



*A short introduction in the world of Daleth
presented as a "handout"*

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World description

The World of Daleth: The World of Daleth is not a planet, as you might think. The planet is called Airtha and the World of Daleth is just a part of it - and it is more than just a geographic part - it is the modern Dalethian cultural point of view towards the world.

Daleth was a powerful empire on the northern hemisphere of Airtha. The empire consisted of four parts: De Erflanden, which is the oldest part of Daleth, the Weslanan in the west, Salamandran in the south and Overveer in the east. All parts are now more or less sovereign (see: politics)

There are three large islands that belong to Daleth: the highly independent Roverseiland (in the northwest), and Zwaardeiland and Vuureiland, both off shore near the city of Vîmeir.

Mountains

The landscapes in Daleth feature a large, hooked mountain range, called The White Mountains (the northern part) and The Black Mountains (the southern part). The White Mountains have the highest peaks, but the highest mountain is the Middagstop, situated on the border between the White Mountains and the Black Mountains. In De Erflanden and Overveer are more mountains.

In Salamandran is a volcano (Mount Funins). This is part of a geological feature known as "The Half of the World", a semi-canyon. West of the Half of the World are the lower lands of Salamandran, and on the east are the highlands of Overveer. The change of landscapes is very sudden and marked by the Wyz river.

Water

There are three large and one smaller water systems in Daleth.

The largest is the Wyz-system, consisting of Kristalmeer (a large lake, formed by glaciers in the long forgotten past), the Wyz River, the Nordan River (with its several smaller rivers and brooks) and the Strauma River. They all add up in the Wyz River, which flows to the southeast.

The second largest is the Is-system. The Stainrens River, the Swamps of Gamoor and the Is River form this system and the mighty Is River flows to the southwest.

This system is bordered closely by the small system of the Ivèn River, which is possibly not even a river all the way, but part of a creek. The fourth system is that of the Weslanan, where the Tar River, the two Cin Rivers and the Noorderstoom River all add up to mouth in the

Weslanan Bay.

There are not so many lakes. Most noticeable are Kristalmeer, the largest of all, more a sea than a lake, and the smaller Spychlmeer (in Overveer), Lazulameir (south of Ildritz), Lake Lexan (near Ciniz), and The Green Lake (Gronbrunlar).

In Overveer are the Zwarte Meren (the Black Lakes), but they are not filled with water, but with a black unknown substance. Another waterless lake is Het Droge Meer, once the centre of a blossoming culture, now another part of the Salamandran Desert. It is filled with sand and dirt.

Cities

Daleth has three large cities: Ildritz, the former capital of the empire, now capital of De Erflanden, Altheizar (capital of Overveer) and Nieuw-Gamoor (capital of Salamandran). (More about the settlements via the Maps & Places section, where you should find a description of each settlement of any meaning)

Borders and other parts of the planet

The borders are in the west the Western Sea (which has several names, such as "Sea where the sun sets in", "The Great Sea"), in the south a large desert like country known as Wythviz, in the east the dry steppe realms of Thirun, and in the north the icy and uninhabited (?) lands of De Taycha and Trigohaima.

Beyond Daleth's borders are other lands, such as Dernian Landis in the east, Anthastahts in the West and Luban in the south. Most of these lands are hardly known, and every once in a while a brave explorer sets sails to the far away fantastic lands they have heard of in old stories. Many of them never returned.

Large parts of the planet are still undiscovered - at least not by Dalethian explorers.

The exact size of the planet is unknown. No one managed to sail around it (if that is possible in the first place). No man of science ever bothered to calculate the size of the planet.

Illusions

We are intelligent.

We are smart.

We want to know the truth.

Yet, we love to be misled.

The truth, as they say, is out there, however, the lies are inside our minds (free after T.

Pratchett) . The power of the illusion lays in the strong fantasy of the misled, not in the talent or the art of the illusionist. Just keep that in mind if you want to know how Daleth magic works.



The eye deceives, the mind spins wild fantasies around that wrapped view, the mouth will tell lies for truth, convinced, convincing. For the truth is that what we have seen, with our own eyes, and heard, with our own ears. However, the truth is also what we made of it with our own minds.

Our wonderful minds, that sometimes make reality stranger than fiction. Our minds, that have the power to dream, to fantasise, to build our own truth. Our minds, so apt to hide the lies behind reality, the illusions beyond reality.

And we will dream and say it is the truth. And we will freely drown in fantasy. We will love illusions. It will spice up our dull days, it will enlighten our lustless lives. We are willing to see the world with a magic view.

And we are willing to share that view. Stories are told and retold, paintings made, and by any means we will try to share the dream of reality we have.

Soon, the truth we heard from others will be our own truth. And in reality we can relive the fumbled, wrapped, mislead truth by remembering the stories, the paintings, the dreams of others. And yes, we will continue to live in the lies, spread it, buying and selling, building a culture of shared illusions and dreams.

For all those who have heard a truth, this truth becomes reality, and the woods will be sparkled with strange creatures, the night will send monsters, the skies will be filled with gods.

That is the truth of the humans.

That is the truth.

Your mother told you.

Your teacher told you.

Your neighbours tell you.

And you will tell them the very same truth for your view towards reality is spoiled with the same illusions.

Illusions are the true magic of Daleth. It is the beginning and the end of all other magic. If you are sensible for the power of illusions, all other magic will work just as well. All truth is held together with bonds of illusion, and those who fail to see that bond will not understand the world as the others will. Will be a liar and a traitor to civility. Will be put away in the madhouse.

Illusion is also the start of inspiration, ideas triggered by the wrapped view towards the world, dreams that are made reality. That is a very strong power, that makes illusion worthwhile, yes, necessary for a society.

Truth and lies, what is the difference if magical powers of illusion are larger than life, and stronger than steel? And so Daleth has its magical creatures, its wizards of the wrapped

mind, its magicians and illusionists. And, more important, it has a population, who believe this truth...

Although... do they?

The illusion of a different truth is just a word away.

The Dream Dimension

Extract from a study book for the Study of Physics, 2nd. semester

by Prof. Ir. M.I. Mooiwinck
Altheizar University, 2105

As the snare theory puts it, the universe Alls gave us exists of minuscule particles called snares, that move in a yet unknown amount of dimensions. Some of these dimensions are known to us, as height, time, magnetism, and gravitation. Others are still nameless. Some move in each others range, and blur the borders of the dimensions.

These dimensions, you have to understand, are found within the known dimensions, and not in another universe, nor in another plane of existence.

One of these dimensions must be the dream dimension, as it is called. It is not exactly what dreams are made of, but more the explanation for our perception of the world.

Bound within the borders of the known world, the dream dimension is tangled in reality. It is always there, but we don't always notice. We can't notice, because, like time, it is immaterial, untouchable, invisible. But it is there.

This dimension exists of snares that move beyond the known dimensions, in a yet unknown phase, an unknown frequency set, an unknown direction. Together they form particles called iupa-eslep (Or $\wedge E$ in scientific notation), that have the properties inherited by the snares.

It is possible that these iupa-esleps move in a certain way, that can be picked up by human senses. Of course, the particles move in a certain multidimensional direction, which makes it impossible to see them in the same way by another watcher. That is what is meant by perception of the dream dimension, it is there, but nobody can see it in the same way, and many won't see it.

The human brain is capable of seeing visions of the dream dimension. That is the way hallucinations, illusions, visions and dreams come into existence. Some have the ability to see a lot of this dimension. In earlier times they



were put in asylums to get cured of their twisted view of the world. Nowadays, they still have to be put away - after all it is hard living without filtering the dream dimension from the more known dimensions - you will see things that others don't, and what's more, react to them in a way that others don't understand.

Aether

Aether in Daleth is made of alcoholic content, usually it is a matter without real substance. There is supposed to be natural aether too, but that cannot be used by men. Only cooled the aether can be transported, in small bars on ice. It melts at room temperature and evaporates quickly in lukewarm summer temperatures. There are some hospitals who make aether to use during operations. There might be some mad scientists who produce it for their own crazy experiments. There are people who make it to drink and get overdrunk on it (and usually die doing so).

Frozen or liquid aether is used as a drug. It sends someone who inhales it into the dream dimension (or maybe the aether dimension). This relaxes the person like normal healthy sleep. The drug is used for those who are in great pains, or panicked, or otherwise out of control.

The evaporated aether can not be seen in the air. It is only visible when a thunderbolt sets it on fire - very high temperatures are needed to inflame the aether. This can be simulated with the Blitzermachine, that can set the aether on fire in a controlled experiment. This Blitzermachine has been used to do research on the Naglani metamorphosis; it is expected that Naglani enter a dimension generated by aether to make the transformation from human to bird, a kind of magic powered by aether. The experiments still don't have prove enough to get to real conclusions.

Aether can transmit light. Substances that don't contain as much aether as air, like water in a glass, transmit light in a different way. This explains how a ray of water bends the light from it's normal course. Other substances, like stone, don't contain aether at all, and light can't come through it.

A vacuum container must hold aether, otherwise the light wouldn't come through. On the other hand, the container is empty, vacuum. Scientists from Altheizar think the aether is partly moving in the dream dimension, and vacuum is only a state that is empty in some dimensions, but not the dream

dimension. Thus, light can come through a vacuum space. This proves there is something like a dream dimension - maybe a special aether dimension.

Aether is in the air, but it can not be distilled from it. It is unknown how so many aether has gotten into the air, scientists guess it has to do with the creation of the world, as the gods separated the dream dimensions from the other dimension by wrapping it into the layers of reality. Aether might be a residue of the process, pollution of Daleth's atmosphere.

A scientific sect from Nieuw-Gamoor suggested that by disclosing the secrets of aether, it might be possible to fly. Fly in the air like the birds, and even higher, to the stars. The priests of the Four Gods who heard these ideas accused the scientists of blasphemy and the whole sect was hanged at a secret place and the gallows were burnt, afraid as the city council was for the sect to attract any disciples for their ideas. Other scientists were told the members of the sect had gone insane by inhaling too much aether and committed suicide as a result.

It is thought the amal-burns (along with some other plants, including the aelçim, which is used in Tuijon), that the Sudzi use to talk to their dead family members, contains a natural produced aether or at least a kind of it (it is not sure how many different kinds there are). This opens a door to the dream dimension, that makes the communication with the deceased possible. Many official institutes believe the Keepers of Doravor in Ciniz produce their own aether to be used in their secret rituals. The University of Ciniz is one of the places where the aether experiments have astonishing results.

It is not unthinkable the Dernian Rays show concentrations of aether, or maybe even "dark aether", the counter substance of aether.

Portals

"To make it short," the Master said, "This world is not always as we see it. The point of view is also important. And thus, I'm not convinced the world we live on is the only world in the universe. Of course, there are the three other worlds, the 'restless stars' from ancient times. And the second moon, discovered only a score of years ago. But these are only objects from our own dimension, from our own point of view."

"So, where are those other objects then?" Madel asked. "In our thoughts?"

The Master shook his head. "It will be better



to show you.” He placed a piece of paper on the table, and drew nine dots on it in a symmetric figure. A square with a dot on each corner, a dot halfway each line, and one in the middle. He looked around, and then took two dozen long needles from an embroidery set standing in a corner of the salon. Embroidery was popular in salons, but regarding the layers of dust on it, Count Yzabrân didn’t seem to care about it.

“Try to connect the dots with the needles,” Master Elaud said.

Madel took the needles and put them on the square, horizontally and vertically three needles, each connecting three dots.

“Can you do it with less needles, General?” the Master asked.

Madel looked at the pattern. Wynn was faster and took away one needle, the one in the middle. “Now there are only five,” he said.

“It can be done with less,” the Master replied. He looked towards Yzabrân.

“I can do it with four needles,” the Count answered. “But the way you put it makes me think it can be done in even less.” Yzabrân took four needles and put them in a starlike pattern, only crossing each other on the dot in the middle.

“Yes, you are right, I can do it with less,” the Master said. He took all needles from the paper, took the paper and folded it solemnly. Then, he took one needle and stung it through the paper. “I can do it with only one needle,” he said. He gave the paper with the one needle to Madel, so she could check the trick. She unfolded the paper and saw the needle had gone right through all nine dots.

“Imagine,” the continued the Master, “Imagine our world and everything around it is not flat like the paper, but folded in a strange way? Weird connections can exist between worlds that seems to be far away, so far away we never see them the normal way. Imagine, one of the dots is our world, or our sun and its planets. Imagine you can travel over the needle. That way, other worlds come much closer...”

“Do you think the portals are like a needle?” Samber asked. He listened intensely, trying to understand. Now he had seen the example with the needles, he understood what Elaud had explained that evening.

“It is a possibility,” Master Elaud said, now not so sure. “I expect the New Poorters are travelling on the needle to our world and back, and that they know how to use the needle, and the portals.”

“What about Arlo Paran? Did he know about the theory with the needles and the portals?” Yzabrân asked. He looked at Paran’s book, still laying unread on a side table.

“Paran had his thoughts, but he had the spirit of his time against him, so he never

published them. But I do think Paran knew about the possibility of travelling through the portals to other worlds. At least, most cultures have legends pointing in that direction. People come to Daleth in strange ways and others leave this world in an evenly strange way. Not only cultures, but also individuals, living beings, even things appear and disappear. Thus far, those appearances and disappearances are only accidental, confusing and without any evil meanings. I think most first Poorters didn’t realise what happened to them. But the New Poorters, they are different... very different...”

Kalle frowned. A shiver ran along his spine. “Your stories frighten me. I don’t dare to see the New Poorters straight in the eyes now. You are saying they came with other than peaceful thoughts?”

“I don’t dare to say anything like it,” Master Elaud said, on his guard again. By doing so, he frightened the others even more.

“I’m going to bed,” Madel said. “I hope I can sleep after these stories.”

Wynn took her hand. “When we were young, we could say that it were only a fairy tale,” he whispered to her.

Kalle overheard this, and felt uneasy about it. He asked if he was needed, and after he was dismissed he also went to his bed. The Secret Palace was a relatively safe place, but after Master Elaud’s explanation it felt as a safe place no more. He could -right here, in this room, in his warm bed- be stung by the needle, and getting connected to another world. What kind of world? What kind of world could be expected, so far out of view? Even the restless lights, close to Airtha in the night sky, even they were unknown in their appearance. Master Elaud had also mentioned the dark second moon. That moon, named Twabairhtei, was a strange thing, Kalle thought. The normal moon, Lukarna, was visible, and had faces - so sometimes you couldn’t see it because you saw it’s dark side. But Twabairhtei only showed his dark side and was so small and far off, it stayed unknown for hundreds, thousands of years. The thought made Kalle so uneasy he got up and walked towards the upper hall. From there, he could see the glass dome, and see the stars through it. Stars, sparks... they drifted in an unknown darkness - Riqiz, as the Naglani called it, the Darkness, the Nothingness.

Portals, 2

The strangest places in Daleth are the Portals. The fact that they are actually invisible is very weird and -to many men- scary. Some people think the portals are holy places, but no known religion accepted the portals as a place of the



gods.

What are the Portals?

The Portals are places where people appear or disappear. People coming to Daleth via the Portals usually lost their memory or turned insane. The few who do remember their former lives, claim to be from another world. Some have related stories, some have very different stories. They are supposed to come from different worlds. The Portals are portals or doors to other worlds, so say the scientists of Daleth.

It can also be that someone disappears from Daleth when going through a door. Some scientists say small doors can pop up anytime, anyplace, and swallow someone totally unexpected.

Not only people come through a Portal, the same goes for other living things as animals and plants. Dead objects are rare, but the humans do have things with them as clothing, small personal belongings, jewellery.

Where are the Portals?

There is only one Portal at a time. This Portal will pop up in different places and stay there for years or ages. Since the Portal is invisible, it takes a while before someone realises the Portal has moved.

Nowadays, the Portal is at Hailaiga. The place of the Portal has been marked with upstanding boulders and a large stone Portal on the actual spot. A former Portal was near Isaulls in Isatèr, but there is no trace of it left.

Some Naglani claim the Naglani came through a Portal near Ciniz. They say the Keepers of Doravor still guard the place. In their opinion, Doravor is Daurawards, The Doorman, the Keeper of the Portal.

It is unknown if the other lands on Airtha have Portals too.

What is beyond the Portals?

Scientists are working on schemes to travel through the Portals to other worlds and come back to Airtha. The study of the Portals is a difficult one, with many boycotts from both religious and political sides.

They think it is possible to construct a portal-ship that can travel through the Portal, and keep up a communication line with Daleth. This Portal-ship should be strong and well-provided. It is unknown what is behind the Portal; it can be a nice place or a cruel one. It is whispered some frightening monsters came through the Portal, what if the ships arrives on a world filled with monsters?

Keepers of Doravor

Not really belonging to a religion, the Keepers of Doravor behave like they are fundamentalists in some religion. They have taken residence in the Garden of Ciniz, in a big building overlooking the Cin Valley, opposite to the Castle. It is not known how many there are among them, but there must be at least twenty Keepers. They live in said building, and hardly ever come out of it, and hardly anyone is allowed in. They make a living by selling grapes, raisins and wine.

It is very much unknown what the Keepers do all day. Apparently, they keep Doravor, but nobody can tell what or who Doravor is. A Naglaniman once thought the name Doravor could once have been “daurawards”, meaning “Keeper of the Door” or “Keeper of the Portal”. He was unsure whether the Keepers kept the Keeper of the Door or the Portal itself. In Ciniz, among young children the Keepers are thought to be very evil. The Keepers will come out in the night and fetch you, and imprison you, and drain your blood from your body, and mix the blood with their wine, and use your sparkless body to work for them until the end of time. This is nothing more than a horror-story for the children, to keep them in at night, but there might be some truth in it as well...



Imperial Departments

The government of Daleth is officially led by the Emperor, head of state, chairman of the government, tamer of the people, face on the coins.

It is the Emperor who signs laws, that are written by his Board of Advice. The Board of Advice is the intermediary between the Emperor and the Departments and Chambers, getting their information from the Departments and Chambers and turn this information into advice to the Emperor, and then work out the laws if the Emperor agrees with the advice. After finishing a law, the Heads of the Department and Chambers vote over the law, when approved of, the Emperor signs the new law. Some laws are signed by the Emperor without being voted for.

In normal life, the Emperor does not rule the country. Every day business takes too much of his precious time - although many of his servants wonder what he does all day. The government is in the hands of the Daily Board, a group of men and women who take care of every day affairs. The report on regular basis to the Emperor and to the Departments and Chambers. That is also where they get their



information from.

The Departments are large bodies where civil servants and clerks keep statistics and information in general, explore the problems of the empire and search for a solution. The solutions are handed to the Board of Advice. The Heads of Departments and Chambers assemble twice a month to compare solutions and information.

The Chambers are in fact small Departments, and some Chambers become Departments eventually. The main difference is that the Chambers have just a few rooms in a building, where a Department can have one or more buildings to work in.

The Departments that have assemblies presided by the Emperor himself (if possible) are called "The Emperors Department". It might be that the Emperor sends one of the members of his family or a close friend to be in the chair at the assembly. In cases of emergency, such as war, the Emperor must attend all assemblies himself.

All departments are in Ildritz, near the Imperial Palace when possible. There used to be a lot of traffic from and to the Departments, with messengers running the streets all day. This ended as the steam-post service entered the Departments and the Palace, interconnecting the sites of politics in the most modern fashion. It is a closed system, not connected to the public steam-post connections. The hub of the departments -the private redirection office of the Emperor- is in the palace in a guarded room.

The Departments

Department of Common Affairs (DCA)

The DCA works on any affair that is not taken care of by any of the other departments or chambers. These are normally temporary matters.

The Emperors Department of Treasury (EDT)

Everything concerning money is for the EDT. They see to it that money is worth its value, that the Empire will have money to keep healthy for the next generations, that the Departments can pay their employees.

The employees of the EDT are called the Keepers of the Hoard by the Dalethians.

Department of Labour (EDL)

The EDL is responsible for enough work in the Empire. If there is not enough work, they might create projects. They see to it that any labourer (employee, etc.) is threatened well and paid for what (s)he does - except for the prisoners whose labour is also controlled by the EDL.

Chamber of Poverty Affairs and Salvation (PAS)

The PAS is housed in the EDL and controls the laws and measurements for the poor. They examine the problems of poverty and try to find a solution. All workhouses are under control of the PAS - the employees of the PAS decide who is allowed to live in the workhouse or in any other institution that cares about the poor.

Department of Transport (DOT)

All affairs concerning transport and infrastructure are for the DOT. They prepare great projects such as the railways and the steam-post system. They are also responsible for the security of the infrastructure.

Department of Education and Science (DES)

The DES is in control of most schools, libraries and universities. They will tell schools what to teach and check if they really do. Some "private" schools are not controlled by the DES. The DES finances laboratories and expeditions when the scientists can prove the experiments are good for the Empire.

Chamber of Modern Technics and Steam (MTS)

The youngest of all departments and chambers should lead new innovations into a smooth practical adaption for the empire. The people working here stay in close contacts to scientists and universities, and the DES, who hosts this chamber. Further, they are responsible for new ways to use steam power and the safety of the steam engines.

The Emperors Department of War and Public Order (WPO)

All military institutions and everybody working there belongs to the WPO. So does everybody who should secure public order. In times of war the WPO is the leading Department.

Chamber of National Security (CNS)

It is called the Chamber of National Security, and there is a clerk in a room of WPO who works for this Chamber, but where the Chamber has its true office is unknown. The Chamber of National Security is also known as the secret service. Who works for the CNS is a mystery, where they work is an enigma, and what they do stays a secret.

The Emperors Department of Law and Justice (DLJ)

Apart from the Board of Advice and the WPO is the DLJ. Where the Board of Advice and the Emperor make the laws, and the WPO checks if the citizens live according to the law, it is the



DLJ who check if the new law is compatible with the already existing laws and contracts. It is also the DLJ who contracts and contacts judges, lawyers and others involved in justice. The DJL is also involved in any law case that cannot be solved in any lower branch of the trade. Whoever does not agree with a penalty, can turn to the DLJ.

Department of Health and Wellbeing (DHW)

DHW is the department that claims to work with humanity. They see to it that all who live in Daleth have a certain standing of living: food, clothes, housing. They explore the possibilities of stopping diseases and plagues, and make laws to make Daleth a healthy land. The sewers and running water-systems in the houses are set up by the DHW.

Department of Urban and Rural Planning (URP)

The URP usually has clashes with the other Departments, but is also used to work close together with them. The URP plan new neighbourhoods to existing settlements, roads, and a range of facilities. They do give advice on architecture as well. In their archives (which will be put on puncher cards in the near future) is the whole of land measurement stored - everybody can check how big their piece of Daleth is in the URP archive. The Department is rather new, and now many of the employees work on reconstructing the old inner cities to make them more accessible to the busy traffic of today and tomorrow. It is said the URP hired a clairvoyant to see in the future, but apparently -when examining present projects- it didn't really help to predict the future.

The Emperors Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA)

The Emperor has foreign offices (Hindairus) in Altheizar (Overveer), Diwán (for Dernian Landis and the Unknown Territories) and in Faunèz (Fanigawi). Regularly, a envoy travels to the south, to negotiate with Luban, but there is no foreign office in that realm yet.

Chamber of the Union (COU)

Not really secret, but not really public as well, the COU is a quiet group of politicians who work on the main task of restoring the United Empires as they once have flourished. Nationalists of Overveer, Salamandran and the Weslanan are against new United Empires, and the more extreme nationalists will fight against this Chamber as much as they can. The Chamber hasn't got its own chamber, but assembles in whatever room is free in the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Department for Agricultural Affairs (DAA)

One of the most important departments in Daleth. The DDA is responsible for a steady flow of food into the mouths of the Dalethians. They control storage, import and export of food. Although agricultural, fishing is also part of the department. Further, they should encourage farmers to produce in an effective way that also holds profit for the future.

Chamber of Arts (COA)

Only a few chambers of the DES are used for the COA, but many more buildings are involved in this chamber. The COA runs all affairs that have to do with art, such as the annual Imperial Art Prize for the best piece of art produced, and the maintenance of art in the public museums. They separate the true artists from the wannabees, and finance the ten best of the true artists.

They also give advice in public arts, such as statues on squares.

Chamber of Religious Affairs (CRA)

Religion is not a topic that is controlled by the government. There is a Chamber of Religious Affairs to stay in contact with the spiritual world many citizens live in. It gathers information about the various religions in Daleth and meets with the priests to discuss topics as "can we build a new temple on spot X?". The chamber is said to have a secret side that infiltrates in the religious movements, especially that of fundamentalists and steam-priests.

Subversive elements in Dalethian Culture

A research by the imperial advisory board, Ildritz 1842

Now the wars have ended, the Empire is more and more threatened by the interior subversive powers. These powers hide just under the surface of modern culture; they can be found almost everywhere. In some places however, their powers strengthen, and a new enemy is born.

It is not good to tell these subversive elements are powerless, because we don't know how much power they have. They have members and people who do agree with their subversive ideas, and they might raise a larger public if only they were better known.

Here is a list of these subversive elements, their threats to society and their political statements.

Religious:

* Followers of Molik



- * Natural fundamentalists
- * Steam-priests

Political
Mystic

I have to warn that the information that I have gathered is not complete. I, however, tried to be as complete as possible with the information I have now. The search for more information about any risks to the throne and the Empire will of course continue.

The Cult of Molik

Especially in rural societies, the Cult of Molik is still vivid. Although the High Priests have let known that the Old Gods are defeated and no longer supposed to be worshipped, the believe in Molik, but also in the other Old Gods Nox, Vaya-Marei and Trigo still lives among some people. The Cult of Molik however, is much larger than any other cult.

Molik, as the priests will tell, used to be the husband of our goddess Gräins. She is our goddess of life, and Molik, her counterpart, was the god of Death. The Molik cult celebrated in the rural societies stresses on the aspect of death. It is not unthinkable the rites include human sacrifices, murder and mutilation. The Molik idol can be found in the Weslanan fields. Most people claim the idol scares away the birds. This can be, but some birds don't let themselves get scared away, and the idols are a warm home to kaurnwyrms. Many farmers probably don't know the meaning of the idols raised in the wheat fields, but some do. It has been reported that travellers who were looking for some shadow from an idol found the remains of slaughtered animals under it - probably a sacrifice to the evil god.

Research in the Weslanan taught us the cult was way beyond a pure ritual of people who were thinking in past times. A priest of Gräins in the county of Tarnov, who wants to stay anonymous, told:

"Do not forget the Weslanan are the heartland of a different kind of people as De Erflanden. Where they once came from, they probably had a god like Molik, male, evil, dead related, and therefore powerful. This might have stuck in their memories, and still has a part of their life. Faith is an unexplainable strength, and we do not know where it comes from, and the faith in Molik might come from the same place."

"Further, life can be hard here on the fields - and both Gräins and Molik are the best suitable gods for the fields, the harvest and the seeds. Molik provides a target to focus on when things are bad, when the harvest is bad, when cattle dies and children too. He can be both the cause of this and the solution. So they pray to Molik, and offer him life in the form of small, killed animals. No, I can not confirm they also

ritually murder humans."

The anonymous priest was very careful in his words and was alert to any sound in the temple garden. It was obvious he was scared of something, and later he confessed he did not want to talk about Molik in public, the followers of the Cult could be dangerous. Although asked several times, he did not answer to the question what he meant by dangerous.

A traveller of old age in "De Schele Vos", Tarnov, told how the followers could be recognised. He said he had to know, for all his life he had been along the roads of the Weslanan, and he always wanted to be sure to survive the night. It turned out he had slept in the fields or, if he found work, with the farmers of the Weslanan.

"The Molik idols in the fields do not speak. Everyone can have an idol. But if it is well kept, with clean clothes, and a nice hat, that a kid like I was might want to nick, it is a bad sign. Finding food at the feet of the idol might point in the direction of a sacred place, but all the same, many farm workers like to come together at the idol to eat at noon. In the wide fields of De Gouden Velden, there are hardly any other places to recognise as a meeting point. But I do have found killed animals on some occasions, they were placed in a dish, so it could not have been the slaughtering by any prey bird or scavenger. By the way, kaurnwyrms are considered a part of Molik, so they are not killed."

"Talking of kaurnwyrms, the clothes of the Weslanan people might be decorated with the fur of this creature. If it is fashion in the salons, there is no problem with that, the people here like to show off their wealth. But when the wealth of a kaurnwyrms fur is hidden or in the clothes of the poorer people, it might be a sign of the cult. The very poor cannot afford the fur, and they do decorate themselves with straw around their necks and arms. The richer people sometimes use golden straw to decorate themselves, gold braces in the form of straw, very expensive, but it separates them from the normal kaurnwyrms fur wearing people."

"But you have to look very carefully to recognise the straw from the wheat ears. Ears are used by the followers of Gräins, and are very common."

"Inside the houses, you can find straw dolls. Any young girl might want to play with these dolls, and they do. They are cheap, and easy to make. But girls do play with them, take them along, make the dolls dirty and worn. Not so the dolls that are used for the cult. They sit on the windowsills to protect the house from evil, from death. They are neatly dressed, sometimes even in kaurnwyrms furs. Girls are not allowed to play with them. Dolls like that are taken into the fields, during harvest. Because they believe



Molik might hide in the wheat fields and the sheaves, and they want to show they believe in his power.”

More south, in the small village of West, a young man tells about the rituals:
 “In the nights when Lukarna hides her face, you can see the fires of the followers of Molik. They set alight a sheave - all through the year, they save them to use for this purpose. I do think they put some things in these sheaves - gifts for Molik. I once was close to such a ritual and I think I heard something scream inside. It might have been a baby or an animal.”
 “I heard this story from a girl in Angrazn, she told me that she and her lover went into the fields at night, and hid in a shed where not a stond later a ritual for Molik took place. She said that they made an idol, and brought it to life with spells and the blood of a goat. I do not know if this is true, but she seemed intelligent and sober to me. And I did hear about an army of Molik idols, marching to Ildritz in the last war... it was spotted by many men here in the Weslanan.”

A famous place for the Cult of Molik is the grave of Molik, west of Arhym. It is a hill, not very high, but rather long - an enormous grave it might be. The lifeless surroundings make the place rather morbid. Twice a year, so the people of Arhym say, the followers of Molik gather at the grave, and celebrate their God. The field kindins however, never reported anything out of the ordinary on these days. But, like the priest said earlier, they might be part of the cult, or, more probably, too scared to take action against the cult.

But is the Cult of Molik so dangerous to our empire? The cult itself, as celebrated by the farm workers of the Weslanan, is not dangerous to the position of Daleth and the Emperor. Although people might get killed -which should be condemned at any time- during the rites, it is no threat to society in general. But there are some followers of Molik who do not want to wait till Molik himself gains power, and they will use any means to get more power. These people are found among the leaders of the cult, although the normal followers do not accept any leadership in religious actions. Driven by power over people, these leaders can also be found in the upper classes of society, and therefore they can have an influence on politics in Daleth. Their agendas include the return of Molik in the elemental religion, human sacrifices each night Lukarna hides her face, and an active role for the Emperor in the religion.

Natural fundamentalists

As a branch of both the natural religion as the elemental religion, the natural fundamentalists should have a stable position in Dalethian culture. It has not.

The natural fundamentalists are usually Naglani who made contact with the elemental religion, but other people can be involved as well. The core of the movement exists of students, scientists and intellectuals; they do have helpers in any class of society. Priests of the elemental religion and shamans of the natural religion can be part of the movement, but this is in most cases against their will or they are manipulated without knowing.

The goal of the movement is to bring all elements together and reform Alls. This will be according to popular believe, the end of the world. They are researching technics, such as alchemy, and religions (with meditation) to find clues to do this. The natural fundamentalists have contacts with the steam-priests for the knowledge of steam, to some the superior element - the element of Alls.

Steam-priests

Close related to the natural fundamentalists are the steam-priests. The steam-priests claim that steam has it's own god, Alls, for steam brings all elements together. They work together with the natural fundamentalists and some steam engineers. Their worst enemies are the refusers, and the refusers might take violent action to any ceremony led by steam-priests.

The steam-priests usually work in Ildritz, but can also be found in any place where steam is more developed than elsewhere, such as Nieuw-Gamoor, Sterrenbos and Ciniz. They make engineering a part of religion, and put religion into technics. The more theoretic steam-priests have developed plans for steam engines that are far beyond the possibilities of mankind and the laws of nature. The fantasies these people are spreading among our society are endless. But some people believe in those fantasies and either put money in those projects or volunteer for tests - and die.

The steam-priests do not have their own temples yet. They celebrate steam in salons and steam powered factories. They are dressed in modern fashion -sometimes even trendy, like the people in the Glassgardens- and have no signs that makes them steam-priests to the common eye. They will hand out pamphlets in the streets to anyone interested. Some attract interest by showing a small, working steam engine model.



The danger of these priests of steam lays in the commotion they can cause among the citizens, and the riots they rouse when confronted with refusers. The Empire also has to be aware of the illusions of a steam future these priests project on our society.

Steam and Science

Science in Daleth is important. It is the engine behind it's development, the key to the wealthy state of the Empire. Scientists are respected citizens, universities are supported by the government. Older inventions have made life easy and form a base to reach out to new discoveries. Newer inventions are frowned upon, well criticised and thoroughly tested, and then lovingly embraced by the establishment.

However, modern inventions did not make it throughout the whole of the Empire. Many rural regions still function the same as in the past centuries, growing crops and herding cattle as many generations before the current one did. Where scientists in the academic cities don't even notice the benefits of the modern science anymore, the rural population is still stunned by it when they are confronted with it on Foor or on the rare occasion they go to the big city.

But not all like the science as it is today. Some malicious groups rebel against the machines, against the insights of the scientists, against the future developments they fear so much. Whether they are right in their doomed visions or not is not yet clear, even if some scientists might agree with some of the hapless expectations.

During the last decades, the steam engine made its entrance into Dalethian society. Starting as a doomed experiment that killed a generation of steam scientists, it has become safer to work with the engines, and now the civilisation is looking for clever ways of exploiting the enormous powers of steam. Dreams and illusions clashed upon physical limits in the past, but steam has the power to break these boundaries and to set the Empire on the right track to a glorious future.

When the Steam hits the Punk

The first steam engine was made in Nieuw-Gamoor, in 1812. It was designed to power a water pump, needed to stop the Iswater from drowning the city. From there, the engine developed into uses in industry and transport; the developers travelled to Ildritz to show their engines in the salons and in the Imperial College of Technics.

After the revolution of 1826, the technicians went to the University of Ciniz to study on further development of steam power. Ever since the death of his parents, Count Yzabrân of Ciniz emphasised the aspect of safety in the making and the use of steam power - the power of the future, according to him. Yzabrân was one of the few of the Dalethian elite who foresaw the possibilities of the steam engine and he encouraged his allies - Cinfer, Unvar, Gronbrunlar - to take a lead in the development of steam technics.

Meanwhile, in Ildritz, the steam engine was a gadget and was used for the joy of the elite. Especially when the first steam carriage, "The Hissing Carriage" was built by Master Elaud in 1839. The elite enjoyed the rides on it on sunny afternoons. The Hissing Carriage made it possible to travel in all comforts from the inner city of Ildritz to the outskirts of Lazulameir, or from the winter- to the summer palaces.

To work with steam, live and die with it

The man in the street was not in touch with the power of steam until the first industrial engines appeared in the early 1820's. The engines were used to replace manpower or horsepower. Many people lost their jobs, and many others changed their jobs. More and more workers were needed to produce and operate the engines and to provide the energy sources in the form of wood, coal or oil.

The whole working society changed within a decade. To reduce the possibilities of a revolt, some elite members did do their best to give the workers a life to work for with better standards of living, education for them and their children, and better (safer, cleaner) working place standards.

Nevertheless, in Pyrallis it came to a revolt in late 1839. The slaves and prisoners were released from the mines by some good willing local leaders, but they started a revolt to free their kind. They burnt half of the city, closed mines, killed mine leaders, like madmen. The city was never the same again.

In the early days of steam power, and in the less educated ranks of workers, a new kind of mythology emerged. The Stoomspook (Steamghost), the Steel Dog and the Eisargasts came to life in the dark and damp industrial buildings, where steam hissed and roared through the pipes and escaped violently. The monsters of the steam era projected the fears the workers had for the large, hot, powerful hissing engines.

They also feared to get fired, and end in the slums of the larger cities, begging for their food. The work in the industrial steam powered factories was harder than in the horse- or man



powered factories they had known before. It took a certain intellect to work, to manipulate the engines, to keep safe in the dangerous surroundings.

Some lived from the steam engines, other died because of it. The accident in 1820, in which the Count of Ciniz and his wife died, was not the first nor the last accident in which an exploding steam engine was involved. In the early years, half of the engines exploded in their first year. After that, the steel of which the engines were made of was stronger and less accidents happened.

Apart from exploding engines came the accidents with unexpected, destructing powers, hot steam spouting out of bad pipes, fires that spread across the factories, more and more accidents happened in the coal mines. Life became more dangerous than ever before - apart from the wars.

Human powers and politics

The bad side of steam power started some actions in the cities.

In Pyrallis, the revolt of 1839 triggered the Guild of the Refusers, a union of workers who refused to work with steam power or work for the sources of energy. The Guild soon got a massive following in Pyrallis, Altheizar and Ildritz. They claimed to be hand workers, but in Ildritz their following consisted of many non-workers: those who did not want to work with steam, nor anywhere else. Young artists stepped into the movement, angry, young and wild, just for the sake of it. The non-workers soon realised their mistake: without work they had no money, so they had no food. Those who have rich parents can still be found on the market corners of Ildritz and the Kungsfelthan, proclaiming their knowledge about the wrongs of steam. The handworkers gain their money with making things the old way, and doing it really good too. Some already made it to the Imperial Court.

Another movement started in the Weslanan with the involvement of Count Yzabrân in the safety of steam engines. After his death, his ideas were picked up everywhere in the Weslanan. Steam power should be safe to the users. Many laws regarding steam appeared in the courts of the Weslanan (The Code of Ciniz). Those who worked in the less save parts of the steam (powered) industry got more money for it, to make up for the fear. The owners of the factories were forced by this loss of money to make the factory safer. This worked out well and less accidents are reported from the Weslanan.

All over Daleth, people start to worry about the workers and the smouldering revolts. The

workers have gotten more influence on politics, and a few social laws make their lives a little better. With the dirty industry, the cries for a cleaner life became louder. More houses have got baths now, the bathing culture becomes normal in every household. Diseases are successfully fought and the hospitals can do better jobs.

The situation of the steam worker stays fragile. The worker depends on the goodness of the factory owner and the local politics. Workers are tempted to strike by the Guild of Refusers, or by the rivals of their bosses. Sabotage is not unthinkable. For many workers, the good times are still veiled by a cloud of dirty smoke and hot steam.

The God of Steam?

The Gods of our world have a very distinctive territory. Phyarx, the god of light and fire, Aaser, god of the Water, Vindel, god of the Winds, and Gräins, goddess of the Earth, are our Gods.

Now, engineers have designed a new element: Steam. Which God can keep steam under control? It is water nor wind, fire nor earth. Is it Alls, as the Natural Fundamentalists will have it? Is steam truly all?

No, I do not think so.

Steam is unholy, let alone Alls.

This is the era in which our second face of the night was discovered, a sister to Lukarna. This was the hidden face of the God of Steam, Twabairhtei, an evil God, not unlike the unholy counterparts of our Gods. Yes, I even dare to say that Twabairhtei is the evil twin of Alls.

Therefore, steam is evil. I am not preaching the manifesto of the Refusers, but in a way they are right. What has steam, what has the god of Steam brought us? It is nothing but evil. It is denial of our four Gods.

Let us take our life in our own hands and pray to the four Gods who have lead us through life over the centuries. Do not get seduced by the god of steam; it looks like the world is a better, a more modern place with steam, but in the end it will lead to our end.

How many of us have already died in the struggle with Twabairhtei? How many have burns upon their skin, have hurt themselves while they fought the evil powers that Twabairhtei has brought us?

Now, dear believers, it is time to stand up against those who are blinded with power - steam power that is. Stand up against them, and show them who truly rules this world: the



four gods.

In the name of Phyarx, Aaser, Vindel and Gräins, stop Twabaírhrei from spreading his evil ideas!

(High priest of Ildritz, 1841)

Coal

There are two important kinds of coal, and some less important ones.

The **Nidwahauri** is an important coal, that can be found plenty in the Haurindal region. It burns very good and gets very hot if needed. The energy taken from it is higher than that from any other kind of coal.

Nidwa is sold for 5 Skatts per wagon at the consumer markets.

It has a rusty shine over it, making the coals almost brown, and contains some iron. Nidwahauri is popular in use in steam engines.

The other important one is the **Ambrazhauri**. It has a green to yellow shine over it, burns less economic as Nidwa and is thus a little cheaper for only 3 Skatts per wagon. Ambraz is mainly mined in the regions of Scholvan, Gronbrunlar and Ciniz.

Lolunhauri is only found in Sterrenbos, and is rather rare. It burns good and almost without smoke. It is very expensive at the cost of 7 Skatts per wagon. It has a bluish shine over it, nicknaming it the Blue Gold. Because its colour is so dark, it is hard to find in the mines.

The **Geigohauri** is a kind of coal that is found near gold. It is believed that Hallusmana gathered Geigo and gold for their own uses and put it away in the same safe places. Others believe that Geigo can turn into gold, because you never can find geigo without gold being near. It is most wanted, but rare and thus expensive. It is not sold on the markets, thus no standard price can be given. 7 to 10 Skatts per wagon may be paid on the black market - if anyone can manage to find that much.

A new developed kind of coal is the **Aethereins**. It is made out of Charcoal, Lulon and Ambraz in factories all over Daleth. The Aethereins is very dark, containing no aether as the name might suggest. The scientists who developed Aethereins claimed he found a way to get the aether out of the coal mixture, other say he is clever but the claim is nonsense. Its quality is combined with a low price: Aethereins is sold for only 2 Skatts per wagon on the markets.

Riureins is not coal, but close related. It is turf from very deep in the soil, so deep it has to be

mined to get to. It smokes terrible when burned and does not give much heat. It is not very much wanted, but it is the only stuff the poor can afford to heat themselves.

The **Hauristass** is a mixture of leftovers of aforementioned kinds of coal, pressed into "brickets". The more Riureins in it, the cheaper. Some factories might cheat and put charcoal in it as well.

Letneins is not solid, but does fit in here. It is a liquid coal, as the manufacturers claim. It is oil, pressed or distilled out of the original coal. It can be used in lamps and small heaters. Because it can be transported in bottles and the lamps can be filled without the letnan being touched, it is cleaner in use than the buckets of coal. Costs are 2 Skilliggs per bottle.

The coal markets

Coal is sold on special coal markets. These are protected areas where fire has not much of a change. The coal markets are usually outside the settlements. The coal changes owner here, but the buyers are not the consumers. The bought coal is taken into town in small doses, no more than a wagon at the time, to be sold at the doors of the consumers.

The coal seller in the town has to have a specially prepared cart for the transport, including a few buckets of water and wet blankets to prevent fire in the town

Agriculture and hunting

Almost all Dalethian surface is used to feed the population. Wastelands are seldom. Even almost uninhabitable lands are used for hunting and herding. Lakes, rivers and the sea are used for fishing. Daleth has an economy that is still based on agriculture.

All rivers and lakes provide fish. Fishing is allowed only with permission from the landowner. Rivers that border lands are sometimes seen as free fish water, but this is only so if the fisherman is on a boat in the river. Fishing from the bank of the river is only allowed with permission from the landowner. Landowners are keen to give permission for fishing in a river on the border, greedy to get more fish out of it than the landowner from the neighbouring lands.

In many cases, the fishers have to give a twelfth of the catch to the landowner. Most landowners give the larger part of their share to charity. On the banks of Kristalmeer, there is a large production and trade in reed and reed products.

Fishing on the sea is free, but a ship entering a harbour might count on some import tax,



which means a part of the catch is for the community. Some cities, like Uzda and Vîmeir have their own fleet of ships for fishing; these ships fish for the community and do not have to pay import tax for their own harbour. Shells are used throughout Daleth and shell fishing is, along the beach, a good business.

Hunting goes by the same laws as fishing: it is only allowed with permission from the landowner, and a part of the catch is for the landowner. Hunting is done almost everywhere.

There are two kinds of hunting: hunting for fur and food, and the hunt on dangerous animals. Most countries list a number of animals that are dangerous and are allowed to hunt without permission. The hunt on dragons is free throughout Daleth - but nobody has seen a real dragon in the last centuries. Many countries also list the number of animals available and will not allow hunting if the number of animals is low, some nature loving individuals want the dragon to be on that list too.

The woods, forests, bushes, groves, glades and such provide wood. Dead wood (branches, twigs, but also leaves) is free to collect for the poor, so are the fruits of the forest (berries, nuts, mushrooms) in the community forests. But many landowners have a special patch of forest for private use, these patches are known as "formin". There are also special forests for the production of wood.

Small patches of wood and solitary trees and bushes outside the woods are called Bizhen. They can be used free by the tenant-farmers.

Roadsides are a wonderful spot to gather all kinds of herbs. This is free in the borders of the imperial roads. Because many travellers pass these roads, there are good changes that foreign and exotic herbs are found, grown from seeds spilled by traders or originating from the excrements of the horses and other animals.

The fields are forbidden to walk in when the plants grow; some paths might be free to be used by pedestrians. These paths are known as boottracks, because an old boot (sometimes a carved wooden boot) on a pole marks the entrance of such a path. What grows on the lands belongs to the farmers and indirect to the landowners. Animals in the fields can not be hunt without permission from both farmer and landowner.

The importance from the fields is made clear in the imperial laws: it is prohibited to destroy irrigation or drainage infrastructure and fences, and in many countries the destruction of the crops or the harvest is a lethal action.

Places where it is difficult to farm are used for herding a variety of animals. This includes large parts of the Cinfer shire, Salamandran, De Taycha and the mountains.

People

Ever since a long long time ago, everybody thought there was only one race in Daleth, divided into different people: Poorters, Naglani and Sudzi. They lived more or less together, had fertile marriages between each other, and their children and grandchildren never showed any flaws.

Research of the Portals proved there had to be many different races; all human, but with some striking differences. It was expected that every race came from a different portal, or from a different world beyond the portal. Of course after living together for so many years, all kinds of "hybrids" were found. After a long study of the subject, the following races or people were found:

Poorters

Poorters are the most common people in Daleth. They arrived in hordes through the portals around the year 469 AFO. They have many forms and colours, and many cultures they brought along. Now, they are considered "standard" and everyone who doesn't want to be of another people (hybrids) considers him/herself a Poorter.

New Poorters

The New Poorters arrived in Daleth only recently. There is not much to tell about them, because they were never studied. They disappeared soon, only a couple of them stayed. They are taller and stronger than any other people, but get ill very soon from the Dalethian food and drinks, and from the air in some places.

Naglani

For long, the Naglani have been considered the only true aboriginals of Daleth. Their myths and legends however, tell tales of doors and other worlds. Through the eras, the Naglani lived close to Portals. This is enough proof for scientists to think the Naglani came from elsewhere.

Naglani can change into birds in some nights, and fly. The Naglaniwomen lay eggs. Naglani never eat eggs or birds of any kind. They kept this changing and egg-laying long a secret, and still most Poorters think it is a myth. Being isolated for a long time, the Naglani have their own culture, religion and language. Naglani are quite tall, have a pale skin, dark hair (ranging from deep black to a rusty red),



and dark eyes (either blue or green, sometimes brown). Although thin, they are strong and know how to cope with low temperatures.

Sudzi

The Sudzi are the smallest humans in Daleth. They are a little fatter than others, and have only three fingers and a thumb on each hand. Their skin is pink to red, their hair can be blonde or brown, sometimes a very dark shade.

Gods

Some say it is blasphemy to consider the Gods as a human race. However, there is many proof there once had been a civilisation, much advanced, who could have been considered gods by less advanced civilisations. The four gods of the Poorters have human bodies, so they could have been humans.

Like the Giants, the race of the gods also disappeared from Daleth; just the religion stayed. Scientists think this race of gods might have become an astral race, living on another level of existence.

Giants

The Giants, who build the huge castles and cities in the south of Daleth, weren't giants after all. They were as big as an average human, had dark skins, black hair, and brown to golden eyes according to the paintings found in the ruins. They had a advanced civilisation, but disappeared long ago. There isn't much known about the Giants. Some think the Giants might have gone south, to the mouth of the river Wyth. There is a civilisation here that resembles the Giants very well, only the houses have shrunken in size.

Ainahawair

The people of the Ainahawair know only one sex. They need no partner to reproduce. Although this is considered a good way of survival of the people, there are not many Ainahawair in Daleth anymore; it is expected there are about 100. When living with Poorters, they behave like men or women, just as they want to be. It is easy for them to change gender, but they hardly do for they want to keep the secret of their Ainahawair-ness. As they walk in the streets of any Poorters-city, no-one will notice anything strange about the Ainahawair. However, they live quit isolated private lives.

Others

Outside Daleth, many other people live. There are contacts with the people of Dernian Landis, who have a bluish skin and strange ways in an advanced but much defended culture. There are stories of hairy orange humans in Anthastahts. Some say human creatures live on the bottom of the sea...

Timeline

Age of Myths

- * Creation and Echo
- * Gods rule over Airtha

Ancient history

- * Arrival of the Unknown in Daleth
- * The City of Old build
- * Thing from the Sky hits Airtha
- * Naglani migrating south
- * Sudzi migrating west
- * The Battle of Living
- * The Unknown leave Daleth

Era of the Giants

- * First Opening of the Portal: the Giants arrive in Daleth (year 0)
- * The Cities of the Giants founded (0-50 AFO)
- * The Realm of the Giants established (150 AFO)
- * The upcoming of the Sudzi and the Naglani (300-450 AFO)
- * Skaunsric established by the Naglani (423 AFO)
- * Klainskrizzon established by the Sudzi (452 AFO)
- * The Disappearance of the Giants (450-550 AFO)

Dark Ages

- * The Second opening of the Portal: The first Poorters Arrive in Daleth (469 AFO/0 ASO)
- * The alliance with the Naglani and the Sudzi (587 AFO)
- * Salamandran founded (684 AFO)
- * The Third opening of the Portal (700 AFO)
- * The War against the Naglani (850-1040 AFO)
- * Salamandran falls to the Poorters (851 AFO)
- * The Empire of Daleth founded (1045 AFO)
- * A Trade-route to the east discovered (1101 AFO)
- * The United Empires founded (1176 AFO)

Modern history

- * The Empires fall apart (1213 AFO)
- * The Weslanan settled (1200-1400 AFO)
- * Overveer revolution (1396 AFO)
- * The War against the Weslanan hordes and Tarnov (1460-1560 AFO)
- * A Trade-route to the south discovered (1705 AFO)
- * Times of peace and wealth in Daleth (1600-1800 AFO)
- * Anthastahts discovered (1799 AFO)
- * The Fourth opening of the Portal (1800 AFO)
- * The independence war against the New Poorters (1838-1839 AFO)



Religion

In Daleth, there are three mainstream religions. These religions are nameless. Nevertheless, a discussion about Dalethian religions is always a good way to spend an evening with. Some salons are devoted to religious discussion.

The Poorters believe in four gods, mostly described as the elemental religion. The Naglani have only one god, and their religion is often referred to as the natural religion. The Sudzi don't have gods, but they regard to their dead ancestors as divine creatures. This is the ancestral religion.

There are some smaller religious groups, most of them on the dark side of life. Some only exist a short time. In early times there have been other religions, but there is not much left of it and it is hard to determine how exactly rites and beliefs were.

Outside Daleth, people have their own religions. These do not, or hardly do, interact with the religions of Daleth.

Nowadays, religion is not a big part of Dalethian life. People will call to their gods only in hard times and since life is flourishing in Daleth there is no direct need for gods. Of course, holidays are still celebrated and certain rites still exist - but many people don't know the meaning of it anymore.



Luban

Behind the scenes

Luban is a land far to the south. It is on the mouth of the Wyz river, and there is some trade with Daleth over the river. The Dalethians hardly know a thing about Luban and most of them never even saw a true Lubanian.

The **lands of Luban** consists of the **Valley** in the north. This is the place where the traders come from. Then there are the **Riverlands**, the heart of Luban, on the river Wyz. South of the Valley are the **Highlands**, and beyond the mouth of the Wyz are a few **Islands**. In the northeast are woods, and on the south, along the coast of the **Blue Sea**, are the **Dreaded Coast** with isles and cliffs.

There are **cities** in Luban, but no isolated farms or villages. The people stick together. Alawab is the first city, travelling down the Wyz from Daleth.

Each land has its own **clans** and different ways of life, but the Lubanians are one people with one cultural heritage. They have not been influenced by the Dalethians of the people from

Dernian Landis. The biggest difference between the lands is the wealth and the absence of it.

The Riverlands are very rich, it is a land of royalty and agricultural wealth. The Valley has some wealth too, because there are many traders and merchants there. The Valley is a *trait-d'union* between Daleth and the rest of Luban. The Woods and the Highlands are poor. Luban **exports** "exotic goods" to Daleth (Spices, jewellery, elegant wood, cloth). The **technic level** of Luban is a little higher than that of Daleth, although the Dalethians have better use for their inventions.

The **climate** of Luban has hot days and cold nights throughout the year. It is very dry and most of the **landscape** is bare rock, dust, and desert. Plants are rare, although there may be more plants than one might expect. Most **settlements** of Luban are near the river, many of them are built into the mountainsides.

Luban has its own **language**, see The Luban Language for details. But the spoken language is not enough to understand a Lubanian. The language is stressed with **gestures**, that may change the words to confuse the spirits. These hidden meanings are also found in the indicators, that reveal the true meaning of a word.

The **religion** has a large part in daily Luban life. The Lubanians believe in spirits. Most of the spirits are bad and the Lubanians are very afraid of them. Their religion is based on this fear and all rituals in the religion are meant to keep the spirits in a good mood or to scare them away.

These spirits are everywhere, in plants, animals, stones, in the air, the water, the earth and the fire, even in humans. When something dies, and an evil spirit is caught in the dead body, it is a cause of many problems. Therefore, before killing or dying, a lot of rituals have to be done to get rid of the evil spirit.

To prevent spirits from entering daily life, the streets are lined with scare-away-statues, named *biriwil*, horrible looking statues containing good spirits. They also serve as an altar. The humans prevent themselves by using **masks**. These masks are either mask out of metal or wood, veils, mud, tattoos or make-up. Each clan has its own way of making masks.

It may be that the spirits the Lubanians see are produced by the use of **mir'qot**, the dried leaves of one of the most popular plants in Luban. It is used as a kind of drug. The leaves are either chewed, or used to make a tea. It is said, the *mir'qot* is holy and the strong taste of it scares the spirits away.



Women are not allowed to use mir'qot; but they may use essences of the mir'qot flowers in perfumes.

Plants are rare in Luban. The few plants are all sacred. It is illegal to harm a plant or to eat fruits and vegetables, except the mir'qot and other ritual harvested plants. Because there are only few plants, the palaces and the mansions usually have a **garden** with artificial plants, among with fantastic fountains, miniature mountain ranges, picturesque pavilions, and so on. The garden is in most cases on the roof. The poor Lubanians usually paint the holy plants on their walls. There are some temples where ritual harvested fruit is available.

The **houses** of the Lubanians resemble labyrinths. The true entrance is hidden behind veils and walls, the stairs go up and down, no wall is longer than 7 paces, there are doors that don't lead into rooms and rooms without windows or visible doors, on the outer walls some fake windows are painted, and mirrors and glass walls are a traditional part of the interior. All this is necessary to keep the spirits out of the house.

Women and children are not allowed to give orders and are supposed to stay in the houses. This is not, as the Luban man can tell you, because the women are suppressed, but to protect them against spirits. Women are not allowed contact with spirits, they are too necessary for the future to risk their lives. But, since the men are under influence of the mir'qot, women have their own way to arrange things. It is even said the women press their husbands to use the mir'qot, so that the **women network** can stay intact. To prevent evil spirits from entering the marriage, the woman has to be a virgin at the wedding. There are numerous ritual tests to check this.

Each clan has its own **king** (siwagat). Luban is ruled by all the siwagats together. But, in case of democracy, the siwagat that can bribe the most voters is the most powerful. These are usually the siwagats from the Riverlands.



Dernian Landis

Dernian Landis (the Hidden Lands) are called Myrëns by the natives. The natives have blue skins, bad eyesight and die in direct sunlight. Women own everything, everything is inherited by daughters. Men have to work for a living and cannot own houses.

Architecture

The architecture of all buildings and public spaces is designed to keep the sun light out. Steel and wooden frames support coloured glass domes, poles support tent roofs in poorer places. The glass can be gold plated. Houses are made of stone with small windows filled with coloured glass.

All bridges and markets have a roof. Streets can have a roof, usually the squares and many streets have arcades to provide shadow. Gardens are indoors. Filtered (split) light might get into the buildings.

Landscape

The Dernian Landis are in the north, west and south surrounded by high mountains. These mountains are so high and uncrossable, that they made Dernian Landis "hidden", and gave it its name. In the east, there is an ocean (Maliqë). A large island is also part of Dernian Landis.

The landscape within the borders is rather wild, although the lands are spotted with little towns and farms that all have their share of cultivated fields. On the mountain slopes, nothing grows and the people are poor. They are breeders of sheep-like animals.

The most fertile, smooth sculpted lands are crossed by two slow rivers, of which the Flÿ is the most important.

Technics

The technics are of lower level than in Daleth. There are no steam engines. The technics of optics (lenses, mirrors etc.) are very advanced. Some attempts have been made to make a flying object to return to the Hidden Planet.

Trade

Myrëns exports many minerals (gemstones), spices and cloth. They also sell artistic, exotic jewellery (with silver) in Diwán. It is sometimes hard to tell if they sell real gems or fake glass. The objects of coloured glass are popular in salons. Apart from spices, no food can be traded because it rots away on the long journey.

There is some national trading of goods along the coast.

Translations of toponyms:

Myrëns - Our Peaceful Place/World (Dernian Landis for Dalethians)

Zhënmel - The Holy Mountains (the mountains that protect Myrëns)

Kélflÿ - Cold River (a village in the west of Myrëns)

Flÿ - River (the river that runs through Kélflÿ, the largest in Myrëns)

Chiirÿtët - The City on the Bay (capital of Myrëns)

Diwán - Border (the marketplace near Daleth)



Mikmblidhet - Gathering of Friends (village on the shore, north of Chiirÿtët)
 Keqitët - City on the Cape (city south from Chiirÿtët)
 Maliqë - The Sea (in the east)
 Chëntópiil - The Singing Woods (wood in the west of Myrëns)

Things:

‘lec’ry - a yellowish fruit used to make lamps burn, grows on trees, taste is bitter
 fúchëpék - a kind of double baked bread, usually burned at the edges
 móchë - a kind of very heavy and spicy round meatloaf
 shärmchárfër - animal, snake that lives in the fire
 mädchóshtë - big clawed beast



Fanigawi and Maristriumarka

West of Daleth, on the southern coast of the World Sea, are the lands of Fanigawi and Maristriumarka. It is unclear if these are two separate lands, or that the names belong in fact the same land. Maybe one is part of the other... there are no diplomats in Daleth who can tell.

The coasts of Fanigawi (“Shire of Mud”) and Maristriumarka (“The Region of the Water Trees”) is well known by the pirates of Roverseiland and other seafaring countries. The lands were better known as the Naglani sailed from Elfane over the vast waters of the western sea. The Dalethian names date from those legendary times.

The coast is low and easy to access with flat boats. The shore is sandy and large beaches can be found all along the shore. A large river has its mouth in the lands, and a lot of river arms form islands and swamps. The islands are overgrown with trees, that partly stand in the water. The river mouth is changing with the tide, that sweeps the sea over the land thrice a week.

The plants are almost all semi-marine. The large swamps and the river mouth have a changing state of wetness, sometimes dry, sometimes flooded. The animals living in Fanigawi and Maristriumarka are also fit for life in water and life on land, but they are not all amphibious. Some people say the humans in Fanigawi are half human, half fish. Some of these creatures have been spotted, but it is not true that these are the dwellers of the swamps.

The People

In fact, the people of Fanigawi and

Maristriumarka are a rather developed people, living from the sea (fishing, in earlier times trade with the Naglani) and small scaled agricultural activities. They know towns and invented many ways to live with the water. The wooden roads are the best example of this. The main power source is that of water mills, which can be found in every town.

They have their own language, that is very different from the Dalethian languages. Many words are directly connected to the life with the water and the sea. They got at least twenty words for the verb “to fish”. The vocabulary of swamp- and mud related words seems unending.

Because there are no diplomatic contacts with Daleth, the situation in the lands is unknown. It is expected Fanigawi and Maristriumarka are in a state of war very now and then, or maybe there is a civil war. War bands and pirates raid the towns, the anarchic order in the lands is not on a level to give state protection. The seafaring cities avoid spending longer times in Fanigawi or Maristriumarka.





World Map