

*Fey were first among the lands,
Erlini next with growers touch.
Shuluri swam beneath the waves,
Loari built great works of yore
Linaeri lordly above mortal men.*

The End of the 1st Era

The Lords of Orhan rescued men and creatures from the ruins of Kulthea at the end of the 1st Era. No longer needing to hide from the K'ta'viiri the Lords expanded their realm on Orhan, growing expansive forests, gardens and ornate structures to please their fickle interests. Using Althan genetic stock they created new races to populate their realm and act as their servants. Many of these new creatures were born of the Essaence, more noble and fair than their cruder human forebearers. They started simply, Iloura and Oriana first forming the lesser creatures of the Essaence, the Nymphs, and then the Erlini as servants to tend the gardens. Competitive, other Lords followed suit, wanting servants made more in their image. Kieron and Oriana desired servants to delight and entertain and thus were born the Linaeri. Jaysek and Iorak made the Loari. Shaal followed with the Shuluri.

Their humanoids were more than mortals, akin to the Fey and more connected with the Essaence. These “Elves” benefited from powers beyond their mortal cousins: immunity to disease, longevity, collective consciousness and Essaence sensitivity. As time passed these Elvish race grew their own unique cultural identities, recognized leaders and became more than mere servants to their omniscient Lords. A Conclave was called, the Lords recognizing that their children were straining their bonds of servitude. It was decided that Kulthea would be repopulated, but not just with the sons and daughters of Altha. The Lords would also send their own “children” to Kulthea.

The Lords of Orhan first sent the Fey servants—Nymphs and Sylphs, Naiads Dryads, and Oceanids—to Kulthea to begin nurturing the surviving fragile life back from the edge of oblivion. Next, the lords returned sentient peoples to Kulthea: the Elven races they had nurtured on Orhan and mortal men, drawn from the blood of the ancient Althans.

The Erlini were settled across Kulthea while the Iylari focused on small conclaves: the Loari kingdom in Palia and Folenn and the Linaeri republic in Agyra.

The Age of Legends

The Interregnum was a time of healing but also a time of change and upheaval. Spanning over one hundred thousand years, much of the history was lost to disruption and the fog of time. The settled Elves soon realized that Kulthea was not barren; many races had hidden and survived the destruction at the end of the 1st Era. Demons and bizarre creatures still accessed the planet through open gates and powerful Dragons ruled the skies. The Lords, anxious to exert their will on the healing planet mated with the races who bore great heroes and men of renown. (Note 1: Age of Legends might be an excellent time for “Epic” or high level adventures, use of Arcane Magic and/or Hyborian Age setting). (Note 2: See sections: Jinteni, Worim, Taranian, Dragonlords for details on these cultures during the Interregnum).

The Birth of Magic

While a select few, the K'ta'viiri, mastered Essaence manipulation in the 1st Era, most Althans were unable to access the power flowing through the planet. Over tens of thousands of years, the creatures on Kulthea slowly adapted, absorbing the Essaence and developing natural powers and the ability to shape Essaence. The shaping was still raw, manifesting as inborn ability or crude in its execution. This Arcane ability was mastered by the Earthwardens, Elders from the 1st Era who had returned to Kulthea. Wary of the influence and power of the Lords, they were reluctant to share their Elemental powers with the Elvish races. Instead the Earthwardens refined their powers and established hermetic enclaves to pass along this knowledge. The Elves continued to channel the power of their Lords on Orhan while mortals adopted the intuitive use of the Essaence. As races and cultures interacted these powers slowly diffused throughout Kulthea into three distinct magical realms: Essence, Channling and Mentalism.

The Dreamlords

Originally known as the *Guiding Fathers*, they were the leaders and priests of the original Elven settlements upon Kulthea. The closest to the Lords of Orhan, they were the intermediaries for the Elvish settlements upon Kulthea. Now ancient and mostly beyond the physical world, the four can still recollect their life upon Orhan, and can visit there in spirit. The Fathers were High Priests, acting as a channeling waypoint between the Elves and Lords of Orhan. While they would be considered lesser gods by some, the Dreamlords were given the ability to empathetically merge with the Elvish people during the meditative state that Elves use as sleep—a coping mechanism for their longevity and to minimize inter-racial tensions or divisions. To most Elves, the Fathers are just a faint racial memory but still play an important role in the Elvish collective consciousness.

The Four Fathers

Veluvien: Linaeri

Aldrassis: Loari

Glistonii: Erlini

Mavanar: Shuluri

The Island of the Dreamlords

Far in the past, the wise and learned travelled to the island of the Dreamlords for advice and counsel. Since the Wars of Dominion the Dreamlords have become more insular and have warded their island in protective magic and illusion. Attended by young Elves “called” to service, the island is a lush paradise of vegetation and temples of white marble: I recreation of the paradise on Orhan. The Fathers now spend their time in a state of perpetual dream between reality and the collective memories of the races—their physical shells attended to by diligent servants.

Elvish “Dreamstate”

Why it's commonly known that the Elvish races require little if any "sleep" they do fall into a light meditative trance. {treat as concentration -50 to activities and perception but 4 hours equals full nights sleep/rest}. Elves connect with the collective, a vague sense of community where their thought and memories are merged. (this is not a data upload, but similar to human dream activity and copes with immortality issues). The Fathers are faint presences or abstract spiritual guides during their meditative sleep processes. The process can be two-way; at times in the past the Dreamlords have been able to create impulses or thoughts into the Elves (Wars of Dominion). Virtually immortal, Elves still suffer from memory "fade"—a result of the passing of immense time. Though there are a few Elders that have lived since the early Interregnum, their memories are fragmented and unreliable of the Beginning Years.

Dyari

Dyar are less a distinct Elvish race than a category of Elves: those that have forsaken the Lords of Orhan and separated themselves from the Elven collective dream. To mortals, Dyar may seem a distinct tribe or race, but to Elves themselves they are lost brethren. "Dark Elves" are followers of the Gods of Charon. To non-Elves little is known or understood about the Dyar and this division beyond a simplistic concept that they "worship evil gods". The the Ilyar and Erlini the Dyar represent a painful loss shared in the collective conscious. It's believed that Dyar can be brought back from their dark lords and returned to the collective.

Legacy

Some of the earliest works of the Elves are the most impressive and thus the most sought after by collectors.

Architectural Details

Each of the Elvish people built in unique styles. There is no doubt that the greatest of their works were the earliest—when the lore of Orhan was still strong in the minds of the young people. The First Cities are perhaps the greatest works of architecture on the planet—surpassing even the Althans and K'ta'viiri in aesthetic and design. For the most part are seemingly impossible feats of building, gravity defying, fragile appearing elements in beautiful but alien designs. Can be "disrupting" to mortals. The Linaeri built natural structures of formed trees, wood and some natural stone that melded with the natural environment. The Loari were master builders, using glass, marble and stone to fabricate dizzying structures, spires and bridges. The Dyar were also clever builders but they preferred darker stones of angular and geometric design the pleased the lords of Charon. While Loari structures can induce awe or even vertigo, the Dyar cities are disorienting or disturbing to mortals.

Art Items

Decorative art: pottery, glass and jewelry crafted into mesmerizing pieces. Not crude but powerful, like their building their art can transcend what was possible. Early pieces are rare, and highly prized by mortal and immortal collectors and historians.

GM Notes on Elves in SW

1. Additional Talents/Cultural Ranks for Loari/Linaeri. (Golden Voice, Aura for Linaeri, Essaence/Flow perception)?
2. Ilyar make be potent race for PC's. Due to "memory/immortality" get 10-50% less experience points as offset?
3. Ilyar are rare and even low level will generate awe among mortals. Attack on sight be Unlife?
4. Roleplaying. Not arrogant but rightfully feel they are the "children of gods". Less worshipful to Orhan as mortals—more vassal/lord. Do feel that they are superior or closer to god. Righteousness.
5. Collective Dreamstate. May be a good mechanism for delving/astrology/seer. Spells allow Elves to plumb the racial memory for information. May also be good "mcguffin" to direct party and keep them on track.
6. Higher Elvish languages (spoken) can't be learned by mortal races? Language of the gods.
7. Erlin more human/normal culturally. Many SW races have Erlin racial background. (like the Moors/Italy!)