

# SKYREALMS of Jorune

## *Salu Sailors*

By Sholari James

A proud seafaring people and expert shipwrights live along many of Jorune's ocean shores, and on many remote islands. At first glance they might seem much like any human seafaring culture, but when studied closer the differences are obvious. These are not true humans, they are the salu - humans adapted to the sea - the greatest sailors and shipwrights ever to have plied the oceans of Jorune.



### **History**

Originally, the bio-engineered humans were the result of illegal tampering with human genes by unscrupulous nations who in secrecy created highly efficient mining and farming stations in Earth's oceans. By operating fluid filled vessels, these bio-engineered humans could survive

and operate under greater water pressures than normal humans. They could explore and mine the last unknown regions of Earth. When discovered by Terran authorities, the altered humans were granted refugee status and in some instances, were allowed to create their own cities out of the bases that once had been their work facilities.

They were officially referred to as Homo Aquatus and soon proved their worth to the Terran Colony Council. As more than 70% of Jorune's biomass could be found in the oceans, it was only natural to include a contingent of Homo Aquatus to explore this unknown and often hostile territory.

Three main research stations were created for the Homo Aquatus on Jorune. NorthSea Station outside the coast of Burdoth (now known as the mysterious Salu city of Petubah), SouthSea Station in the Kitcharka Sea in south-eastern Drail and Knossos Station in the great inland sea called Lake Dau-Uh-Dey. The stations were equipped with both air- and fluid filled submarines and a multitude of other research equipment necessary to catalogue the underwater marvels of Jorune.

Most of the work was led by the Homo Aquatus scientist and self proclaimed leader Salo Martinez. The educated and charismatic Homo Aquatus was already a legend on Earth for his leadership during the first hard years of freedom from slavery. He was an example to mundane humans and homo Aquatus alike with his wisdom and leadership. To his own people he symbolised everything a Homo Aquatus could become and the respect they could earn among humans.

Both human and Homo Aquatus worked in these research facilities in harmony – until the shanta attacked.

When the Knossos Station was attacked its inhabitants managed to flee into the great lake. Descendants of these colonists would return in the coming years, but now as the mentally estranged acubon of Lake Dau-Uh-Dey, as the Manon had changed them. [*See the Acubon Secrets essay for more details*]

The SouthSea Station was a combined surface station which was entirely destroyed by the shanta during the initial attacks upon the human colonists.

The NorthSea Station was smaller and only had few surface access tunnels, which were blocked by the colonists after they received the first news of shantic attack. Because of this, the NorthSea station remained operational long after the other outposts had been attacked and destroyed. The survivors of the SouthSea and NorthSea Stations would learn more about the great oceans around them over the years to come. Slowly they would become the salu people of Jorune.

## **Salu of the northern hemisphere**

During the first years of the human-shantic war the NorthSea Station struggled to stay operational. The survivors were both mundane humans and Homo Aquatus who cooperated well when organising their defences. The great Salo Martinez led them and structured their survivor culture to best suit the new conditions. However, the lack of resources was acute and a lot of time was spent foraging for food in the surrounding area while avoiding shantic warriors. As all equipment was intact the SLAV's (Submerged Liquid Atmosphere Vessels) were frequently used.

While the humans of the NorthSea Station were unaware of the Leesh-Ebeeca they did find that shantic hostilities quickly dwindled. More time was therefore spent trying to make contact with other colonies. Binding human and Homo Aquatus survivors together again was ever the prime objective of Salo Martinez.

But all nearby coastal colonies the SLAV's could reach were found destroyed and abandoned. From the brief messages and missing persons notes left behind by fleeing colonists, the refugees of NorthSea Station understood that some human survivors had ventured further inland to avoid the shantic warriors. Unwilling to leave the safe haven of NorthSea Station the humans and Homo Aquatus stayed in hiding, living off their dwindling resources.

While the station had a near endless supply of fusion power and sufficient food could be found, other important necessities were impossible to manufacture, most importantly, the fuel for the SLAV's. When suddenly one of the two fusion reactors malfunctioned, half of the station lost its climate control. The climate control purified the air and was crucial to human survival underground.

A great council was held but no unanimous decision could be made. Most refugees, Salo among them, meant it was time to leave NorthSea Station and try to join survivors of the larger colonies further south. The last complete survivor transmission received by NorthSea Station had come from what was to become Anasan and fragments of transmission from the Thanterian colonies could sometimes be intercepted. Salo and a large number of the refugees of NorthSea Station therefore decided to try and reach these larger colonies by means of the SLAV's. Others disagreed and meant that it was wiser to risk the shorter inland trip to the survivors of the smaller and closer Gauss colony.

This was the first crack in Salos wise leadership, as he allowed the survivors to split into smaller groups.

Two expeditions set out, one by sea and the other by land. However, a large number of Homo Aquatus were reluctant to leave their safe haven and source of food and stayed behind to guard NorthSea Station.

History does not reveal what happened to the expedition headed for Gauss. As Iscin legends do not speak of these humans it must be assumed that they were killed by shantic warriors or settled elsewhere.

The expedition headed for Anasan reached its destination and there abandoned the SLAV's, which had run out of fuel. Among the hostile, but fertile tropical waters, the Homo Aquatus were forced to found their new homes. History is vague about the destiny of the mundane humans, but bronth historians claim that they simply joined the Anasan survivors that would evolve into the Reigos Culture. The Homo Aquatus found an abundance of food and shelter among the many coves, cliffs and caves of the West Trinnu Jungle Lands and hid themselves from the shanta. Over the years they would forget their origins and forced to evolve into a very primitive society in the dangerous tropical waters. Their culture became bent upon survival.

Legend among these wild southern salu speak of a great chieftain Saluu who gave them their name - Salus. Thus, even though Salo Martinez final faith is unknown, his name would be forever honoured in his people. Over time they became the tribal salu of today and would spread over the entire region encompassing the Kymay, Roray, Ash-Shen, Kativi and Sillipean Seas. They would not come into contact with their cousins from the south or the north until more than 1000 years later. They would however share one thing; their name. They were all Salu – Salos people.

### ***The Civilised Salu***

The now small number of inhabitants that had remained at NorthSea Station found that they could no longer keep it operational. The Homo Aquatus chose instead to settle on other islands and along Doben-al's eastern coast. Soon the station became an eerie, silent, dead town, only visited during holy days of remembrance when the Homo Aquatus would wait for their lost brethren during a symbolic day and night.

The Homo Aquatus along Doben-al and Burdoth's northwestern shores evolved into a more civilised people than their cousins of the Trinnu Coast. Their culture evolved to become the stereotype of salu seafarers and mariners in the eyes of the realms of the crescent moon of civilisations. They early changed their name to Salos, after their popular legendary leader and cultural founder.

As the salu relied on the sea for sustenance and protection they early began the development of unpowered sea vessels. Boats and ships not only aided them when fishing or hunting, they also gave the salu some protection from Jorune's larger marine predators. Over centuries to come the NorthSea salu developed and honed their shipbuilding techniques to perfection. Thanks to their connection to the sea and their nearly natural ability to understand the mechanics and physics of water bodies, currents and winds, their ships soon outshone those of the ancient mariners of lost Earth.

With their ships, the salu began exploring the Assydre, Vosule and Jaspian Seas, as well as the coasts of northern Burdoth and the Doben-al. They early encountered the suspicious Delmerans in their coastal cliff forts and a sparse trade began. The Delmerans did not entirely trust the "seafolk" and had no need to cross the waters. Despite this, fish were exchanged for agricultural crops at secure trading locations. The Homo Aquatus desperately asked for any news or rumours about the inland settlements, but the Delmerans were as isolated as they were.

Shortly thereafter, the salu encountered the bronth and tologra who were migrating along the coasts of Ros Crendor during The Great Wanderings of the Iscin tribes. These creatures were at first shunned for their fearsome visage. But along the northeastern coast of Ros Crendor, a bronth and salu chieftain met for the first time in peace among the sand dunes. They shared a meal of tender dothobider meat and swapped experiences. This was the beginning of a friendship that has lasted nearly three millennia.

Over the years the contact between the bronth and the salu increased. Inland goods were traded for fish and superior fishing vessels made by the salu. Knowledge of how to build ships was exchanged for wisdom and lore that otherwise had been lost to the salu. Much of the cultural refinement of the civilised salu society has its origins in bronth lore and ethics.

It was through the voyages of the salu, that word for the first time reached the bronth and tologra of the empty and virgin lands to the northeast. Vast forests and fields ruled neither by shanta or man.

During their long exploratory journeys, the salu were the first to come in contact with the expanding ramian influence. Contrary from the Delmerans and bronth, the ramian were not interested in establishing contact with the salu and often attempted to destroy or steal their ships.

At the end of the fifth century after the Great Destruction, increasing shantic violence against the bronth and tologra, combined with droughts and plagues created a religious exodus to the eastern coasts of Ros Crendor. Bronth explorers and some colonists began venturing with the salu sailors to the new lands in the east. With the arrival of the tologra who had fled from their inland domains, the religious exodus escalated into frenzy. Over-confident in their own ship building skills, the bronth hurriedly constructed many of the ships themselves for their great armada. Only the tolograns put their entire faith in the salu and their ships. During the legendary stormy crossing of the Assydre Sea, it was the tologran ships that managed to ride out the storm and be carried away to faraway Sharden, while the bronth ships sunk or were cast upon the shores of Crendor.

In the lands to become Burdoth, the salu had only sparse trading contact with the growing Delmeran culture. However, during the 12<sup>th</sup> century the rise of the Essanja culture to the east began posing a threat to the salu. The marine culture of the Essajeans saw the salu as competitors and the priests of Sajjanis saw them as suitable sacrifices to their terrible god. Also the rise of the powerful Vucian Empire caused salu estrangement from their human cousins, as salu began being hunted as exotic slaves.

Because of the competition with the humans, the salu settled the coasts further to the west, in the lands to become Northern Khodre. The salu also settled the coasts of the peaceful lands of newly founded Dobre and Crendor. Here their skills were appreciated and their people had a haven.

When the fast growing bronth culture in Dobre came in contact with their lost cousins the woffen to the east, the salu followed and settled the sheltered bays of Hooth and Barooth between Dobre and Lundere. To this day, the Two Bays have ever been the salu's best sheltered havens and one of their most populous regions. Neither has there ever been any wars with their bronth and woffen neighbours in Lundere and Dobre.

Maybe because of their estrangement from mundane humans, the salu suffered few of the great plagues that ravaged the human survivor cultures in 600-800 PC. Instead the civilised salu continued to spread and flourish as a people. Soon three main kingdoms existed in the Two Bays, Assydre Sea and Jaspian Sea. Around 1000 PC these three kingdoms were

peacefully united under one king, who ruled his loosely knit kingdom from Hilukka in Barooth Bay

Around 1200 PC word reached the salu of Hooth Bay that woffen sailors from eastern Lundere searching for their lost cousins in the south (Anasan) had encountered other salu in the warm Kymay Sea.

Instead of daring an overland journey to Lundere's eastern seaports, an expedition of salu ships, led by King Salique's son, passed through the Sychill strait into the Kymay Sea. After some weeks of searching they found their long lost salu cousins - their separated kin who had ventured east into the unknown with their legendary leader Salo. However, their meeting ended in anything but peace, as the savage salu of the Kymay Sea refused to recognise the northern salu as their kin. Incited by their dread Salume priests, the Kymay Salu instead attacked and killed most of the Civilised Salu expedition, including King Salique's son. The few survivors were pushed eastward and hunted all the way to the new colony ports of eastern Lundere, where they received sanctuary from the woffen. Taking the inland route back to Hooth Bay, thus losing their ability to return to the sea, the hapless salibes provided warning to the salu of their savage kin in the south and brought word of the death of King Salique's son.

This was the beginning of the mostly unknown Salu Wars that lasted from 1189 PC to 1312 PC. Driven by a thirst for revenge King Salique launched fleets of warriors to punish the Kymay Salu. The salu ships passed mostly unnoticed by the human realms of Burdoth and Heridoth, who were establishing their inland realms and began attacking Kymay Salu towns and villages.

The Salu Wars began in favour to the Civilised Salu who subdued many of the Kymay Salu. However, word of the attacks reached the Salume priests of the Roray, Ash-Shen, and Kativi salu, who joined their brethren in Kymay in a great religious crusade. Soon, the Kymay and Kativi Seas were coloured red by the blood of the salu. After the death of King Salique, his successor, King Virikit Deepdive, continued the war in an attempt to reform and civilise their more savage cousins.

In 1300 PC, terrible rot plagues began sweeping over the world and the salu were early afflicted. Especially the Civilised Salu who were in contact with both humans and Iscin Folk were severely decimated. King Virikit died of the plagues and his successor, Queen Suqqiti, withdrew the fleets of the Civilised Salu from the Kymay Sea in 1312 PC, thus ending the Salu Wars. The Salu Wars were the first, but not the last tragic milestone in salu history.

After two centuries of isolation to save themselves from the rot plagues, the salu ventured out again in 1500 PC. The Civilised Salu now encountered the fast growing influence of the Jaspian traders. Intrigued by their stories of the north, the salu began exploring northeastern Temauntro and Jasp during the warmer mullin periods. The salu were accepted as humans in Jasp and allowed to build ports, but could hold no other trade than that of sailors, pilots and shipwrights.

The salu also aided the Jasprians to dare the wind-torn, icy cliff coasts of northern Temauntro and passed down along Temauntro's western coast. Some salu-Jaspian expeditions even reached the warm Sharharras Sea far to the south. The Sharharras Sea became a Shangri-la for the salu with its warm waters, abundance of food and lack of competition from humans and savage salu. A myth began evolving around the Sharharras Sea and it was seen as paradise by the Heki worshippers. More and more salu explorers and settlers began sailing down along

Temauntro's coast and settle the Vashiltu Islands southwest of Temauntro. The submerged city of Salak-tlok was the first salu society to be founded on a reef off the Vashiltu Islands.

In 1800 PC the Jaspian and Erucian marine cultures began clashing in the Sharharras Sea. The Jaspian traders were seen as intruders and after some bitter skirmishes, which the outnumbered Jaspian far from home could not win, the Sharharras Sea was closed to Jaspian. The salu however, were ignored by the Erucians, as they did not compete for colonies or trade. Over the centuries, salu families continued to migrate to the Sharharras Sea, now referred to as Eyden.

When the ramian gained a foothold in northwestern Temauntro, they created a deadly obstacle to all salu trying to pass south to Eyden from the Jaspian Sea. In general, the growing influence of the ramian on Jorune's seas greatly affected the salu, who seriously began arming themselves and building more of their easily defended submerged cities or refuges.

Around 2400 PC the salu came into contact with Erucian outlaws or refugees fleeing ramian incursions in their colonies. While most of these survived by means of piracy, a bond was made between them and the salu of Eyden. When two renegade Erucian Noble Houses fleeing the dying Erucian Empire sought refuge among the outcasts a strong union was created between salu and Erucians. The salu Waverider people grow out of this union and the humans began referring to themselves as Armadans and chose a Sea Emperor to lead them. Many ports were enlarged or founded on the hidden Vashiltu islands and the floating city of Cyracis was founded. A true miracle, Cyracis was constructed out of old ship hulks or captured ships slung together. With the ingenuity of the salu and their knowledge of the sea currents, Cyracis could withstand even the severe Sharussa storm and continued to grow. Following the circular Sharulla Current, Cyracis circled the outer reaches of the Sharharras, unknown to most people.

The aggressive ramian expansion from 2000 PC to 2500 PC and a strange explosive growth of sammorils at the middle of the third millennium forced many of the salu of the Assydre and Jaspian Seas to relocate. Especially the deeper cliff coasts of Ros Crendor and Khodre were afflicted by the sammoril menace. Many salu chose to migrate to the Sharharras Sea or the bays of Lundere during this time, creating explosive growths of populations there.

With the influx of so many new salu families in the Sharharras Sea, the salu began spreading eastward into the Ceridis Sea, where they established good contacts with the thriddle of Tan-Iricid, who often found use for their services when travelling. By 2800 PC the salu presence in the Ceridis Sea was a fact. As the salu did not compete for land, had no army to speak of, and never sided with any human or ramian realms, the salu were left alone by the growing Holy Coronian Empire. Although regarded as thones, the salu are still respected in trade and superior shipwright services.

In 3345 PC, a great expedition of Armadans and Waveriders from Cyracis began exploring the southwestern shores of Drail. In less than three months they charted a route to the Southsea, past the dangerous Deathcliff Peninsula. Here they met gentle salu who had been separated for millennia from their northern cousins. These were the ancestors of the fabled SouthSea Station and had recently been subjugated by the fierce salu of the Eastern Island and their Salume priests. Tired of this oppression, a great horde of salu from the SouthSea began journeying north to Eyden. These salu greatly influenced the Waverider culture and the Ceridis salu with their culture, magnificent buildings and dialect.

### ***The Tribal Salu***

The salu who had followed their legendary leader Salo from Northsea Station, had chosen to settle in the warmer waters along the West Trinnu Jungle lands, which were abundant in food but also many large predators. Out of necessity they bent their entire existence upon survival and lost their terran ties and much original cultural refinement.

Some individuals developed traits typical for terran lifeforms adapting to the isho around them, such as signature skills. It was early found that these signature skills were somehow better in water than on land and could be further enhanced by the hasra seaweed. Thus, these individuals became the sentinels of the salu and could warn them of approaching larger predators. Many of these later became priests and acted both as sentinels for salu dwellings as well as interpreters of their god Salume's will. Together with tribal warrior Champions they would protect and control the salu societies.

In these warmer waters grew the more fierce and tribal salu, who spread from the Roray Sea in the West Trinnu Jungle Lands to the Ash-Shen, Kymay, Kativi and Sillipean Seas. This spread was slow and no larger leaps in cultural refinement were ever made during the first two millennia.

Most of the early history of the Tribal Salu is unknown, as all written forms of their Sakoq dialects were abandoned. Only the time of the Salu Wars is known from texts preserved by the Civilised Salu. In Tribal Salu culture, this war is remembered orally as a great clash between Salume's Rightful and the Heki Traitors. The animosity towards the northern salu is still kept alive by the Salume priests.

The tribal Salu were the rulers of their oceans, as human were few in those areas and mainly concentrated to Anasan and Heridoth. The wild coasts of Sillipus and Hobeh, as well as the Trinnu Jungle Lands were theirs to settle. Except for the Civilised Salu, the Tribal Salu did not encounter any competitors until the end of the second millennium. At this time the ramian presence grew rapidly in the Kativi Sea. Ramian began settling Sillipus and began a pogrom of the salu living along its coast. But as the salu proved to be deadly foes who could sink entire ramian fleets in the harbours, a truce was entered. Seeing the potential of the fierce tribal salu, the ramian chose to have the salu as allies and sentinels towards the spreading humans and bronth in the northwest.

After the sacred Pergalion Pact in 2193 PC, young salu warriors proving themselves and gaining experience became a common sight on ramian ships around Sillipus.

Towards the end of the third millennium, the Tribal Salu had spread far south along the Sillipean Islands south of Sillipus. They had found the great Seawood forests far to the southeast and explored the barren, mountainous Drail Peninsula of J'angra to the southwest.

Following the ships of their ramian allies, ships of Tribal Salu came upon the peaceful SouthSea salu, who resided among the Chivochka Islands in 2951 PC.

Contact between the organised SouthSea salu and the Tribal Salu was initially peaceful. However, when it became known to the Salume priests that these new salu, the Islanders, had been found, they immediately assumed that this was more of their weak salu enemy and Heki worshippers. Inciting their people, the Salume priests caused a religious crusade to the Chivochka Islands. The result was an invasion and much bloodshed, as the Salume priests assumed control over the Chivochka Islands. The native religion of the Islanders was destroyed and all Islanders were forced to Salume worship.

Despite the ramian presence and occurring hostilities in the SouthSeas, the Chivochka Islands proved to be haunted by less larger predators and no competing humans. Together with the

surviving, refined culture of the Islanders and the increase in health due to the tubukk fish, the subjugated Islanders did not inherit all the tribal and fierce traits of their invaders. Instead, over the centuries a more relaxed and organised tribal structure evolved under the suspicious eyes of the Salume priests. Today, the Chivochka salu are much less savage and hostile than the Tribal Salu to the northeast.

## **Salu of the southern hemisphere**

The shantic attack upon SouthSea Station came suddenly and without warning. Shantic warriors warped into the surface section of the station and began killing all humans they encountered. It was a bloodbath and the Homo Aquatus barely managed to escape the wrath of the shanta. Shantic dyshas destroyed the fusion reactors, which in turn reduced most of SouthSea Station to rubble. The Homo Aquatus fled to the surrounding islands (now known as the Chivochka Islands) and were briefly hunted by the shantic warriors.

### ***The Salu Kingdoms***

As the Leesh-Ebeeca set in, the Homo Aquatus were forgotten and could regroup as a people again. Totally cut off from other human settlements (only two other inland human colonies had existed in Drail) and with nearly no high tech resources, the Homo Aquatus struggled to survive. Life was harsh and within three generations most of their origin and history had been lost or become garbled legends. Survival demanded more time and was more important than organising an advanced community.

Over the following centuries, the Homo Aquatus began referring to themselves as Islanders and elected presidents and then kings to organise their defences. Fortunately, the survivors discovered the nutritious Tubukk fish and children grew strong and healthy. The tubukk fish proved to be what durlig was to humans. Without it the SouthSea salu would not have survived.

The first millennium was peaceful and a time of cultural growth. The Islanders developed their culture and charted the islands and the southern coast of Drail in their small sailing ships. An elite of skilled hunters and daring explorers were formed among their own kind and simple but beautiful sea palaces were built by the dozens of island kingdoms.

A religion known as Gonda appeared in the region after a salu prophets revelations in the cold kelpgrass fields far to the south. It was reverence of the seas as a great entity whose tides, waves, flows, ebbs, tides and deep drumming from the south were all ways of speaking to the salu.

After the ramian had traversed the Vareech desert, finding the Kitcharka Sea (also called SouthSea) in 2100 PC, it did not take long before the first ramian ships came sailing round the dangerous J'angra Peninsula from the northeast. Soon the ramian were colonising the lands around the Kitcharka Sea that had so far been untouched by humans.

Their first contact with the salu was not violent but firm. All salu north of the main Chivochka Island were driven away. Occasional skirmishes took place when ramian attempted to raid salu or take them as slaves. The Islanders always responded by withdrawing and staying as elusive as possible. Despite the strained relations, some trade took place between the Islanders and the ramian colonists.

After the great Ramian Wars in the Ceridis Sea ended in 2586 PC, the ramian colony effort in the SouthSea increased. This caused much trouble for the salu who found themselves

constantly assailed by ramian foragers and slave hunters. Trade ceased and the Islanders were forced to retaliate to cement their territory. This resulted in the firmer establishment of the salu kingdoms and better organisation. Soon, the Chivochka Islands proved to be too hard pickings for the ramian, resulting in the ramian ignoring the salu there.

In 2951 PC a group of foreign salu explorers in unknown ships reached the Chivochka Islands. Their dialect was very different from that of the Islanders and their ways more savage. The foreign explorers had followed ramian ships around the J'agra Peninsula and were amazed at the salu kingdoms they found. During four years the salu travelled between the Island Kingdoms and met with all the kings there. After having lived four years of luxury and seeing many amazing things, the Tribal Salu returned home with tales of peaceful underwater palaces free from most dangerous predators and fat fish that made their children grow strong and healthy.

Over the next decades more and more Tribal Salu adventurers set sail for the lost Islander Kingdoms. Contact was peaceful and encouraged by the Islander Kings who were delighted by the reunion of two lost people. Much trade took place but little cultural exchange from the Tribal Salu, whom the Islanders regarded as less civilised. Many Tribal Salu explorers ventured each Auss to the Chivochka Islands to hunt Vurunn Whales and pick beautiful Savorin pearls for their women.

Soon however the Salume priests began appearing to judge the Islanders. They saw fat and lazy Islanders worshipping a false good, much like the Heki Traitors of the north. The hunters and explorers that came to the Chivochka Islands became decadent and turned away from Salume in order to listen to the callings of the false god Gonda. This could not be accepted.

Within a decade the Salume priests had stirred up a religious frenzy in the north and a crusade began. The Islanders were caught totally unaware by the sudden anger and soon found themselves invaded by the more numerous Tribal Salu. After two decades of war, the last Island Kingdom fell and all kings had finally been replaced by scary Salume priests.

The Islanders were forced to abandon their worship of Gonda and instead turn to Salume for salvation. So thorough was the war against Gonda that extremely few Islanders know where to find his holy places anymore. The Salume priests cemented their power by fear and persecution and held the Chivochka Islands in an iron grip.

In 3345 PC the Islanders saw another turn in history. It once again began with the arrival of explorer ships. This time it was Armada humans and Waverider Salu from the Sharharras Sea that had rounded the dangerous Deathcliff Peninsula. By luck they first encountered the Islander outcasts and refugees who had fled the Chivochka Islands to live along the southwestern coast of Drail. Finding brethren in these northern salu, the outcasts chose to follow the Waverider Salu back to the Sharharras Sea and away from the Salume priests.

Word soon began to spread of Eyden and more and more refugees secretly left the Chivochka Islanders.

It took more than 100 years before the Salume priests kings began to understand what was happening. By then the influence of the Waverider salu had spread as a rebel movement among the Islanders.

Once again, Tribal Salu warriors are following the call of their religious leader to come to the Chivochka Islands to crush the Waverider influence. Rumours also exist of Waverider salu communities building mighty ships to destroy the Salume priests-kings and free the Islanders.

## Physiology

While the Homo Aquatus of the salt-water seas slowly changed and became the salu, they physically and psychologically stayed the same as their masters once had created them on Earth.

All salu have greyish, tough skin and bodies that comfortably can withstand pressures of up to 20 atmospheres (This is roughly equivalent of 200 metres under water). Higher pressures than this prevent the blood from circulating normally and blocks oxygen entering the brain and other vital organs of the salu. The main protection from the pressure of the deep is the salu's mass, which is denser with stronger bones, especially the rib cage, than a normal human, its circulatory system and its ability to fill the body cavities while under water (sinuses, ears and lungs mainly). This makes the salu much heavier on land than in the water but enables it to pump blood only to vital organs while subjected to higher pressures. Certain salu can handle pressures better than others, depending on size, sex, age and training. Some salu have supposedly managed to dive as far down as 350 metres.



The skin of the salu is also composed in such a way that it minimises heat loss through contact with water, enabling the salu to live comfortably in temperate to tropical waters.

The salu's eyes have a pocket of air over their irises, enabling them to see under water without refractive distortions. The eyes are large, with big, light sensitive pupils and a coarser surface that protects the eye as well as enables it to receive a maximum amount of light. This trait, along with the ability to better register blue wavelengths of light, enable the salu to see better under water (where light diminishes fast and blue wavelengths penetrate deepest).

The arms of the salu are slightly longer and very muscular to improve their propulsion. Their hands and feet are slightly webbed and enlarged. The strong arms make melee weapons as deadly in a salu's arms as in a boccord's.

Salu have no nose and only small slits revealing the entrance to their olfactory organ. If this is the result of the changes Jorune has imposed on them is unknown. The salu sense of smell is weak and actually works best above water.

The most unique of the salu's organs, are the gill glands on either side of the neck. They process water flowing through them 20 times more efficiently than a normal terran fish. It is this organ that allows salu to stay under water indefinitely. Salu can however also use their lungs and normally spend 30% of their lives above water. It is the lungs that allow them to use their vocal cords and communicate properly with each other. If the lungs are not used in a week's time they will be weak when breathing again. Lungs and vocal cords can degenerate if not used regularly. The unnatural salu gills are even more susceptible to damage. After more than 10 hours without fresh water submersion, the gills start deteriorating. It is the fine blood vessels that extract oxygen from the water that dies, making the gills less effective or useless.

More than 5 days without submersion will destroy the gill glands totally. These organs do not regenerate. The worst punishment a salu can suffer is to have his gill glands destroyed. It is an irreversible and extreme form of banishment from their world.

#### SALU TRAITS

Average height & weight:	170 cm & 90 kg (M), 160 cm & 80 kg
Average life Span:	45 years (M), 50 years (F)
Main strengths:	Adapted to cold temperatures and equipped with gills for breathing while under water. Good swimmers with extra strong limbs and upper body. Equipped with slightly webbed fingers. Can only eat certain types of food.
Main weaknesses:	Cannot stay longer than a couple of hours out of water without the degeneration of their gills start. Often not tolerated in civilised lands or regarded as cruel savages.
Preferred geography:	Tropical, sub-tropical and temperate saltwater oceans.

Poor sense of smell, slightly better nightvision than humans so to penetrate the darker, murkier depths of the ocean, normal sight and slightly better hearing.

### Society

Most salu live in tight knit family groups and are dependant upon each other to survive. This is especially true of the Tribal Salu, who need their hunters and gatherers to provide them with food, their warriors to protect them from dangerous predators and enemies and their priests to guide them and warn them of predators.

Civilised Salu and Islanders frequently found larger salu towns or even cities but are generally spread out in smaller coastal or reef villages. Most larger salu wharfs as well as trading outposts for land folk are situated in the larger towns.

Salu bond for life through rituals much like human marriage or bonding as a statement to the society. Civilised Salu kings and Tribal chieftains can often take more than one wife. Separations are frowned upon and salu who are tired of each other's company tend instead to ply the seas to stay away from home. Salu who have lost their mates are encouraged to swiftly find another, especially among the tribal salu. A split family is of no use to the tribe.

Salu families normally give birth to 3-10 children, much like humans. Only half of these children reach maturity among the Tribal Salu.

Salu know the sea very well, but contrary to belief, cannot physically venture to more than the upper reaches of the great oceans. However, their knowledge about the super fauna of the Jorune seas is unparalleled. Salu are both fishermen, hunters, gatherers and even to some degree herders. They also ply the sea to trade, war or raid. Most of their food, tools, limilates, building material etc comes from the sea. The insight into the weather patterns, sea currents, tides, flora and fauna of their region is unparalleled.

Salu are secretive but not to the extent of the acubon. They do not willingly bring visitors to their submerged cities or reveal the location of their villages. They choose to settle in remote areas of coasts or out on reefs or islands.

They often retort to sabotaging nets or fishing fleets of human fishermen who encroach on what they consider their territory.

## **Salu homes**

Most homes of the Tribal Salu are built in secluded but calm coves, bays or inlets, where they are safe from the ocean's larger predators. Some use natural caves which are expanded or complemented with wooden additions, while others build their houses on poles, inaccessible from land. All salu houses will have a connection to the sea via hatches or underwater rooms. Some salu dwellings are totally submerged, with only a few places, platforms or cliffs turned into community and cooking places where the salu can speak freely using air and utilise the air consuming fires. These dwellings might have large quantities of Toku sponges (see Salu Devices below) providing them with air or might be totally water filled.

The larger tribal settlements, such as Klitum, Akrum, Poreka, Senweg, Popollion, Tírickac, Pergallion and Tortût consist of several smaller communities grown into a large mass of salu housings, due to their favourable positions.

Needless to say, the salu underwater dwellings are less susceptible to attack and provide the salu with safer havens from their human and ramian enemies. Regardless if the salu dwelling is just a small village or a large city there will always be one or more underwater escape routes, since the salu have learnt over the centuries that the most dangerous predator of all is man.

Salu dwellings will be simple, with few mundane human equivalents of bed clothing, carpets etc, due to the fact that salu withstand colder temperatures than humans and don't need them. The salu will neither have expensive trinkets lying around, as the homes might quickly need to be abandoned.

The Civilised Salu are mainly found in smaller communities, much like those of the Tribal Salu. However, many Civilised Salu will group together and build larger stilt towns with submerged lower dwellings, such as Tah-Kuban, Toki, Lokipi, Neeka, Durukla, Taktipi and Yalum. These towns are able to cater for human traders but most will be situated on peninsulas or islands that are hard to access from land. Just like the Tribal Salu, the Civilised Salu are dependant upon above-water places to cook their meals, feast, sing and speak. While many structures of salu towns might be on land, a large proportion will always consist of submerged caves or dwellings which the salu can retreat to. In some rare cases only the uppermost tiers or levels will be above water. The secret of the Toku sponges was stolen from the Tribal Salu during the Salu Wars and the otherwise tropical Toku is cultivated in most Civilised Salu communities.

The few Civilised Salu cities that exist, such as Petubah, Centresee, Saluuth and Hilukka are true marvels to salu culture. Created both above and under water, the topmost levels are only the spire of vast networks of interconnected houses and corridors filled with lanterns that light up the depths of the ocean. These are the extravagant and fabled salu cities of legend, which few outsiders ever visit. Air filled corridors and halls provide safety for even land dwelling humans.

Even more unknown are the beautiful halls of the Islanders, the salu of the Chivochka Islands.

Mainly situated behind sheltering reefs in calm sandy bays or lagoons with sapphire waters. All buildings are designed with an inhuman grace and beauty. The slender and beautiful mother of pearl towers of the Islanders jut out of the sapphire waters towards the clear blue skies, while the rounded, boulder like underwater sections spread out across the sandy sea bottom. The Islanders favour lighting both inside and outside their houses and at night the bay or lagoon water glows as if a thousand fireflies had descended to the sandy sea bottom.

Just like their northern cousins, the Islanders soon discovered the use of Toku sponges and have them in most of their dwellings. However, the great number of Islander halls have diminished. The ramian attacked and destroyed the northernmost halls when cementing their power in the northern Chivochka Islands. The Tribal Salu priest-kings then ordered the alteration of some of the halls to be easier to defend and hide, making them darker and uglier to look upon.

## **Religion**

### ***Heki***

Many salu living close to non-salu cities or working regularly for humans or other races have chosen to follow these religions and abandoning their own. The original religion of the salu from Yobreh bight to Jasp and Burdoth via Khodre is however called by the same name as their great god- Heki.

Heki is the great shipbuilder and the god who gave salu the ability to hide in the oceans and live of its fruits. Heki is depicted as large salu with no eyes and a long tail. He watches over the salu and calms the seas and winds, so that they can travel upon and live in the sea. Heki will require sacrifices now and then. These are taken by his other children, the terrible predators of the sea and the salu are not to mourn if one of them is taken to Heki. Heki sails the sea at day and the sky at night. To help the salu he lights the moons and the stars and by looking at these the salu will always find their way home - no matter how far they have drifted with the current.

Heki is revered through songs or with special horns that blow down into the water from the surface and create an eerie sound. Priests perform ceremonies, bless boats, bind lovers and solve disputes under the guidance of Heki. It is the priests that also predict the future and the success of a sailing venture by consulting Heki and spreading colourful Raspa juices in the water to study its swirling pattern.

Once a year the Heki priests and worshippers venture to the ancient ruins of Petubah (NorthSea Station) where their oldest and most revered priests reside. Here they spend a symbolic day and night in waiting for their long lost cousins who followed Salo. After this follows a week of dispute solving, feasts, marriages and general merrymaking and trading.

The more civilised salu worship Heki and their religion has changed through generations of contact with humans and other races to become what it is today. The more primitive salu despise the worship of Heki (whom they don't recognise as a god) and will sometimes attack Heki priests and their underwater shrines under the guidance of their Salume priests.

It is not uncommon for human or woffen fishermen and sailors to worship Heki or at least make offerings to him in order to earn his protection when upon the sea. Human and woffen Heki shrines are often situated at the very aft of a boat and painted with holy symbols, which supposedly attracts Heki's attention. Offerings of fish, wine and rusper are poured into the sea to please him.

## ***Salume***

This is believed to be the oldest salu religion. It is the worship of Salume, a great and terrible ocean entity that resembles the great Sammoril predator of the seas, but with long tentacles and human arms. Salume rules all waters and all things that live therein. The creatures of the land are creations that have fled from him and live in exile. Salume created the salu and gave them the gift to live in the sea, but to hunt on land and on the surface. He prefers his people to be hunters and simple folk and will occasionally require one of the salu as a sacrifice. These are sometimes taken by his other creations, the predators of the sea, but sometimes they are handed to a dharsammoril by his priests. The sacrificial victim is bled and left close to a dharsammoril's lair.

The Salume priests are bloodthirsty and often require sacrificial victims of other races in order to protect the salu and their ways. The priests are not allowed to breathe air and frequent use of the hasra seaweed (which enhances signature skills) has shrivelled their lungs forever. However, their acute signature skills rival those of the shanta while underwater and they often serve as sentries for entire salu communities. The Salume priest is often the leader of a tribe in all but combat, where a champion leads the people. In order to satisfy their god and the priests, the salu often raid their neighbours to find precious goods and sacrificial victims.

Salume priests also incite tribal salu against Heki priests and will destroy any heki shrine they find. They regard Heki as one of the land living traitorous creations of Salume and not a god. He usurped Salume's rule and tried to steal the salu and make them live on land. He is responsible for their decadent ways and the new diseases that originate from land. Salu and humans alike fear the Sign of Salume when they find it painted upon the hulls of their ships. It is said to attract the wrath of Salume in the form of a sammoril that will destroy the ship. Salume priests are also known to be the creators of the Krelee shell crystals and other strange artefacts that rule, attracts or disperses dangerous creatures of the sea.

While many tribal salu are pirates and raiders, allied humans can normally trust them until they upset the Salume priests. Once this is done their days are counted. Salume priests can be found in remote and more tribal salu communities around Hobeh, Sillipus, the Eastern Islands and the South Sea.

Some human pirates of Sillipus have been known to sacrifice animals or even humans to Salume in order to be granted a powerful gift associated to the sea or when blessing a new ship for the first time. It is unclear whether the Salume priests approve of this and where this custom came from.

## ***Gonda***

The religion known by the name Gonda is all but extinct. It exists only in some isolated outcast societies along Drail's southwestern tip, where Islander priests took refuge from Salume priests. The religion centres around a salu prophet known as Birikit. Birikit was according to legend a lone hunter who had ventured far into the underwater grass plains of the Vurunn Plateau in the cold southern ocean, in search of Vurunn whales. Among the hypnotically moving grass he had a revelation and saw Gonda, the spirit of the world or world-creature revealed. Once his eyes had been opened to this, Birikit could listen to the world creature through the tides, waves, flows, ebbs and tides. Birikit found a way of replying to Gonda, by training Vurunn whales to sing with their deep resonating voices in melodies he wanted. This resulted in a deep drumming from the icy south that has continued to this day. It can be heard sometimes by hunters on the grass plains and is clear sign that Gonda favours them and their hunt. Birikit and his followers created elaborate ways of interpreting the wisdom of Gonda and found much strange and maybe circumstantial lore supposedly handed down to the salu. In the end, Birikit ventured into the icy south to find the source of the drumming, never to return.

Today, the last Gonda worshippers listen to his voice among the coves and cliff caves of Drail, trying to interpret what it is that he is saying. Some venture on secret pilgrimages to the grass plains to hear the drumming, but no salu can ever venture into the icy south where the waters are too cold to swim.

## **Salu Law and Order**

Most salu communities in the Burdoth, Doben-al, Khodre, Jasp and Lundere areas will have their own set of rules or even written laws kept by tradition in the Heki shrines, guarded by the Heki priests. Their rulers will consult these if there is a serious conflict or otherwise decide upon a punishment. Communities are led by one or several chiefs or family leaders who gather a couple of times a year to decide upon legal matters. In reality, many conflicts between these families are never really resolved, as the family chiefs cannot come to an agreement. Sometimes the Heki priest will help the chiefs, other times the salu will consult the yordica of humans, bronth or woffen (preferring the bronth). The salu along the easternmost coast of the Doben-al are an exception to this. Twelve extremely wise and powerful Heki priests are said to reside in the ruins of NorthSea Station (Petubah). Salu who cannot agree upon a dispute venture to the sacred ruins en masse once a year to hear the judgement of these wise Heki and to arrange marriages and other important ceremonies. It is the only time of the year that the ruins of the NorthSea Station are inhabited and somewhat resemble the ancient glory of their ancestors.

Many of the tribal salu of Hobeh and the Kymay Sea are led by their Salume priests. These interpret the will of Salume and judge all conflicts. Just by being a priest chosen by Salume, means that he is just and wise. Strangely, Salume priests from different communities will judge conflicts similarly or even identically. While the salu understand that this is because of their link to Salume, the reality is that Salume priests often sneak off to secret gatherings to trade secrets and information. Woe to anyone intruding on a Salume priest gathering!! By having harsh moral and physical judgements (like: slaughter the livestock if you both claim you own and share the meat – not taking into consideration that it might be young or not time to slaughter) the Salume priests keep their subjects in line. Murderers and other criminals are sometimes placed close to samoril lairs to see if they can survive the night, and thus have the forgiveness of Salume. Non-salu offenders often get this treatment.

## **Language**

Sakoq, the language of the salu, is no true language but a garbled form of Entren. Many sounds have been replaced by deep rumbles or hard definite sounds, so to carry better underwater. Many dialects exist within the two main dialect groups.

Northern dialect group:

<i>Hooth Sakoq</i>	Spoken by the salu of Hooth Bay
<i>Dobrakooq</i>	Spoken by the salu of eastern Doben-al and northern Burdoth.
<i>Jaskooq</i>	Spoken by the salu that migrate between Khodre and Jasp

Central and southern dialect group:

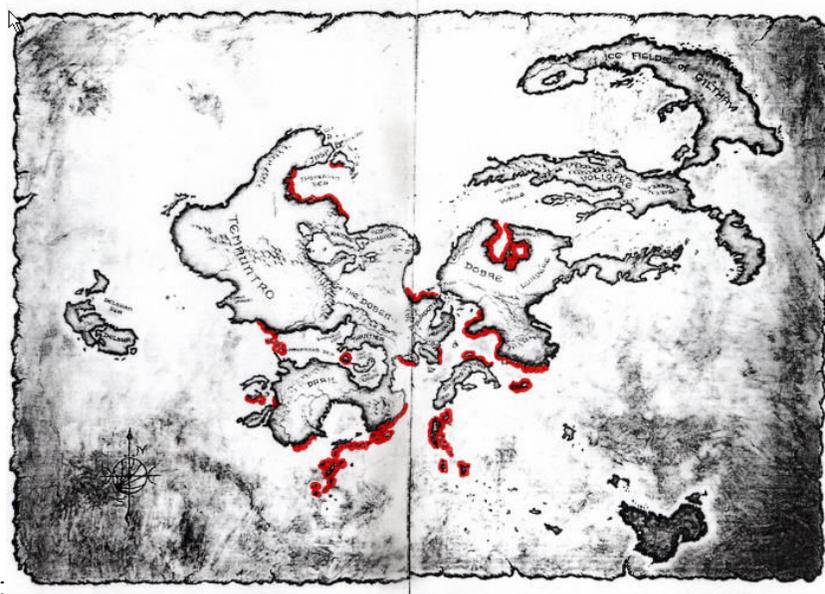
<i>Sakoqqua</i>	Spoken by the fierce salu of Hobeh and Sillipus
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<i>Sakoqqos</i>	Spoken by the salu around the WTJL, Anasan & the islands S of Sillipus.
<i>Sakoqqi</i>	Spoken by the salu of the J'angra peninsula and the South Sea.
<i>Sakoqqic</i>	Spoken by the salu of the Sharrid Bay.

*Sakoq is either written with Entren letters, Thow-Script or not at all. Most tribal salu are illiterate, even viewing the art of reading and writing to be a weakness among their so-called civilised brethren. Warning or protective symbols around villages, reefs, graves, places of taboo or other important places are, however, common among the tribal salu and created by the dread Salume priests.*

## Salu Territories

Salu are found mainly in the following areas, which they claim as their territories



- Northeastern Doben-al coast. [Civilised Salu]
- Northeastern Temauntro's coast (seasonal –not during crith).[Civilised Salu]
- Northern Khodre's coast (migrating seasonally up to Jasp) [Civilised Salu]
- Hooth Bay (Between Lundere and Dobre) [Civilised Salu]
- Hobeh's wild southern coast. [Tribal Salu –dangerous and fanatic]
- Sillipus northern coast. [Tribal Salu]
- The Sillipean Island band southeast of Sillipus. [Tribal Salu – more peaceful]
- Anasan's eastern coast. [Tribal Salu]
- East Trinnu Jungle Land coast. [Tribal Salu]
- Sharrid Bay and the Sharras Jungle Lands. [Waverider Culture – peaceful]
- Ceridis and Sharharras Seas [Waverider Culture]
- Dargedá Archipelago (western Drail) [Waverider Culture]
- S Kitcharka Sea and Chivochka Islands (southern Drail) [Islander Salu]
- J'angra Peninsula (eastern of Drail) [Tribal and Islander Salu]

## **Places of Note**

### ***Centresee***

A large sprawling salu city situated off the great shifting dunes of the Dobra Peninsula between the Barooth and Hooth Bays. The city consists of countless pole buildings and a sprawling mat of rope-like buildings snaking over the sandy seabed and into a steep underwater ravine. Known as the greatest salu wharf of Hooth Bay and their greatest trading port, Centresee attracts many Land Folk. Many of these live permanently among the city's above water buildings.

### ***Saluuth***

Off the cliff coast of Saluuth Island in Barooth Bay lies the inaccessible salu port that holds many ancient Heki temples and functions as the Heki priesthoods centre of power and learning. Not really open to Land Folk, the large salu city is cut into the steep cliffs – above and under water – that fall down to the greater depths of Barooth Bay. Most of the greater tamed or herded sea creatures are taken yearly to Saluuth for trade and slaughter.

### ***Hilukka***

The Hilukka Island off Dobra's eastern coast has the only existing salu fort. Originally built by Dobrens, the fort was a disaster and fell partly into the sea. The salu has used this fact to their advantage and have many underwater passages leading into the fort as well as a large pool in the central courtyard. Outside the fort lies the great city of Hilukka with large underwater halls and high rising massive towers. Believed to be the oldest salu settlement in the Barooth and Hooth Bays, Hilukka also serves as the seat of the Civilised Salu king and queens.

### ***Toki and Lokipi***

Larger salu towns and shipyards that keep attracting salu to the strong culture centre of the king and queen's court, as well as the services of the strong Dobren Realm. Both towns are situated on islands with much housing to Land Folk but extend beyond the shoreline.

### ***Neeka, Durukla and Taktipi***

Quiet trading stilt towns in Hooth Bay known for the sweet tasting Neeka Seaweed, fishing vessels and Solumm mussels.

### ***Petubah***

The ruins of ancient NorthSea research station off the Dobren-al coast. It is inhabited by elder Heki priests and their protectors and viciously guarded. Once a year the great underground halls are filled with salu coming for the Awaiting Ceremony who conduct their ancient rituals and then trade, pact, hold courts and marry.

### ***Tah-Kuban***

Large salu stilt town far off the Dobren-al coast and centre of trade with humans, as Petubah is secret and off limits.

### ***Potoilon and Retlum***

Large towns hidden among the treacherous Khodren reefs. Retlum serves as the foremost shipyard of the Jaspian Sea and is home to many traders, while Potoilon is the seat of Heki priests.

### ***Yalum***

Northernmost salu town off Jasp's southern coast. A seasonal trading town inhabited only during eris and mullin. Due to the strong storms of the Jaspian Sea, only very few stilt houses extend over the surface, clinging to the sheltered side of a solitary rock pillar favoured by great seabirds.

### ***Senweg and Popollion***

Large, sprawling Tribal Salu settlements fiercely guarded against human, woffen and ramian raiders. Their inhabitants are known to be traders but often retort to piracy in times of need. Popollions are known to have sold Salu Chausis to Anasani, contrary to the orders of their salume priests.

### ***Tirickac***

Enigmatic deep water city at the very verge of salu physical limitations. Inhabited by fierce Salume priests and often haunted by sammorils. The city has many dwellings built of piled stones or dug out of already existing caves naturally overgrown with toku sponges. An underwater lost valley with bountiful game and edible sea plants inhabited by dangerous salu. Here resides the rulers of the Kymay Sea.

### ***Klitum, Akrum and Poreka***

Larger isolated Tribal Salu settlements along the coasts of the West Trinnu Jungle Lands that are largely unknown to humans and ramian. The few sailors that know of their existence avoid them at all costs. Especially the inhabitants of Klitum and Akrum are dangerous religious Salume zealots who are rumoured to have eaten human captives. As the salume priesthood's presence is strong here, all three of the towns are rumoured to be the last resting place of Salo.

### ***Pergallion and Tortût***

Large Tribal Salu settlements nestled among the dangerous Sillipus reefs. These towns are fortified with rock wavebreaker walls to prevent ships entering and were the main battle grounds of the Salu Wars. The two towns serve as the main trading ports and shipyards of the Kymay and Kativi Sea.

### ***Vishiltu Islands***

These remote islands off the southwestern Temauntro coast harbours the central Waverider culture that has blended with the outcast Armadan humans. The islands are mainly calm, with the exception of the eris storms and are bountiful in fish and game. Despite its riches in food, sammorils do not venture to the Vishiltu Islands for food, making it a safe have known as Eyden for salu.

### ***Salak-Tlok***

The main salu town of the Vishiltu Islands and centre of the Heki priesthood of the area.

### ***Cyracis***

A great floating city far out into the Sharharras Sea. The great city is made of hundreds of ships roped together and built over. Salu dwellings cling to the underside of this sprawling city of wood, while human dwellings are carved out of or built on top of the ship hulks. Cyracis is constantly reforming and new parts are added to those that sink or break loose. The city is the capitol of the Armadan humans and the Waverider salu and follows the great

circular Sharulla Current in its migration across the vast open sea. Rumours abound that the city is also protected by an ancient leviathan somehow controlled by the Sea Emperor. Great chains hanging into the depths fuel these rumours. The great pirate lord Torroc Dhar once ruled the Armadans from this city and it is said that salu living there have trained bone fish and spear fish to defend it.

### ***The Eastern Islands***

New and fairly unknown Tribal Salu colonies beyond the Sillipean Islands, far out into the Endless Ocean. The small secluded islands are rich in fresh water, prey, schools of colourful and nutritious coyola fish and the vast underwater Seawood forests.

### ***Tokirik Island***

The only larger port in the Eastern Islands. Situated in a lagoon close to the Seawood Forest, this port has the potential to become something great. Already Tribal and Islander Salu experiment with ships constructed out of the super hard Seawood.

### ***Tukliki***

An islander city constantly under siege. Over the last centuries Tukliki has shifted salu and ramian hands countless times. The once grand and magnificent city is today partly a ruin. Ramian inhabit the upper cliff dwellings of the main Chivochka Island, while Islander salu live in the underwater and reef parts of the city. The sections between are uninhabited and serve as trading grounds or battle ground depending on the political situation. Tukliki is rumoured to be situated close to the ruins of the original SouthSea Research Station and was once the centre of Islander culture and the seat of the largest Islander Kingdom, until the ramian sacked and destroyed much of the city in 2783 PC. Since then ownership of the city has been much disputed. It is suspected that the Islander salu launch their raids upon the SouthSea ramian from this port and the ramian constantly seek ships to sink in the area.

### ***Likleion***

A small and secret town built when the ramian intensified their efforts against the Islanders. Likleion is the true source of the Islander raiders that trouble the young ramian colonies further north. Situated on a sea shelf known as the northernmost spawning ground for Vurunn Whales, tubukk fish and Acapi sea serpents, the ramian are used to the salu presence there. They do not suspect that the plateau also holds an underwater town full of Islander raiders and salume priests. No surface buildings exist, instead a large number of boats are always present directly above, as if a large fishing fleet was moored there.

### ***Kalakia***

Largest Islander city, situated in the lagoon of a peaceful atoll in the central Chivochka Islands. The beautiful city is however ruled by a ruthless Salume Priest-King who has begun to see Waverider spies all around him. Kalakia is the main shipyard of the Chivochka Islands and is known for its high slender white tower jutting out of the sapphire waters.

### ***Vitekli***

One of the southernmost cities of the Chivochka Islands, known for its skilled carpenters, Vurunn hunters and toku cultivators. The beautiful pearly white city lies in a sheltered bay of a small island. The king of Vitekli has long resented the rule of the salume priests and among his subjects he has long been known for his secret association with Gonda worshippers and waverider rebels.

### ***Vurunn Plateau***

A large plateau that stretches as far as anybody knows towards the icy south where the waters dies and becomes hard and still. The great underwater kelp grass plains are the favoured grazing territory of the Vurunn Whales who ply the waters in great pods. Islander salu venture far south to these peaceful waters to hunt the Vurunn in mullin and eris. The source of the mysterious drumming that became the Gonda religion lies somewhere in the southernmost part of the Vurunn Plateau.

## **Salu Devices**

Nothing is more mystical and awe inspiring to humans than the salu devices used for their everyday life in the sea that is so alien to Land Folk. Many of them are not understood by humans and many more are carefully kept secrets of the Salume priests. Below follows a list of some of them:

### ***Salu chausis***

This is the common name for salu ships, but mostly refers to the ships of the Civilised Salu. These superior salu ships are adapted to the salu and their need for fresh water. Their compartments can be filled with water and the steersmen sit on low decks that can dip down into the water. The smaller salu chausis used by the salu are very hard to sink and can even submerge if needing to hide (but cannot travel like this).

The larger salu chausis used for trade and even sold to humans are inferior to the salu's own ships, but still among the best ships on Jorune.

The ship building skills of the Tribal Salu was long inferior to those of the Civilised Salu, although better than that of humans, ramian and bronth. The ships of the Tribal Salu tended to be smaller, simpler and faster than the ships of the Civilised Salu. They were also impossible for humans and ramian to use, due to their very aquatic structures with water filled compartments, ocean dipping decks and water-current sails. However, after the Salu Wars, some improved skills of ship building were captured. Later this technique was implemented on combined ramian-salu ships. The latest addition to Tribal Salu ship building came from the Islanders, who had refined ship building with longer, faster and more slender ships and a new type of sail. Today the ships of tribal salu rival the ships of the Civilised Salu but are more unknown to humans.

### ***Seawood***

A jet black, sturdy underwater hardwood. Nearly as hard as stone and can actually be used as ship armour and simple mechanical parts. Seawood in contact with air hardens on the surface and becomes shiny and iron hard. If treated properly (soaked in brine and dried with the vakya limilate during a long time), it becomes iron hard from the inside and out. Seawood grows in vast underwater forests beyond the Eastern Islands far to the southeast, newly discovered by adventurous Tribal Salu. The full potential of this material is yet not fully known.

### ***Toku sponges***

The natural Toku sponge has a large air filled sack which serves as a home to the small predatory Diver insect. The Diver insect lives in symbiosis with the Toku sponge and leaves its waste for the sponge to feed on in the sack. After the sack has been removed, the Toku sponge can be used in many underwater salu caves or homes to create a breathable atmosphere. They are fed water and nutrients in the form of spoiled food or waste by the salu

and give off breathable air. Toku sponges are carefully cultivated and grown to enormous proportions. It takes several weeks to fill up an area with air and a lot of sponges are needed in frequented living quarters. Therefore it is not unusual to have entire floor, walls and ceilings covered with Toku sponges. Needless to say, only during extremely dire circumstances will the salu light air consuming fires in these air filled spaces.

### ***Salu Lighting***

Several luminescent creatures of the oceans are used to light underwater salu homes, as normal lanterns or candles would consume much of the valuable Toku sponge generated air and cannot be used underwater. Some of these creatures are capable of giving of light after their death, such as the Winda Shells, while other like the Settra Snails and Byrris Plants are kept alive in salu communities. The lighting of the salu homes therefore tends to be cold but magical nuances of bluish white and green.

### ***Navigational devices***

The salu are masters of star-navigation but often retort to other means in order to navigate the open waters. These devices will be based on the same principles of navigation as the conventional methods of ancient earth, but will always look very alien or mysterious, as they will be made of unknown spiky sea creatures, shells and bones.

Of special note is the Isketik device used by the Civilised Salu. While it can measure star and sun positions over the horizon, it also registers the flows of the stronger Beta isho. With this device it is therefore possible for the salu to follow the same isho flows that crystal schooners navigate after. While the Jaspian trimsmen would use maps to record the flows of the Beta isho, the salu rely on memory or oddly carved pieces of wood.

### ***Fishing Tools***

Salu fishing tools are superior to any fishing tools found throughout the other realms. Bottom nets, trap nets, floating nets, funnels nets, drag nets, drift nets are but a few of their superior nets. Besides these they have various fish traps, floaters, fishing rods, lures and cages used to catch the great variety of food found in the Joruni seas. Human, woffen and bronth fishermen living close to salu settlements pay hefty prices for these superior tools.

### ***Weapons***

Most salu weapons are made of shells, spikes or bones from various carapaced Joruni sea creatures and look very strange and alien to humans. Axes can be made out of sharpened virull shells, daggers of sammoril teeth and even short swords from sappick tails barbs. Most known are their variety of harpoons and tridents used for catching larger game. Their harpoons are sometimes fitted with spearfish barbs that if kept wet will stun fish and sting and irritate larger victims. Due to the muscular arms of the salu, thrown weapons, such as harpoons and spear become very deadly in their hands. Due to the difficulty to keep bows and especially bowstrings dry, the salu do not favour or master missile weapons.

### ***Armour***

Armour is nearly never used by salu. However, when serving aboard ramian ships, some salu have been seen to have used lighter armour that easily can be discarded if jumping in the water. Ramian scholars speak of spiky, crustacean armour worn by Islander salu who sometimes attack ramian ships in the Kitcharka Sea.

### ***Krelee Shells***

A mystical and rare item manufactured by the dread salume priests. The shell of a krelee is combined with an ebba crystal. When activated under water, the shell gives off sonic noise that scares or drives off most Joruni creatures. This device can be used above water but will only have an immediate range of 1-4 meters. Under water it is said to be able to protect entire villages.

### ***Raspa Juices***

Holy juices found in various colours among Heki priests. Made out of common or uncommon ingredients, these juices tend to be oily and very colourful. During Heki ceremonies they are sometimes poured into the water in swirling patterns from which the will of Heki can be discerned.

### ***Heki Horns***

Strange horns used to blow sound down into the sea during Heki rituals. Variations of these horns are said to drive off or summon various dangerous sea creatures when mimicking mating and hunting sounds of larger prey and predators.

### ***Hasra Seaweed***

An isho enhancing seaweed used commonly by salume priests to enhance their signature skills. Although very powerful, especially under water, it will cause bleeding in breathing organs such as lungs. Frequent use will cause the lungs to shrivel and cease working permanently.

### ***Settack Paint***

Paint made of secret oils and juices that attracts larger predators and especially bonefish, spearfish and sammorils. It is painted by salume priests upon the hulls of unwanted or cursed ships. Although the symbols painted on the surface don't have the desired effect and can be washed away, the sticky and smelly paint is always applied to the underside of the hull, out of sight, as well.

### ***Minoick***

Another strange artefact used by the terrible salume priests. The different varieties of these strange molluscs live in symbiosis with several larger predators, eating vermin from their lairs or parasites from their hard carapace. When handled correctly by salume priests they can safely enter the lair of terrible predators without being attacked (except for attacks from other rivalling Minoicks). Some priests are even rumoured to have ridden on the backs of sammorils. A minoick will however not protect its user from a predator somehow enraged by the user's actions. Neither will bleeding wounds prevent a predator from attacking.

### ***Cuduck sticks***

These sticks are used by both the Tribal Salu and the Islanders to catch and hook the Acapi Sea Serpents who can then be used as mounts. These magnificent sea creatures are not suitable for fighting, but serve as excellent and unseen means of swift transportation. Riding an acapi is however not without risk, as Jorune's larger predators wouldn't hesitate to attack and eat a solitary acapi separated from its school.

### ***Moreen Kelp***

This sticky, adhesive seaweed will cling to any skin it comes in contact with. Although it will cause discolouration, it is harmless to use. The seaweed is used frequently by salu to seal meat

pieces or bleeding wounds so not to attract dangerous predators, as most of these can scent blood particles from long distances away. The moreen kelp is very effective in stopping bloodloss through ghastly wounds.

### ***Salu Tanker Bins***

As salu have to submerge in water at least twice every day to prevent damage to their sensitive gills, tanker bins are found frequently in their cities and ports that cater for salu traders. These are normally simple wooden tanks or tubs, but can in surface buildings of salu cities be elaborate wooden rooms with view ports and fresh water flowing through them.