisely, Teppes did not disappoint his people. Further expansion of the empire to include the continents of Ellora and Tressyn brought new wealth in the form of trade, knowledge and resources. Ships sailing under the Chaldean imperial flag did not suffer from pirates, and explorers from other lands avoided the shores of Chaldea and her colonies as already claimed.

For over 2000 years there would be peace and prosperity for the empire and her colonies. A fleet of imperial ships brought trade to every corner of the realm. While not every ruler was a paragon of virtue, those truly unfit to rule were few and far between. Each generation was raised to understand the heavy weight of tradition and duty, and most accepted the burden with a sincere desire to live up to the example of their ancestors. In 13740 ER (0 AF) the empire expanded to the east, with the establishment of the city of Amthydor. Nestled at the western end of the Tasman Sea, Amthydor was Chaldea on a small scale. The highest ideals of her parent empire were represented in the new city. Though distant from the main holdings of the Empire, Amthydor was a shining jewel in the Imperial crown.

In 13877 ER (137 AF) Sennet II would come to the sit upon the throne of his forefathers, continuing the practices that had helped the empire to flourish for thousands of years. Sennet died in 13889 ER (149 AF), when an unexplained fire raced through the family wing of the imperial palace. Also killed were Sennet's wife and two of their three children. Only his youngest son, 6-year-old Roeber, survived. Sennet's nearest relative, a well-meaning but aged uncle named Tilsen, became

the boy emperor's Regent. Upon Tilsen's death only a year later, the task of Regent fell to his son, Maldren.

Maldren was not content merely to be Regent. An arrogant, petty and selfish man, he craved the power that came only to the one who sat upon the throne. Always a healthy and active child, under his cousin's care Roeber became a withdrawn and sickly boy. Servants close to the boy were certain that his illness was not natural, and even once made an attempt to spirit him away from the palace to safety, but were summarily executed for their attempt 'to kidnap a royal personage for purpose of ransom'. The prolonged and mysterious illness, the result of gradual poisoning by Maldren, claimed young Roeber's life only weeks before his 11th birthday. The long era of the empire's benevolent rulers was over.

The people who had flourished under the leadership of Agrin and his heirs became little more than prisoners and slaves of their new emperor, Maldren I, who claimed the throne in 13894 ER (154 AF). Maldren quickly bankrupted the treasury in the pursuit of an extravagant and wasteful lifestyle, ignoring the needs of his subjects in favor of his own pleasures. Demands placed upon Chaldea's colonies increased, as the government sought additional funds to maintain the rapidly dwindling treasury. Where Maldren's reign was corrupt, his descendents were even more so. Taxes that had been reasonable in the past were raised to prohibitive levels, and those who could not pay were stripped of all possessions to pay their 'debt'. The poor who had once been offered education and the chance of employment became slaves, sold into servitude when they were unable to provide for themselves. Education, previously encouraged for all citizens, was restricted only to the wealthy. Religion, previously encouraged as a path to self-improvement through spiritual development, became suppressed.

Troubled by reports of events at home, colonies began to withdraw from under the Imperial 'wing', and contact between the capital city of Ylsidra and the more distant colonies became sporadic at best. In 13926 ER (186 AF), Maldren's son Crayden claimed the imperial throne. Faced with empty coffers and fewer ships bringing tithe from the colonies, Crayden sent messengers in 13931 ER (191 AF) to command obedience from the increasingly independent colonies. It took nearly two years

for the last of the emissaries to return. From nearby Mennier to distant Amthydor, all of the messengers came bearing the same reply – "We do not recognize the sovereignty of Chaldea."

Furious with this show of insubordination, Crayden commanded the Army and Navy to enforce his will and bring the upstart colonies back under imperial control. While distance and lack of imperial funds spared Amthydor from the worst of the sieges, a concerted attack in 13934 ER (194 AF) left three imperial ships sunk at the mouth of the harbor and parts of the city in flames. The fall of the empire had begun.

The Imperial Menagerie, begun as a means of studying and protecting rare exotic creatures, became nothing more than a collection of living trophies. Originally filled only with plants and animals, during the reign of Maldren's grandson Xavras it was expanded to include demi-human races as well. No longer content with what could be captured, the now decadent and cruel emperors turned to Thyran wizards to create new 'exhibits' through magical experimentation and selective breeding. Humanoid-animal crossbreeds, the 'Mageborn' races, were bred and displayed as curiosities or used as slaves and soldiers.

Any who dared to speak out against the regime were silenced, often brutally. In time, none dared oppose the power of the emperor, at least not openly. Small pockets of clandestine resistance persisted, seeking to lessen the influence a corrupt government upon the people. Thousands fled imperial oppression, risking death on a stormy sea rather than endure further suffering. Diplomatic relations were broken off, as other nations came to see Chaldea as too dangerous and unpredictable. Foreign nations welcomed refugees who were able to escape what had become a brutal police state. Slaves rebelled, murdering their cruel owners. The creations of the Thyran mages, the strange 'mageborn' races of the Tabreen, Lupaari, Osper and Kobarr escaped their captors and fled into the jungles or across the seas, to begin lives as free people. In 14016 ER (276 AF) Abreis IV, the last Emperor of Chaldea, was assassinated.

Broken and divided, unable to sustain itself, the once glorious Chaldean Empire crumbled, to be swallowed by the jungles from which it had arisen. Those who could fled to other lands. Those who could not either adapted to life in small tribes and villages along the continent's southern coast or died.

Of all the imperial colonies, only Amthydor remains as it was at the height of the empire, the others having been divided, conquered or lost to time.

Mennier

The continent of Mennier was once home to a colony of the Chaldean Empire. The violent storms of the Sea of Imbrium hamper approach from the north. As a result, all contact was lost following the fall of the Chaldean Empire in 14016 ER. What cultures might remain are unknown.

Orosol

Located in the southern seas, the continent of Orosol remains unexplored and any cultures there are unknown to the world at large.

Tressyn

The continent of Tressyn was once home to a colony of the Chaldean Empire, and all contact was lost when the empire collapsed in 14016 ER (276 AF). The vast distances involved have hampered the process of reestablishing contact and many have forgotten the existence of this tiny continent completely. What cultures might remain there are unknown.

The Seas of Raia

The Seas of Raia are all mostly unknown, uncharted, and dangerous places to travel. Only the Tasman Sea, being almost totally inland to the continent of Salindaer, is traveled regularly by the peoples of the Free Lands. Brave explorers have traveled the unforgiving seas to learn what we currently know of them.

The Burning Sea

The Burning Sea is an area in the eastern ocean where the waters lie above a highly active geothermal source causing them to literally boil and steam. The fog and steam are so thick that visibility within is limited to a few yards. The mists and fog have hampered travel in the region, leaving the continent of Ellora unknown to (or forgotten by) most of Raia and therefore unexplored. Only the reavers and fishermen of the Kassanor Islands sail the area with impunity, and even then only the westernmost edge.

The Tasman Sea

The vast Tasman Sea is traveled by traders and travelers from across the Free Lands, the Eastern Domains and the Southern Provinces. While the pirates from the Kassanor Isles seldom venture so far west, the Tasman Sea has its share of small scale pirate operations that periodically terrorize shipping in the region.

The Sea of Imbrium

The Sea of Imbrium is an area of ocean beset by frequent and violent storms, making travel in the region extremely dangerous. The depths of the Sea of Imbrium are filled with the rotting hulks of ships that failed to heed the warnings and were unable to outrun the savage storms (or great sea beasts) of the region. It is only recently that merchant sailors from Myr have successfully braved the Sea of Imbrium and 'rediscovered' the continent of Hur'Resa.

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