

BEST OF GREYHAWK #14

Excerpted from the World of Greyhawk folder #14
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October 26, 2011

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After reading 100 pages on a total of 135, I was afraid to have nothing (or not much) to mention in this Best of #14. The discussions concerning "Ascendancy" and "God Powers" (cf. Folder #13) went on extensively but without bringing new "Best of" content, small "questions and answers" filled more space and a debate on a recent (in 1996) legal decision declaring "AD&D was a security risk (in jails) because it promoted violence" did not increase the flow of campaign related contents. Hopefully, Iquander having just moved and having recovered his computer offered us a new article of quality on the "Other Side of Oerik"

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ADVENTURE LOCALES

Subj: Repost Adventure Locales.
 Date: 5/3/96 3:39:21 PM
 From: Emirikol7

I can't remember who posted the locations of all of the Modules and Reference Card Adventures, but would you either re-post them, or send them to me email. They already removed the closed folder so I can no longer get them from there.

Thanks,

Jay H.

Subj: Re:Repost Adventure Locales
 Date: 5/3/96 7:09:54 PM
 From: Thendur

Here is a re-posting of my earlier post of Greyhawk Adventure Locales
 I have corrected some mistakes as well as added *all* available DUNGEON magazine references (thanks are in order to TSR Roger, whose Greyhawk Index, I turned to for some obscure DUNGEON references)
 If anyone wants to help me add to this list E-mail me: Thendur@aol.com

note: You might want to expand your screen -> for a better view.

Here is a Key to the terms used in this post:

- *Adventure*: The name of the Adventure [With A's & The's omitted]
- *Number*: Refers to its Adventure # [i.e. *WG8* Fate of Istus]
- *Hex*: Is the adventure's Hex location on the WoG Map, or a general location if no hex is given [+ indicates more than one hex]
- *Source*: Lists its source of origin [GoF: Gem of the Flanaess, FFF: Folks Feuds and Factions, GHA: Greyhawk Adventures
 Hardbound, FtA: From the Ashes campaign book, Dx indicates
 DUNGEON mag issue number x (i.e. D19 means DUNGEON#19)]

Adventure	(#)	(Hex)	(Source)
Against the Cult of the Reptile God	(N1)	(k5-113)	
Assassain's Knot, The	(L2)	(B-78)	
Assault on the Aeri of the Slave Lords	(A3)	(A4-104)	
Bath Time for the Hopping Prophet	(NA)	(D4-86)	(GoF)
Beaming Up	(NA)	(D4-86)	(GHA)
Beckoner in the Dark	(NA)	(Cairn Hills)	(FtA)
Beyond the Crystal Cave	(NA)	(Jeklea Bay)	
Beyond the Magic Mirror	(EX2)	(D4-86)	
Border Watch	(WGM1)	(14-78)	
Born-Again Ogres of the Blinding Light	(NA)	(Cairn Hills)	(GoF)
Brainstorm	(NA)	(Abbor Alz)	(FtA)
By the Wayside	(NA)	(B5-127)	(D19)
Castle Greyhawk	(WG7)	(D4-86)	
Child's Play	(WG10)	(Unknown)	
City of Skulls	(WGR6)	(Land of Iuz)	
Dark Denizens of the Deep Delve	(NA)	(Cairn Hills)	(GoF)
Dark Heart of Oak	(NA)	(Gnarly Forest)	(FtA)
Dark Justice	(NA)	(D4-86)	(FFF)
Dead of the Howling Hills	(NA)	(Howling Hills)	(GoF)
Decent into the Depths of the Earth	(D1-2)	(M5-138)	
Diplomatic Incident,A	(NA)	(D4-86)	(GoF)
Diver Down	(NA)	(D4-86)	(GHA)

Dungeonland	(EX1)	(D4-86)	
Dwellers of the Forbidden City	(I1)	(Y109)	
Elephant's Graveyard	(NA)	(Hepmonaland)	(D15)
Entrance to the Valley of the Mage	(NA)	(D4-86)	(GHA)
Expedition to the Barrier Peaks	(S3)	(A6-119)	
Falcon's Revenge	(WGA1)	(D4-86)	
Falconmaster	(WGA2)	(D4-86)	
Far Cry From the Swamp	(NA)	(D4-86)	(GoF)
Fate of Istus	(WG8)	(Various)	
Final Resting Place of Doshak Krane	(NA)	(D4-86)	(GoF)
Five Shall Be One	(WGS1)	(N3-58)	
Flames of the Falcon	(WGA3)	(D4-86)	
Gargoyle	(WG9)	(F5-131)	
Gauntlet, the	(UK3)	(E5-137)	
Ghazal	(NA)	(W3-91)	(D30)
Ghost Dance	(NA)	(Shield Lands)	(D32)
Ghost Tower of Inverness	(C2)	(A4-92)	
Ghost's Ship	(NA)	(Scant)	(GoF)
Glacial Rift of the Frost Giant Jarl	(G2)	(S5-134)	
Greyhawk Ruins	(WGR1)	(D4-86)	
Griffon Hunt	(NA)	(Bright Desert)	(GoF)
Hall of the Fire Giant King	(G3)	(M5-138)	
Heart of Al Rakim, the	(NA)	(D4-86)	(FFF)
Hidden Shrine of Tamoachan	(C1)	(A4-137)	
Honest Bandits	(NA)	(Cairn Hills)	(FtA)
Hopeful Dawn	(NA)	(Y4-96)	(D41)
Horse Sense	(NA)	(D4-86)	(GRA)
House of Brothers	(NA)	(M5-127)	(D6)
House of Cards	(NA)	(D4-86)	(GRA)
Howl From the North	(WGS2)	(A3-43+)	
In the Dungeons of the Slave Lords	(A4)	(A4-104)	
Into the Mistmarsh	(NA)	(D4-89)	(FtA)
Isle of the Ape	(WG6)	(X3-83)	
Iuz the Evil	(WGR5)	(Land of Iuz)	
Izek's Slumber	(NA)	(D4-86)	(D42)
Journey to the Center-of-the-World	(NA)	(Hepmonaland)	(D51)
King of the Rats	(NA)	(D4-86)	(GRA)
Land of the Men With Tails, the	(NA)	(Hepmonaland)	(D56)
Leopard Man, the	(NA)	(Hepmonaland)	(D22)
Lich-Staff, the	(NA)	(D4-86)	(GoF)
Lost Caverns of Tsojcanth	(S4)	(E5-88)	
Lost Temple of Tharizdun	(WG4)	(F5-88)	
Marklands	(WGR4)	(Furyondy+)	
Mayhem at the Worlds End	(NA)	(D4-86)	(GoF)
Minding the Store	(NA)	(D4-86)	(GoF)
Mordenkainen's Fantastic Adventure	(WG5)	(X3-86)	
Prisoners of Zender, the	(NA)	(Scant)	(GoF)
Puppets	(WG11)	(I4-94+)	
Pygmies, Sage, Myconid and Plants	(NA)	(D4-86)	(GoF)
Queen of the Demonweb Pits	(Q1)	(N5-138)	
Rary the Traitor	(WGR3)	(Bright Desert)	
Rescue of Ren, the	(NA)	(D4-86)	(GHA)
Riders on the Storm	(NA)	(Stark Mounds)	(GoF)
Rogue	(NA)	(Hepmonaland)	(D34)
Ruins of Nol-Daer	(NA)	(J4-104)	(D13)
Sea of Sorrows, the	(NA)	(Greyspace)	(D36)
Secret of Bone Hill, the	(L1)	(B-78)	
Secret of the Slaver's Stockade	(A2)	(A4-102)	
Siege of the Highfolk	(NA)	(Vesve Forest)	(GoF)
Sentinel, the	(UK2)	()	

Serenade Before Supper, a	(NA)	(S4-97)	(D53)
Shadows of Terror	(NA)	(Kron Hills)	(GoF)
Shrine of Ilsidahur, the	(NA)	(R4-139)	(D10)
Sin Eater, the	(NA)	(Gnarly Forest)	(FtA)
Slave Pits of the Undercity	(A1)	(A4-101)	
Slavers by Midnight	(NA)	(B4-84) (FtA)	
Steading of the Hill Giant Chief	(G1)	(P5-129)	
Sunken Temple, the	(NA)	(Kron Hills)	(GoF)
Swamp Hag, the	(NA)	(Hepmonaland)	(GoF)
Tamara Belongs To Me	(NA)	(Gnarly Forest)	(FtA)
Tears at the Orphanage	(NA)	(D4-86)	(FFF)
Temple of Elemental Evil	(T1-4)	(N4-96+N4-95)	
To Slay a Hierarch	(NA)	(D4-86)	(GoF)
Tomb of Horrors	(S1)	(K2-97)	
Treasures of Greyhawk	(WGR2)	(D4-86+)	
Vale of the Mage	(WG12)	(Vale of the Mage)	
Vault of the Drow	(D3)	(N5-138)	
Vecna Lives!	(WGA4)	(D4-86+)	
Verbeeg of the Gnarly Forest	(NA)	(Gnarly Forest)	(GoF)
Village of Homlet, the	(T1)	(N4-96)	
Vote for the Goat	(NA)	(D4-86)	(GoF)

Well that's all (for now) Anyone interested in adding to this compilation please E-mail me or post it here.....

Until next we meet on Oerth,
Dan

FUTURE AND GUNPOWDER

Subj: Re:Future and Gunpowder
Date: 5/11/96 1:59:08 PM
From: Oeridian2
Posted on: America Online

I've always liked the very ironic fact that, while "smoke powder" (i.e., gunpowder) doesn't work on Oerth, lasers and grenades do (as in "Expedition to the Barrier Peaks").

Joseph

Subj: Re:Future and Gunpowder
Date: 5/12/96 2:13:38 AM
From: QSamantha
Posted on: America Online

To see just what musketeers can accomplish, I recommend the movie Ran by Akira Kurosawa and the Samauri video/war game. Compact formations of musketeers or (to jump ahead several hundred years to the Crimea) Thin Red Lines (wherein three ranks of musketeers take up a stationary position and fire in sequence, each rank firing while the others are reloading or aiming) can be devastating. The more accurate the fire, the more devastating.

However, with magic all bets are off. Magical Armor AC 6 versus melee weapons, AC 2 versus shot? Vorpal Musket (chance for automatic head shot and save versus death)?

Old rifles were often VERY long. I can see an armored knight charging into battle holding a long gun much as he would a lance. Looks cool in my minds eye. Make it a Musket of Speed, so he can reload in the saddle and it looks REAL cool. Kinda like the climatic scene in True Grit where John Wayne as Rooster Cogburn solo charges the bad guys across a field, firing and reloading as he comes on.

The word is I*M*A*G*I*N*A*T*I*O*N.

QSamantha

Subj: Re:Future and Gunpowder
Date: 5/12/96 6:36:11 PM
From: Tamerlain

Em,

Interesting points...but in this case I think it would have to be the interference of deities...there are several Greyhawk publications which suggest that Gunpowder doesn't work (with the sole exception of Murlynd's two strange six-shooters...) and the reason is the innate magical property of the Crystal Sphere (or planet if you disdain "Spelljammer"). The old rule governing game worlds was this corollary---the level of magic available is directly and conversely related to the level of technology developed. High Magic = Low Technology and vice-versa. Under this set of rules, if Greyhawk developed Gunpowder, it would "lose" some of it's magical nature (which suggests that the FR would be becoming less magical).

However, the folks at TSR have forestalled this by presenting the rules in the new DM's Option: High Level Campaign. It presents "magic" and "technology" as two of four ratings for a world (the other two being "chronological" and "ecological"). Each of these ratings can be moved from a low rating of 2, to a high rating of 20. And it is entirely possible for a world to be both high in technology and magic ratings. The DMO does suggest however, that any changes (where changes are even possible) are generally very gradual, so gradual that the inhabitants don't recognize it, and, where change occurs quickly it is catastrophic (even if beneficial). By using these rules, a DM could rule that Greyhawk has a magical rating of 12 and a technological rating of 12 (steel tools and weapons, coal mining, trade crafts and guilds, feudal governments etc.)...but that the tech rating is changing to 13 (cannons, national governments and ocean going ships...). The advancement to firearms requires a change to a tech rating of 14...and it could be argued that technological development drives technological development...in this case it could be jealous wizards holding things up! Maybe Murlynd is a harbinger of change...

The key thing here though is taking it slowly...gunpowder was used for firecrackers for quite a long time before these things come to pass.

For a comparison to Oerth, Earth has a technological rating of 17, and a magic rating of 2 (alas, although some might argue for 3).

Steve

Subj: Re:Future and Gunpowder2
Date: 5/12/96 6:50:27 PM
From: Tamerlain

I, for one, after having said this would not be opposed to allowing gunpowder...eventually. One of the problems right now is that there is not a lot of free capital to drive this type of endeavor. I *do* play post FtA, and although cannons could be developed anywhere in the Flanaess, the ability to use them in mass at present is limited at best (unless Suhfang is busy with this task). Let's remember that the Flanaess is the "most advanced" area in all of Oerth.

I do see the potential of the Scarlet Brotherhood being able to produce these things in a fairly short period of time (strong infrastructure, tight governmental control, and a large base for supply exchange). This makes me a bit upset to even think about though :) I imagine red robes (with lots of colonial troops from Hepmonoland and the Amedio) instead of red coats...

But, it wouldn't be unusual for mages to want to immediately disprove this type of thing as a serious endeavor...Why on Oerth produces some big iron thing which throws a steel ball a little ways when you can have a fireball or two much more easily? It could be though, unless the "magical" rating of Oerth was to increase, that the way of the wizard is as doomed as the way of the longbowman...it is too specialized, and too difficult.

Producing a few cannon is much easier than producing a few third level 5th level mages. But what if the mages were to actively work to extend Greyhawk to a magic rating of 13 or 14? That would be interesting indeed.

Thinking....

Steve

RHENNEE / GYPSY HOMEWORLD

Subj: Rhennee/Gypsie homeworld
Date: 5/13/96 2:18:21 PM
From: DM ScottW

I was reading a bit in my old GLOSSOGRAPHY about the Rhennee, who will be making an appearance in my online game fairly soon... if the players go that way<G> Anyhow, on Page 6, 3rd Column, last paragraph (under description) it is written-

"Rhennee resemble Oeridians except they tend to have dark brown or black curly hair. They are shorter than average (about 5'6" tall on the whole) and slender but quite wiry and strong. Rhennee folklore claims that their race came to Oerth by accident, their home plane being quite different. Thus, legend says, the Rhennee roamed about on horseback and in wagons, but in their new home, conditions were so dangerous as to force them to take to the water to survive. Nobles claim descent from legendary leaders of the lost tribe, while the ordinary Rhennee are descended from the common folk of the tribe.

A third sort of Rhennee folk exist, although they are most rare. They are land wanderers who claim to be the only "true" Rhenn-folk because they have not changed their way of life since coming to the Flanaess from Rhop, homeland of the lost Rhennee."

I forget who it was that was looking to create a Gypsie "homeworld" but here is some proof from the Greyhawk material that will back you up on it<G> Now for some WoG specific questions... Where is Rhop? When did the Rhennee come to Oerth? To the Flan? When did the Rhennee split with their brethren to take to the water? I will be thinking about these questions, and posting at a later date, in the meantime, I look forward to your input.

-Scott

Subj: Re:Rhennee/Gypsie homeworld
Date: 5/13/96 4:33:03 PM
From: JOHN JOHN

May be I like my explanations for things simple. I always thought that the story about the Rhennee coming from some other plane too farfetched. Yes this is a fantasy world and all that but I like things simpler than that. In my mind all the stuff about coming from some other plane is just a legend passed down through time that has been distorted (yes I realise the story is in print in various WOG accessories but I'm going for simplicity). What I like to think happened is that in ancient times the Rhennee were a simple people like everyone else around them but because of some invasion (perhaps one more brutal than others, say like when the suel came in after the invoked devastation. Granted the suel weren't the only invaders and destroyers but they have the worst reputation now since the Oeridians and Flan have written the history books so to speak). Well I always figured the Rhennee were descendants of people who took to the sea to escape the awful invaders. Maybe they were on a peninsula and were trapped so the survivors had no choice but go to the sea. Somewhere like the pomarj which sticks out into an ocean so that if you're on the east coast you can go nowhere but the sea. Then for whatever reason they stayed in their boats. May be other people they met didn't want these foreigners landing on their shores etc. Perhaps these people are descendants of people who lived in the bright desert before the events that are listed in the Rary the traitor module came into being (the scorpion crown thing). Perhaps the magic curse didn't affect everyone and all those it didn't headed for the sea (except for those who travel in wagons on land). In short the world of greyhawk is filled with peoples who have been displaced, disappeared or are now extinct or nearly so, so the Rhennee could come from nearly anywhere and could've been made the way they are at any time. I'm more inclined to place them taking to the sea and becoming the rhennee we know now during the suel migrations

because that would be an excellent reason to want to stay and live on the sea and rivers for safety reasons, but this is me.

Subj: Re:Rhennee/Gypsie homeworld
Date: 5/13/96 11:03:48 PM
From: HalberKill

john john

my take on the rhenfolk history is that they probably migrated over the mountains well after the invoked devastation. This would leave few places for a new people to settle especially with many powerful kingdoms that have had a few centuries to "dig in". Not that they would want to settle anyways, taking into regard their nomadic lifestyle.

I tentatively set it around 320cy, when the Bakluni/Flan nomads invaded the northern territories. (Which by the way explains Delvenbrass in the Vesve, a Bakluni castle). Why did the nomads invade the territories to the north -- and not leave. Most likely, as in most cases in history, another tribe moved into their homelands, pushing them out. And it very well may be possible that the tribe(s) that pushed them out of their lands did the same with the rhenfolk.

Needless to say the invading Bakluni/Flan nomads also marked the beginning of the end of the old "superpowers" of the day, as around that time perrenland, veluna, furyondy and tenh break away from the aerdi kingdom, leaving little cracks for a nomadic people who aren't very war like or destructive, and if anything entertaining, to seep into.

And why take to the rivers and lakes---well, just look at the greyhawk map---now start thinking about trade routes or the easiest ways to travel between the major centers of civilization.

You will probably see that the best way to get anywhere that counts is by river, as opposed to land routes where if there is not a great lake barring the way then it is hostile territory like the bright desert, the abbor-alz, and the bandit kingdoms---places where merchant caravans would not likely go unless they had an adventuring party or two on the payroll. Which would bankrupt any real merchant caravan on the first week to pay them.

just a suggestion

THE WAY THE SUEL OF THE SCARLET BROTHERHOOD SEE THINGS:
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Subj: Scarlet Brotherhood Views

Date: 6/10/96 8:50:26 PM
From: Emirikol7

THE WAY THE SUEL OF THE SCARLET BROTHERHOOD SEE THINGS:

We are finally in an expansionist phase of our history. The malignant oeridians had chased us from our homes on the central flanaess to the fringes. We made our last stand here on tilvanot. Continuously the allies of the oerids, the elves, and dwarves have attempted to discredit our attempts at peaceful resolution of our differences. They too hunted our people and chased us from the mainland.

The baklunish, in our distant past, destroyed our homelands with the rain of colorless fire and thus created the sea of dust. Fortunately our people were led through the mountains by the Scarlet Brotherhood and brought eventually to our new home here on tilvanot.

The Hobgoblins and other enemies of the oerids, elves, and dwarves are now our companions and friends. Their culture is clearly inferior to our own, but what can you expect; the dwarves and elves hunt them as they once hunted us, they have been stripped of all of their wealth and lands, so it is understandable why they hate the demi's as much as we do.

Our servants, the flan, are a stupid and simple people who are in need of guidance. We have taught them the suel ways; but they are too stupid to understand them, so they don't appreciate the meaningful work we give them.

The hepmon, olman savages are another primitive people their savage nature makes them excellent warriors for our armies. Since the oerids and demi's dont understand them either they hate them too. However we cannot let them grow too strong or they will threaten our5 peaceful lifestyle with their savage ways. Their culture has only negative things to offer, so we keep them away from our cities and children.

We have grown tired of being dominated by an obviously inferior group. Their ways are decadent and we will conquer them. The suel people will begin a new era of rule and the oerids, bakluni, and demi will be trampled underfoot! WE are skilled in the new suel arts, and we have gained much since the petty oerid wars. We have readied ourselves for 1000 years and they must now be ready to bow to the NEW SUEL ORDER! Hail the Scarlet Brotherhood. Hail the Father of Obediance!

A LOAD OF BOOKS

Subj: Re:Book Wagon!
Date: 6/10/96 7:07:19 PM
From: KHYRIC

Heres a couple I found. Hope it helps.....

Songs...

The Tale of Derider	Nightwatch Novel	Pg 251
Blinding Light	Greyhawk Adventures	Pg 16
The Legend of Porpherio's Garden	Beyond the Crystal Cave	Pg 2

Books...

Books from Quasquetons Library (4)	Module B1 In search of the Unknown	Pg 10
Book discovered by Atirr on The Sinking Isle	Greyhawk Adventures	Pg 95
The Keoish Court at Niolo Dra	Greyhawk Adventures	Pg 96
The Journal of Henriki Ardand	Greyhawk Adventures	Pg 100
The Memoirs of Pontus Hardiggin	Greyhawk Adventures	Pg 101
Power Politics	Danger at Dunwater	Pg 19
The Politics of Power	Danger at Dunwater	Pg 20
The Triumph of Diplomacy	Danger at Dunwater	Pg 20
The Occult Properties of Gemstones	Danger at Dunwater	Pg 20
A Lizard Language and Common Tongue Grammar	Danger at Dunwater	Pg 20
The Nature of the Sahuagin	Danger at Dunwater	Pg 20
History of the Van Arthog Family	The Sentinel	Pg 17
Woabluf	The Sentinel	Pg 22
Cenozoic Glacial Geology	The Sentinel	Pg 22
The Art of Coarse Angling	The Sentinel	Pg 22

KHY

THE BOUNDS OF OERIK WESTERN AND SOUTHERN REGIONS OBSERVED

Subj: Soon is Now
Date: 6/16/96 10:45:54 PM
From: Iquander
Posted on: America Online

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I present to you my much heralded "Other Side of Oerik" posts. I hope you like them.

Oh, you might want to start "logging" now. This is about 25 pages of text. . . .

Iq

Subj: Intro 1

Date: 6/16/96 10:47:46 PM

From: Iquander

After a long while of promising the information, I'm finally satisfied with what I have enough to post it here. You'll find that I've taken certain liberties with some of the material, and that I've done a little to spice things up. Before I launch into the prattlings of the wizened old sage of Nellix Town, I thought it might be useful to explain where most of this comes from, and the major flaw inherent to the entire piece (if indeed we can treat a bunch of assumptions on grounds of "major" or "minor" flaws. . .).

In an effort to locate the realms of Oerth other than the Flanaess, I've had to cast my net rather widely, attempting to look into as many places as I could. Primary among these is the Glossography, wherein we first learn that the planet Oerth has four continents. The foremost of these (at least to the scholars there), of course, is Oerik. We know most of eastern Oerik, the land called the Flanaess, because that is the setting in which almost all official TSR Greyhawk products take place. There are a few exceptions to this, such as portions of Vecna Lives! Taking place just west of the map of the Flanaess, and Dwellers of the Forbidden City taking place just south of it.

The further one goes from obviously defined "canon," however, the more one learns about the lands of Oerth outside the commonly explored Flanaess. In this way, Frank Mentzer's RPGA modules are invaluable (as are his comments in early editions of this folder), as are Gary Gygax's New Infinities novels and his Sagard the Barbarian "Hero's Challenge" series, co-authored with Flint Dille.

The most enlightening clue to the rest of Oerth came in the very first folio addition of the World of Greyhawk, and appears on page 18 of the Glossography. I refer, of course, to the small map that appears to show nearly the entire continent of Oerik. This map is invaluable in our search for foreign lands.

<cont'd>

Subj: Intro 2

Date: 6/16/96 10:48:15 PM

From: Iquander

The first question we need to ask is "what are the four continents of Oerth?" Oerik is obviously the first. Roger Moore explained why he thinks Hepmonaland (of which we can see the northern portion in the two color maps done by Darlene and included in both the original boxed set and From the Ashes) is the second (Oerth Journal #3), and his evidence is quite likely to be the case. The third continent is likely the so-called Aquaria, or Aqua-Aerdy-- several thousand miles east of the Solnor coast of the Great Kingdom settled by Aerdi explorers several centuries ago. This is the realm of Frank Mentzer's current online campaign, and the setting of his RPGA modules. In some way, then Aquaria is official, at least in light of the fact that the RPGA modules were published by TSR, and they include notes on the history of Aquaria in light of the history of Oerth. It also holds the seal of approval of Gary Gygax, who, of course, created most of Greyhawk as we know it.

At this point, I would like to point out that all of this information probably violates what Gary actually planned in his own campaign, but as the man's own TSR work did as much, I'll simply state it as fact and move on.

So, we've got Oerik, Hepmonaland and Aquaria. There has to be one more, but it isn't mentioned in any official TSR source. Or is it? In the conclusion of Dance of Demons, Gygax's final Gord the Rogue novel, Tharizdun

returns to Oerth and ravages the entire planet. Gord and his friends Leda and Gellor attempt to outrun the awakened god of all evil. Witness the passage below:

"The three had been chivvied and chased across the whole of the world. From the distant South, through the Moving Islands, across Gonduria's vast continent, and thence across the Agitoric Ocean to western Oerik's shore." (402)

<cont'd>

Subj: Intro 3

Date: 6/16/96 10:48:44 PM

From: Iquander

We can surmise a few things here. My guess is that the "distant South" is in fact the southern regions of Hepmonaland, as this would make the three's travels truly an adventure "across the whole of the world." I haven't a clue about the Moving Islands, but I would assume that they are northeast of the Aerdi Sea, perhaps just south of Aquaria.

What is "Gonduria's vast continent?" That's an excellent question, as it's the only time it's mentioned in even the extended canon. Oddly, Gygax's Sagard book, "The Ice Dragon," includes details on the "Gondorians," highly technological aliens allegedly responsible for the creation of humans on Oerth. The last book, "The Fire Demon," mentions a distant people called the Gundanese, who I assume by the context to live on the opposite side of the planet from Oerik. Perhaps all of these things are tied, or perhaps not.

Regardless, it seems likely that "Gonduria's vast continent" is the same place as Aquaria. It's likely that the residents on the eastern coast of the huge continent call it that, just as the Aerdi settled the western coast and brought their own names with them.

All of this leaves an entire continent for development, so there should be room for just about anything you feel like putting on the planet that is not otherwise there. Design your hearts out.

There is, however, a fair amount of information about western Oerik. For starters, let's look at the "Oriental" cultures first. For starters, we know that there are Asian-type residents of Oerth, in part because their dragons have appeared in official adventures. Admittedly, this is a rather weak link given the nature of Greyhawk's early design, in which whatever the designer wanted to insert into the world was generally accepted, but it's always nice to tie up loose ends. The existence of an Asian culture on Oerik (or at least on Oerth) would explain the origins of these dragons. I recently noticed that the heraldic device of the North Province of Aerdy contains what looks to be an eastern (western) dragon, and I'm open to any theories on that one.

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Subj: Intro 4

Date: 6/16/96 10:49:13 PM

From: Iquander

The most promising evidence of an Asian culture on Oerth comes in the short story "The Five Dragon Bowl," included in Gary Gygax's "Night Arrant" Gord the Rogue collection. This is our first (and only) introduction to the Suhfang Kingdom, and I've included some information contained in that story below.

Other new countries and places come from Sea of Death (Chomur, Sa'han, Behow, Jahind and Mulwar), while others (the ill-named Hitaxia, Fex, the Vanain Confederation, Davann and more) are taken from the Sagard books. It should be noted that only a few of these are anything other than names, but I have chosen to elaborate only when necessary. I have not refrained, however, from making obvious or likely connections, and I have not always explained myself in doing so. Those curious will just have to do the research themselves.

Having said that, there is a fairly major part of research that I have neglected. I have only been able to locate the first, third and fourth (of four) Hero's Challenge books. While this might seem like a minor problem, that book describes Sagard's journey from Ratik (where the entire first book is told) to some southern realm. I've decided

where I want to put these lands in my own campaign, and really the only place they could go, in light of certain maps included in the gamebooks, but the second Sagard book, if I ever find it, may prove me wrong.

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Subj: Intro 5
Date: 6/16/96 10:49:36 PM
From: Iquander

Just to allay some fears, it seems pretty obvious that the Sagard novels are meant to be set on Oerth. If this is not the case, and they take place on Yarth, as mentioned by Gygax himself in Polyhedron, that world has at least a dozen countries that are almost exact matches and calls itself Oerth, as well. I have no doubts that Gygax meant to set his books there. He also meant to publish the City of Greyhawk, Castle Greyhawk, Shadowrealm, and about a hundred other projects. Oh well.

I'm sure that some of the stuff I've discovered (or made up, for that matter) is bound to bend some people's noses out of whack. For that reason, I've presented the information in a way that certain sections, or the whole, for that matter, can be easily ignored. The more visually minded among you may wish to know that I'm am currently attempting to draw up maps of the Sagard areas, linking them to Oerik. When and if I ever finish these, you will be the first to know.

Iquander

Subj: Bounds of Oerik 1
Date: 6/16/96 10:50:14 PM
From: Iquander

The Bounds of Oerik

Western and Southern Regions Observed
by Savant Iquander
Society of Sages and Scholars, Nellix

As you well know, my humble abode in Nellix is far from the salty bounds of Oerth's oceans. Landlocked as I am, it's rare that I get the opportunity to treat with those who rely upon the sea as a home, and so the origin of the present treatise is a curious one, indeed.

Nearly a year before the Great War, the month of Wealsun found me visiting a dying scholar in the noble city of Scant, north of the Azure Sea (which those of Onnwall insist on calling the Sea of Yar). While the lessons learned at the bedside of that worthy pedant will be related at another time, it is a tale I came upon quite by accident that forms the basis of this current endeavor.

It began simply enough, with a half-empty glass of Celenese Green and a humble tavern called the Forgotten Anchor (sources confirm, alas, that this establishment was razed to the ground when the Scarlet Brothers invaded last year). Nestled betwixt the quarter of Scant known as the Annals and the city's respectable harbor, the tavern featured an odd mix of well-mannered seafarers, as well as a more cultured, learned clientele, of which I was a member.

Well after dusk, the quiet of the place was upset by a dark skinned sailor, who burst into the place babbling in an unintelligible language at once both guttural and romantic. He appeared a mix of Baklunish, perhaps, and a darker cast, not unlike some of the natives of southern Hepmonaland. Assuming that this strange fellow was, in fact, descended from such savages, the sailors taunted the man while the scholars looked embarrassingly away. I, however, understood the urgency of the foreigner, and I followed him to his ship.

Unbeknownst to my erudite tablemates, a small trinket I picked up in the Bright Desert during my tenure as Duke Justinian Lorinar's personal historian allowed me to transcend the language barrier, and I understood the strange man's tongue. His plea was urgent, for his crew had finally landed off Scant's harbor that night after over

a three months at sea. Half of them had died, food was gone, and they had become horribly lost. By his pleas alone, I knew the man as no Hepmon at all, and vowed to discover the secrets his ship might hold.

In retrospect, it would have been wise have requested an escort as I accompanied the stranger, but any confidence scam or mugging with myself as the target would end with little save disappointed and still-poor criminals, so I decided to follow the man, despite the risk.

It turned out to be a most fortuitous decision.

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Subj: Bounds of Oerik 2
Date: 6/16/96 10:50:42 PM
From: Iquander

The sailor was a member of the crew of the Shakani Reaver, a sleek (though badly damaged) vessel captained by the privateer Damreeg the Rake. I was brought aboard and introduced to this worthy, who seemed unlike any man I had met before. He was tall and well muscled, and had olive-toned skin and very slightly slanted eyes. At first glance, I took him to be Baklunish (albeit a very large member of the race), but conversation soon proved differently.

In return for a promise of much needed supplies (which I eventually obtained from the Nyronal embassy in Scant), Damreeg and his crew agreed to tell me everything they knew of their homelands and, in some cases, the lands beyond. Unfortunately, most of the Rake's crewmen were uneducated simpletons, and details often eluded me, despite the simplicity of my inquiries. I have included what information I was able to obtain below, though certain holes will become apparent to the careful reader.

My primary concern is that I have virtually no way to verify the tales of these men. Indeed, a few (such as the Isle of Batmos) seem so outlandish as to be solely the product of an imagination starved by months and even years at sea in a single outing. By this I mean to say that I encountered several strange men from cultures very different from those well acknowledged on the Flanaess, but I have no way, short of accepting the tales in their entirety, to know if what they told me is true.

I have chosen to include all of my findings below, and I leave it to astute readers or the unfolding of time and exploration to prove me incorrect.

Readying, CY 585,
Nellix

<cont'd>

Subj: Bounds of Oerik 3
Date: 6/16/96 10:51:13 PM
From: Iquander

WESTERN AND SOUTHERN REGIONS OBSERVED

It is a fairly well-known fact that the Suel Empire, prior to its destruction in the Rain of Colorless Fire, stretched to the borders provided it by nature. On all sides, the Suel found themselves surrounded by mountains--the Southern Crystalmists (later dubbed the Hellfurnaces after the magical chaos of the war set off several dozen volcanoes simultaneously) to the east, the Grandsuels (or Sulhaut) to the north, and ranges to the south and west as well, whose names we of the Flanaess have lost to time. These borders, however, did not stop the expansion of the Suel in all directions. To do that took manpower and strategy. Of all directions, the Suel had the greatest luck exploiting their southern neighbors.

It is believed that the Suel controlled nearly the entire southern coast of central Oerik, and the lands that stand there now undoubtedly hold ruins constructed by that fell empire's eldritch magic. By all accounts, the people of

the southern coast are as different from the Suel as could be imagined. They are a dark-skinned folk who stand, on average, between five and seven feet, the latter of whom are seen as more important within their society.

Social station in this land is, and always has been, of utmost cultural importance to the natives. Technologically, they are akin to the Baklunish, and it is said that spellcasting is a rare talent in this area, which perhaps explains how they were so easily subjugated by the Suel. Architecture of this land ranges from stone towers and squared buildings to ornate minarets, often within blocks of each other. The cities of the Southern Coast are said to rival Ekbir and Zeif in sheer beauty, and as architectural artifacts, they put the Flanaess to shame.

The names and nature of these lands has changed significantly over the millennium since the fall of the Suel, and four large nations are known to exist there today. Understand that few travelers from the Flanaess have visited this area, as to do so requires either an extended and treacherous sea quest or an overland trek across the Sea of Dust. Not surprisingly, then, what information we do have comes from daring and lucky mariners.

Beginning due west of the Amedio Peninsula, we find the small nation of Changar that stretches from the easternmost mountains that reach the sea to some 400 miles to the west. This is the most heavily Suel-influenced of the southern nations, and evidence of this can be found in both the racial admixture of the land and the architecture of the Changa's ancient seaport, Hatanagar.

Jahind, Changar's sworn ally, extends from the former nation's border to the next set of mountains that reach nearly to the sea, some 450 miles in all. The kingdoms are very similar (save that the Jahindi had more success in repelling the Suel and are thus "untainted" by pale skin and light hair), and Jahind is said to enjoy the benefit of a successful navy.

Mulwar, the next nation to the west, is a dangerous land buttressed by mountains to the north, east and west. It is said that the land is ruled by a cruel and cunning leader who, many whisper, is in fact an evil spirit, able to change his own form and bend the simple people of Mulwar to his terrible will.

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Subj: Bounds of Oerik 4
Date: 6/16/96 10:51:53 PM
From: Iquander

Northwest of Mulwar, the immense Chomur spreads nearly the width of all Aerdy between three distinct mountain ranges. Chomur is more a wild region than an actual state, and many Suel refugees fled here during and after the horrible wars that shattered the Sulioise Empire. In fact, the northern inhabitants of this land are nearly pureblooded Suel, even after all of these years. These people often war with their southern neighbors, and are despised by nearly every native resident of the land. It is also said that Oeridians mix openly with the darker natives of Chomur. Little else is known about this mysterious place, save that it is inhabited in parts by several organized tribes of hobgoblins.

West of Chomur, in a small valley, the Suhfang outpost of Behow stands as a gate to the wonders of the Far West. Though largely independent from the Suhfang Kingdom, the Behoise conform strictly to imperial laws and religion, a fact that gains them few visitors from the east.

Due north of Behow, the legendary land of Sa'han claims the title of easternmost holding of the Suhfang Kingdom. Like the empire proper, magic is said to operate on different principles here, and the art of the Wu Jen is practiced widely, as is a complicated form of martial arts that is believed to have been the origin of the forms currently employed by the Scarlet Brotherhood.

Both Western Realms have been adamant in their hatred for the Suel, and while many, many refugees have managed to work their ways into western society, they do so primarily as low-caste workers or slaves. The wars between these peoples are legendary, and animosity flows, still.

Aside from these realms, Suhfang dominates much of the rest of the continent. It is likely that an actual base of power, in fact called Suhfang, exists, but the name is also applied to the greater realm as a whole, and it is all rather confusing. Indeed, it is (quite embarrassingly) unknown whether or not the Suhfang Kingdom itself is even on Oerik at all, as ample evidence suggests that it is in fact on the eastern shore of Gonduria's vast

continent, across the Agitoric Ocean. Adding to the difficulty of matters is the fact that the Suhfeng Emperor declares the entire western half of Oerik under his care, despite the less absolute reality of the matter.

The culture of the empire is quite foreign to our own, and places great importance upon mysticism and the elements. This latter fact has caused the most arguments between the severe Suhfeng and the people of the east. Aside from the Bakluni, whose entire system of belief and much of their culture hinges upon the importance and veneration of the elements, the Flanaess views the elements (air, oerth, fire and water, of course) simply as a given part of our everyday experience. There are, certainly, eastern wizards who focus exclusively upon one of the four elements, and the followers of Telchur, Artroa, Sotillion and Wenta are often (incorrectly, I might add) viewed as elemental cults, but the elemental forces are not often considered by the average man of the Flanaess.

Not so with the Suhfeng, with whom the elements play, if possible, a more important role than they do in the Near West. In fact, many of the mages of these western realms are tied intimately to their land, and the inability of their most powerful magi to venture far from the site of their personal elemental connection is often cited as the primary reason this otherwise technologically advanced race has not been able to make itself a serious presence east of the mountain ranges that bisect the continent.

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Subj: Bounds of Oerik 5
Date: 6/16/96 10:52:29 PM
From: Iquander

Not only do the scholars of the west place greater importance upon the elements, they also disagree as to the nature of elemental power itself. Westerners hold that, instead of the four elements generally acknowledged in the east, the multiverse is composed of five elements. As proof, they offer the existence of the so-called "Imperial Dragons of Suhfang," apparently outer-planar dragons of largest size and power that come in a variety of five colors, each of which supposedly corresponds to one of the elements of the natural world (this relationship is further elucidated in Scholar Thu Kin Boh's extended treatise, Fo Ling-Ku (Elemental Structures), currently on reserve in the University Library at Rel Mord).

Apparently, these Imperial Dragons each correspond to one of the western elements and are said to live within the elements themselves (whatever that means). Because these creatures reside outside of the Prime Material plane, they visit worlds such as Oerth and her four sisters only when they so choose--or are summoned. Golden is the color of the Fire Dragon, green that of Water, while blue is said to represent Air/Wind. The Imperial Dragon of silvery hue is Metal, and that with a shade of violet is associated with Wood/Nature.

Eastern scholars (myself included) scoff at the conception of the world as defined by five elements (as everyone clearly knows that "metal" is clearly a product of Oerth, and that "nature," as a force of life, simply does not enter the equation). Indeed, extra-planar travel seems to have assured that we of the east are correct, since beings have thusfar failed to locate a fifth elemental plane. This brings up the intriguing possibility that the Imperial Dragons and spirits of the western elements do not allow Suhfeng sorcerers the ability to travel off-plane, thus proving the fault inherent to their entire system of belief. Still, however, the Wu Jen (as most western mages are known) are a terribly powerful lot, and that power must come from somewhere.

It appears that this cult of elemental dragons extends to the boundaries of the Suhfang Kingdom's vast empire (although, disturbingly, Nerull seems to hold some degree of influence, as well), just as do their strict and often draconian laws said to have been drafted over seven thousand years ago.

In fact, many of the Suhfang colonies south of the great bay that intersects southwest Oerik are almost wholly independent from this rule, despite the wishes of the greater government. Most prominent of these is the large theocracy known as Tsing-Chu.

There, a devoted caste of priests diligently follow the teachings of the god Khuzkan (a complicated figure who may or not be Pelor under a different guise), who implores them to scour the world, rewarding the actions of kind men and the dispatching of evil. Of course, Khuzar conceptions of evil often vary significantly from the morality of the rest of western Oerik (especially in the realms south of the Vanian Confederation), and this alone has been the cause of several prolonged disputes. The justice of Khuzar priests is swift and unflinching, and few understand what is happening to them before their sentence has been carried out.

Another spur in the side of Tsing-Chu's neighbors are the Tsongs, large groups of malign humans exiled from their homelands. These men and women prey upon the shipping lanes of the southwest, and are an annoyance to the people of the south, who view them both as a subtle diplomatic weapon employed by the rulers of Tsing-Chu and as proof that the "sentencing" of the Khuzar priests is often less strict within the nation's own borders than it is without.

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Subj: Bounds of Oerik 6
Date: 6/16/96 10:53:00 PM
From: Iquander

One nation that has had particular problems with the Tsing-Chuans is the Vulzar Kingdom, a highly magical realm populated (if sailors tales are to be believed) by pale white humans with white hair and pink-to-crimson eyes. All descriptions of the inhabitants of the kingdom match exactly with descriptions of albinos of the east, and we can only assume that the entire population of the nation (or at least the majority of them) is likewise afflicted.

By all accounts, Vulzar is the most resplendent and decorated of all the nations of Oerik. It is situated in the western valleys of the Slate Mountains (the range that reaches southmost in all Central Oerik) and stretches to the warm equatorial waters of the Agitoric Ocean. The beauty of the Vulzar Kingdom is perhaps most evident in the architecture and local flair of Wii Shangazza, literally "Home of the Gods," the capitol and main port of the kingdom. It is said that every god in the multiverse holds a cathedral in this place, and while the truth of that statement is questionable, the city is said to have as many temples as residences.

While this echoes of Innspa, here on the Flanaess, Wii Shangazza is supposedly different in that each temple is thought to be the largest and most ornate of each god in the Flanaess. Vulzar legends claim that the gods themselves rested on their fair shores in the months following creation, and that the pure-white cast of their skin and strange eyes come from the blood of the gods themselves. Certainly, the land of the albinos is favored by some higher being, as they have resisted absorption by no fewer than three empires of antiquity.

To the east of the capitol, in the heights of the Slate Mountains, the barbarian people of Davann eke out a living by taming the wild mountain goats, bears and (supposedly) smilodons. According to legend, many creatures long-dead to the east flourish in the lowlands of the Slates, and one valley in particular is said to play home to several hundred dinosaurs, most of which have been trained by the Davanians, who have an affinity with beasts of all kinds.

The most common of their trained animals is the Davanian Bat, which they raise by the hundreds and sell to the highest bidder. These bats, large reptiles with a wingspan of over ten feet, provide excellent and (relatively) inexpensive short-range air travel for the rulers of the Vulzar Kingdom and the lands to the south. Just as Greyhawk has it's griffins and Enstad brags of Hippogriffs, so too does Wii Shangazza boast a company of Davanian Bat-mounted knights.

The relationship of the Davann to the Vulzars has ranged, throughout history, from total and complete peace to open warfare. Currently, relations seem to be strong, though the unflinching support of the Davann to their leader, whomever he or she may be, means that a veritable army changes philosophies each time a ruler passes away.

It is certain that the land east of Davann, between the Slate Mountains and the southwestern border of Chomur, supports at least a handful of small nations, though nothing is currently know of the region.

At -5 degrees latitude, the land east of the Slate Mountains cuts dramatically westward, forming the Gargian Bay. Within the southeast "border" of this bay, explorers will find the Hydrianian Island chain. The easternmost island, called the Isle of Slith, is inhabited by a foul humanoid race with many of the serpentine traits of the Yuan-Ti prevalent on Hepmonaland. If this is the case, the Slith represent humanity much closer to the base stock than the Yuan-Ti of the south, as snakelike features seldom exist here more prominent than a forked tongue or serpentine eyes.

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Subj: Bounds of Oerik 7
Date: 6/16/96 10:53:35 PM
From: Iquander

The rest of the chain consists of explored but unsettled islands not larger than the Olman or Sea Princes outposts of Flotsom, Jetsom or Fairwind.

Due south of the Hydranians, several miles off the coast of the mainland, the Skull Island chain breaks the hostile waters of the Crimson Sea (so named for the blood-red kelp and algae that infest the waters of the entire region). This collection of some 24 islands is home to pirates and brigands of all variety. In fact, one of the most prominent islands, St. Koal, is the subject of myth and legend as far north as the Lordship of the Isles, though it is certain that none of those buccaneers have ever ventured to see it. As seafaring tales have it, when a skillful pirate dies at sea, his spirit travels to live among the legends that dwell at St. Koal. In comparison, the chaotic streets of pre-war Fairwind are stoic and well-mannered, indeed.

To the west of these chains, the mainland of Oerik thins to a peninsula some 1,200 miles across. This continues southward for nearly 350 miles (where rest the lands of the Vanian Confederation), where the land thins to a width of approximately 65 miles. The land continues southward for some 70 miles before widening drastically to nearly 900 miles and continues for 250 miles to the south (the land within being Hitaxia) where it widens to a thin strip of land no more than 25 miles from east to west. The lands south of this expand greatly and are covered below. I will, however, attempt to describe the lands south of the Slate Mountains before continuing too far, so as not to confuse the reader.

Directly southeast of the Vulzar Kingdom, a former empire now wastes slowly away under the gaze of ineffectual rulership. Long ago, after the magical chaos of the wars to the north ceased much of their activity, a powerful ruler from the city-state of Vane conquered the Skull and Hydranian Islands, thus ruling over an empire that extended to Hitaxia in the south to the border of the Vulzar Kingdom to the north. This ruler, Gargus Rex, ruled longer than most men live, but death eventually claimed him, and the wars of succession between his seven eligible sons are legendary. The outcome of these wars was the Vanian Confederation, a union of seven city-states allied in times of war and bitter rivals in times of peace. As the years that followed the wars of succession have, with few exceptions, been relatively peaceful, most of the city-states have diminished considerably in power, and much of the land claimed by one or more of the kinglets is, in fact, a wild region. The time of the Vanians seems to have passed on Oerth, and it can now be said that the confederation has left more ruins of itself scattered about the region than it maintains as livable dwellings.

As a whole, the area is heavily dominated by Hitaxia, which is truly the rising power of the southern realms of Oerik. Hitaxian slavers and privateers discourage Vanian vessels bound for Hatanagar and the ports of the north. For the most part, they meet little resistance, save for a small but dedicated fleet of privateers employed by the ruler of Shaka [of which captain Damreeg was, and perhaps still is, a proud member].

Most of the cities of the Confederation are situated on the coast of the nation, though Yate, the cultural center of the empire during the time of Gargus Rex, has a central location within the nation. Here especially, the citizens downplay the decadence of their realm, ignoring their military impotence and domination by the more powerful Hitaxians.

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Subj: Bounds of Oerik 8
Date: 6/16/96 10:54:08 PM
From: Iquander
Posted on: America Online

Religion among the Confederation is a strange mix of the native religion, southern tribal spiritualism and the veneration of a being known as Gak, who seems to have been the official patron of the Vanian Empire. Perhaps these once-proud people cling to his worship as a stubborn badge of the time of bounty that will never come again.

Other states in the region include Talea, Ecomia and Drakosia.

Immediately to the south of the Vanian Confederation is Hitaxia, the dominant force in the southern realms, and the only nation of the lot that is not either newly formed, wholly uncivilized, or in some form of decay. The greed of Hitaxia is practically a measurable constant to the people of the south, and it is this greed that has changed the ways of much of southern Oerik.

Just over 500 years ago, the Sultoon Rahman conquered the entire Hitaxian plain, and bulwarked his land armies against the amassing forces of the disparate Vanian Confederation to the north. He marched on the southernmost city-state of the Vanian Confederation and sacked it in less than a week, taking much of the hard-earned spoils of Gargus Rex's reign south to Tabu-Bel-Abu, Hitaxia's seaport capitol. Nearly all of this money was spent to build up the defenses of the city and improve the standard of living of his countrymen. The Hitaxians found this wealth to their liking, and soon discovered a method by which they might vastly increase the revenues brought in from trade with the south.

In an operation that lasted the better part of a century, Rahman erected a great wall of stone running east to west along the 25-mile-wide strip of grassland that acted as Hitaxia's southern border. This he plated with the finest marble quarried in Nuxes, to the south. The structure was a marvel to behold, but southerners knew the reality of the situation all too well. To start, the Hitaxians salted the fields for miles to the south of the Great Gate, and initiated rigorous tariffs both by land and at sea. The Hitaxian navy, which had always been strong, complimented Rahman's plan and merchants who wished to trade between the southern realms and those of the north soon saw much of their profits going to the coffers of Tabu-Bel-Abu. While suffering from the disease that would take his life, Sultoon Rahman ordered the construction of a great palace and treasury in the capitol city, both of which still stand today. The nation thrived, and Rahman, after his death, was called "the Magnificent".

In the years that have followed, succeeding Sultoons have been at once more and less influential than that seminal ruler, and the nation is still the major player in the affairs of the southern realms, if not Western Oerik itself. Recently, the Hitaxians have taken to slaving raids on the Wuga jungle and northern island chains. The trade in manpower has been extremely lucrative for Hitaxia, and they have found willing customers in Chomur, Gyptic and elsewhere.

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Subj: Bounds of Oerik 9
Date: 6/16/96 10:55:38 PM
From: Iquander

As can be imagined, the Hitaxians are not well liked by their close neighbors, though there is little anyone can do to change matters as they currently stand. The Great Gate (now merely of stone; the marble that once coated its entirety was stripped by a desperate sultoon some years ago) precludes any invasion from the disorganized ruffians of Fex to the south, and the lack of anything resembling courage to the north assures no major land assault from that quarter. A strange natural phenomenon, known as the Black Current, protects Hitaxia's eastern border from naval invasion, as its waters flow close to the coast with a current not unlike that of the strongest river. The coast is literally littered with the hulking corpses of ships, both friendly and hostile, unlucky enough to have been caught up in the Black Current's ravenous appetite.

The racial origin of the Hitaxians is one of the greatest mysteries of the Flanaess, as they seem very much to be descendants of Bakluni stock. Indeed, the entire culture would be largely at home on the shores of the Drawmidj, and the spires, mosques and minarets of Tabu-Bel-Abu recall sights of Ekbir's grand cityscape. It's possible that the Hitaxians are the relatives of some stranded Baklunish expedition to the south centuries before the Suel had organized into civilization. It is a doubtful hypothesis (given what little we know of the Bakluni even today), but one that seems the only possible option.

Religion in Hitaxia is likewise unique. The people of this region believe that, if one dies in combat, his spirit is transported on great ghost boats down the Ebon River to the Isle of Night, there to pass through the massive Gates of Fahderium on their way to the afterlife. That the river and island actually exist (southeast of Fex) adds a strange twist to the tale. Strangely, the people of Hitaxia do not subscribe to the gods of the Bakluni, and

instead take an almost agnostic view of the world. When it comes to discussing matters of spirits and the dead, however, most Hitaxians become grimly silent. Hitaxians take the afterlife very seriously, and it is unwise to taunt the religion, unless one is attempting a full, firsthand investigation of the Isle of Night.

Southeast of the Great Gate, beyond the immense Kush Kavi Mountains, wild tropical rain forest extends for thousands of miles along the north and eastern coasts of the land. The jungle itself has no official name, but instead is often referred to by the names of the most prominent tribes of savages who inhabit the area. In this manner, the northern regions of this jungle are called "Wuga Country," after the dark-skinned primitive peoples who make this area their home, and the southern portion of the jungle is called Zymbia, or the Zimbian Jungle.

Wuga country is inhabited by at least three prominent tribes of humans. The Wuga are, of course, the most pervasive of these, and their members are often encountered as slaves or guides to the exploring folk of Hitaxia, Gyptic and elsewhere. They seem to paint their bodies with different varieties of mud, and the coloration and design of these body-paintings are said to define the tribesman's status within the society. They are, for all intents and purposes, nomadic peoples, traveling under the vast canopy of the jungle while attempting to evade the dangerous creatures who make their homes there.

In contrast, the Gingas, another tribe, have managed to master certain elements of agriculture, and they have in minor ways bent the Oerth to their wills by setting up farms and small orchards within the jungle (which, given the voracious appetite of the unstoppable growth of the woods, is no mean feat). Their culture is difficult to examine, as the Gingas themselves speak in a highly inefficient tongue. What takes a Wuga warrior less than a minute to relate in his chattering language might take the Ginga tribesman at least ten.

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Subj: Bounds of Oerik 9
Date: 6/16/96 10:56:06 PM
From: Iquander

The Kodokii, who live in the Kush Kavi and are in fact exiles from Fex, have recently dominated much of the western jungle. They are a vicious people who are said to hunt humans for sport, and their eating habits are scarcely the material for an enlightened treatise such as this. Curiously, the Kodokii, who are in all other ways unremarkable in terms of technological achievement, seem to have mastered the art of short-term personal flight. It is not known how they manage to do this, since the wooden wings they attach to their arms should not work. They do work, however, and it is perhaps the Kodokii's mastery of this craft that has allowed them to dominate such a large area in so short a time.

Certainly, a jungle so vast as this supports several tribes of humans (and probably a few humanoids, as well), but as the Wuga, Ginga and Kodokii are the most often encountered by civilized explorers, they are the only groups mentioned here.

Strangely, jungle tales tell of a secluded race of intelligent monkeys somewhere in the heart of the eastern Wuga land. These creatures are said to hold the lone Mt. Dolog as a holy site of extreme importance, and the ruler of this tribe is, by all accounts, a hugely powerful white-ape.

Aside from Mt. Dolog, about which little is known, the Wuga Jungle holds geographic beauty unparalleled in the east, recent discoveries in the Amedio and Hepmonaland notwithstanding. A mysterious lake just larger than the Sea Princes' Spendlowe can be found just north of Dolog, and two towering mesas known as the Gates of Death act as a beacon toward the region's unique salt flats.

The most mysterious structures in the Wuga Jungle, however, are those fashioned from human(?) hands. To the south, where the massive Putuma River marks the unofficial border between Wuga Country and Zymbia, a wide road of stone interrupts the wild of the jungle. Crafted from blocks some ten-feet square, the road has survived the centuries since its construction relatively well, considering no other trace of its makers survives. Some claim that this is a part of the colossal causeway constructed by the ancestors of the ancient Momboddo Empire, far to the south. (Similar roads at one time bisected much of Zymbia and Tanzula, as well, until the more aggressive natives there uprooted them from the oerth and used the massive flagstones in the construction of early cities.)

If the road had a destination, per se, it must have been the legendary Sanda-Uul, the City of Ivory. No one knows who built the city, but tales of its treasures, and dangers, have haunted southern culture for more than a millennia. The few madmen who have claimed to have found the city (its location seems to have always been a secret) claim that huge pyramids form the basis of the place, and that gigantic ivory statuary depict the rise (but not fall, oddly) of a great civilization. Remnants of that civilization allegedly still walk the tall battlements of Sanda-Uul. Though a few natives and explorers claim to have blundered upon the place, no organized expedition has been able to find it. Perhaps, in the steaming jungles of the south, some things are better left hidden forever.

<cont'd>

Subj: Bounds of Oerik 11
Date: 6/16/96 10:57:02 PM
From: Iquander

To the west, across the Kush-Kavi, the deserts of Fex blow their chaos to the western seas. Originally a land of dark-skinned desert men, Fex became Hitaxia's dumping grounds after the construction of the Great Gate some 500 years ago. What was once a harsh but thriving crossroads between the civilized lands of the north and south is now a pathetic wasteland. In fact, in the years following Rahman the Magnificent, the desert has become even more treacherous than it was before, and many Fexians claim that the Hitaxians are killing their land.

If these people have any leverage over their northern neighbors, however, it is by the sheer luck of geography. Deep within Fexian lands, the Ebon River spills into Lake Ebon, where the Isle of Night stands as the final resting place of Hitaxian spirits. For their part, the Fexians disdain northern religion, and seem to worship a small pantheon unto itself. Whether these gods are unique to the region or merely aspects of the familiar gods of the east is currently unknown.

The Fexians use the location of the Isle of Night to great advantage in negotiations with the Hitaxians. Recently, in fact, they threatened to dam up the Ebon River, thus barring Hitaxian spirits from gaining the Gate of Fahderium, unless a series of concessions were granted to the southerners. While the greedy merchants of the north understood that for Fex to do so meant destroying the ecology of its northern regions, the Hitaxians eventually relented and agreed to let only Fexian traders through the Great Gate from the south. In actuality, however, the merchants have lost little, and they have knowingly employed bandits to raid what few Fexian caravans there are, thus encouraging the folk of Tanzula, Nuxes and beyond to conduct trade by sea.

Being made up of the outcast criminals of Hitaxia and having been strong-armed into poverty, the Fexians are a sour lot, content to raid each other into oblivion. Their despair has led them to several recent conflicts with the dark-skinned Tanzuli, the most recent of which caused the Kodokii to flee into the Kush-Kavi Mountains and beyond.

The folk of the grasslands of Tanzula are less desperate than their northern neighbors in Fex, and they reacted to the aggression of Rahman by sealing their own borders and becoming almost entirely self-sufficient. As the land of this portion of Oerik is much less populated than the Flanaess, there are few settlements of import in Tanzula. In fact, stating that they have any sort of government at all might be an exaggeration. As a whole, though, the Tanzuli protect their borders to the death, and they react to outside aggression as a unified order of savage fighters. They are far from primitive, despite their tribal organization. If there is a leader who presides over all of the tribes of Tanzula, that individual is not known to the majority of southerners.

It is believed by many that the Tanzuli are descendants of the dark-skinned inhabitants of the jungles of Zymbia who fled to this land centuries ago. Since then, Zymbia has been a lush wild region, said to be teeming with life but with death hidden behind every tree. If ever there were a place with more legends of evil, it is not known to scholarship. Given the harsh reality of life in the jungle, it's likely that most of these stories are wild exaggerations, but there is certainly something within the heart of the place that makes even the most brave think twice before venturing within its bounds.

<cont'd>

Subj: Bounds of Oerik 12

Date: 6/16/96 10:57:31 PM
From: Iquander

Currently, much of the jungle is said to be dominated by the Ushad-I, an apparently human master of foul southern magics. If tales can be believed, this man, in order to stave off death, has pieced together a body for himself from the forms of captives brought from all reaches of the southern regions. The lengths to which the Usad-I will go in this are astounding, for it is said that he has changed entire heads several times in his long life. Perhaps more frightening, the Ushad-I has entered into a pact with the Fire Demon, Marduk, and now holds the southern tribes (with few exceptions) under his control.

Just off Zymbia's eastern coast lies Rarzuul, a large island that was once a home to a powerful mage said to have traveled to our own lands. Details on the matter, despite repeated inquiries, were not forthcoming.

The Zimbian Jungle ends in rough foothills known as Sala-Nus. South of these hills, the once-great Momboddo Empire is still a site to behold. Its structures are different from any known on Oerth. Some represent a perfect blending of living organic matter and strangely-cut wood, while others have been constructed from an almost impossible amount of metal. Domes are said to be integral to Momboddo architecture, and there is little land not utilized for some sort of farming. The people of the empire have managed even to tame the tropical mountains that act as the empire's western border, and their ocean vessels that ply the eastern and southern waters are said to be second to none.

Strangest of all (at least to our own pretensions) is the fact that Momboddo is a complete matriarchy. Somewhat like our own free-city of Hardby, but on a tremendous scale, women control almost every aspect of Momboddo society. It is to the oldest female child that all property is passed, and it is women who are referred to in all matters of politics.

This is not to say that the Momboddo do not value men, only that their society is inherently slanted against them. It has not always been so, however, as stories tell of a time in which the male of the empire were nothing more than slaves used for the sole purpose of creation. In almost every way, their culture was, and still is, to a degree, alien to our own. And, as far as I can tell, there is good reason for this.

The Momboddo are, in fact, aliens themselves. Unlike the dark-skinned folk native to the south, they are olive-skinned, have sharply chiseled features, and smoldering, red eyes. There are many tales told in the north about how the people of the empire came to exist on our world. These stories are complicated by the fact that by the time the Hitaxian's ancestors began recording their history, the Momboddo were already in decline. In fact, it is said that Vanian explorers during the reign of Gargus Rex discovered ancient ruins of Momboddo design as far north as the Isle of Night.

The most commonly believed tale of the origin of the empire holds that the Momboddo simply appeared from great gates located on the Isles of Dreams, just south of Rarzuul off Momboddo's eastern seacoast. Those ancient travelers (or outcasts, according to Momboddo's enemies) knew they could not return, and eventually spread to the mainland, where they began constructing what would be the hub of a great empire.

The Momboddo brought with them the secrets of metallurgy long before its discovery to the north. Though the women warriors encountered little organized resistance from the inhabitants of the northern jungles, they soon dominated most of the land. Their rule was strange, for they merely asserted their control over the tribes and moved on, seldom building structures of their own, leaving the dense growth to itself in all save government.

<cont'd>

Subj: Bounds of Oerik 13
Date: 6/16/96 10:58:53 PM
From: Iquander

The more or less barren plains that would once become Fex and Tanzula are a different case, and even today several structures stand in good repair in those lands. South of Tanzula, the Momboddo encountered the people of Gyptic and Nuxes, and taught these men and women their culture and technology.

Then, suddenly, the Momboddo Empire withdrew into itself, abandoning the empire at large and returning to the natural borders that acted as the hub of the empire. Without the guidance of the Momboddo, Gyptic and Nuxes abandoned matriarchy, but exploited the technology and artifice taught to them by their alien neighbors to the east.

Using the naval designs of the empire, the two nations began courting northern trade routes and eventually came into conflict with each other. After centuries of warfare, Gyptic lay in ruins, and sold its entire navy to its neighbor for a pittance (many suggest that this was not their own idea). Now, it is a poor nation, though a return to the religion and traditions of the time before the coming of the Momboddo has given it a rich cultural heritage.

The only thing rich about Nuxes is its merchants. Over the years, the renown of Nuxes craft work has spread as far as the Suhfeng, and their merchants eventually dominated the government of this land. For their part, the Momboddo seem unconcerned about the bastardization of their lessons, a feeling that is much appreciated by the men and women of Nuxes. The nation's capitol, Gavvard, rests on the south-westernmost outcropping of land in the Oerik continent, and has a splendid view of Tukotan, some thirty miles across the Gavvardian Channel (which connects the Sea of Rage to the western, Agitoric Ocean--also known as the Sea of Eternity).

<cont'd>

Subj: Bounds of Oerik 14
Date: 6/16/96 10:59:14 PM
From: Iquander

It is clear that the Agitoric Ocean is not eternal, however, as there is a fair amount of travel between the far continent (called Gonduria) and south-central Oerik. Between the continents lies the near-mythical Isle of Batmos. There, men train huge fish as mounts, and a Batmosian fishing procession is said to be one of the most beautiful sights in the realm. They are said to be the most peaceful of men anywhere. One of the ways they have achieved this peace is by exiling all children who appear to have an evil streak in them. These individuals often terrorize the shipping lanes of the seas east of the Agitoric, mounted as they are on huge, saddled fish.

Beyond Batmos is Gonduria, a continent fully twice as huge as Oerik. There can be found the ancient cultures of Chadan and Gundan, said to be the oldest humans on Oerth. And who knows? Across that far continent, on the western shores of what we call the Solnor Ocean, perhaps the distant relatives of John Asperman, Aerdi's greatest naval hero, live out the Oeridian legacy fully across the great globe that is the Oerth. Nothing is impossible in the realms beyond the Crystalists.

Nothing.

Savant Iquander,
Nellix.

Subj: Re:Soon is Now
Date: 6/17/96 4:38:15 PM
From: Emirikol7
Posted on: America Online

Iq,

A great thanks for creating another hulk of information for neural digestion.

I've got a couple of questions on your marvelous (simply marvelous) project.

1. What is the name of the SouthWestern bay/sea jutting into the mainland?
2. Which side of this bay (east or west) are the countries of Tsong and Tsing Chu on?
3. About what degrees of latitude is the Vulzar Kingdom located at?
4. How far west does Mulwar extend? Is it just in that mountain valley?
5. What is the continent north of the 'Suhfang' plains?
6. What is the name of the Mountain range west of the 'Suhfang' plains?

7. Is the spelling officially SuhfAng or SuhfEng?
8. When you speak of Oerids mixing Chomurians, where in the heck did they come from? They would have had to cross two mountain ranges to get to that isolated valley. If they share the valley with the Suel, they probably have their own territories inside of it; unless they were slaves of the Suel.
9. What is the name of the old suel empire (now the sea of dust)?
10. What was the name of the old bakluni empire?
11. When you speak of Sa'han and the Scarlet Brotherhood, are you implying that the suel escaped to the east with this knowledge, or that possibly some beings from Sa'han were the ones gated onto the Tilvanot Peninsula for the "Fate of Istus" explanation.
12. Is there anything else you'd care to explain?

Em

Subj: Re:Now all we need is...
Date: 6/17/96 7:41:08 PM
From: Iquander

>>>

1. What is the name of the SouthWestern bay/sea jutting into the mainland?

>>>

The name of this bay (or even its existence) is not mentioned anywhere in the Sagard or Gord books. I wouldn't even venture to guess (though I'm sure I could come up with something in a pinch).

>>>>

2. Which side of this bay(east or west) are the countries of Tsong and Tsing Chu on?

>>>>

First off, the Tsongs are outcasts of Tsing-Chu, not a nation of their own. Sorry if that wasn't clear. My guess is that Tsing-Chu takes up much of the land surrounding the east and south coasts, _west_ of the Southern Bay.

>>>

3. About what degrees of latitude is the Vulzar Kingdom located at?

>>>

Somewhere between 5 and 0, as I said in the file that the southern border stretches near the equator. That would mean that the mountain nation of Davvan is located mostly in the slates, but also in that little niche between 4 and 1 on the western slopes of the Slate Mts.

>>>

4. How far west does Mulwar extend? Is it just in that mountain valley?

>>>

Pretty much. Keep in mind, though, that that "little valley" is about the size of the Duchy of Urnst. Also, Mulwar extends to the sea, which makes it even bigger. I don't imagine that the borders of any of the Southern Coast nations are very stable, though.

>>>

5. What is the continent north of the 'Suhfang' plains?

>>>

I'm not sure I understand the question. If you're asking what's there, your guess is as good as mine. I'd put a ton of Suhfeng types up to about 35 degrees north, then mix in some semetic types. All of the former nations would have varying degrees of loyalty to the Empire, and the latter would be a thing unto themselves.

<cont'd>

Subj: Re:Now all we need is...

Date: 6/17/96 7:41:23 PM

From: Iquander

>>>

6. What is the name of the Mountain range west of the 'Suhfang' plains?

>>>

Again, your guess is as good as mine. I don't think there's too much room to play with off the left side of the page 18 map, but I do think that Oerik and Gonduria's east coast are much closer than Oerik/Aquaria.

>>>

7. Is the spelling officially SuhfAng or SuhfEng?

>>>

Officially, as far as the word can be used in this context, the Kingdom and Empire are called "Suhfang." I have transformed this into "Sufheng" when I'm talking about the people of Suhfang.

>>>

8. When you speak of Oerids mixing Chomurians, where in the heck did they come from? They would have had to cross two mountain ranges to get to that isolated valley. If they share the valley with the Suel, they probably have their own territories inside of it; unless they were slaves of the Suel.

>>>

Well, I've always sort of assumed the Oeridians are "people without a home," in that they are spread all over Oerik (the continent is, after all, named after them). By that logic, they would exist all over the place, including in and south of the ancient Suel empire. Perhaps they once had a great homeland, but, at least until the Great War, they were not unified.

>>>

9. What is the name of the old suel empire (now the sea of dust)?

>>>

Realize that not all of these questions are addressed anywhere. I've always called the Suel empire the Suel Empire, or Empire of the Suloise, much like the Roman Empire is called the Roman Empire.

>>>

10. What was the name of the old bakluni empire?

>>>

Likewise, I call this the Bakluun Empire, or Empire of the Bakluun, but you're on your own.

>>>

11. When you speak of Sa'han and the Scarlet Brotherhood, are you implying that the suel escaped to the east with this knowledge, or that possibly some beings from Sa'han were the ones gated onto the Tilvanot Peninsula for the "Fate of Istus" explanation.

>>>

I was attempting to imply that the Suel modified the forms of martial arts practiced in Sa'han into their own forms, which were practiced / revived by the Scarlet Brotherhood.

I reject in all ways, shapes and forms the idea that the Brotherhood was not always a martial arts based organization, and that Kara-Turnas were gated across the multiverse to teach them how to fight. That just sounds dumb to me.

Of course, I would be happier with an Oerth-based gate theory, but then I prefer to do away with the entire scenario.

>>>

12. Is there anything else you'd care to explain?

>>>

I'm happy to answer any questions, but it'll be tough for me to anticipate what people will want to know for a while. I've tried to cover all the bases in my write-up, but I know for a fact that major gaps have been left--not because I left them, but because Gygax simply never invented them. I suspect I'll have lots more to say once I've read the Green Hydra (Sagard, Book 2), but for now, I'm just happy to field any questions.

Like this one:

>>>>

What is the relationship between the Suhfang's empire and the Baklunish/Oeridians to the east?

>>>>

Again, this is never mentioned. Magus Yeo seems to have contempt for all things of Oerik, so my guess is that the relationship has been tenuous. There seems to be a vast difference inherent to the elemental theology of the Bakluni and the Suhfeng, so my guess is that this has caused lots of problems. Then again, proximity says that there are probably quite a few Suhfeng in Bakluna, while in the Flanaess, they are relatively rare.

I think Oeridians are tolerated just about everywhere, but they are not allowed into the upper ranks of Suhfeng society.

Iq

Subj: Bravo, Iquander!
Date: 6/17/96 9:41:48 PM
From: TSR Roger

Iquander, I loved reading your series of posts on Oerth! Thank you! Only now no one will like my Amedio Jungle article, alas. ("Derivative," they will say.) But that is the burden that all must shoulder. Thank you again! Way cool stuff. Roger

Subj: Way Out West
Date: 6/19/96 11:00:27 PM
From: QSamantha

A very nice set of posts on Western Oerik, Iquander. Thank you.

QSamantha

Subj: Western Oerth Posts
Date: 6/21/96 12:10:06 AM
From: Aria13

Iquander,

An excellent job of pulling together information. You're ready for Jeopardy. ;) I have to say the geography is somewhat confusing. The scale is also a bit fuzzy. That's not your fault, of course. While interesting, I wonder if this information is at all useable by TSR in any future WoG product. First, some of it they don't own I believe. Second, not all of it comes directly from purely WoG sources but must be extrapolated from the EGG apocrypha. Again, no slight to your effort. And still quite interesting. Well done.

Aria13