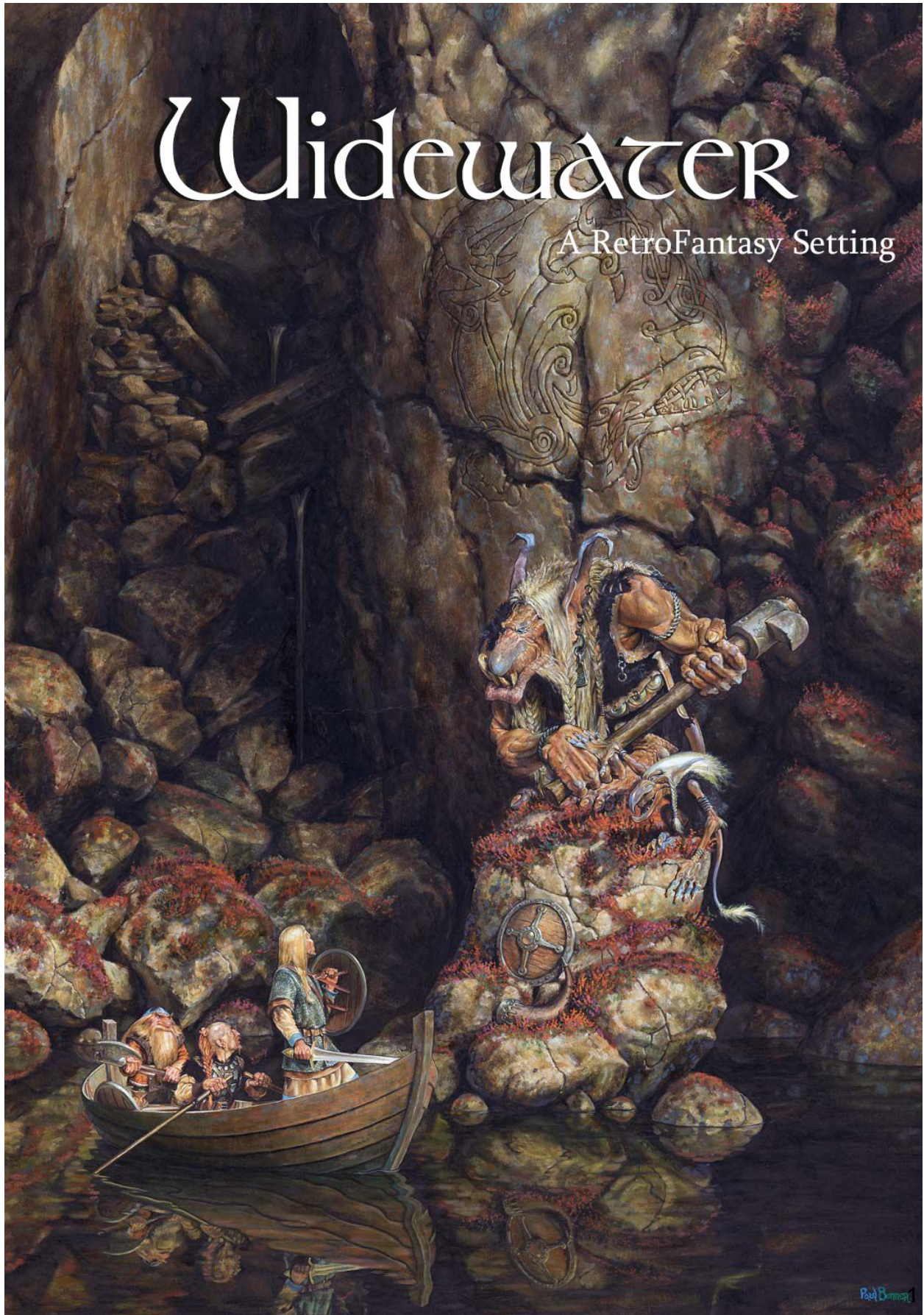


Widewater

A RetroFantasy Setting





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1. History

It is said that there was a time before the gods - The Aligned Time. The Elder Races (fae, elves, dwarves, goblin-folk, antediluvians, giants, draug) claim the world was created by the wild, chaotic, Natural Magic which pooled into land, mountains, seas, forests and creatures. All creatures lived in harmony there, with the natural cycles of life and death dominating together with the seasons. Only vague oral legends exist from this time, as few still live who remember them. Also, the elder races tend to live in the now and those with a sense for history do not have writing to record it with.

Then one day came the gods. It is unclear whether the gods came to Widewater or were beings who rose to godhood. Many of the elder races do not remember or care much, but the eldest among the giants and elves remember these times well and with bitterness.

The Younger races (humans, orcs, rorrock, lizard men) do not agree with the view that the ancient people of the land walked alone without gods and the most common belief is that the gods created the world - together or each one by itself. Most religions claim that these Elder Gods walked and lived in the lands they had created in these eons past. During this Golden Age the gods tamed the wild, natural, elemental magic and created the more calm, wondrous (corruptive the elves say) Artificial Magic.

During this Golden Age the Elder Gods prospered and grew in power. But as their power grew they became envious and competitive and began fighting each other, often with the elder races as pawns or even as enemies as they battled the gods as representatives and protectors of the chaotic wild natural magic. This time is known to very few as the God War.

The God War ended with the defeat and banishment of the Elder Gods and their foremost minions the Draug. The Elder gods were banished to the Night Sky, where they to this day reside in their floating palaces, forever wandering across the dark night and avoiding the sun. The lights of their windows, feasts and watchfires can be seen by all in Widewater as the stars in the night sky. Some Elder gods however managed to flee to other smaller magical realms. These realms cling to the natural world like parasitic entities and are known as Fallen Realms and the gods who reside there are known as Fallen Gods. It is said that only a few Elder Gods wanted to pay the price of corruption and evil to reside in these Fallen Realms and that the Fallen Gods are forever tainted by their choice.

The Gods left behind their wonderful and often cursed ruins, artefacts and artificial creatures known as Godhomes, Artefactuals and Artificials. The elves claim that their greatest victory was the defeat of the elder gods. But it was also their greatest sorrow, as they lost their immortality and now wane in years, magic and glamour for each new generation born. The birth of every new child is both a joy and a sorrow. It is also said that the two moon sisters lost their father in this time and that the sun was created by the elves to break the power of the gods and protect the lands from their return.

The goblin-folk became a sundered race - in culture, form and nature. All of them however

became forever corrupted. The dwarves remained unchanged and as solid as the mountain. They had not been interested in the Elder Gods or the God War. Legends also whisper of other Elder Races, terrible (the Draug) or gentle (the Shallis), who were destroyed in the great God War. Ancient and forgotten tombs, magical scars in the landscape and cryptic artefacts are all that remain of these creatures.

Free from the Elder Gods and their artificial magic, under whose shadow they had lived, rose the elves, dwarves, fae, trolls, hillfolk, giants and goblins. As they were the children of the slow but merciless natural magic they strove to restore the world - in their own peculiar ways. But the grief of the Elder Races continued as the God War had left many scars and doors open to the Fallen God realms. From Hell demons of fire plagued the lands. From the Underdeeps climbed shadow creatures. The Abyss spewed out foul alien monstrosities from the cold, dark, crushing, depths of the oceans. From Dimhall came Invisible Stalkers and Mist Creatures.

At this time the scourge of the Antediluvians began. The once proud aquatic Elder Race of the Antediluvians (or Deep Ones) had become corrupted to foulness by the Fallen Gods of the Abyss. Many were also the battles against the forces of Hell and the Underdeeps.

Also some elves had joined the Fallen Gods of the Underdeeps. These became the hateful Drow, who tried to obtain their ancient magical power and came to forever hate the surface living elves for their treason towards their species in dooming them to mortality.

The scourge of the Undead had not begun as this time - as the Elder Races could not rise from the dead.

true peace seemed unobtainable in the lands and these new terrors became a new and natural part of the cycle of life and death.

In a much later age, men, orcs, lizard-men and other folk wandered into the lands. They were somehow linked to the Elder Races, but changed and more distanced from the natural magic. Some referred to them as the Younger Races and they sought to structure and order all things they could see - and rule all they could conquer. The men of this time are however often called Firstmen in legends and created many kingdoms and unique cultures - often centered on magic and god worship.

It soon became evident to the elves that the Young Races had brought back and worshipped the Elder Gods. Although banished, the Elder Gods could draw power from their new worshippers and thus still influence the world they so desperately yearned to return to.

Especially by night their wills could be heard by the new priests. The Younger Races were also more attuned to the wishes of Elder Gods and could be granted a new type of power by them - Divine Magic. Most probably true to their beliefs and legends, the creation (or alteration) of the Younger Races is linked to the clever Elder Gods.

Ruling from the Night Skies or other parasitic realms, the gods continued their strife amongst themselves using their mortal pawns and sometimes even manifesting temporarily through them or spawning offspring with them through magical copulation rituals. The first kingdoms and conflicts of ownership arose. Greed, evil and lost balance once again came into the world, but also morality and order.

The scourge of the Undead began as the forces of Dimhall could more easily draw upon the god-influenced life force of the Younger Races as well as gain worshippers there. Necromancers appeared, granted power by the Death Lords and the creation of Undead began. Until this time it had not been possible to raise the Elder Races from the graves, and thus the coming of the Younger Races strengthened the powers of Dimhall.

The same was true of the Fallen Gods residing in the realms of Hell who now corrupted and created the Fallen, the Possessed and the Corrupted amongst the Younger Races. The Antediluvians began to breed monstrosities with the Younger Races and the Shadows of the Underdeeps began to tangle into the flesh of humans. The power of the Fallen Gods increased as they now could influence the lands further through the coming of the Younger Races.

The exception to this were the already existing Elder Race minions of the Drow and the enslaved Antediluvians, who served the forces of the Underdeep and the Abyss since the downfall.

Then came the Overmen - or Zairem as they call themselves. Although the elves claim that the Overmen appeared long after the first men had wandered into Widewater and founded the first kingdoms, most historical texts tried to undermine this fact and place the Overmen foremost and first in history. Rare and ancient scrolls or obscure legends among the Elder Races actually tell of a glorious time of Younger Race kingdoms and empires even before the coming of the Overmen, but knowledge of anything else than barbarous times before Valdusia was largely suppressed by the scholarly purges of the Valdusian rulers.

Ancient scripts claim that the Overmen came in great ships which when moored could never again set sail. From these ships the Overmen built their first palaces and with steel, fire and arcane lore created the first great empire known as Valdusia.

According to legend, the Overmen also rebelled against the Elder Gods by trying to tame the artificial magic, create more artefacts and ascend to godhood to usurp the gods. In their rebellion against the gods their hubris caused the Great Cataclysm which reshaped much of the lands and left many scars.

From the ashes of the Great Cataclysm rose the young kingdoms and new empires. These waxed and waned, becoming the fractured realms which exist today in Widewater.

But there is something new in the world. New Gods with new worshippers have arisen in various parts of the world. The most prominent are the sly and power-hungry gods of the expansionist Radchail Empire, the destructive War-Gods of the Thasean Warlords and the Cruel Orc gods. It is clear that the New Gods of Widewater fight the Elder Gods through their mortal pawns. Arcane scholars whisper that these usurper gods are actually the Overmen lords who ascended to immortality and godhood during the Great Cataclysm.

2. The lands, sky and sea

The lands known as Widewater are as diverse as its gods and people. In the warm north sand deserts and ancient steaming jungles can be found, while the colder south hosts dark pine forests with mossy timeless boulders.

Snow is common in the southern highlands during the winter, while the north normally only has chilling rain. Vice versa, the southern highlands remain cool in summer, while the north is scorched.

Amongst the wild and untamed nature of The Wilds the mysterious and discretely magical signs of the Elder Races is most obvious through old, finely carved river bridges, magical marker stones, stone men, standing stones, carefully sculpted trees, age-old hill warrens, faces carved into the rocks etc etc.

All parts of Widewater is littered with ruins from the God War and the fallen kingdoms and empires which came after. Even the lands show the scars of its violent past in form of broken mountain peaks, awakened volcanoes, great rifts, dead forests, diverted rivers, dried-out lakes and withered wastes.

The weather and skies are equally shifting with often rapidly changing southern weather coming in fast from the Emerald Sea at winter and more stable hot weather spreading down from the north in the summer. Strange weather phenomena is known throughout Widewater, such as:
Tower Clouds (impossibly high and with extremely forceful weather),
River Clouds (mirroring the rivers in their flow. Mighty sight),
God Spears (tornadoes),
Godfire (lightning striking with eerie precision),
Wildfire (fire moving around as with a will of its own),
Drake Blizzards (striking fast, hard and howling),
Pushes (powerful river surges),
Pulls (powerful forces drawing ships and buildings downwater),
Sinkers (impossible to stay afloat in, sinks all ships and people),
Shiftmist (thick mists which shift people from one end of Widewater to the other...or elsewhere).

The night sky is dominated by Widewater's two moons - The Sisters, or Dima and Dwora. Notable are also the many moving stars which travel between the fixed stars in chaotic and sometimes non-repetitive patterns. Most notable of these are the Runner (fast and moving in strange changing patterns), the Great Southern Ring (great debris ring), the Blinker (code-like engimatic blinking), the Whisperer (can sometimes be heard on still nights), the Jumper (disappears and appears again in another location) and the Thief (eats other stars occasionally).

3. Peoples & Realms

The lands are most commonly referred to as Widewater, as they are all situated around Widewater River and its tributaries. The rivers flow through this land and serves as the main means of transportation – for good and for ill.

Civilisation clings mainly to the main Widewater river artery and are remnants of ancient empires and kingdoms, shrunken to mere whispers of what they once were, but with promise to rise again.

Most realms are small, some mere city states, divided by patches of untamed wilderness commonly known just as The Wilds. The realms are normally inhabited by the Younger Races (humans, orcs, overmen, rarrook-men and lizard-men), while The Wilds still house the havens of the dwindling elder Races.

Realms normally share the same culture and religion, but it is not always so. Especially the city states are melting pots of people, cultures and religions. The havens of the Elder Races are normally extremely uniform.

The Elder Races

Despite being spread over several large and separate isolated areas, the Elder races remain largely uniform in their cultures (except goblins) and mainly unaffected by change or time. They worship or serve no gods and have been pushed to The Wilds by the Younger Races. They do however hold many secrets to Widewater's mysterious past.

Elves (a.k.a Sidhae, Faelings, The Timeless, Ageless)

Most human-like of the fae creatures and less magical. Their Great Sorrow sundered them from the magic and placed them one step closer to the mortals. Despised by some other fae and seen as traitors or inferior. Divided into Silver Elves of the Silverwood Forest, the Dark Elves of the Dark Forest, the evil, dark and often unknown Drow of the Underdeeps and the more diverse Young Elves (a.k.a Free Elves/Lost Elves). The Young Elves have separated themselves from the traditionalistic rule of their elder kin as well as from the traditional way of life, rest of the fae and often nature itself. Some Young Elves have made new beautiful woodland homes, such as in Oldwood Forest and the South Wilds while others live amongst humans.

Elves defeated and banished the old gods whom men still worship, but at a terrible price. Some magic has been tamed and corrupted. Also some elves. All elves have lost their immortality and every new elf lives a shorter life span. Amongst the traditionalistic elves, the birth of an elf is both a moment of joy and a bitter reminder of the shorter lifespan it will have. Older elves are

bitter and time is their greatest enemy, as are the old gods influence on the world. Seek always to preserve and remember the old. Change is bad.

Silver Elves

The traditionalistic elves of the Silverwood forest.

Language:

Dark Elves

Those governing the dark fae and living in the Dark Forest.

Drow

Evil, light-shunning and spider-goddess worshipping elves of the Underdeeps.

Young Elves

Those living amongst the other realms or in new havens separated from their more traditional kin, such as Oldwood Forest, South Wilds, the Kingdom of Tornfall or the East Wilds.

Languages: High Elvish (Malvalaain), Darkish (Svoralaain) and Drow (Norvalaain)

The silver elves and young elves all speak High Elvish. Also most fae speak this ancient and unaltered tongue.

The Elves and fae of the Dark Forest speak Darkish (Svoralaain) which is an unearthly and somewhat unsettling form of whispered elvish. Understandable by speakers of High Elvish but corrupted by an evil influence. Giants sometimes speak a guttural, pidgin variety of this to tongue

The largely unknown Drow elves of the Underdeeps speak Drow (Norvalaain), a tongue which has changed much from original High Elvish.

Religion: Faerun

Although the majority of the elves, including the younger elves, adhere to the Faerun traditions, some elves living amongst humans have adopted their ways and their religions. This is primarily elves living in the Sudyan Empire or amongst the

Dwarves

Dwarves are the most seclusive of the Elder Races. But they have vast and mighty underground kingdoms which often clashes/infringes on the Underdeeps. The most common are Borjornikka dwarves. They are the ones venturing up to the surface to trade with other people. The deep mining Buratja dwarves with their imprisoned logedragons in their furnaces are however the cultural roots of the dwarves. They are the true master smiths and the most unlikely to ever leave the dwarven domains or even understand the other races. The rare and huge Zvorda

dwarves are fierce warriors with pre-defined destinies. The Borjornikka are strictly divided in proud family bloodlines like the Strongarms, Longbeards, Greybeards, Redbeards, Blackbeards, Stoneskulls, Steelforge, Hammers etc. The Buratja dwarves normally never see the sun.

Because of external factors there are some differences between the fierce and constant warring Westron Families of the Fire Mountains, the skilled and mystical Southron Artificer-Smiths of the Yellow Mountains and the secluded, territorial Eastrons of the Black Mountains. Loyal to the death to each other, quarrelling, greedy, brave, stubborn. Dwarven traders, travelling blacksmiths, crafters and adventurers live throughout the human cities with their own dwarven safehouses.

The mysterious and unseen dwarf mothers, the greed and hoarding, the thuuls, the vast labyrinths, the Ginnungagap void, the example cities from D&D, the rune magic, their hated hobgoblin enemies.

Crafting Mitraka and building ovens is the highest art.

Dwarves and their society changes slowly. Change isn't bad, but swift whims are. They are solid like the mountains.

Norg - Dwarf

Thul - dwarven mountain master

Thuun - Dwarven great-king

Norglavanja - The Beautiful. Dwarf women

Steinfylgjar - Stone protection totems

Borjorn - first-father. Dwarven smith god who created dwarves from the escaped embers of his forge. They crawled as worms into the ground and grew into dwarves.

The three levels of the underground (Tvologoya): Gydanskij (ten first levels), Tvologograd (next 85 levels), Nifulong (last unknown levels with the magical forges and the Underdeeps).

Only the cities of Gydanskij and some of Tvologograd are noted on maps. None of the mostly unknown Nifulong cities are known to outsiders.

Language: Dvarga

Complex and tradition-bound Dwarven language spoken and written between dwarves in their halls and during rituals. Unchanged over the millennia. Very hard to learn and dwarves don't appreciate fools who abuse it.

Religion: None

Goblins (Goblin-folk)

a.k.a Diggers. Found in many corners of Widewater. especially the wilds. Some tribes of these smaller goblin-folk are even accepted in human realms and trade with them. Others are a pest and multiply like wildfire after creating a new underground nest. The goblins of the Copper Hills (or Goblin Hills) are always up to mischief and often burrow their way down to civilised areas. They are however inventors, tinkerers and gadget-makers. Their main burrow is very industrial and referred to as Tinkertown.

Language: Gobbo

The guttural and chaotic speech of the goblins. Although countless dialects exist throughout Widewater, the goblins always seem to understand each other by adapting their speech to each other and using a lot of body language and guttural noises and sound effects for emphasis.

Religion: Faerun and small local cults

The chaotic goblin-folk mainly hold to the ancient Faerun practices. But when living in close proximity to other races the goblin-folk sometimes adopt other smaller local cults of various Elder and New Gods.

Hillfolk (a.k.a Vettir or Hobgoblins)

Larger and meaner goblin-folk. With big ears, drooping noses, whipping tails and large claws these filthy, greedy, mean, disease carrying creatures organize themselves into petty kingdoms. These Mountain Kings often clash with the dwarves and steal and harass human neighbours. It is not uncommon for hobgoblins of the west to obey or ally with an orc-king. The hobgoblins are the scourge of the forests, mountains and underworld. Some specimens - often old but not necessarily so, grow extremely large. While some old ones are cunning beyond comprehension, most of them are stupid and slow. They are referred to as Ogres and are often more fearless and blood-thirsty. All hobgoblins despise sunlight. Most suffer headaches, are reduced in sight or temporarily blinded, burn easily and generally feel uncomfortable and sick when caught out in the open sun. But the older ogres can actually be harmed by sunlight. There are many tales of old ogres burning their eyes to blindness, turning into clay or stone or simply bursting when subjected to direct sunlight.

Language: Nether

The dark and guttural tongue of the hobgoblins, trolls and ogres is known as Nether. Ancient roots and sometimes known by both elves and dwarves. Naturally, ogres speak this as well as some giants.

Religion: Faerun**Fae**

Countless different dark and light faerie creatures which cannot be trusted and are fickle and chaotic in their nature.

Language: High Elvish

All fae (except dark fae) instinctively speak the unaltered and timeless High Elvish. Only very few of them have ever learned to speak Riverish or any other tongue. They simply see it as a

fickle and ever changing tongue not worthy of spending time on.
The fae of the Dark Forest speak Darkish instead of High Elvish.

Religion: Faerun

Giants

Rare and solitary, these goblin-folk come in different sizes, shapes and intelligence. Most, but not all, are utterly devoted to evil. It is said their fall from civilisation and grace together with the bitterness of their near extinction in the God Wars made them spiteful, cruel and evil.

Throughout Widewater can be found the ancient ruins of the Giant Kingdoms from the First Time before men and gods wandered into Widewater. All that remain are curiously shaped cliff plateaus, gargantuan stairways, immense pillars, semi-natural battlements and great chasms leading down to subterranean halls.

Cloud giants are rare but as wise as they are selfish and cruel. They tend to live as recluses in the ruins of their ancient keeps atop great mountains. They dream of their lost Clourealms which were destroyed by the Dragons and the gods. The fierce mountain giants are the largest, most cunning and evil roaming the wilds and terrorising other creatures. They work poorly together but now and again gather a "court" of hill giants and ogres. Hill giants are smaller, more numerous and notoriously stupid. They are often recruited into orc and hobgoblin armies. Elusive forest giants are cruel but wise enough to steal from their neighbours and then sneak off. Rare and neigh mythical are the Frost and Fire giants who dwell in the far south or deep in the warm bowels of the earth. Both are great smiths. Cloud, Frost and Fire giants are skilled natural magic users and forest giants sometimes show an aptitude.

Language: Gobbo, Orcish or Nether

Most giants have no language of their own, but nearly instinctively speak one of the ancient goblin-folk tongues. The giants living close to the orc kingdoms sometimes also speak orcish. However, ancient so called Cloud Runes are sometimes found on ancient mountain top strongholds bearing witness of a much more civilised time. Some cloud giants even still know how to read and pronounce them.

Religion: Faerun

Antediluvians/Fomorians

Horrors of the deep. This terrible brood are as diverse as the fish in the sea, but all cold, merciless and evil. They are corrupted creatures created by the forced union of Fomorians and Elder or Younger races.

Language: Nok

Nok is the name of the mysterious clicking and offensive gurgling language of the Antediluvians.

Religion: Abahr, the Horror of the Deep**Draug**

An extinct powerful Elder Race which sided with the Elder Gods in the God War at the dawn of time. Although long gone and mostly forgotten, they are in some cases only imprisoned and dormant in ancient, forgotten burial mounds. Their cursed Draugnír script and dangerous lore of Natural Magic use sometimes surfaces to the horror of the elves.

The Younger Races

These are the people which migrated into Widewater after the God War and include all human cultures, overmen, rarrook-men, lizard-men and orcs. Although some still live untamed barbarian lives in The Wilds, most of the Younger races live semi-organized lives in realms and city-states and worship all manner of gods.

Ezir

A dangerous and wild city-state to the far north inhabited by wild, raiding Northrons. They worship and sacrifice maidens to the dormant dragon horrors of the Arkland Wilds. Now and then the swift Ezir raiding ships are carried down to the river and raid southward. Their dragon emblazoned sails and fierce slavers are a nuisance to all of Widewater. Slaves caught in their raids are doomed to serve their new masters in Ezir - at best. At worst they are sent to Ezir's silver mines in the Marching Hills or even end up as dragon sacrifices.

People: Northrons

The northrons of Ezir claim to have dragon-blood in their veins and refer to themselves as Dragonbloods. Like their southern cousins they braid their dark long hair and beards. These, just like their clothes, armour and weapons often have dragon depictions.

Language: Northron Riverish

The raiders of Ezir speak a more Northron dialect of Riverish, a mish-mash pidgin Sudyan and Northron trade language which most men and creatures understand throughout Widewater. For some, like Northrons, Townsfolk, Thorosians, River-Gypsies and Bog-men it is their mother-tongue.

Religion: Dragon worship

Radchahi Empire

A new and quarrelsome Empire with new powerful, expansionistic gods, feared priests, complex traditions and ceremonies and the deadly crimson guard. The empire has grown through the conquest and annexation of its surrounding realms, peoples and gods. Heeding the call of their new gods, the Empire has now sent thousands of missionaries into the Widewater realms, spreading the words of their gods, offering secret lore, cures, salvation and protection from diseases, infernal forces and the undead (often aided by divine magic). With the missionaries come the Radchahi emissaries and their retinue of servants and guards. Add all Radchahi traders, investors and money lenders and it's clear that the Radchahi Empire is waging a war on the battlefield, the divine front, political front as well as the financial front. They are the worldly mirror of the war the New Gods are waging upon the Elder Gods.

The twin Emperor/Empress Radiron and Radesia lust for power in conquest and must constantly keep the Empire's annexed realms together with force. Ancient and powerful noble families and mighty mages threaten the stability of the Empire. All who aren't Radchائي aren't civilised.

Contemptuous, exotically clad and ceremony driven emissaries to neighbouring kingdoms and empires reside in Köping and some other cities.

The new technology of the Radchائي, such as the rare skyships, the floating city Cloudhome, large astrological timepieces and flamelances worries both the gods and people of Widewater. Some Radchائي have even tamed the fickle wasp drakes, enabling them to scout enemy lands better and dispatch faster emissaries.

People: Radchائي

Superior, proud, expansionist people who see all other races as inferior and uncivilized. Led by some of the new/young gods. The Radchائي are all dark in complexion with brown eyes and black hair. They favour clean shaven faces and heads as a sign of civilisation. Their clothes are often jewelled and elaborate with a strong tradition for important males to cover their faces in the vicinity of barbarians (so not to divulge their emotions and be infected with their wild looks, dangerous ideas, false gods and filthy diseases. Although some people of the annexed realms are dressed differently, the benefits of dressing like a Radchائي (which means civilised in Radchائي) normally wins over old traditions.

Language: Radchائي

Strange and harsh language of the expansive Radchائي Empire. The only civilised tongue in their view and a must for all who have dealings with Radchائي. Speaking another tongue for long can lead to perversion, falling from grace, inferior culture temptation etc.

Religion: Radchائي pantheon

Kingdom of Erland

Ruled by an old and just king who is heavily beset by the Radchائي Empire who invaded (the Radchائي prefer to say "annexed") his realms west of the Widewater River. Strife Bridge earned its name as it is a divided ancient city, fought over by Erland's best knights and the deadly Crimson Guard of the Radchائي Empire.

People: Northrons

Northrons live in the kingdom of Erland, along the east and west shores of Upper Widewater as well as around the outskirts of the Silverwood Forest up to the Easthorn River. Dark skinned and brown eyed people with long, often braided beards and hair. The women are known for their beauty as well as fierceness in temper. Northrons have a stable relationship with the fae of the Silverwood forest and are equally superstitious and wary of the spirits who rule that realm. Especially the Northrons of the Easthorn River and the city of Ezir are a troublesome lot. Their

ships often raid their southern neighbours.

Language: Riverish

Riverish (sometimes known as Low Sudyan) is a mish-mash pidgin Sudyan and Northron trade language which most men and creatures understand throughout Widewater. For some, like Northrons, Townsfolk, Thorosians, River-Gypsies and Bog-men it is their mother-tongue.

Religion: Sadani pantheon or Faerun

Neptah

Sandy Neptah of the Glass Desert is a proud old kingdom in decay, constantly plagued by the cruel lizard-men of Boneville. Many of its more prominent families have made strong connections with the Irem realms, Erland and Köping to secure havens if the growing lizard-man threat grows out of proportion. The old kingdom still has lucrative silver and opal mines in the Marching Hills. The Swords of Neptah are a famed band of mercenaries who operate throughout Widewater, but also answer to the call of Neptah's King and Queen.

People: Neptem

The people living in Neptah are referred to as Neptem. Black in complexion with curly or long braided hairbraids. Neptem often adorn their bodies with white tattoos and those chosen by their goddess Neferat to play a larger more important part in destiny wear elaborate facial markings. Neptem often adorn armour and clothes with silver from their mines.

Language: Riverish or Neptai

Neptai the old and nearly forgotten language of the Neptem as well as the evil sorcerers of the Glass Desert. Many Neptem have instead adopted Riverish or Iremi.

Religion: Nefertat the Cloaked

Dracha

In the ruins of Boneville in the deep Glass Desert is a cruel lizard-man kingdom of sorts, where the lizard-men live among gargantuan ruins of unknown origin and worshipping their Deity King. They fight amongst themselves and raid their neighbours.

People: Lizard-men (Scatha)

The cruel lizard-men (or scatha as they call themselves) wandered out of the burning northern deserts many hundreds of years ago. They settled among the ancient abandoned ruins of the Glass Desert and made the ruin capital of Boneville their cultural centre. The desert zone ruled by their cruel deity-king is referred to by them as Dracha.

Lizard-men are extremely territorial and short tempered, fighting each other as often as raiding the neighbouring realms.

Lizard men tend to grow their entire lives and older members gain greater size as well as larger physical displays such as horns, ridges, spinal sails, neck rings etc. They also come in a wide variety, depending on which ancestry they hail from.

Language: Scashi

Scashi is the hissing tongue of the lizard-men and which is curiously understood by most dragons.

Religion: Scatha God-King worship

Neirya

An evil city of powerful evil sorcerers and dark cultists deep in the Glass Desert. A feared place, yet a haven for lizard-men, mercenaries and seekers of forbidden lore.

People: Mixed

Neptem sorcerers founded the ancient city which today is inhabited by all kinds of dark magic users. Neptem, Northrons, Irem, Sudyans and Overmen are the most commonly found in Neirya. The Council of Eternals have dark schemes for the world and seemingly random sorcerer risings are often orchestrated by the Council of Eternals. Thefts from libraries, dark experiments across Widewater and other dark deeds are often performed by the secret Council of Eternals - but for what end is not known.

Language: Riverish, Iremi and Neptai

Neptai is the old and nearly forgotten language of the Neptem and evil sorcerers of the Glass Desert. It's script is commonly used for spells and in grimoires.

Religion: Various

Neirya is full of smaller cults, all of them slightly darker and harsher variants compared to those found elsewhere. Infernalism is found here along with the cults of Vorgon, Abahr, Nefertat, some Irem gods, Dragon Worship, Nazadi & the Spider Cult, Valaric, some orc gods, Mashuru & The Brotherhood of Memory etc.

Izmir Sultanate

Ruled by a paranoid and dangerous sultan.

People: Irem

The Irem are the swarthy and proud desert folk of Izmir and Nadir. Their clothes are equally

suited for protection against the desert elements as they can be transformed into airy beautiful robes. The Irem are known for their vanity, explicit and wondrous clothes and beautiful alluring women. Even if it is an exaggeration it is said to be impossible to distinguish a pauper from a sultan by looking at the clothes.

The Irem are however clearly divided into hereditary casts of makers, soldiers, servitors, growers, herders, advisors and nobles. These casts distinguish themselves by adornments and unique every day terminology specific for each caste.

Language: Iremi

Iremi is the warm and beautiful language of the Irem people. Known for its use in poetry.

Religion: Iremite pantheon

Nadir Caliphate

Rules by princess Jarazine together with the powerful caliph of Vayaz. Despite constant failures and attacks by monsters and barbarians, the Caliphate tries to colonize the East Wilds. Suffering lizard man attacks from the north.

People: Irem

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Language: Iremi

Iremi is the warm and beautiful language of the Irem people. Known for its use in poetry.

Religion: Iremite pantheon

Tinkertown

An underground goblin city of tinkerers and weird inventions. Smoking chimneys rise from the hills, staining the landscape.

People: Goblins

See Elder Races

Language: Gobbo

See Elder Races

Religion: Faerun**Köping**

The big city of Köping (formerly known as Silvertown, Valorum, Tolsung and fabled Tapairë) has a long, colourful and mighty history and is situated smack in the middle of several kingdoms and empires as well as Badlands and wastelands. It is an ideal centre to return to.

People: Townsfolk

A mixed variety most commonly referred to as Townsfolk.

Language: Riverish

Many languages are spoken in Köping, but all who live here know Riverish (sometimes known as Low Sudyan). It is a mish-mash pidgin Sudyan and Northron trade language which most men and creatures understand throughout Widewater. For some, like Northrons, Townsfolk, Thorosians, River-Gypsies and Bog-men it is their mother-tongue.

Religion: Various

Practically every religion found throughout Widewater can be encountered in the City of Köping, famed for its tolerance to religions. The size of these religions and cults varies through the centuries depending on popularity and magnitude of power influence from the neighbouring realms.

Three Bridges

The old and powerful home of the Merchant's League which has several Hansa-like harbours and partner towns throughout all of Widewater. Money is power here. There are no nobles but men are not truly free. The Guild-masters political intrigues are deadly and felt throughout all of Widewater. Guilds rise and fall in prominence and influence. The Merchant's League act as grey eminences and influential financial supporters who are involved in the fates of all realms of Widewater. The city is divided into Island, East Bridge, West Bridge, South Bridge, Westend, Southend and Lost Town (former Eastend). The three bridges and their foundations are ancient while the sprawling wooden houses on the bridges are newer. The buildings on the island tend to have stone bases with large overbuilt wooden floors above. The buildings of Westend and Southend tend to be of stone while the buildings of Eastend were mostly of wood.

People: Townsfolk

A mixed variety most commonly referred to as Townsfolk.

Language: Riverish

Riverish (sometimes known as Low Sudyan) is a mish-mash pidgin Sudyan and Northron trade language which most men and creatures understand throughout Widewater. For some, like Northrons, Townsfolk, Thorosians, River-Gypsies and Bog-men it is their mother-tongue.

Religion: Various

Most religions of Widewater have a small religious outpost in Three Bridges. Some have flocked have been drawn to the rich metropolis while other have been adopted and brought home by guildsman stationed elsewhere in Widewater. Religious orders do however not enjoy the freedom they have in Köping, as the Guildmasters do not allow them to intervene in the running of worldly business and greater political decisions.

Sudyan Empire

Today less than a fourth of what it once was. The last great empire of the old gods. Heavily beset by the orcs realms of the west, the Radchaili Empire of the north, Vargahr's Long Night to the east and the Sourlands to the south, it is still a centre of culture, civilisation, learning and beauty. It's ancient library holds long lost lore in forgotten languages. The central lands are littered with glorious stone buildings, palaces, monuments and bridges. Especially stone towers were a love of the old Sudyani and every prominent family had at least one tower building. Outsiders sometimes call the Sudyan Empire the Land of a Thousand Towers, but in truth there are many, many more towers than that. Some toppled and ruined, some abandoned but still glorious, some still inhabited by the proud and colourful descendants of those that built them. The capitol Solora is partly uninhabited but still a true marvel of colorful stone, breathtakingly high towers, aqueducts, amphitheatres and countless stairs and terraces. The great abandoned buildings are a sad reminder of the Sudyan Empires glorious past and inhabited by the seedier kind och clientele which always are attracted to great cities. The Thieves Quarter of Solora is infamous throughout Widewater and unofficially a city state of its own.

Other remarkable architectural feats (some with roots older than Sudya) are Great Bridge, Leysia Island, the temple city of Nurya, the sculpted Seven Forests, the Solora Roads and the Sudyan Wall.

Solora and many other great cities of the Sudyan Empire are the homes of many great mages who reside in great towers hoarding knowledge and artefacts. Their powers are officially added to the Emperors, but their subtle internal conflicts are know to a few as the Mage Wars.

People: Sudyans

A refined, colourful and civilised culture with ancient traditions and cultural heritage. Their entire Sudyan culture is steeped in both beauty, legendary historical deeds and great contributions in

lore and technology. The greatest mages, masons, historians and scientists come from Sudya. Although their beautiful cities are old and crumbling, their territories shrinking and their armies a bleak shadow of what they once were, the Sudyan Empire is still the place to find forgotten lore, magical knowledge and civilisation. Beauty and empire are their ideals.

Colourful, costly and beautiful clothes, jewellery, fantastically rich nobles, complicated customs and rituals are what defines Sudyans. They are lovers and protectors of beauty and things old. Sudyans tend to come in all colours and complexions, although the white haired and fair are more uncommon. Family names run back centuries and all prominent families tend to have a hereditary fortified family tower - inhabited or not.

Language: Riverish and High Sudyan

While most citizens of the Sudyan Empire today speak Riverish, the traditional language of Sudyan nobility, mages, astrologers, priests and historians of the Sudyan Empire is High Sudyan. Especially the scholars and mages learn this tongue as it is strongly linked to history and magic.

Religion: Sadani pantheon

Although the Sadani pantheon is predominant, other smaller cults exist in Solora, many of them in secret.

Freetown

A small, but fierce city of Freemen who stand against the tide of the orc realms to the west.

People: Townsfolk

A mixed variety most commonly referred to as Townsfolk.

Language: Riverish

Riverish (sometimes known as Low Sudyan) is a mish-mash pidgin Sudyan and Northron trade language which most men and creatures understand throughout Widewater. For some, like Northrons, Townsfolk, Thorosians, River-Gypsies and Bog-men it is their mother-tongue.

Religion: Various

In Freetown Faerun and River God worship runs along that of some Orc and Sadani gods. Other smaller cults also exist as well such as Ygghal and the newly arrived Radchaili gods.

Vargahr's Long Night

The curious name for a prophecy proclaiming a Hell on earth at the coming of seven demon lords. Fiery gateways to Hell have opened in the realm and several prominent lords and ladies have been possessed by demons. Demons haunt the night and possess the unlucky, ruling and

corrupting the terrified surviving populace. The spread of Blight (taint of lands), possession and Bloodfire (infernal disease) are their weapons together with infernal magic, terror and the Army of the Possessed. Slow to move and act, but fierce to fight.

Especially the Blight scares the people of Widewater. It is created by ceremoniously driving great 10 m iron spikes wrought with infernal symbols and imbued with infernal magic all the way into the ground. The blight then affects everything within 20 km of it, turning the ground sour, corrupting wildlife and allowing temporary summoned demons to rise out of the ground at night, killing all they encounter. It is said that the demon lords can see and hear everything that transpires within the blight and corrupts the very air, dreams and thoughts of all Vargarians living there. Only the houses and fields warded by the grim Vargarian Wardens escape the demon terror at night and thus the Vargarians live a life in constant fear of these wards failing or not being renewed in spite or as punishment.

People: Vargarians

Vargarians are of close Sudyan lineage but crueller and more hardened by the horrors of hell which have governed them the last two hundred years. Vargarian commoners wear simple clothes and often arm themselves - as only the tough survive. Vargarian leaders and nobles are normally found clad in scary, horned armour to incite fear or in garish and elaborate clothes to provoke disgust, lust or a sense of otherworldly beauty.

Maybe due to the hellish rule over the last two centuries Vargarians tend to be darker in both hair and complexion than their Sudyan cousins. Their noble family or soldier deed names all bear parts of the demon lord's name they are pacted with.

Language: Vargarian

Vargarian is the new language of the infernally ruled people of Vargahr's Long Night. It is based on Sudyan, but with much influence from demons using ancient Godspeech. It is written with a dread, sprawling script referred to as Infernal Glyphs.

Religion: Infernalism

Warlords of Thasea

Not a kingdom as such, rather a strong tribe of warriors and horsemen related to the nomadic horse people of the Greensea Plains. A band of power hungry warlords with a warrior caste culture rule the region and would live to raid the civilised lands if they weren't locked in a centuries old endless holy war with Vargahr's Long Night. Worship a Goddess of War.

People: Thaseans

Thaseans are a proud and honour-bound warrior culture of the east. Their war gods favour the valourous and weakness is greatly frowned upon. Their strange sense of honour can sometimes lead to slaughter of the weak and innocent while sparing those brave enough to resist. It is said that Thaseans often wear armour even to bed, which is true for many. Armours and clothes are

never elaborate nor costly (such as plate armour) giving them a true scruffy looking barbarian appearance. Thaseans don't like wearing helms as this blocks any battle plans or sudden tactical insights communed by their gods. It also makes them look weak and scared of death. Instead they paint their faces during battle and raise and colour their hair to incite fear in their enemies (and to distinguish themselves from their enemy). Thaseans don't trust leaders who don't partake in war personally and look down upon politicians of the neighbouring lands.

Language: Thasean

The tribes led by the Warlords of Thasea have no script and rely on verbal traditions. The Thasean language is quick yet heavy and hard to the ears with many buzzing “Z” sounds.

Religion: Thasean war Gods

The Orc Kingdoms

In the Cracklands, the Borderlands and the Fire Mountains several small orc kingdoms exist. They might be situated in a conquered dwarf or hobgoblin city, in a great burrow beneath the Cracklands or amidst the jagged peaks of the mountains. These kingdoms are normally centered around one dominant tribe and some other conquered tribes and rarely last more than the orc king's lifetime. The rise of an orc kingdom is however always a bad thing and a clear sign of raids and pillages to come for all neighbouring people.

There is a prophecy and lesser known rumours of even more and greater orc kingdoms to the west, constantly and slowly pushing the weaker orcs before them, like a great unyielding glacier softening the lowlands before their coming. If this is true, Widewater has much to fear..

People: Orcs

Large, fierce, tusked, green or brown warriors of the Cracklands, Borderlands and Fire Mountains who often raid the people of Widewater. Orcs might be bigger and stronger than humans, dwarves, elves and goblin-folk, but they are not as cunning and often so quarrelsome and infighting that their kingdoms rarely last longer than the lifetime of the king. The inferior and smaller variety of underling orcs are referred to as Snaga orcs and serve their more powerful masters as servants, craftsmen, smiths, builders and herders. They are commonly however employed as last desperate weapons of war when all else has failed.

Violence is power amongst orcs and there is time for little else in an orc's life than strife and survival of the fittest. Despite their warring and infighting nature, the organised battle-plans of some orc kingdoms can to at times seem unusually cunning and goal oriented. Orcs are also naturally very resistant to magic, forcing the wizards of Widewater to target their realms, steeds and slaves when fighting them, rather than the orcs themselves.

Language: Orcish

Many dialects with many words thrown in from neighbouring languages. Root words stay mostly unchanged. Known by other dark creatures as well, such as giants and some hobgoblins.

Religion: Orc Gods

The Sourlands

Once the great kingdom of Rhonia, but a king fearing death sought ways to cheat him and expand his life. The Death Lords answered his calling and together they managed to thin the borders between the world of the living and Dimhall, land of the dead. The king's never-ending half-life came at the expense of his realm which was emptied of life, sucked dry and then became sour as it slowly turned into boggy, misty marshlands filled with ruins, crypts and undead. The Lich King still rules here and his half-life servants worship death and cling to their cursed lives by stealing life from the living. The undead rise from the graves and Undead Plagues are often seeded and started in the civilised lands as the Lich King seeks to expand his kingdom (and unlife). Poor and sickened bog-men humans still reside in the sourlands, worshipping the death lords and trying to keep undeath away from their doorstep. Necromancers flock to the Lich King's banner to learn the Necromagic from the Death Lords. More from D&D, Visentia, death gods etc.

People: Bog-Men

The poor, weak, pale mortals of the Sourlands are referred to as Bog-Men. They are often pale in complexion with pale brown hair. Their current bleak existence leaves little room for elaborate clothes or colourful cultural rituals.

Language: Riverish or Godspeech

Riverish (sometimes known as Low Sudyan) is a mish-mash pidgin Sudyan and Northron trade language which most men and creatures understand throughout Widewater. For some, like Northrons, Townsfolk, Thorosians, River-Gypsies and Bog-men it is their mother-tongue. Godspeech, the terrible language of Dimhall is however slowly replacing the Riverish spoken by the fully living.

Religion: Death Lords

Kaerûn

The old and mysterious remnants of the ancient Taperiôn Empire of Overmen. The Wizard's Isle with its ancient towers and the Broken Bridge is centre of this small city-state realm. Today the kingdom is ruled by scary Overmen mages and human guilds. Stuck in a power struggle lasting centuries, several Overmen sorcerers and their households have moved abroad. They seek the ancient glory and forgotten left-behind secrets of their ancestors who caused the Great Cataclysm.

People: Townsfolk and Overmen

A mixed variety most commonly referred to as Townsfolk.

Language: Riverish and Zairun

Riverish (sometimes known as Low Sudyan) is the most commonly spoken language, a mish-mash pidgin Sudyan and Northron trade language which most men and creatures understand throughout Widewater. For some, like Northrons, Townsfolk, Thorosians, River-Gypsies and Bog-men it is their mother-tongue.

Zairun, the old ritual language of the Overmen is used for old spells and rituals, but otherwise only spoken by the regal Overmen.

Religion: Various

The townsfolk of Kaerûn worship various smaller deities, most of them New Gods, while the worship of the Overmen is more akin to summoning and binding various gods rather than worshipping them. The Mazulian Death Cult is strong in Kaerûn as well.

Kingdom of Viranne

The Kingdom of Viranne claims to be ancient and the Virain claim to be the first men who moved to the Widewater lands. This is doubtful, but the kingdom, its nobles and its folk are seen as traditional and old-fashioned. Viranne has only one riverport and the people generally shun the river and nearby Emerald Sea. Instead they stick to their rolling hills, deep forests and high mountains. Their ties to the Elder Races of the South Wilds is well known and the number of Trollbloods and half-elves is higher here than anywhere else.

People: Virain

The people of Viranne are known as Virain and are tall with braided blond or silver hair and beards. They are fierce and boastful warriors, but also excellent farmers and bards. Most of them shun the waters of Widewater and the open sea, preferring instead the rolling hills, forest and mountains of their lands and the neighbouring South Wilds. They know their mountains, vales and forests well and are normally friends of the neighbouring Elder Races.

Language: Virain

Virain is an isolated language with some influences of elvish. Especially the humans and half-elves of Tornfall speak Virain mixed with High Elvish.

Quite a few Virain also speak Riverish.

Religion: Faerun variant

The Virain worship the various spirits of their lands as well as a form of ancestor worship. The Elder Races recognises most of the Virain spirits, even if their names have changed slightly. Of

all the humans, the Virain are seen as most aligned with nature because of their adopted worship of the forces of nature.

Kingdom of Tornfall

A small, magical kingdom ruled by a council of elves, half-elves and Virain men. The Kingdom is an isolated, tranquil, fairy tale setting which however has a grim secret. It is a seat of magical lore and the realm is neither a threat or a coveted prize due to its small size. Visitors from most realms are welcome here as long as they bring no evil or dangerous political agendas. It is a haven for any who wish it. Most religions are also tolerated here, but found normally only in the wondrous city of Tilaini.

People: Elves and Virain

The Tornish humans and half-elves live in a society heavily influenced by the new, emerging elven culture in Tornfall but with a mix of Virain culture and traditions. The appearances are either elven, half-elven or Virain.

Language: High Elvish and Virain

The most prominent and socially best esteemed language is High Elvish. However Virain is still used by the humans of Tornfall. All speak smatterings of Riverish to commune with outsiders.

Religion: Faerun

Ancient Kingdom of Mazûl

The cold and mist enshrouded ancient kingdom of Mazûl was said to be young at the time of the Overman Valdusian Empire. Maybe this is why they share their lands with a secluded and mystic Overman aristocracy of advisors and scholars. It is the second largest still existing Overman stronghold in Widewater. The Overman scholars and mages serve the conquering humans and feed them with longevity rituals and countless medicines to fool death and aging. The tombs of the City of the Dead (and countless other tombs across the realm) are filled with mummies and treasures. Rumours abound of the Dead Plague having reached the tombs. The heavy Mazûl Knights fiercely protect their lands against Ahuramazians, Wildlings, Virain, Pirates, Quangair and Antediluvians in their ancient and enchanted armours.

People: Mazulians

Mazulians tend to be dark haired with a fair complexion and striking blue, grey or green eyes. They are the tallest of men and tend to have no beards and even shave their heads. This is especially true of their nobles. The nobles - dead or living - define the people with their dreams of immortality and desperate extension of their lives. The death cult of the Mazulians have given them a sinister reputation which the nobles and their Overmen advisors build upon when creating their tomb cities, dark castles and sinister clothes and appearance. The tradition of

Mazulian nobles and dignitaries to wear elaborate and personal masks and gloves to hide their true age is well known. The dabbling in lore related to necromagic has led to many accusing fingers being pointed at the Mazulians. Accusations of abducted and sacrificed maidens and young men abound with the Virain and elves of the South Wilds.

Language: Mazûlan and Zairun

Mazûlan is the old and traditional language of the Mazûlans and is full of strange metaphors, illogical synonyms and strange pronunciations.

Zairun, the old ritual language of the Overmen is used for old spells and rituals. Only spoken by the advisor Overmen.

Religion: Mazûlan Death Cult

Quangair

A realm of seafarers who rule several islands in the Emerald Sea, the most noteworthy being Pim, Sleip and Woel. The Quangair are fearful of the inland faeries of the Dark Forest as well as the undead of the Sourlands. The mainland realm of Quangair is shared with Townsfolk of mixed origin, many of them refugees from the Sourlands.

People: Quangair and Townsfolk

The Quangair are pale and fair haired seafarers from the far north. Known for their beauty, laughter and songs, the Quangair seem content with life and eager to experience more of it. Their ships are small and light, not warships like those of Ostmark and the Ahuramaz Sea-Empire. The Quangair are however unsurpassed sailors and said to be able to speak to the sea itself. They love adventuring, exploring and the occasional raiding. They are new to dry-land conquest after having taken over the failing kingdom of Jarrik and naming it Quangair. The Quangair are allied to the Ahuramaz empire and often employed as expert pilots and boatmasters, but have yet to embrace the worship of the mighty Sea Goddess Anhumaz. Instead they worship different sea, wind and winter spirits whom have to be appeased for fortune upon the seas.

Language: Quangan and Riverish

Quangan is the island-peoples swift, jumpy language which utilises a very simple pictogram script.

Most of the mainlanders who are non-Quangair speak only Riverish.

Religion: Quangair spirits

Ostmark

Proud noblemen, jousting knights and a fierce people who believe in acts of headless bravery. The best and most devout paladins of Widewater come from Ostmark. Highly superstitious and often on quests into the Dark Forest. The realm is littered with forts and castles, all combining function with fairy tale beauty. Although not the greatest of seafarers, the Marksmen and their bulky trading ships ply the Emerald Sea and sail far up Widewater. Allying with Ostmark is hard, but once achieved there is an unbreakable bond of loyalty.

People: Marksmen

Marksmen are of fair complexion and often freckled. Red, blonde and sandy hair is common. Marksmen and women take great cultural pride in who they are and fiercely protect their land. Heroism and moral conduct (as well as boasting about it) is important. Their history, folklore and scriptures are full of tales of heroism and life isn't really worth living if it doesn't earn a song. Songs, entertainment and bards are highly appreciated amongst these romantic people. Even the creatures of the Dark Forest has a place in their world as a place to earn reputation and fame.

Language: Ostian

The hard Ostian language is rarely understood by outsiders. It's script is however as beautiful as its castles, knights and princesses.

Religion: Gods of the Mark

The Ahuramaz Sea-Empire

It lies deep in the Emerald Sea archipelago controls many islands. Its fleet is unparalleled.

People: Ahuramazians

The Ahuramazians of this strong Empire of seafarers are said to be as grey as the north sea and as weathered as the reef rocks of the islands. Their hair is grey or brown with the occasional black haired individual. Their faces are stern and chiseled, giving them a fearful appearance in their sea armours. They are the opposite of the fair Quangair. They might not be known for their beauty, but this they make up for with their colourful ship sails and elaborate temples to their sea-goddess. Ahuramazians tend to be very serious about everything, especially the weather, the sea and their goddess. Trade, slow conquest and spread of Anhumaz words is the Empire's core purpose.

Language: Ahuran

The mariners of the Ahuramaz Sea-Empire have a beautiful soft language known as Ahuran. It has a watery, flowing script complemented with sea-inspired pictograms. Most islanders of the

Emerald Sea know a little of this tongue in order to trade or just save face.

Religion: Sea Goddess Anhumaz

Other landless people

Several cultural groups exist within the realms of Widewater or travel The Wilds.

Rarrock-men

Semi-human tribes, known as sand-ogres. They hate the Firstmen for some reason and the firstmen fear them. Tall, strong, maned and with goat-like eyes. They live in religious and tightly knit family groups and often dress in unrevealing desert clothes. Rarrock-men are hard to understand but calm in their demeanor. But for some reasons they can sometimes be incited into dangerous religious frenzy. Isolated families of Rarrock-men are only found in the Glass Desert, Ezir, Neirya, Köping and the Irem lands.

Their religion hasn't been understood and some rumours abound of Rarrock men sacrificing humans and other people during one of their many strange ceremonies.

Language: Rarrock

Language of the mysterious Rarrock-men from beyond the Glass Desert. Silently and slowly spoken or whispered.

Religion: Rokrah the Creator

Wildfolk

Barbarians of especially the East Wilds, the Borderlands and the South Wilds. Fallen, barbaric people with obscure roots, fully occupied with surviving in the wilds.

Language: Riverish

Wildfolk mainly speak Riverish or some isolated half-forgotten pagan language.

Religion: Faerun or other pagan nature religions

Overmen

Look more different from humans. Manes down the back and often long sideburns and beards. Long faces. Long, extra jointed fingers, can see in Darkness but have weak, whispering voices. Double opposable thumbs, no nose, red goat-like eyes. Two toed feet. Don't wear shoes in

private. Found mainly in cities or in the realms of Kaerûn and Mazûl.

Overmen travelling the lands or living outside of their tightly knit family groups in Kaerun or Mazul nearly always wear concealing and hooded robes adorned with symbols and Zairun script. They rarely travel unprotected.

Old toppled statues or bleached murals however often depict the Overmen in alien-looking armour, fantastic, open clothes and bare feet.

The Overmen suffer under the weight of their ancestors sins, the whims of the New Gods and the inescapable hunger for forbidden lore. Fate has them tightly in its grip. An Overman often works directly for his family, patron or master and normally never questions his place in the great, timeless plot and his peoples slow return to power.

Language: Zairun

Old ritual language of the Overmen. Often used for old spells and rituals. Only spoken by the regal Overmen.

Religion: None

The Overmen don't really seem to worship any gods. But they do commune with the gods, summon them and strike deals with them. To the Overmen, the gods are real, but not to be worshipped, rather befriended or lured into servitude.

Trollbloods

Odd individuals found amongst all people and cultures with yellow, sunken eyes. Normally extremely strong and durable but more surly, and if rumours are to be true, more traitorous. Said to have troll blood in their lineage or to have been exchanged with troll children as infants.

Thorosians

Proud, but fallen people of the west. Once of Sudyan lineage but long hardened in their war against the orcs. Thorosians wear more practical clothes than their Sudyan cousins, often favouring armour complementa whenever travelling. They still adorn their clothes more than the other people of Widewater (apart from Sudyans and Irem of course). Ancestry and lineage to old extinct ruling houses is important for Thorosians who often have long family names linking them to abandoned places, lost lands, forgotten noble families and legendary deeds.

Language: Riverish

Riverish (sometimes known as Low Sudyan) is the most commonly spoken language, a mish-mash pidgin Sudyan and Northron trade language which most men and creatures understand throughout Widewater. For some, like Northrons, Townsfolk, Thorosians, River-Gypsies and Bog-men it is their mother-tongue.

Religion: Sadani Pantheon or River Gods

River Gypsies

Can be found all over the rivers, buying, selling, fishing and harvesting river kelp. They have floating, temporary raft villages. River gypsies are said to all be freckled and often wear their hair long and flowing - like the river. But this is not always true of course, as they are a mixed lot and tend to pick up drifters from other people who find comfort and familiar ties in this people. The traditions, worship of the river gods and the language of Riverish is what actually ties this semi-nomadic people together.

Although the Juttha Islands are officially a part of the Sudyan Empire, it has long ago surrendered their rule to the anarchistic societies of the River Gypsies.

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Religion: River Gods

Horsefolk/wainfolk

Brave traders, explorers and sometimes mercenaries with superior horsemanship. From the vast Greensea Plains. Known for their migrations, great wanes and huge family tents.

Language: Windspeech

The joyful language of the Greensea horsefolk is known as Windspeech. They claim it is like the wind, fast, fleeting and carries over the plains. The horsefolk have no written script but love to sing. They sing when travelling, when going to bed, when waking up, during great events and sometimes even during battle.

Religion: Arinii, God of Winds

4. Dead Languages and lost cultures

Countless other dead languages and scripts from lost cultures exist, such as Valdusian, Alabian, Sorotian, Chur'ackh and Firescript. They are encountered in old magical scrolls or in history books amongst the Sudyan and Overmen libraries or on ancient tablets in crumbling ruins.

Ruins, legends and cultural memories abound of lost realms and the fabled first kingdoms.

Valdusian

No longer spoken, but with many clear ties to Sudyan and Zairun. It was the common tongue of the Valdusian Empire created by the Overmen. Although it was the language of choice for the people and chronicles of that ancient time, it was never the tongue of the Overmen masters who brought Zairun with them across from the sea. Today old tomes with ancient forgotten and secret lore written in Valdusian can be found in the Sudyan libraries.

Alabian

The extinct tongue of the long forgotten Alabian culture which spread across what is today known as the Sourlands and Ostmark. The Alabian culture seem very simple, yet had a refined written language and seemed pre-occupied with astrological and magical mappings. Scholars claim the Alabian knowledge of the natural magic and the elder times must have been astounding. Stone circles, dolmens and cliff sides are often found adorned with their ancient glyphs and symbols.

Sorotian

The Sorotians once inhabited both shores of the Greywater River in what is today southern Radchahi. Libraries still hold ancient tomes written by these druidic people which seem to have ended by means of a terrible cataclysm around the time the orcs settled Widewater. Old tomes describing lost gods, secret spells and magical potions are sometimes found in the ruins or in orc treasure hoards.

Chur'ackh

The dry ruins of the Glass Desert hold the remains of a nameless people long gone. But the dry desert still holds ancient tomes and scrolls written in a chaotic and curly script the lizard-men refer to as Chur-ackh. It is said that the dark sorcerors of Neirya still know how to read Chur'ackh and pay well for scrolls brought to them.

Firescript

It is unknown who created the Firescript or what its purpose was. It can however be found all

over Widewater, in the civilised realms as well as in the wilds. It is never written in books or scrolls, instead engraved onto stone tablets, items, cliff sides, standing stones and other hardy material. The script cannot be seen with the naked eye, appearing only to be random dents and cracks. But when subjected to fire the ancient runes will form and burn for a while on the object in question. Only a few mages still have the ancient knowledge how to interpret Firescript and they don't like to share their secrets.

Godspeech

A mysterious root language known to the gods and other ancient beings. It is sometimes found on truly ancient ruins. The servants of the Fallen Gods residing in Hell, Underdeeps, Abyss and Dimhall sometimes speak fragmented parts of it. Most scary is this language on the rotting tongues of the Undead or from the hoarse burning throats of demons. Although communion with the Elder Gods is never clear, there are some who have heard them use this tongue and are confounded and terrified by the implications.

Draugnir

A language known only by some mages and the Dark Elves of the Dark Forest. It is believed by some to be the language of demons or dark sorcerers, because of its chaotic and jagged script, but is actually the script of the long lost Draug people, a powerful Elder Race which was allied to the Elder Gods and driven to extinction. The ancient elven seers fear the resurfacing of their forbidden lore relating to the use and taming of natural magic.

Cloud Runes

The ancient script of the long lost Giant Kingdoms is known to but a select few reclusive cloud giants. It was never used as an everyday script except for a few descriptions of kingly or heroic deeds. Instead the script was created by tame natural magic and bind it its runes. Every rune is a natural magic power in itself and combining them can create more complex functions. Cloud Runes glow and draw on surrounding magic when read aloud in a deep voice.

5. The Wilds

All around the civilized realms are the dangerous, wild places filled with dangerous barbarians, evil creatures, brave settlers and ancient beings tired of the encroaching humans and their gods.

Arkland Wilds

These high mountains are dry and hot at the lower altitudes, well as cold and snowy at the higher altitudes. Dragons slumber here and when one awakens they scour the lands, scattering settlers southwards. In their greed the most powerful of them have ventures south to steal mountain halls. The younger, lesser dragons stay awake longer and sometimes settle in the south. During the Great Cataclysm it is said that they all awakened and burned the north - creating the Glass Desert (and the lizard-men).

Silverwood Forest (Aukalikka Forest)

The Silverwood Seers rule this ancient forest. Ancient elven seers, often dormant in dream, maintain this realm of fae creatures – some of them fickle and dangerous. Their unaging trees demand a tribute in souls from sacrificial victims who seem glad to be hung from the branches and absorbed into the trees. Beautiful, good, yet dangerous and terrible. Enemies of the old gods and sad in their waning existence. They despise their younger brethren who have fled the traditional ways.

Glass Desert

A vast and hot desert situated on a great northern plateau. it's hot winds and sand blow down over the neighbouring southern realms. Lizard-men, dark sorcerers, djinn, sand drakes and other beasts roam these wilds. But the desert isn't only sand, it is also dry bushlands, rocky cliffs and wandering dunes. To the far east lies the Dune Sea where mysterious nomads are said to sail the bottomless, singing and shifting sands which cannot be trodden.

Valdusian Wastelands

The folly of the Overmen created the Great Cataclysm and nowhere is it more evident than in the Valdusian Wastelands. Even the magic is ruined here and haunts the physical ruins of the ancient Valdusian Empire. It is a barren and broken land.

East Wilds

Another wild, untamed wilderness inhabited by Elder Races, mythical beasts and unwanted but brave younger race pioneers as well as the Young Elves. The deep, ancient forests holds many mysteries and powerful untamed natural magic.

Oldwood Forest

An old, yet growing forest and home of the younger elves who have sought to create a new and beautiful realm.

Siegelands

The lawless no-man's land on either side of the Elbir River is plagued by the neverending conflict between the Thasean Warlords and Vargah'r Long Night. Although being one of Widewater's most fertile lands, nobody dares to farm here and it constantly patrolled by the forces of either side.

Ring Mountains

This patch of forest and mountain wilderness holds dark secrets, such as a the great hobgoblin kingdom of Bolgga, the Krakens of Lake Bolga and the Deephole mountain halls leading down to the Underdeeps. Monsters abound and sometimes wander outward to plague the neighbouring realms.

The Underdeeps

Secret, mainly unknown to all but dwarves and the goblin-folk and rife with foul creatures, but also with cruel Dark Elves worshipping their Spider Gods and Shadow Fiends. Although they once ventured down to avenge their high queen and battle the Fallen Elder gods, they soon became corrupted and began to worship darkness. The Underdeeps seem to connect to all parts of the lands and the Dark elf dark magic schemers know more about the surface realms than first expected. The bottomless chasms of the Underdeeps connect to the Underdeep Shadow Realm of the Fallen Gods. The border is not clear.

Greensea Plains

Fierce horsemen from the Plains sometimes dare the civilized lands with their wains. Some trade, others raid, some work as mercenaries.

South Wilds

Elder races and chimera beasts of the Overmen prowl the ancient, dark, cold pine forests and ancient places of worship. Young elves and isolated elder elves can both be found here in smaller societies.

The Borderlands

These ancient forests, rivers and mountains are home to mythical beasts, Elder Races, orcs and wild men. Uncharted, mystical and wild!

Cracklands

An emptied and dried-out ancient lake from the Great Cataclysm has become the dry and barren Cracklands, where water must be sought deep underground. These lands serve as the main settlement of the orcs who arrived from the west. From their fortified burrows these warrior cultures have violently pushed into the Widewater realms and the mountain halls of dwarves and goblin-folk alike.

The Badlands

Once a part of the Sudyan Empire and after that the proud kingdom of Thoros, the Badlands now serve as a buffer zone between the orc realms and the Widewater realms. Refugees, mercenaries and crusaders now huddle on Widewater's western shores.

Fire Mountains

Home of warring orcs, hobgoblins and dwarves. All kinds of dark creatures serve the orc kings, such as goblin-folk, necromancers and sorcerers. Even dragons sleep in these mountains upon their hordes of stolen gold in underground stolen halls.

The Dark Forest (Svortnid)

A haunted, evil place, the seat of Svortnid– a dark, misty, moss-ridden, pine forest woodland realm which fell to evil. Grim elves, dark fae, evil trees, monsters, hill giants, renegade orcs, trolls, etc roam the forest and abide to the ancient chaotic laws of ancient times. A grim and dark place which plagues the southern realms. Possibly only the dark side of the fae?

The Emerald Sea

The destination of Widewater River which is littered with an archipelago of thousands upon thousands of islands. Some small kingdoms, some monster infested, some filled with ancient ruins and treasures and some serving as pirate ports. Many islands are uncharted in the great archipelago and the deep holds many mysteries as well as horrors. The Antediluvians are the primary horror here, but also ancient beasts of the deep rise occasionally to plague the islanders and those brave enough to ply the waves.

6. Other notable places

River Teeth	Old river wall and gate. Has an unknown, Low Road passage. A Godhome but corrupted and used by the Antedeluvians and their masters.
Deep Juttha	Sunken town ancient stone town with only higher floors, pillars etc over water. (Sunken Venice).
Hell Gate	Smoky, open lava pits with tunnels and portals to Hell.
Flotsam	River gypsy floating town in the Widewater River.
Tree home	Ancient tree with dwellings and home to renegade elves who have formed a new and beautiful society.
Skytower	Aerial tower, cliff town for Radchail flyers.
Cloudhome	Floating skyrealm city in the Radchail Empire. A Godhome.
Ygghalhorn	Fire geyser in the Borderlands linked to the Fire Goddess Ygghal. People try to get close for blessing, sometimes burnt or die. Others are sacrificed.
Tilaini	Wondrous magical city of Tornfall. Neutral centre of magical lore and eldritch scholars. Built upon split cliffs overlooking the Emerald Sea and Tornfall River mouth.
Draug Tombs	Ancient and dangerous tombs of the most powerful Draug who were imprisoned in Time Tombs as they could not be truly killed.
Mount Tordun	Its summit plateau is the crumbling home of King Hrongnar the Cloud Giant, while the bowels of the mountain holds the goblin town known as Cogtown.
Cogtown	A maze-like underground town filled with tinkerer wonders, goblins and the occasional ogres.
Sky Pillars	Sixteen floating, gigantic pillars found throughout Mazûlia. They sometimes shift colour and occasionally seem to become translucent in different light. Although they have carved details and most likely open interiors, none are known to have ever managed to enter one.
Godhomes	Amazing places left in the world such as the Floating Pillars of Mazûlia, floating islands, strangely angled ruins, roaming and living tree houses etc.

7. Religions

The Godless

The faiths which have no gods, but rather respecting spirits of the wilderness or holy ideals.

The Faerun

The elves, fae, giants and goblin folk normally have no gods. Instead they worship, avoid, summon, use, abuse, fear, lure and obey the various spirits or natural forces residing in the world. These spirits act in complex relations to each other, which often differ from season to season, place to place, fae to fae. The spirits are not gods but seem to be personification of natural forces, magical creatures of their own or sometime deceased members of the fae who have chosen to linger in the world for some reason. They are countless, fickle and demanding, sometimes even demanding sacrifices from amongst the Elder or Younger races.. Like all fae they are chaotic. Most notable are the Dima and Dwora moons, Herun the Horned One, Sashrina the Tree, Jaltar the Fallen, Misma the Whisperer, Lavania the Winter-Queen, Narga the Summer-King, Old Man Marshes, The Dream Trees, Mist Whisps, etc etc

Scatha God-King worship

The Scatha worship their huge God-King as their only deity. Through holy portents, omens and deeds a God-King is recognised by their seers and rises to usurp the former and older God-King every 50 years or so. The usurpation is sometimes violent, sometimes peaceful, but is always followed by the ritual cannibalization of the former God-King. This is not a ritual challenge of strength between tribal chiefs but a magical and ceremonial identification of the next suitable God-King.

The God-King acts as the link to the magical world around the Scatha and leads their entire culture based upon his attunement to the magical world. He is consulted to provide answers to all kinds of questions, mundane and magical. The God-Kings sometimes even battle the gods of the other races in fabled crusades followed by their people. These mass attacks upon temples and shrines of other people always ends with the ritual “eating” of the rival god.

The Elder Gods

The gods the elder races battled according to legend. These gods returned to Widewater with the coming of the Younger races who worshipped them.

Sadani Pantheon

The Sudyan gods are colourful and each have their own personalities, motivations, areas of expertise, temples, priests, mysteries, worshippers and, rituals. Countless legends speak of their exploits, lusts, heroic deeds, human affairs and wars against foreign gods - mirroring the worldly deeds of their worshippers.

Ladanya the Hunter - food, farming, hunting

Savinya the Star-Maker - secrets, magic, stars and moons

Shelya the Lifebringer - physical and mental healing, restoration, spring, growth, life

Lurunnu the Wind-Maker - wind, sailing, communication, commerce

Mekh the Unruly - fire, hunger, anger and destruction

Calyadun the Wise - wisdom, comfort, protection

Lesya the Darkness - corruption, theft, slow death

Sammorin the River Snake - travel, boating, sea creatures and protector of sailors and fishermen

Jajaro the Grim - Lord of predators and beast. Creator of monsters who are sent to punish or test mortals. Culler of men.

Boromdya The Loud - God of joy, laughter, feasts and thunder

Seseima - Goddess of love, lust and complications. Known for creating strong bonds of unbreakable love. Trouble-maker who enjoys creating impossible bonds of love between high and low, between men or women, between foes. Her priestesses also serve as luxury courtesans in return for expensive offerings to the temple.

Rudya the Crafter - Creator of artifice and deliverer of secret knowledge to humans. Creator of great artefacts. Hoarder of ancient secrets. Creator of Artificials.

Maykal - God of merriment, food and wine. Often depicted as a smiling, fat man but sometimes as a slim skeleton with an insatiable lust for food.

Vajaris - The Twins of Fate. Luck, chance, change, reversing high and low, gameplayers

River Gods

The River Gypsies humbly worship river gods. These gods rule one river each and require tribute for passage and for the food and protection it supplies it people. The river gods often meet and visit each other in complex relations at the tributary mouths. Once a year during high flood they They don't build great temples, but make small token sacrifices on their prow boat shrines and are led by Prayer Pilots who better interpret the will of the gods through the weather as well as the actions and reactions of the world around them.

Blue Mother Wadda (main river god of Widewater River)

Sister Malla (Westhorn River)

Brother Valla (Easthorn River)
Uncle Silver (Silverlake)
Brother Cerra (Greywater River)
Brother Tivva (Grey River)
Sister Bones (Dried-out Dead River)
Sister Warra (Stillwater River)
Brother Vecca (Swiftwater River)
Brother Orra (New River)
Auntie Kes (Elbir Marshes)
Sister Vassa (Elbir River)
Brother Galla (Samulga River)
Sister Hatta (Hex River)
Uncle Death (Sourland marshes)

Lindorm worship

Pagans and barbarians of the Borderlands as well as East and South Wilds sometimes worship the feared monstrous Lindorm snakes. In return for protection (often from the cruel Lindorm itself), better hunting and fishing and some magical gifts, spells or trinkets, the semi-enthralled worshippers offer various treasures and human sacrifices at their foul dens.

Dragon Worship

According to legend the great dragons who now lie dormant under the mountains of the dry and barren Arkland Wastes once all awakened during the Great Cataclysm. The horror and desolation they wrought upon the lands can still be seen today and is remembered by the oldest of the Silverwood elves. It was during this time that Northrons turned to dragon worship in order to survive. During this time they were a cruel and deadly people. But when the great dragons returned to their slumbers, the dragon worship all but died out. The northrons of Ezir however continue to worship the great beasts. As if hearing their prayers and smelling their virgin sacrifices, smaller dragons slither down from the mountains to collect their due. Why this is so of for what purpose is unknown, but the elves speak of the dragons as more organised than commonly believed. In return for sacrifices and worship the dragons leave priceless gifts for the men of Ezir, such as dragon scales for armour, dragon horn for blades and spears, dragon blood for fire weapons as well as the occasional mystical and magical dragon rune upon a rock.

Death Lords

The Lich King is an enthralled servant of Dimhall. He helps spread the power of the Death Lords of Dimhall throughout Widewater. All undead with some intelligence still about them worship these Death Lords or unwillingly channel their powers into the world. The Death Lords often require sacrifice or deeds to spread their realms. Necromancers are granted power over the dead and serve them willingly.

The poor and hapless bog-men still eeking out a meagre existence as the living in the

Sourlands worship the Death Lords or strike deals with them to keep them away from their doors or their graves.

Naskarbeth - Queen of rot and decay

Mortovul - King of Undeath. Horseman of doom

Ezrokal - Duke of Bogs, Mires and graveyards

Rotesha - Duchess of Misery, Disease and Pestilence

Norkath - Lord of winter, cold and the long night

Necroth - Breath of death, unseen spreader of Death Plague, stealer of children. A semi-controlled savant force rather than a god.

Sabruth - keeper of secrets and memories. Trader in mortal experiences and emotions.

Rankura - Keeper of souls. Master of ghosts. Jailor of fleshless life. Life judge.

Sea Goddess Anhumaz

Most of the people of the widespread Ahuramaz Sea-Empire worship the great goddess of winds, seas and bounty. But she is a fickle god and as swift to anger as the sea itself. Beautiful, terrible and powerful. Her priestesses conduct sacrifices, bless voyages and foretell the most advantageous moments to undertake battles, journeys, marriages etc. They travel far and wide with the Empire's ships and build shrines and then temples to her honour throughout the archipelago. Loved by the Ahuramaz and feared by their enemies.

Infernalism

If demonologists are to be believed, the dread demon rulers of Hell obey a long and strict hierarchy and all have strength and weaknesses. Knowing this hierarchy, which demon to manipulate against the other and what strengths and weaknesses to use, is crucial for all who wish to barter a deal with demons. These deals often grant the infernalist magical powers, great beauty, youth, riches etc. But demons are extremely cunning and patient, so in the end the valuable souls of those they have entered into deals with normally fall to them. Souls are hard currency in Hell and the only way for demons to gain new powers, bodies, rank or favours from their lords.

Examples of demon lords: Azuroth the Defiler, Vargurak the Hungry, Nemeziak the Shadow Lord, Charbek the Soul Eater, Gorgoron the Scorcher etc.

Minor demons act as servants and many don't even have bodies.

Nefertat the Cloaked

Discreet and calm Neptem god of life, death and destiny. She weighs all men's deeds in life and decides what type of afterlife they should live. If she takes in interest in one of her worshippers it will be given a sign and will from then on be heavily influenced by fate. Such an individual is marked in some way, depending on the purpose of Nefertats interest. Finding and interpreting these signs as well as interpreting the result of an individual's chosen actions is the complicated domain of the cloaked androgynous priests. They also control the complicated ceremonies and difficult codes of conduct and morality a Neptem should live by. They are consulted and are part

of all matters cultural, financial and political as the result of every single individual's actions are important for the "Weighing" after death.

Iremite Pantheon

The desert gods are all beautiful, vain, powerful and desperate for glory and ventures in the mortal world. They are known to possess mortals, giving them unearthly beauty, wisdom and magical powers. But their fates are always fiery and most die violent or memorable deaths while achieving immortal glory. At least one aspect of each god is said to always wander the lands - if it can be found.

Arinii - God of Winds

The wind god of the Greensea horsefolk is more like a spirit whose voice and will can be heard in the wind and the rustle of the grass. Female shamans "married" to Arinii interpret his will and especially storms are important portents and full of commands. Thunder is a sign of Arinii's anger which sends all of the horsefolk cowering and covering their heads in their great tents. Arinii breaths life into the world every spring and renews creation. His dry breath of autumn steals the life breath from life overextending its stay in his creation.

The shamans are important in breathing life into new members of the horsefolk as well as catching the last breath of those dying. A lost soul breath lingering in the world angers Arinii and causes mischief for the living. Likewise the ashes of the burnt dead must be scattered to the winds to forever ride the Greensea as winds upon cloud steeds.

Gods of the Mark

Eight gods protecting the Realm and standing guard over both the people, their faith and their virtues. Different gods hear and protect people during different stages and roles in their lives. These gods require slightly different codes of conduct, prayer and offerings of their worshippers. It is traditional for children, men and women of different ages to at least once in their lives serve the gods as their priests and in their temples, surrendering all possessions and worldly duties. The gods, just like the people are extremely wary of outsiders and keep tight traditions.

The Father - men, fathers, kings

The Mother - women, mothers, queens

The Sister - adult unmarried women

The Brother - adult unmarried men

The Son - male children

The Daughter - female children

The Crone - old women, seers, councillors

The Old Man - old men, seers, councillors

Nazadi & The Spider Cult

Spider goddess of the Drow, master of Shadows, spawners of dark horrors. Nazadi is but one of the Underdeep Shadow Gods and fights a constant war against the others. She has a very

physical existence among the Drow in the Underdeep. She is both their god and their ruler. Nazadi cannot leave this dark realm, but longs for her return to the surface lands. She broods and plans and spins her webs of power, both physical and political throughout the Underdeep. Now and creatures from above, such as goblins, dwarves and even men venture down and and get caught in the webs of her people. Some of them are converted and return back to the surface to secretly spread Nazadi's gospel as her priests. The secret spider cult around these priests is but a whisper in Widewater. In return for information about the surface realm the worshippers gain power over the shadows and the protection of spider creatures which crawl up from their mother in the darkness below.

Abahr, the Horror of the Deep

Ancient, weather-worn and half sunken statues can be found along the various river shores throughout Widewater. They resemble a gruesome sea creature with strong arms, long teeth, four eyes and a scaly hide wrapped in tentacles. According to legend, these places were once the sites of Abahr worship. The same legends speak of a time when the horrendous Antediluvians of the deep sea trenches ruled the Widewater rivers. It was a time of horror and death as the antediluvians both sacrificed and ate the land people and even spawned monsters with their women. New statues of Abahr pop up now and then at the river mouth or on the Emerald Sea islands, showing that the monsters of the crushing depths still venture far beyond their strongholds around the Antediluvian Trench.

Mazûlan Death Cult

This ancient religion was once believed to have been a religion devoted to life, natural cycles and ancestor worship. But with the coming of the Overmen from their fallen Valdusian empire, the religion became more sinister as the Mazulan nobility began their desperate hunt for eternal life and tapping into the lands of the dead to adhere to the wills of their lords, even after their deaths. The new god Mazaru was introduced to the religion more than a thousand years ago, but is still referred to as the Advisor. He is often depicted as a mummy or master of death who advises the Mazulan nobility in life and death.

Infused with dark and forbidden Overman lore, the religion today exists to prolong life, prepare for inevitable death and determine the will of the deceased nobility. Religious spokesmen - Death Tongues - speak for the dead and serve as a second court to the living ruling court. Dark necromagic is common amongst Death Tongues and the Overman advisors, sharing dangerous similarities to the powers of the Necromancers.

Quangair Spirits

These lesser gods seem to have existed for a long time and seem reasonable and benevolent, if somewhat distant, absent and slow. Scholars speculate that they are gods slipping into legend and history. The Quangair believe they are ancient spirits of great power whose attention must be gained by praying, shouting, singing and praising as loud and devotedly as possible. Their powers wax and wane, so it is crucial to know when and how to catch their attention.

Quros - The Southern Wind Child
Weiros - The Winter Mother
Quana - The Green Sea Father

The New Gods

These newer, independent gods (some would say usurper gods) are either worshipped by smaller cults, tribes etc or are part of the Orcish, Radchaii or Thasean nations. Several are summoned and bargained with by the Overmen. Vague legends claim they are powerful Overman sorcerers who ascended to godhood and thereby causing the Great Cataclysm.

The Radchaii pantheon

The Radchaii are governed by a dual God/Goddess known as the Duality or Raii/Raii-at. The radchaii therefore always choose an emperor and empress under strict religious procedures which are twins and brutally groomed to rule.

The Duality has conquered and enslaved many other gods which are part of the growing pantheon. As a reward for their surrender and servitude these gods take care of lesser deictic tasks, such a protection of travellers, fertility, lust, trickery, battle-frenzy, air-travel etc. This reward for utter subjugation is mirrored in radchaii worldly affairs.

Valaric the Usurper

Giver of ancient secrets, artifice knowledge, smithcraft and complex magical rituals.

Worshippers of Vorgon have no priests, instead they are scholars, artificers, mystics, magicians and such like who all petition their god with sacrifices or pacts in return for knowledge.

Knowledge is power when it is hoarded and traded. All who serve Valaric enter a pact of servitude, recognised by a grey patch somewhere upon their bodies. It is not uncommon that Valaric grants great powers for great sacrifices - sacrifices sometimes too horrendous to endure for his worshippers who go mad.

Those who wander the world seeking lore and spreading Valaric's gospel are referred to as "Messengers" and are sometimes granted visions or instructions by Valaric or are even ridden by him. When in such a Godtrance they can perform miracles. Messengers sometimes setup a metaphorical "temple" centered around themselves (in a library, town square, nobles house etc) to actively spread Valaric's gospel or a certain knowledge people need to learn. Such a "temple" normally only lasts a couple of weeks or months. Senior Messengers are referred to as Keepers and are normally the ones who initiate new acolytes to the powers of Valaric and know the secret locations of the words of Valaric put down in sacred scripts. Keepers frequently act as the voice and ears of Valaric and frequently go into Godtrance.

Messengers and Keepers often correspond amongst themselves and with other worldly factions. Complex codes are often used in these cases, as well for secret scientific notes. The most revered and mystical is the Flux Code, which is known only to important Messengers and Keepers. This code somehow changes over time, but is still understood to its users through

their communion with Valaric.

Messengers and Keepers are highly regarded in many realms and civilized religious communities, as they often freely spread their knowledge. Mighty rulers, priests and mages petition Keepers with great wealth or political favour in order to gain secret and forgotten lore. This has led to Keepers often being politically involved in both matters of state and the great High-Mage conflicts.

Once per year several Keepers and Messengers gather at certain location defined or scryed 1 month before its time. At these Communion it is common for Valaric to manifest through his followers to create demigods and to spread a certain lore. To outsiders these gatherings seem very scholastic and boring, but few understand that a god is present.

Much like the Brotherhood of Mashuru, Valaric's servants are bent on acquiring lore, spells, artefacts and lost history. But while the Brotherhood seems to have a clear agenda, Valaric's servants are bound to their god's unfathomable whims and are known to fulfil quests beneficial for other gods whom Valaric cooperates with.

Vorgon & The Dream Witches

Vorgon is a master of dreams. His dream-witch priests can invade people's dreams if they can make the right connections during daytime meetings. They introduce strange desires, plans, ideas and strategies which their victims believe are their own when they wake. Some lose their minds and become souless slaves to the cult. The most powerful can even cause daydreams and play mind tricks upon their foes. Legend says that Vorgon often is reincarnated as a Stone Giant and it is common to hold a mummified but still living, giant's head in the temple's inner sanctum. Foul juices are distilled from the head and used in the priests' rituals.

Thasean War Gods

Several minor and major gods which all are known for their martial prowess and mainly provide protection, grant special battle skills or induce frenzied rage, immunity to pain in return for quests or guidance to conquest. The Thasean culture has a complicated approach to war and heroism, which amongst other things require them to die well in battle, spare brave foes, slaughter innocent cowards, indulge in slavery (of the worthless defeated) and compete in boasting.

Zworeg - Grandmaster and inventor of War. Bringer of fury and tireless combat.

Bizanga - The sly and deadly slayer in the night

Zuszkina - The fierce protector of homesteads, children and women, known to involve battle frenzy in young mothers.

Bazwek - Wise elder tactician and maker of battle plans.

Pezkina - Sly and seductive shield maiden, trickster and protector of common soldiers, masterless warriors and travellers.

Szok - He Who Comes for the Dead. He weighs the deeds and courage of the dead and decides if they get to join the Heavenly Horde or if they will be reborn as maggots, insects, rodents and cowards. He is known to focus on the quality and courage of the mind and heart and not rank or deed. Women dying to protect their young are especially favoured.

The Orc Gods

Despite being fractured into different clans under different chieftains and kings with different chaotic dialects, the gods remain uniform among the orcs. Every clan worship one primary god but respect the others and would not anger them unnecessarily.

Ragrog - great grandfather of war and destruction. Rage and warfare are his primary attributes along with peculiar orcish honour and shame.

Gorog - Brother of Ragrog and master builder of forts and war machines. Tinkerer, smith and clever conjurer of war plans.

Grokkar - Young warrior god of strength, courage and swiftness. Master of raids and swift attacks.

Reifagga - Huntress and master of beasts. Tamer of Vorgs, giver of endurance and patience.

Drekklā - Silent slayer of the night. Deceiver and trickster. Mistress of assassination and vengeance.

Ygghal

Fire Goddess of the Borderlands. Worshipped at the fire geyser of Yggalhorn. Worshippers prove their devotion by getting as close to the frequent eruptions as possible. But as their magnitude varies, some die horrible deaths. Burns from Yggalhorn tend to take on a violet tone and are signs of the Goddesses favour. Sacrificial animals or humans are tied closer to Yggalhorn and the area is littered with the blackened bones of the faithful as well as those sacrificed. The lone priest and some devoted are granted fire powers, such as immunity, scorching touches, fire starting, fireballs, blood boiling, mind scorching etc etc.

Rokrah the Creator

The Rarroc-men believe that their god created them before all other things and creatures. They shared the endless infinity with him and later journeyed to his new creations at will. But Rokrah and the Rarroc were betrayed by the false creatures which arose to become false gods.

God-like in power but not gods. Some of them were trapped together with a great piece of Rokrah in this world and forever barred to return to infinity. Wandering the lands, they seek to strengthen Rokrah's power in this world and their own magical power, so that they can leave. The fallen piece of their god manifests as a great mountain far to the north of the Glass Desert. It is a holy place which the Rarroc allow no outsiders to see.

The Rarroc believe that the Overmen were somehow responsible for this cataclysm and seek to destroy their experiments, lore and relationship to the New Gods.

Now and again during religious ceremonies, Rokrah speaks to them and directs them towards its adversaries or to obtain another fragment of itself (Godstones). When this happens the Rarroc community is whipped into a deadly religious frenzy. The worship of the Godstones are laughed at by those few of other races who have seen it.

Samaael the Thunder God

A god of wisdom, judgement and thunder, which controls the elements of air as well as lightning and thunder. He is worshipped primarily in the cities of Kaerun, Wurdun, Teyvûz, Ulunya and Solora as well as other major cities. He is known for his meddling in human affairs and strange electric discharges moving of their own accord as if alive, called God Flares.

Colaria the Creator

A creator god worshipped in the great northern cities known for her beauty, fertility and love bonds. She has the power of manipulating pregnancies, births and offspring of her worshippers, granting them wondrous children and sometimes demigods in return for sacrifices of animals which are dissolved in front of her statues in front of the awed flock.

Rignor the Silent

A dark and secretive god invoked in secret by assassins, thieves and other secretive wrongdoers of the larger cities. He grants temporary powers of stealth, invisibility and protection in return for dark deeds communed via special pauper messengers known as Scarecrows who hear his words.

Cults & Orders

Witch-Hunters

A cult of devoted and sometimes magically gifted witch and demon hunters. Equipped with uncanny tools, rituals and investigative methods. Ever vigilant for the Blight and for the possessed. Often brutal in their cleansings and instant trials. Given leeway in many cities because of the fear of the blight and Long Night demons. But also because of the fear of having their accusing finger pointed at them. Some are said to have become tainted themselves during their work. Witch-Hunters often also have to hunt and destroy/banish non corporeal demons, such as a demon song, poem, story, disease, cloud etc.

Mashuru & The Brotherhood of Memory

This old and mysterious brotherhood wander the realms in search of artefacts of artefactuals which they pillage from ruins or buy, trade or steal from other people. It is common that only they understand the significance of a seemingly unimportant artefact.

They offer rare historical information, clues to spells or other mystical knowledge in return.

Where their money or their information comes from is a mystery, as they seem to be given this information by their god Mashuru in drug induced trances. Rumours abound of strange artefactual installations being built in remote places by the Brotherhood of Memory.

Demigods, Dimholts, Abyssmals, Shadowkin & Demonborn

All the gods seek to manipulate the people of Widewater and use them as pawns in their endless games of power. A rare but significant type of pawn is an offspring with one of the peoples of Widewater. As the gods can only walk the lands under rare circumstances and in avatar forms, the union of a god and a mortal is extremely rare. Yet they do exist.

Many demigods are mindless monsters of great power. This is especially true of demigods born to the fae or Elder Races - but not always so. The wild, natural magic still residing in them is to blame if scholars are to be believed. Demigods born to humans, orcs and Overmen are often superior members of those species, destined for great acts of heroism and doomed to face endless threats hurled at them from the other gods.

While demigods are caught strongly in the web of fate, they do have a chance to make a choice and decide who and what they are. Some few have risen above the game of the gods to create their own destinies.

Demigods created by the Fallen Gods are however always dark and dangerous. They are referred to as Demonborn (as the cruel and cunning union between men and demons is the most common union), Dimholts (often powerful human necromancers, Half-Dead Champions or Death Plague spreaders), Shadowkin (monstrous, uncontrollable and mainly among the Drow) or Abyssmals (true, leviathan monsters of great power with Antediluvian origin).

All demigods/demonborn are born with much higher mana and moxie. Likewise they tend to live much longer and heal faster. They also have many other types of powers, attributes and behaviour - largely depending on who sired them.

8. Magic

Magic is divided into three different types depending on their source, effects and price to use.

Natural magic

A.k.a raw or elemental magic. It is chaotic, fickle but often subtle. It normally takes no toll on the user, but strange side effects or other effects than planned might occur. Certain places strong in natural magic can be tapped for enormous amounts of raw magic.

- Fae glamour
- Vitni (elven magic)
- Seering
- Shamanism
- Witchcraft
- Enchantry

Artificial magic

A.k.a. tamed or altered magic. The legacy of the first mages (possibly the gods). This magic can be weak or strong and moulded to countless needs. It is easier to control but always corrupts or withers the user and the environment.

- Sorcery (Dark, evil magic)
- Artificy (Creation of artefacts from ancient magical components reputedly left over from the God War.
- Wizardry
- Illusionist
- Warlock
- Dream Witches (artificial magic). Men and women with countless symbols and texts on body. Touches them to control people and their dreams. Illusions, calming, making docile, forcing actions. False actions are performed in “daydreams” while real actions are very different. Emotions transferred to victims.

Divine magic

A.k.a. Godcraft. Channeled to the user via the Elder or New Gods or from the Fallen Gods of Hell, Abyss, Dimhall and Underdeeps. It normally always requires something in return - voluntary or not. Sacrifices, temporary possession (God-Ridden), prayer, rituals etc.

- Necromancy (Dimhall magic). Liches can disguise themselves with life and youth from their victim's life force. An illusion. Lower temperatures as attack. Spirit mist envelops and assembles bones into skeleton monsters.
- Shadowcraft (Underdeep magic)
- Abyssmal (Abyss magic)

- Religious power (Divine magic)
- Infernalism (Hell magic)

Different names for magic users:

Wizard, sorcerer/sorceress, magician, illusionist, witch, conjurer, priest/priestess, necromancer, enchanter/enchantress, diviner, shaman, witchdoctor, charmer, warlock, magus, thaumaturge, seer, mage, diabolist, miracle-worker.....

9. Artificy

The art of crafting and combining normal and magical components into magical items. All kinds of combining crafts are used, such as forging, assembly, carpentry, masonry, jewellery etc.

The main components are always ancient items reputedly leftover from the God Wars or made by the first Overmen in ancient Valdusia, so called Artefactuals. See the Magic Items list for an overview on known Artefactuals and their use.

10. Creatures

Fae

Blights, treants, dryads, scarecrows, shambling mounds, mist faeries, pixies, gnomes, Hags,

Undead

Banshees, lich, ghouls, ghasts, blotrese, revenants, skeletons, zombies, spectres, wights, will o wisps, wraiths, mylings, ghosts, crawling claw (often acting as an assistant/familiar)

River beasts

Lindorms, tigerfish, shellbacks, crocopikes, river snakes, Siltfiends, Nightcrawlers/Mudcrawlers

Beasts of the Wilds

Wolves and worgs, lindorms, small dragons, large/old dragons, spiders, sea dragons
Trolls (Disputably intelligent or just extremely cunning predators), etterkops, carrion crawler

Beasts of the Underdeeps

Shadows, shades (half-living shadows), Driders, Spiders, Darkmantles, Quaggoths, Troglodytes, araumycos (huge fungal growth cavern entityk), beholders, hook-horrors, shoggoths, Shadow leeches, phaerimm, fungials (fungi animals), cloakors, Grell, Grick,

Infernal Beings

Various types of demons exist. Few have physical bodies and rely instead on possession (4-6d6 vs Willpower contest to win 10 point victory. One roll per hour). Those that have physical bodies exist in this world only a limited amount of time (duration of spell, duration of certain phenomena such as blood moon, duration of night, during a song, during a summoning etc).

Examples of demons:

Succubus/incubus (steals IP during ecstatic dreams). Live only that night and for duration of

stolen IP).

Rider (standard possessing demon which grants powers to the body ridden while wearing it down)

Demon song (all who hear it risk possession)

Demon sickness (like a contagious disease)

Demon item (owner is possessed while item is in his possession)

Demon story (possession as it is retold/passed along)

Familiar (small demon-infested advisor animal)

Inhabitor (demon-infested advisor item)

Shade (semi-physical demon with limited powers to inflict harm and manipulate the physical world. Normally short duration)

Manifestation (physically manifested demon. Normally bound to a certain item, person, place, phenomena and/or limited in time. Powerful, cunning and cruel)

Hellbound (a demon encountered in Hell with its full god-like powers)

Demon Hound (Often a servant of swift messenger, mainly capable of existing at night and on Blight ground.

Gibbering Mouther

Artificials

Creatures and monsters from the dawn of time - God War if legends are true - created from non-living materials, such as wood, grass, clay, metal, bones etc. It is believed that sorcerers can also create inferior versions of these as servants or guardians. Some new artificials seem to assemble by themselves in places of corrupted or wild magic. In some cases live animals have melded with artificial components into a tortured new lifeform.

Abyss spawn

Creatures from the crushing depths of the Abyss. Often leviathan sea creatures like: krakens, sea dragons, razor eels, facehuggers, craboids, chuul (servants of the Aboleth)

The leaders of these are the Aboleths who travel in and out of the Abyss at will. They are the direct servants of the Abyss Gods.

The best known and most feared are the lesser and greater Fomorian (a.k.a Deep Ones), who are created by Fomorian or Aboleth mating with and corrupting Elder and Younger races into cold, monstrous and chaotically varied sea-humanoids without compassion or mercy. Most Fomorian shun daylight however and cannot live more than a couple of hours outside of water.

11. Cool Things

Nidfrost - cruel contagious frostbite-like plague

Death Plague - contagious plague causing painful death and causing the dead to rise as undead.

Blight - Infernal corruption of the lands through spread of great demonic artefact spikes driven into the ground.

12. World Mysteries

Who are the Overmen? What are they? The Overmen originally came across the Great Sea in magical ships that couldn't sail. Sailed without winds. Sunk or were destroyed by Antediluvian traitors/slave rebellion. Survivors bound and controlled the magic - like the gods - creating great feats of artificial magic and ended the ancient Elder Era with the founding of the great Valdusian Empire. They put a lid on the older First Men kingdoms for some unknown reason, purging information about these.

Why have the Overmen purged the First Men history of their kingdoms and Empires?

Overman hubris. Meddling with ancient, powerful magic. Why? Legends of great wizards trying to ascend to godhood and causing the Great Cataclysm. But some of them seem to have succeeded? At least to demigods? They are the new gods. Ongoing struggle with the Old Gods.

Ruins

Old Firstman ruins of their fallen empire.

Ruins of the old Kingdoms (before Overmen empire). Clearly linked to elemental magic and the fae (who know more about these times. Claims the world is sleeping - restlessly - and waiting for the return of High Magic.

Ruins of the cursed lost Elder Race known as the Draug

Ancient river ruins (shores and river islands) with pukel-men like monster depictions (Antediluvians)

"Ruins" or magical places of fae origin.

Ruins of the Glass Desert civilization (and neighbouring lands) now infested with Lizard men.

Old, dried out canals.

Ruins of the regal Cloud Giants.

Why are the Dragons sleeping? What do they know? What is their purpose? They are linked to the downfall of the Giant Kingdoms and the God Wars somehow. They awakening heralds either great doom, salvation in a time of need or destruction of the old and beginning of something new. Sometimes referred to as the Wardens of the World. The cruelty and bestiality

of their smaller kin and those few who temporarily awaken is ascribed to a curse of sleep laid upon them by the gods (saving men and orcs from their wrath) which doesn't let them awaken fully to their true noble selves. Legends claim they are nothing more than men/elves/goblin-folk who have a second powerful guise as that of a giant fire breathing serpent.

What is the nature of the gods, their meddling in worldly affairs and their struggle against each other?

What are the Dead Plagues? Story behind this? Lich King of Sour Lands behind it. Reason for spread of dread Necromancer cult.

The demons of Vargahr's Long Night. The spreading Blight. Where do they come from? Portals.

Mysterious "Heart Stones", "Star Crystals", and other key magic components with mystical power found in different realms, items, heirlooms, artefacts, temples etc. Hunted by artificers and alchemists for incorporation into magical items. What are they? Where did they come from? What does the mysterious hooded brotherhood know who is secretly hunting/acquiring them? Left behind high-tech scrap? Tools of the gods? Many legends and theories.

Where do the Garrock-men come from? Why do they hate the Firstmen? Why do the Firstmen fear them? They and their god was trapped on this world when the Overmen tried to ascend to godhood and caused the Great Cataclysm.

What is the goal and purpose of the defiling, corrupting Antedeluvians? What is their history? Statues and engravings in ancient riverside ruins show the extent of their ancient river based influence.

The strange goals of the elven seers and Timeless fae. Spreading seeds with adventurers. Planting strange beasts. Building magic energy constructs to channel, reroute, free, trap etc different types of magic. Unknown agenda and timeless struggle between the Two Trees.

What are the dwarves hiding deep underground? What are the secrets of the deep? Still seem able to harness elemental powers, but through crafted tools.

The Whispering Well. Bottomless well with runes. Whispers are vaguely like dwarvish.

Where does the goblin technical know-how and ingenuity come from?

The existence of the Drow and the Underdeeps and their fear of the sun. The elves created the Sun in their war against the gods. The sun prevents them from returning but is also the curse of the elves and their reason for no longer being immortal or having lost their strong link to the magic and the fae. The Drow despise them for this and hide underground to keep their powers. Call surface dwellers "the Sun-Bleached".

The sly and patient plans of the Orc Gods who slowly push the orc tide towards the east.

Clues pointing to a magical high-tech past.

Moving stars and chaotic constellations which are extremely hard to map and predict (orbital installations and or system installations). Irregular night and day cycles and seasons?? Sun brightens and flares. What moves the skies? Astrologists know some secrets they're not sharing.

Clues pointing to genetical changes in races. Tampering.

Gods are immortal, powerful (but often mad, mentally elevated etc) transhumans????

What are the Council of Eternals up to? What is the purpose of their dark plans?

What are the Overmen Auditors up to? What is their End Plan?

What is the reason for the dark Forest and what created the dark fae?