

# Region Lore: Emer

Emer is also known as the Great Continent, not only because of its size but for the many powers which have arisen there.

## 1 Lands

What follows is a geopolitical overview of Emer.

### 1.1 Haestra

Second largest of the four main regions, Haestra is the most widely cultivated and the most densely populated of Emer's varied regions. Its mild climate, fertile soil, and available resources make it an ideal region for human habitation. Haestra is bordered on the south by the bleak Morbek Highlands and the Forbidden Hills, an intimidating barrier. It is said that a pass lies between the two, but the way is hidden and perilous. Beyond lies the desert of Uj.

#### 1.1.1 Votania

Geographically and historically, Votania is a place with few rivals in the picture of Kulthea. It has been home to the Emperor of Emer and the Masters of Emer. This isle lies near the center of Emer, at the center of most comprehensive maps of the Western Hemisphere. Guarded by the deceptively calm Sea of Votania, the isle, is rarely visible, clothed in a thick veil of mist. The sea is a fresh-water body and very deep. Tales of some sort of kraken-like monster living in the depths of the sea are unsubstantiated.

#### 1.1.2 Danarchis

Occupying the rocky peninsula (the northernmost extension of Haestra), Danarchis is a small but powerful maritime kingdom. Aside from trading with the simple Bodlean peoples, they have little contact with the inland affairs of Haestra—instead reaching out across the seas for their riches. Danarchis also controls all of the small islands surrounding the realm, to the Forbidden Reef to the west and the Six Isles to the east.

#### 1.1.3 Bodlea

More of a region than a specific government, this rolling land of hills and valleys north of the Keyten river is home to a coalition of eleven Talath dales, a term referring to the independent valley-towns and the farm/pasturelands surrounding them. The dales are relatively isolated, making only sporadic contact between each other. However, the southern dales benefit from contact by river trade with the Elves of Talaen, and the northern dales trade with

Danarchis. Reasons why Stroane has not annexed this land are as many as the sheep which graze on it. The soil is not as fertile as that in the Miirian land, so has (relatively) limited agricultural value. The Talath, while disorganized, are ferocious fighters when defending their homesteads. Another reason, and perhaps the most bizarre, is the superstitious fear among the Stroane forces that the river Naiad Kellus will rise up to defend the simple Dale-men.

#### **1.1.4 The Miirian States**

Miir lies south of the Keyten river, between the land of Stroane and Vornia. Seven lords forged a loose alliance for their mutual benefit and protection which survived for several centuries only to be broken nine years ago when the Katra of Stroane annexed the southeastern state. Taken completely by surprise by this aggression after centuries of peaceful coexistence, the others have been consumed one by one by the voracious Katra.

This region known collectively as Miir is made up primarily of empty land with beautiful if mysterious ruins. It is a rolling terrain with many small valleys. The downs of Miir have the richest soil in Emer and were once the heart of the Emerian Empire under Aldaron. Now, Miir is mostly composed of short grass with scattered stands of trees. Despite Stroane's recent conquests, life in the few dozen isolated villages here has changed little.

#### **1.1.5 Stroane**

Controlling all lands around the Sea of Votania, from the Spine of Emer to the Bay of Izar and north to the Keyten River, Stroane is a powerful country with an aggressive ruler. Most of this land has been acquired in just the last ten years, sapping the resources of the homeland and causing mixed reactions among the court.

Two years ago, the Katra ('king') was murdered by his young wife, an act which smacks of a conspiracy of some sort. But the wife escaped, and the other members of this supposed plot have yet to be uncovered. The Katra's son—now ten years old—is ruler in name only, the actual administration being handled by a triumvirate made up of the highest military official (the Lord General), the Katra's most eminent advisor (the Chief Sage), and the Katra's uncle (Lorek, Prince of Vornia). The three are frequently at odds, and the government is unstable.

This sudden death of the Katra is unquestionably a fortunate event for Stroane's neighbors, as the realm was quickly becoming the largest on Emer. Expansion was driven by the power-lust of the Katra, and with him gone, it is doubtful that the country will expand further in the foreseeable future. If the conquered lands were more organized and assertive, they would find winning their supremacy back a simple matter, but it appears that most of the Miirian villagers care little whether they are under Stroane control or not. They are taxed in foodstuffs (since they have no money), a burden not as onerous as the thought of taking up arms and perhaps dying.

### 1.1.6 Zinvar

Until 5948—barely a hundred years ago—Zinvar was one of the preeminent trading centers on Emer. A large island (nearly 100 miles long), it was an independent city-state at the mouth of the Keyten river and had ties with the Dales, Danarchis, Kaitaine, and even Sel-kai, Zinvar was a wealthy port to rival Kaitaine.

Then, in 5945, a man who only called himself the Nameless One arrived in Zinvar and announced that the city would fall within a year. This strange man in black was asked to leave the island before he caused a panic. For three years all was normal in Zinvar, and the city prospered. Then, three years later to the day (so the tales go), a black ship with tattered black sails came riding into the western port at sunset, against the wind. It maneuvered into the port as if a skilled crew was at the sails, yet lookouts could see no one on deck. The ship touched the stone dock and vanished. Then the madness began.

Whether it was a plague or a curse of one of the Dark Gods will never be known. While legends say that no one escaped, a few Navigators did. Fleeing instantly, those whose Jumps did not go awry were mind-blasted idiots who only recovered after months of treatment. Those who did not escape attacked each other with the nearest weapon—or their bare hands. Trading ships who arrived later that evening saw the port ablaze, great fires reaching hundreds of feet into the air. They turned away. For days Zinvar burned, columns of smoke visible for miles. No one has yet returned to the cursed isle...and lived to tell of it.

### 1.1.7 Talaen

This island off the western coast of Emer is a idyllic haven of Erlini. While only 150 miles from the cursed island of Zinvar (the Elves could see it burn on that day), the Elves of Talaen had never been in close contact with the island. Talaen has a moderate climate and is covered almost entirely by forest, dominated by the massive trees. Reefs surround the island, making it treacherous to visit. While the Elves will help those who are shipwrecked or otherwise in trouble, they do not welcome visitors.

### 1.1.8 Vornia

The grasslands between the Bay of Izar and the Gold Mountains were never densely populated. Vornia is more of an ancient regional name than a political delineation; there is no central government or any unifying force to the scattered population. When the armies of Stroane rolled through Vornia, they met nothing but a few isolated farms, a tiny village or two, and numerous ancient stone ruins. It was only on the coast of the Bay of Izar that they encountered any real population, and that was no more than a string of fishing villages.

Needless to say, the rustic people of the land known as Vornia put up very little organized resistance to the declaration that they were now citizens of Stroane.

### **1.1.9 The Emerald Forest**

Situated between the Sea of Votania and the Bay of Izar, this extensive forest contains a plethora of wild plants and animals—and not a few sentient life forms as well. Though the Miirians and Vornians say it is haunted, the Forest is the home of many of the Fairy Folk. The master of the Emerald Forest is a powerful being; one might call him a god.

The Forest is surrounded by an invisible barrier which inhibits entry by those unwelcome—which constitutes anyone but the Fauns and Forest-folk themselves, as well as wild animals.

### **1.1.10 Sarnak**

To the south of the river, slag-like hills rise steeply to the impassable Morbek Highlands. Beyond the highlands lie the deserts of Uj. At the mouth of the River Urij lies the walled city-state of Sarnak, defiant these last five years in the face of the aggressions of Stroane. Of course, they have benefitted from the sudden demise of the Katra of Stroane, but deny any hand in the assassination. The most notable feature of Sarnak society is the role of the sexes. Women rule this land, and men are subservient domestics who look after the children, cook, sew, and perform all other domestic chores. The women are the warriors, heads of government, and craftsmen.

## **1.2 Tai-Emer**

From the Spine of Emer to the Sea of Tears, the land of Tai-emer steps down in a series of great plateaus. These shelves of land are eroded by the patient destruction of wind and water, leaving a broken landscape of and plains and semi-fertile savannah. To the north, Tai-emer ends at the Choak Gap, a windy plain 50 miles wide and guarded by the Changramai Citadel. To the south, the Peaks of Peligris and the Spine of Emer curl towards each other, forming the plateau of Arûl. South of this ridge, the land falls away into the flowlands of Khûm-kaan.

This is the home of the Lankani and Pochanti, hardy red-skinned men who live along the fertile riverbanks.

### **1.2.1 Logor Swamp**

Located far to the south, the Logor Swamp lies in western tip of the Arûl Plain, shielded by the Peligris Mountains. After one passes south into the plain, the land drops, and humidity increases. The swamp is over 100 miles across, a misty bog which is treacherous to enter. Logor Swamp and the Plain of Arûl were part of a kingdom destroyed during the Wars of Dominion.

### **1.2.2 The Forest of Ash**

This strange place stands in the foothills of the Spine of Emer, west of the Pochanti lands. Once a great forest, its trees reached hundreds of feet in the air. The forest was burned

long ago by an unnatural fire which left almost all the trees standing. Even the leaves still remain, though they are black and charred. The forest floor is covered with ashes, and the place is utterly dead.

### **1.2.3 Praeten**

Two peninsulas and more than a dozen large isles mark the empire of the Honakh ('king' or 'lord') of Praeten. This maritime country is isolated from the steppe-peoples of Tai-emer and seems more than happy to remain so. The Praeteni are an aggressive people who have found themselves in an unhappy location between two major trade powers. To the west lies Danarchis, an organized little realm with ties to every major shipping port from the Mur Fostisyr to Kaitaine, while not 500 miles to the east floats Eidolon, the only trade city whose fame (and legendary flying trade fleet) has spread across the entire hemisphere.

As a result, Praeten has had to resort to raiding to supplement its economy, its privateer ships making life difficult for Danarchis and the sea-going vessels of Eidolon as well.

### **1.2.4 Pochantos**

Until recently, Pochantos was a large and powerful realm in Tai-emer. The last fifty years saw the northern lands suffer droughts, however, and Pochantos suffered. Then came the fateful arrival of the Nameless One in 6039 and the subsequent destruction of the capital city of Dúbach. Without a central government, the country fell into anarchy.

This was a great stroke of luck for the Lankan Empire. Lankanôk and Pochantos had been at war for more than five years, and battles had proven inconclusive thus far. With Pochantos essentially beheaded, it was an easy matter for the Lankan armies to annex the lands. Now Pochantos exists only as a province of the growing Lankan Empire.

### **1.2.5 Lankan Empire**

One of the largest governments on Emer, the Lankan Empire (also known as Lankanôk) is currently thriving and expanding.

While not technically the most advanced culture on the continent, the Lankani possess quick minds and an aggressive nature. They have conquered nearly all of the once-isolated tribal communities around them, and just ten years ago defeated the Pochanti, a kingdom further north along the coast of Tai-emer. For a culture which cannot work iron, it has no use for the wheel and little desire to sail, they have become quite powerful.

### **1.2.6 Arдания**

This realm is at this time an unknown quantity. A lordly man of uncertain origins—and seemingly limitless gold supply—has settled in the ruins of old Ardan city at the mouth of the Lapinar river. This site, south of the Plain of Arûl, was the ancient location of one of the four regions of the Emerian Empire. This man, calling himself only the Lord of Arдания,

has gathered a large force about him and begun the rebuilding of Ardan City. The palace is partially complete and the outer wall is almost finished.

### **1.3 Silaar and the Isles of Námar-Tol**

Cradled between protective mountain ranges, Silaar is a region known among its Anzeti inhabitants as Nuyan Khôm. South of Silaar lie the great Isles of Námar-Tol, a large and powerful Iylar realm. Four large islands and numberless islets make up this kingdom, ruled by the Loari branch of the High-elves. Finally, to the north of Silaar hovers perhaps the most celebrated city on Kulthea: Eidolon, floating above the island-princedom of Sel-kai.

#### **1.3.1 Sel-Kai**

It is said that the Prince of Sel-kai is the richest man on Kulthea. Although this is probably not the case, the Prince is undoubtedly one of the wealthiest merchants ever. Certainly he has one of the most grand homes: the floating city of Eidolon, capital of Sel-kai.

Sel-kai, a large island in northern Emer, is an independent realm ruled by a man known as the Prince of Sel-Kai. While granted for life, this position is not hereditary. The Prince is elected by the Lords of the 15 Merchant Guilds of the island and rules as a monarch. His powers are only limited by certain checks and balances which can be exercised by the convened Lords of the Guilds. The current prince is Rylec Qatteris, still of youthful mein despite a rule of more than 200 years. That there is Elven blood in his veins, few doubt any longer. A skilled diplomat and shrewd merchant, he remains a popular ruler—except among the handful jealous of his position.

Sel-kai is a government based on trade; the system has worked fairly well for nearly two thousand years, so there is little initiative to change it.

#### **1.3.2 Vog Mur**

A cluster of three islands off the NE coast of Silaar, Vog Mur (“Death Watch” in Muri-elven), would be unworthy of mention here except for two very important factors. First, Vog Mur has a strange and fascinating history. This is a trio of isles, named Ordye Throg, Dalla Veurd, and Dalov Perli. The last is the site of the ancient fortress of Encla Turic (“Iron Gate”).

It seems clear that Vog Mur was once a place of importance to the Lords of Essence. It embraces many ruins, though their nature is uncertain. There is a legend of one wonder: the Eog golem named in legend as Yenor Staideyes, hidden in a vale known as Lon Lemira. An enchanted, holy warrior covered in bronze, he stands 35 feet tall on a base of obsidian. The method to awaken him is presumed lost with time.

Secondly, Vog Mur is home to the Lord of Encla Turic, who has been many men and Elves through the ages, and who has recently cast his eye upon the mainland.

### 1.3.3 Lost Empire of Thanor

Rolling hills and plains dominate northern Silaar, also known as Old Thanor. The place is a wasteland just coming back to life. The fertile valleys located in the Ash Mountain foothills are populated by a strange race of primitive men. The landscape is littered with many bizarre ruins — all that is left of the lost civilization once flourished there.

The southern region of what was once Thanor is for the most part empty land: barren waste, when not shrouded in sulfurous fumes and clouds of ash it is cloaked in a thick fog. The northern shore areas are the most fertile.

Thanor fell in TE 4200. Hordes of Garks swarmed off hundreds of ships. The Empire would have been able to hold off this army, were it not for their protracted conflict with Arûl far to the south. (Thanor once held all of Silaar. and the land which is now the Tai-emer waste was a vast battlefield.) Ancient ruins north of the Lake of Glass are even more plentiful than those in Haestra. It would seem that Thanor exceeded even the later Emerian Empire in technical sophistication before their downfall. Thanor was initially under the yoke of the Masters of Emer, but the realm's isolation benefited it: when the Masters fell, Thanor remained unbothered until nearly the end of the Era.

As a result, the structures of the Thanor were quite grand, with tall towers and high vaulted halls. But the ravages of six millennia have destroyed all of the more subtle works of Thanor, leaving only crumbling skeletons of a glorious past.

### 1.3.4 Voerken Mire

Between the Lake of Glass and the Ash Mountains lies a perilous trap. A vast swamp nearly a hundred miles from end to end, the Voerken Mire lies like a blight on the plains of Silaar. Choked by clinging vines and dangling float-moss, huge, decrepit trees roof the dank swamp. It is swelteringly hot and humid in the Mire during the day (though precious little sunlight reaches beneath the dark canopy). At night the air cools to a clammy chill. Insects are everywhere but other life is difficult to detect. They are wary of visitors, but hungry.

The Mire is constantly flooded, though some Nuyani guides will say that there are paths through the swamp known to the residents. But who-or what-are the residents of the Voerken Mire?

The Thanor capital lies in what is now the center of the Mire. The straight-faced Loremasters say that the Mire formed as a result of a curse laid upon the city, now a tumbled ruin. That area is haunted by Specters, Wraiths and Shadows. The rest of the Mire is home to giant spiders, great snakes, and deadly plants. There are tales of a tentacled monster deep in the Mire, but these stories are unsubstantiated.

### 1.3.5 Nuyan Khôm

The people inhabiting southern Silaar are known as the Nuyani and their country the Nuyan Khôm (“Places of the Nuyan”). Physically small but resilient, they are a shy culture of the Y’nar race. Nuyan Khôm is less a realm than a confederation, the high king (Hutarn)

exacting tribute from the feudal lords (Tarns) and keeping peace between city-states. The capital city of Nuyan Khôm is Ashenoq, an independent city at the southernmost tip of the great Lake of Glass.

The Nuyani have had a stable if uninspired culture for thousands of years. They have survived the ravages of natural and man-made disasters and the threat of war. Their realm has grown slowly, creeping into empty lands. They are friendly to visitors, but careful. Should a dynamic and aggressive man become Hutarn and unite the Tarns, the Nuyan Khôm could be a powerful force in Emer. But there seems little chance of this in the foreseeable future; Nuyani seem to be pacifistic to the point of being submissive unless their home is threatened.

What the Nuyani were not prepared for was the appearance of the Nameless One in the court of the Hutarn thirty-one years ago. He warned of disaster, but would not state what form it might take. That night the Scepter of Khôm — symbol of rulership — was stolen. The country was shaken by the loss of this symbol, but retained their unity. The plague struck in the following winter. For two years, Nuyani died in great numbers. By TE 6022, more than a third of the population of Nuyan Khôm was dead—including the Hutarn and most of his family.

The Nuyani have just begun to recover from these disasters. The current Hutarn (only surviving son of the last ruler) is 29 and has pulled the people back together.

### **1.3.6 Reandor**

Situated in the foothills of the Rust Mountains, Reandor is well protected by natural guardians on all fronts. A small kingdom of no more than 7500 square miles, it has considerable wealth built on rich mines and fertile lands. The weather here is quite different than the rest of the region, as Reandor is nestled among the eastern highlands of the Rust Mountains, creating a humid mid-latitude climate.

Reandor is a peculiar little realm, seemingly out of place among the exotic cultures of northwestern Emer. In fact, the little kingdom hearkens to some of the realms in Jaiman. The old stone castles, the cool climate, and even the clothing styles of the people here show a marked similarity to a frontier duchy of Rhakhaan.

### **1.3.7 Isles of Námar-Tol**

This cluster of large islands dominates the shallow Circular Sea. (The sea was so named because of the constant clockwise ocean currents sweeping around the Isles.) The southern isles were formed by volcanic activity, but have long ago settled, and vulcanism is virtually unheard-of here. The result now is rich soil which supports a wide variety of crops.

The large two-lobed northern island has mines yielding a vast wealth of minerals and gems.

This is a great empire of the Loar Elves, a place of beauty and wealth—and a caste structure without equal. Loari live a life of relative ease and privilege, supported by a class of serfs: mortals of several breeds. These servants perform all labor—from domestic

work to toiling in the fields. Perhaps surprisingly, this structure has worked fairly well for centuries. The servants are paid a respectable wage and well cared for. They have few freedoms, however, and no hope for escape from their position in society.

Visiting mortals are greeted coolly but politely. Nevertheless, the Elves' air of superiority is evident.

## 1.4 Uj

Though the largest region of Emer in sheer square mileage, Uj is largely desert or arid land, and the population is relatively low. However, the western third of the mainland is fertile, protected from the desert winds by the Barrier Hills. Many islands and peninsulas around Uj contain thriving cultures as well. The legendary city of Kaitaine lies just west of Uj, and southwest are the Isles of Itanis, home to the Warlocks and their amazon guardians.

Uj has been called a wasteland—much of this vast region is either desert or barren plain. Several other very divergent ecologies exist within Uj's boundaries.

### 1.4.1 Rhiani Tribesmen

Unchallenged masters of a vast desert and plain, the Rhiani are not terribly numerous, but they are a hardy people willing to brave a hostile environment.

Semi-nomadic, each of the twelve Rhiani tribes has a seasonal home at an oasis or on one of Uj's large rivers. Once a year, representatives of all twelve tribes also gather at Shezarak, the ruins of an ancient city at the mouth of the Umek river to arrange marriages, discuss great issues, and celebrate another year of survival.

Rhiani are scrupulously honest, and greatly respect that quality in other peoples. They are equally intolerant of liars, and have an uncanny ability to detect an untruth. A Rhiani has been known to cut down a merchant in the middle of the Kaitaine Grand Marketplace if he believes he has been cheated. (Because of the unique relationship of trust between the Trade Council of Kaitaine and the Twelve Tribes of the Rhiani, this brutal behavior goes unpunished. It is an increasingly rare event, as shady merchants learn not to attempt deceit against a Rhiani.)

### 1.4.2 Vajaar

This tropical land is in the southwest of Uj, a vast territory which is largely savannah. The area furthest south is at a lower elevation and receives considerably more rainfall. This land—where not cleared for farm or grazing land—is covered with untamed rainforest.

Zornaq is Lord of Vajaar, ruling from his beautiful palace in the capital of Ajan. This bustling coastal city lies beside the river Lamanh, just 150 miles southeast of Kaitaine.

The Lord of Vajaar has at present extended his eastern border to the Daluj river. Beyond he has yet to go, partially because there is little worth taking. Itanis to the south and Kaitaine to the west continue to be taunting jewels to the Lord, but each is too strong in its way to overcome. It must frustrate the Lord of Vajaar to no end, the wealthy Itanis within

sight across the Nyok channel but unreachable: the north and west coast of the large Isle are sheer cliffs, and the waters below them turbulent and dangerous with whirlpools and rocks. And there is the famous magic of the Warlocks.

### **1.4.3 Charn Raiders**

Beastly creatures who make their homes in the many caverns honeycombing the rocky Charn Plateau, the raiders are the greatest single threat to the Rhiani. While ostensibly human, they are culturally only slightly ahead of primates. Like the Rhiani, they have a second, semitransparent eyelid. Unlike the Rhiani, they have ‘deformed’ noses designed to filter dust and sand. The Raiders can even close the nostrils of these snoutlike protrusions at will.

The Raiders’ hatred for the Rhiani is exceeded only by their cowardice. They will attack caravans, but if things do not go their way quickly, they will often flee—only to be ridden down by the enraged horsemen.

### **1.4.4 The White Wood**

The White Wood is a place of power of the Unlife, located in the shadow of the Scorpion Ridge and thus acting as another barrier between the Rhiani and Kaitaine.

This strange, haunted place is a vast forest made up entirely of grotesque, gnarled trees of bleached-white trees. If one passes under the eaves of this barren place, it seems suddenly cooler, and a mist bangs over the bleached trees so that it always seems darkly overcast—even though it is bright daylight. Through the maze of pale trunks one can see nothing but dull grey soil and gnarled branches.

### **1.4.5 Kaitaine**

One of the most famous trading ports in the west, Kaitaine—situated on the isle of Ciros—is a city-state unto itself. The main city is on the northeast coast of Ciros opposite the mouth of the wide River Hallas. Above the city, constructed on the gently sloping hillsides, stand the palatial homes of the lord-merchants of Kaitaine.

Kaitaine is the largest city in Emer and is devoted primarily to trade and commerce (it is second in sheer size only to Sel-kai city). It has been around for centuries and grown steadily over that time. Kaitaine has had its share of catastrophic fires, the last one in 5980, but in a way these are beneficial, clearing out structures so that new ones may be built.

It is a strange amalgam of architectures, from stone palaces to rude wooden shacks. From the fabulous homes of merchant-princes in the heart of the city to the huts of poor traders on the outskirts, the variety is limitless, and the layout is seemingly chaotic. But there is a pattern deep within this sprawl.

### **1.4.6 Lys**

This Elven realm is an Iylar-governed domain on Emer, and differs from the powerful Námartol empire in that the Linaeri branch of the High Elves controls Lys. As a result, it is more

pastoral and shuns ‘technology.’ There are many Erlini residing in this beautiful land as well.

The Elves of Lys have formed an alliance with Itanis, interesting because it is between immortals and men, although the Warlocks of Itanis are certainly not the typical government of mortals. In general, the Linaeri and Erlini are more friendly to mortals than the egotistic Loari, though a Linaer tends to treat a man with condescension.

#### **1.4.7 Itanis**

A group of five isles shielded from the storms of the Loorn Tesea (Ir. “Lonely Sea”) and graced with a tropical climate, Itanis has been called a paradise. It is also a very unusual culture, ruled by spell-using men known as Warlocks, and protected by an army of amazonian women.

Little is known of this unusual society, as few Itanians venture away from their protected isles. It is a common rumor that the race is slowly dying out, and that Itanis may not survive much longer. Itanis and Vajaar have been at odds for even longer than Vajaar has been fighting the Rhiani. The treacherous Nyok Channel divides the isles from the mainland, and the large island of Umelnis has a coast of broken cliffs to the north and west, deterring thoughts of invasion. But the High Praelector of Vajaar is not so easily dissuaded.

#### **1.4.8 The Western Isles**

A tropical paradise, the western Isles are also collectively known as the Komarnen Cluster.

At the far reaches of the isles—cut off from the main cluster by reefs, dangerous tides and a scintillating Flow of Essence—is the Shinh Archipelago, considered a wild, untamed land. It is inhabited by savages.

### **1.5 Onar**

A long peninsula extending from Khûm-kaan to the east, Onar reaches out to the mystical star of Iyxia, home of the Navigators. But the Crystal Cliffs, sheer mountains of volcanic glass along the eastern coast of Onar, effectively sever all chance of contact between the peninsula and the island.

The Circular Sea to the north and the mountainous coasts of Onar contribute to its gentle weather. Few storms of significance batter the white sands of this tropical land.

#### **1.5.1 Rulaash Forest**

Covering the entire western region of Onar, this vast and impenetrable jungle/rain forest remains virtually unexplored. It lies in a region separated from adjacent lands; only narrow isthmuses of land connect this portion of Onar with Khûm-kaan and the eastern Onar regions.

Some areas are perilous, infested with dangerous plants, and in the foothills of the Black Mountains there are other, far worse things.

### 1.5.2 Ahnasan

Through another narrow straight, the lucky traveller will escape the grasping clutches of the Rulaash Forest. Beyond lies Ahnasan, a land of few trees and endless rolling hills of grass.

To be feared are the Kinsai, the ‘cat-people’ of the vast Onar savannah. They ride huge catlike creatures known as Kith. Kith are large, strong mammals which resemble—at first glance—giant, six-legged panthers. These beasts are herbivores, however, and are clearly a strange experiment of the Lords of Essence.

The Kinsai are not ‘cat-people’ themselves, but got their name because of the kith. In reality they bear some resemblance to the people of Itanis.

### 1.5.3 Malqanar

A kingdom on the furthest reaches of Rael, Malqanar is cut off from Emer by the narrow passes, the intervening Rulaash Forest and finally by the Kinsai of Ahnasan. Only by sea (or air) is Malqanar accessible. Even those routes are made perilous by unusually fickle Esswncce-flows, said to be caused by ‘backwash’ from the powerful focal point at Nexus.

This is the home of the Shuluri, the Sea-elves. For the most part, this modest (for immortals) and shy race has settlements only east of the bottomless lake and along the southern peninsula which faces the Bay of Songs. The Kinsai do not normally attack the Shuluri unprovoked, but they protect their eastern border as if they think the Sea-elves are a threat.

## 1.6 Khûm-kaan

Beginning on the south bank of the torrential Lapinar River and sweeping east in a long, ridged and broken spur, Khûm-kaan combines an incredible variety of environments: tropical rainforest, snow-capped mountains, and temperate seacoasts. Embraced by the Spine of Emer and the Black Mountains, Khûm-kaan is a deep basin of riotous growth.

### 1.6.1 Shay Settlements

Most of the Shay reside in the foothills of the Spine of Emer or along the coast, all in the Coronan region. They are not united, instead existing in small villages in a manner similar to the Talath of Bodlea.

### 1.6.2 Quon

Three-quarters of Khûm-kaan is blanketed in an undulating roof of green, an impenetrable jungle. This entire rainforest has come to be known as Quon. Quon proper begins beyond the bank of the Sybarus River and extends all the way east to the Green Mountains.

The mysterious jungle-people of Quon once inhabited this entire rain forest basin, but over the last several centuries they have retreated into more isolated communities, and

lately seem to have vanished entirely. These inhabitants are known as the Kuluku, a word of indeterminate origin.

## **1.7 Rael**

Far to the south and attached to Emer by only the most tenuous of links, Rael is a land apart.

Rael is also properly in the southern hemisphere of Kulthea, where the seasons are reversed (potentially confusing in a world with five seasons/months). Other interesting effects occur. Its terrain is mostly a tortured landscape, either mountainous or arid. Only the coasts and the islands of the Raelian Bay are very fertile.

### **1.7.1 Other Islands**

Literally hundreds of small islands dot the warm waters south of the main Emerian continent. The greatest is the Isle of Jade, but other islands harbor human inhabitants.

Most of the islands capable of supporting an ecology are inhabited by dark-skinned people related to the Kuluku. They are generally peaceful but barbaric.

### **1.7.2 Naal**

Once an empire controlling western Rael and islands in the southern Raelian Bay, Naal had an on-going feud with sister-nation Ansidus for thousands of years. Despite famines and plagues, the two realms remained at each others' throats, until T.E. 5650, when the Comet returned.

Certainly, the devastation was harder on Ansidus—of which virtually nothing remains—but Naal has been reduced from a proud and verdant realm to a grim, arid land where little grows and few civilized people remain to carve out a life. There is a fear of disease bordering on the paranoid, and all strangers are looked upon as evil spirits. The inhabitants are for the most part of Shay descent, but undernourished, mean-spirited and in some areas completely lawless. Naal is not a friendly place.

### **1.7.3 Ansidus**

Ansidus is mostly a wasteland now, populated only by tribes of savages—some of them horribly deformed by the ravages which have swept the land. Perhaps pockets of civilization endure on the fringes of Ansidus, but the Loremasters speak not of them.

On the border between Ansidus and Naal is the Whispering Moor—and the tower of Vour. In a low region where the Spine of Emer dips southward along its eastern march, there is an area of soggy land, the antithesis of the arid stretches all around. Cloaked in thick fog which clings to the skin with an oily film, it is suffocatingly hot by day and chilling by night. This is the Whispering Moor. Atop a rocky pinnacle in the center so that it is

elevated above the foul mists stands the dreaded tower of Vour, home of the Cult of Stars.  
More of this place a sane man should not wish to know.