

SKYREALMS of Jorune

— *Jorune Astrology* —

By sholari James

On a medieval world like Jorune, astronomy is an incorrect term to use for the study of the moons, planets and stars. Those that study the objects of the sky often base their assumptions and theories upon laws and rules that also apply to their view of the world, their gods, fate, isho etc. Therefore, astrology is a more suitable word to use.

Astrologers come in many shapes and sizes, from the devout to the scientific. Astrologers study the stellar bodies but also the assumed influences these have upon the world, their people, life, fate and religion. Study of the stellar bodies is limited to what can be seen with the naked eye or with primitive telescopes. This would mainly be the moons, some planets and the stars.

The moons attract most of the attention and the surface or clouds of Jorune's seven moons can be seen clearly during the night (except for Gobey) and quite often during the day. Needless to say, phenomena such as lunar or solar eclipses are much more common on Jorune than they were on Earth.

The planets Stygia and Elysium can be seen in the night sky as large bright stars, while the planets Lemuria and Eden can be seen as the strange roving stars that move among the constellations during certain times of the year. The planets Asgard and Atlantis can only be detected with telescopes, due their smaller size, their distance from Jorune and their darker hue. Normal people know or care little of their existence.

The Milky Way can be seen clearly. It looks much like the Milky Way seen from Earth, as the two systems on a galactic scale are close neighbours and both situated in the outskirts of one of the galactic arms.

[See the *H2I* essay for more information about Jorune's star system.]

The study of the effects certain stellar bodies might have upon Jorune, and those living there, is limited only by the boundaries of the mind, and the imagination of the observer. Many strange theories and deductions have been made over the centuries by priests, theologians, and iscin. It is this fantastical element to the study of the stellar bodies that creates astrologers and their sometimes wild beliefs.

Not all cultures or races have produced true astrologers. Many lack the cultural sophistication or technology to extensively study the stellar bodies (primitive human cultures, tologra, croid, corastin, scarmis), while others lack interest or certain physical traits, such as good vision (crugar, woffen, blount).

The shantas with their tra-sense are limited to all the things that can be “perceived” with their isho senses or that which influences the sho-sen. The shanta cannot detect the stars or the other planets of the system, but they sense the effects the moons have upon the sho-sen of Sho-Caudal and can sense sun thanks to the rays that heat their bodies and the influence these rays have upon the sho-sen. Some would liken the shantic sholari with astrologers, but their knowledge is limited to the isho, sho-sen and the moons connection with this. The shanta have never seen shooting stars, comets or even the high clouds of the sky. Humans and shanta live in very different worlds.

[More about the world of tra-sense in the essay *Isho, tra-sense and shantic technology*]

Thriddle have excellent eyesight and have long studied the stars and planets. Thriddle calculations concerning lunar and planetary constellations are well known and used by many other astrologers over Jorune. If there is something that needs to be tested through calculation, the best way to do this is to give it to the thriddle.

Also the ramian have astrologer priests. These use dark arts and ancient charts to predict and follow the stellar bodies and their effects upon ramian life.

The other races have never developed true astrologers, the Bronth being the only exception. These great scholars have their own observatories but rarely discover new phenomena and mostly rely on information that can be found in books or calculations handed down by iscin, thriddle or tolamuun priests. It is in their nature to be scholars and astrology is a part of that noble pursuit.

While most other races have no astrologers they do have a multitude of legends and stories concerning the stellar bodies. Many races also use the stars to navigate on both land and sea, the salu being especially efficient masters of star-navigation.

Humans, on the other hand, have always revered the stars in their songs, stories, religions or history. On Jorune this is especially true because of the human origins outside of the system. Legends and religions often hold small grains of truth regarding mankind’s origin among the stars. Most cultures have also pieced together various stars and star signs and have their own names and shapes for these. Creating star-signs or symbols in order to detect a meaning to life or a higher purpose or destiny is a very human behaviour. The belief in something higher than humanity has always been a vital part of the human psyche and exists also on Jorune. Legends and religion are often based upon fairly insecure facts about stars, moons and planets. Astrologers use these as reliable laws of nature and confuse most observations they make.

TOLAMUUN ASTROLOGERS

Only those few, who actually have made some proper studies of the stellar bodies, can be regarded as true astrologers. Foremost among all astrologers of Jorune are the Tolamuun astrologer priests from the Lusail province of northern Burdoth. They have for centuries studied the night sky and the moons with their telescopes and their records date back to

the very origin of their religion around 900 PC. The Tolamun have names for all star constellations and have with their telescopes studied the planets Stygia, Lemuria, Eden and Elysium, which can be seen from Jorune with the naked eye by all who know where to look. Subtle details such as the lunar landscapes, the rings of Elysium and some of the other planet's moons can be seen with the telescopes, as well as some more disturbing and unexplained items on or close to the moons (lunar bases, space stations and satellites). Also, it was the Tolamuun astrologers that found the planets Atlantis (3228 PC) and Asgard (3412 PC) with their primitive telescopes, much to the envy of the thriddle.

The tolamuun names for the known planets orbiting Jorune's sun are not the same as those originally given to them by the first explorers of the system. They are known to the Tolamuun as;

Varros (Stygia),
Tallos(Lemuria),
Sennos(Eden),
Sensemai(Elysium),
Hiira(Atlantis) and,
Tuura(Asgard).

The early names of the planets have since spread from the tolamuun to all northern realms of Jorune, to the thriddle and bronth and, to some extent, to Thantier (where some of these "roving" stars already had been detected or named). The tolamuun complex system of determining lunar constellations is only rivalled by the shanta. Their observations regarding the movement of the planets, is parallel to none.

The tolamuun have also named some of the comets that orbit the system, such as Aghul and Lahrek, and know of their devastating powers. The Tolamuun have not forgotten the reason for small cometary showers that are celebrated in Ardoth with dysha displays. The scrolls detailing the annual Fire Rain between 1121 and 1307 PC that caused mass destruction all over Jorune are terrible reading. The destructive Fire Rains were caused by a comet that was torn asunder by the sun and its debris strewn into Jorune's path of orbit. Among their more obscure observations are the strange ruins on the surface of Ebba (The Lunar Field Station, where lights have been reported during some observances in 3129 PC), the two small objects (old communication satellites) orbiting Jorune (although there seems to have been three according to old scripts) and the phenomena known as Destitta ("Desti's Child". This ignition of Stygia's atmosphere is rare, happening once or twice in a 200-year period, and the bright burning planet can be seen in the night sky for a week or two, as the red, glaring star wanders between the moons. Tolamuun astrologers have also detected the strange structure that orbits Desti, but have not figured out what it might be. They have named it Desti's Follower or the Spiky Moon (Desti Spacestation).

Tolamuun priests are among the few that have seen Gobey's scarred and rocky surface through their telescopes (as a telescope magnifies light). On very rare occasions volcanoes erupt on Gobey, they can be seen by the naked eye as a small red dots and the Tolamuun astrologers refer to these as Gobey's Wrath.

One of the enigmas of the night sky is the moon Tra. The tolamuun astrologers have long sought any kind pattern or reason to its strangely flowing clouds. They are sure that these

clouds do not move in a natural way and adamantly believe, like many others, that the future can somehow be discerned from its patterns and changes in shade.

Extremely precise calendars, formulas, and puzzles keep track of the reoccurring phenomena of sky. The great Tolamuun clocks are well known throughout the Civilised Lands for their mystic auras, magical properties and precise track of the moons, planetary constellations etc. In every great Tolamuun tower there will be a certain amount of these sometimes ancient clocks, ticking away towards some obscure and often mystical astrological phenomena.

Although the Tolamuun use the stellar phenomena in their religion to interpret the future and await certain constellations before acting in certain ways, their observations have been fairly scientific and precise. It is rare to find texts or observations that have been changed due to religious dogma or world views that clash with the obvious scientific facts that can be deduced through observation.

The Tolamuun astrologers are not only limited to the observance of the stars, planets and the moons. They have also gathered vast amounts of information and lore about the sho-sen and the effects the various moons have upon it. Even Ca-Tra sholari have visited the Tolamuun observatories and commented on their precise observations on the world that is normally invisible to humans. The shanta seem especially interested in the various measuring devices and contraptions the tolamuun have created to keep track of the changes in the sho-sen.

With the discovery of Earth-tech, the Dharsage of Burdoth, iscins and thriddle and many others have realised that much of the wisdom hoarded by the tolamuun astrologers is actually very accurate. Even the tolamuun have benefited from the discovery of their ancestral artefacts and wisdom. In 3496 PC the Dharsage gave the High Priest of Sychill a large superior telescope, crafted out of lenses found in an earth-tech cache. Only the Dharsage and the tolamuun know what new discoveries have been made with the new telescope since then.

[See the *Religions of Jorune* essay fore more details about the tolamuun.]

DOW ASTROLOGERS

The greatest rivals of the tolamuun astrologers are the Dow astrologers of northern Heridoth. These rather peaceful and philosophical monks of the Dow people once embraced early tolammun astrology when they were conquered by the Sychillians. It matched their belief in the moons being different realms, which the soul passes through and has to endure during its cycle of reincarnation. The Dow astrologers emphasised horoscopes and more popular predictions of people's immediate destinies and soon won much popularity. The Dow Calendar and the Dow birth horoscopes are today very popular throughout both Heridoth and Burdoth and dow monks can be found in far away places such as Anasan, Dobre, Lundere, Jasp and Khodre. It is hard to discredit these harmless monks and their somewhat whimsical calendars and prophecies. In this way Dowism has

won much ground in the Civilised Lands. The Dow astrologers have woven much more mythology into their astrological observations and focus mainly on the moons and the movement of certain star signs. As the dow and tolamuun astrologers quite often come to quite different results regarding their seering it is not uncommon to see them shouting at each other from their high towers or in the streets of larger cities. This is considered great entertainment by the citizens of Ardoth.

[See the *Religions of Jorune* essay for more details about Dowism.]

PLURAN ASTROLOGERS

Plurans rely heavily upon astrological information and omens of the sky. They have studied the movement of the star signs for centuries, but take little heed to any of the moons (the royal moon Shal being an exception). As the legendary Emperor, His Sons and the Advisors all came from the stars (being banished to Jorune), it is there the faithful will find the signs that will guide them. Endless shelves of books have explained stellar phenomena and what they mean. Comets herald the God's Wrath and the need for penance among the faithful or destruction of the non-humans. Planetary constellations form complex patterns that reveal the will of The God.

Astrology in Thantier has been garbled with a lot of religious dogma. The star signs and the planets are claimed to explain certain physical and empyrean laws that humans must abide. The superiority of humans, the dakrani's and the rulers place in society and the existence of The God can all be seen and proved by the stars, their movements and their placing. The very laws of the pluran religion have been cemented in the sky for everyone to see by the first rulers of men - the star-born.

It is dangerous for anyone except a member of the pluran church to be an astrologer. It is even more dangerous for such an astrologer to herald new discoveries in the night sky, without first consulting the church about its meaning and relevance. The most common way of ending the life of a heretic astrologer is to ceremoniously bury him alive.

KERELL ASTROLOGERS

Among the Kerell sects are a select few people dabbling in astrology. Many of these rely on information stolen or received from tolamuun astrologers to chart paths for their dead to the stars. As members of the Kerell sect see themselves as a people that has been stranded on Jorune it is the duty of the High Navigator to lead them home – in life or in death. Ancient star charts, navigational equipment and other useless astronomical trinkets from the Jorune colony are revered as holy artefacts, although rarely understood. They are used in burial ceremonies and are often found depicted in their tombs. Although not heeded by other astrologers, the old Kerell old texts reveal the existence of all nine planets.

ISCIN ASTROLOGERS

Iscin astrologers are the closest one would come to the astronomers of old Earth but has existed as an institution for merely five centuries. They began as simple iscin that had specialised in astrology and maybe dabbled in isho weather. The iscin astrologers added advanced mathematic formulas, created by the thriddle, to the charts and records of the

tolamuun. After the discovery of earth-tech the iscin astrologers now compare ET star charts, orbital relay information etc with the older astrological lore. Iscins have a purely scientific approach to astrology and try to cooperate with the thriddle in many ways. They are constantly trying to calculate distances, rotation periods and the existence of other stellar bodies. It was the iscin astrologers that detected the asteroid field known as The Keeper's Hand (Brent asteroid field) and they suspect something large tugging at the outer planets orbits (Scylla).

Due to the impossibility to grasp the great interstellar distances between Earth and Jorune, the Dharsage of Burdoth and some other iscin share the belief that old Earth can be found somewhere in the star system. After all – even a journey lasting several years cannot take anybody beyond the known planets. Can it?

SHOUKET (“Sky Watchers”)

Mainly a group of iscin who study the night sky for signs of cosmic disturbances which might affect Ardoth and Burdoth. They are often linked with the Yetherca School of Ardoth, which teaches a history of Ardoth different from that which can be learned at any other school in the city. Despite their strange connections to cyclic destruction, doomsday prophecies and tales of mysterious monsters inhabiting the city prior to humans, the Shouket make many very precise observations related to the isho weather and flooding in particular.

ASTROLOGERS OF THE MOUNTAIN CROWN

For centuries the thriddle have studied the moons, planets and stars of the night sky. As with all other knowledge, the thriddle have an insatiable lust to learn all there is to learn. Ancient scrolls, mostly lost to time, speak of an explosion in the study of the night sky after the first years of contact with humans.

However, a large observatory situated atop the Mountain Crown on Tan-Iricid, shows that astrology is nothing new to the thriddle. As all other halls and structures in the Mountain Crown, the observatory is huge in proportion. Unlike many other structures the thriddle have adapted to their use, the observatory seems to have been constructed to serve this purpose. Large carvings of stars, moons and comets along with strange orbital patterns and monstrous depictions cover the inside and outside of this strange building. Large funnels or chimneys dot the ceiling and protrude out the roof like antennae or rounded organic bone tissue. Well-travelled astrologers from Jasp have remarked upon the uncanny similarity between ramian star temples and the observatory of the Mountain Crown.

All the thriddle knowledge about the moons, planets and stars can be found at the Mountain Crown observatory, as well as those studying the difficult arts. Thriddle astrologers can also be found in other realms and especially in Burdoth where they try to learn as much as they can from the tolamuun. All important astrological findings or discoveries are sent to the chief astrologers in the Mountain Crown, in the usual manner.

Thriddle try to approach this knowledge in a more scientific way, but their observations are not as accurate or persistent as the observations and conclusions of the tolamuun astrologers. The thriddle mathematic formulas have, however, often put a system to the

tolamuun observations or lunar cycles. The thriddle, more than any of the other races, understand the connection between the moons and the sho-sen. They have managed to calculate isho surges, warp phenomena and isho storms with the help of the lunar movements. The thriddle have also recently started to suspect the link between Elysium and Jorune. Especially the shifting shape and colours of Elysium's rings interests them and they have countless telescopes studying the distant planet whenever it crosses the midnight sky.

BRONTH ASTROLOGERS

The bronth love lore and the noble arts. Astrology is counted among these but has few adherents. But there are a select few astrologers among the bronth of Dobre and visiting tolamuun astrologers have marvelled at the large stone observatories they have built on high mountain tops. The bronth seem to do everything thoroughly and their observatories have all the equipment they need. They are also well known for their ability to successfully catalogue facts and manufacture copies of renowned books written by skilled astrologers. The bronth however never seem to make any important discoveries and seem mostly content with reading and learning what other astrologers have found. Some say it is because of their inferior vision that the bronth will never become skilled astrologers. Others claim that there are simply too few astrologers in Dobre to make any form of impact. Like the thriddle, the bronth approach astrology on a more scientific basis.

RAMIAN GOROCHKA ("Sky-priests")

The ramian rochka (priests) have uncanny knowledge about the stars, moons and planets. Arcane stone carvings inside the Tirtive Halls of Vinteer depict all the planets accompanying Jorune around its sun. Similar Star Temples can be found in other places of Jorune, often inhabited by ramian. Most notorious are the Star Temples of Ponteer, Vareech, Tchobyska Chorachka, north-western Temauntro and the Doben-al. Old ramian lore holds shocking detail and warnings about anomalies in the system such as Scylla and Scylla's Necklace. This knowledge has been handed down through generations by the specialised ramian gorochka (Sky-priests) and the arcane charts are the legacy of their unspeakable masters that abandoned them on Jorune. It is not uncommon that the respected (and feared) translators of the ancient scripts, the Degralochi caste, are also gorochka of notable power.

The star charts have advanced navigational lines criss-crossing them and the Degraloch glyphs symbolising the different stellar bodies. Comets and strange phenomena related to Jorune's moons are explained. The tablets also explain how to commune with the entities of certain stellar bodies through complex rituals and of special importance is the moon (Kaurr)Tra. Evidently, Kaurr watches over the ramian as a silent sentinel and judges their deeds. He can be addressed at certain times, during certain cycles of the moon and sometimes responds.

The few ramian sky-priests that exist keep a vigilant watch upon the stars and await the return of their dark Godlings, servants of the Dark Gods. They refer to the Dark Sea above and long to once again be Mariners of this ultimate vast emptiness.

Although their knowledge of the planets and neighbouring stars at times is very detailed, the ramian do not seem to fully grasp all astronomical facts and have many patches in their otherwise disturbingly precise knowledge. Mythology has been heavily interwoven with their lore of the skies and all the moons and planets are regarded as deities. Especially gruesome is Grochmau (Scylla) who threatens to devour all the other deities and those living on them in her insatiable hunger. Ramian gorochka use dark arts and foul ceremonies when they predict, detect and interpret the movement of the stellar bodies and their effects on ramian life. Especially potent is the offering of sentient blood upon weird organic altars when communing with the deities of the Dark Sea above.

CLEASH AND ASTROLOGY

The cleash seem to hold great and ancient knowledge among their leaders. Those of pure bloodlines and higher genetic generation seem capable of passing lore down through the generations. An obscure race memory of sorts. How much the cleash know about the moons, planets and stars is unknown. The thriddle have hinted that the cleash's knowledge in this area is vast and are evidently afraid of what the cleash could do if they reached the Mountain Crown and the secrets stored there. Only the cleash overlords hold the answers to this mystery and it is not in their nature to share their secrets.