**THE ANCESTRAL AS A CHALLENGE**

At the heart of these tales, chaos reigns, weaving a complex web of intertwined perspectives and actions. Strangers, deceived by biased information and betrayed by dissident agents, find themselves plunged into a narrative labyrinth of contradicting ideas. The kings of yore, with their ephemeral lives and modest statures, aspired to transcend their own limits to honor their future heirs, thus becoming almost divine, much like we shape our descendants today. The roots of our ancestors sink into a mosaic of peoples, intertwined and refined over the ages to give birth to our essence, purified like noble thoroughbreds. The values that guide us today were forged in the fires of assimilation, absorption, and elimination, engraved by the countless lives that preceded us.

With each new generation, we evolve to best embody the heights of our missions, rather than succumb to the contradictions that once tormented our ancestors, where one’s virtues eternally opposed those of another. Could the inhabitants of this world see their ancestors as a source of ardent inspiration and challenges to overcome, instead of a simple fountain of reverence and respect or a burning hatred for their past actions, now misjudged?

**Extreme Lands:**

Within the tale of eras, the whisper of the past resounds, where today’s icy rigor was preceded by ages of burning heat and paralyzing frost, once submerging lands under oceanic floods, leaving only mountainous islands and affecting all forms of life. Subsequent glacial eras birthed vast frozen expanses, later melted by great fires, finally giving way to the current cooling—a harmonious dance of extremes that reveals the distinguished clans from the masses, which otherwise spread everywhere without being able to survive, starving by their numbers and becoming infected in their promiscuity, or even corrupted in sharing.   
Today... Iäodunaï, scorched by winding thermal turquoise springs piercing snowy dunes whipped by sharp blizzards, quenches its scarlet bushes and rushes into Dümavel, erecting its high plateaus, mountains, and rivers always swept by all winds. The bluish hills of Agvalsis, surviving its meaty steppes, mingle with the cold, humid, frosted yet luxuriant forests-jungles of the stormy sea of Hatrohaj. The glacial bays of Dalvvar’Aad, carved and perforated by their biting winds, the white misty and drowned marshes and mangroves of Mevyriil, and the shining coasts with steep, aggressive cliffs of Êadryllir enrich the landscape with the revealing sufferings they produce. Ondusiöl herself dances with her seasonal-colored hills, followed by the wind-blown forests and leafy lakes of Bruysséliand, pierced by her cotton-like cloud pillars hiding her high peaks. Finally, the chaotic deserts of Adriuhn, both burning and freezing, shelter a solitary river with resilient marshes, whose floods are both torturous and life-saving. Are we inside or outside? Our senses tell us we are engulfing the sky. In the infinity of our soils, far more mysteries and pasts reside.

**Exaggerated Creatures:**

These lands are home to creatures, large and small, some bearing up to 55 limbs, swimming through the ground like water, or treading the air with ease. They are feared, hunted, raised, milked, and sheared among themselves and by others through various predations, parasitisms, cooperations, and symbioses.   
Some are suspended in cocoons or as they are, navigating streams… The seeds of others swell into bubbles and float... Others are eaten and digested by constant gliders, giving birth underground by sacrificing themselves as they are too heavy to fly again. Sometimes they are attacked by those floating higher than them, falling by the thousands and pinning them to the ground. The luminescence of nocturnal or other species creates, within the deep darkness or under the eight moons, rivers of light or even assemblies of torches prowling in the shadows, while predators migrate following the nomadic sun… or track herds of livestock engorged with honeydew glowing with alluring xenorescence.   
The dangerous predators and rival peoples ensure the survival of those who—despite their small numbers—avoid, through cunning and tactics, the lure of the giant hunts prowling everywhere.

**Excentric Societies:**

At the heart of the lands unfolds the singular, where creatures bearing skin, chitin, and fur erect thriving and restricted societies, clans, and states entangled in their eccentricity. Their lives intertwine into a unique and timeless mosaic of politics, society, and craftsmanship, distinguishing the rare and best in their capacity to adapt to their environment. Innovative cultures, enamored with seemingly insane and excessive arts, are on display. Shepherd-kingdoms milk tiny creatures with silky fur, while suicidal nomads cultivate herbs on massive, moist creatures. The crystalline notes of their instruments clash, from phototroques diffusing vibrant lights to their hydrorgic horns rippling water. Writing remains rare here, except for Ourophaès, the "Enlightened Path," sometimes reviled, sometimes adored.   
All hold their own values and judgments about each community. The madness or dreams of a merciful or independent merchant people are not the same as those of another ambitious or loyal and farmer people. On the contrary, what one might consider a virtue, another might see as a standard of behavior, and vice versa. From the family mother to the thief and even to the genocidal, all are justified and act according to their own understanding of good and evil.   
All origins, peoples, races, tribes, and families have their own rumors about others. Some are perceived as mythical or almost so because they never communicate with others to support (or protect) them, while others seem to invade (or enrich) the lands of all, whoever and wherever they are. From the state nomadism of agriculturalists to the sedentary masses of hunter-gatherers, one finds wandering and decentralized state kings governing only through peace, to communities of autonomous chiefdoms self-disciplining by valuing strength… But also their extremes or in-betweens: such as collectivist clans of a single ruler spreading everywhere, or tribes with no markets, security, and where all would participate entirely voluntarily and be wealthy.   
Thus, all struggle through prowess, alliance, and ingenuity, while each—whether by cannibalism preserving or purifying incest—thus maintains the prosperity of their own against the depletion of resources and their very people.

**Techno-Traditionalism**

Technology dances with strangeness, merging the extreme poles of Luddism and progress into an unprecedented harmony of the archaic and the modern. These societies embody transcended primitiveness, a feat such that anticipation proves powerless against your brilliance. A world WITHOUT Electricity, but FULL of Energy.   
Their technological creations rise far beyond expectations, offering an amplification of every aspect of the individual: physical, mental, social. Autonomy becomes an art, and machines neither captivate nor corrupt. Technology is not merely a tool; it becomes the being itself, teaching, guiding, elevating.   
They themselves are the technology because it teaches them, internally or physically integrating their tools through their design that exposes their mechanisms, allowing them to even feel them with their fingers without touching—unlike other technologies that mystify their mechanisms. Thus, they become their own bullions, which they may or may not use, capable of calculating the unthinkable without necessarily possessing extraordinary intelligence. They can recite a poem of thousands of verses over three nights, or massive velocipedes moving faster than many things—while very few know how to read or write. Among them, technological revolutionaries emerged, breaking down resource barriers, creating new jewels with the same technological morals to increase their resilience through sustainability, efficiency, and adaptability.

**The Wealth of Values**

In this world, wealth flourishes uniquely. Rich things are easily accessible to the wealthy, but people are industrious and intelligent, thus they also find themselves possessing wealth. Moreover, all these peoples value things so differently that one person’s rich is another’s poor, just like the ways to become rich or impoverished.   
The Hisdes shepherds of the Buttes rise as millionaires among the Tumattroïs fire-spitting artists, while the Aizdäls dune runners become the beggars of the Khardes juice sommeliers. Wealth and poverty take on new colors, intertwining in a dance of values. Current currencies take on a life of their own, shining and sparkling, carrying a deeper meaning than barter, though still very present, usually counted in very malleable ways: in pieces, handfuls, bags, etc. Thus, one finds the Golden Ribbons, woven from celestial oceans, draping themselves as beauty accessories. Shiny Skins, lights from oils and luminous mollusks, everything that illuminates, or the Bovare, the sacred livestock, the eminent currency, worth 100 Golden Ribbons.

**The Importance of Transport**

They juggle forms of movement: one will find numerous analogues to bicycles (side bikes, foot bikes, sail bikes, rowing bikes, galley bikes, etc.), but also pleiodes—animal hot air balloons or egg-made for transport or signaling, or inside long woolen sêramksamp manipulating their organs to steer through their underground paths. They purify their materials through different uses of air and heat from various materials, from crystalline honeydew to sap from metallic trees and plants, defining in some peoples highly developed industries, both in art, services, and even war. Some have ventilation and air conditioning systems using wind-catching towers, underground coolers, or evaporative chillers... But others use marine ice-fire energy, aqueducts and thermal reservoirs, or gas pipelines with detailed pipes intertwining their cities, hearths, or supply stations to bring heat and lighting to all (or certain privileged). Explosive snow, flame-throwers, and fireworks are protected jewels—their materials to produce them almost impossible to import or buy, are rare to find and always heavily guarded, besides being unreliable... Although practical in some cases.

**The Transfer of Knowledge**

They communicate rapidly (through terrestrial, marine, aerial, or stationary movement) via, in some cultures, extremely developed technological systems. Telenoéic systems where reflective lights shimmer, or thermal telehydrie by leveling interconnected waters.   
Others sing through telétompe drum-gongs mimicking the tone and prosody of speech at unsuspected speeds, and some alarm through teleélélize, discreetly vibrating between large buried cylinders with no connection. Mention will be made of the use of whistled languages, semaphores (sign language, flags, smokes, and fires), lighthouse beacons (with lights, mirrors, or hydraulics), as well as pterekae stations (volatile messenger animals making back-and-forth trips). Seismic octopendules, compasses, hydroroges (or mechanical or solar ones), balloon signalings, portable print shops, and other information processes provide (when accessible and in addition to communication mechanisms) the necessities to those who require them.   
Educational forms are both archaic and different. Since most do not read and write for obvious reasons to their eyes, they often rely on acroamacy (oral teaching), cooperative development technologies (bullions, maps, calligraphy, etc.), and games (role-playing and others) that all (re)bring them back to their traditions. Their teachings usually last a long time and are sometimes hereditary. It is noted that a true scalde or priest may take up to ten or twenty years to learn their tools and complex required experiences. Finally, all peoples have numerous initiation rites at different stages of age, role, and life, in addition to countless festivals that permeate almost every day and every aspect of their culture as well as the environment of the eight seasons of these lands and their animal, floral, geological, and climatic cycles.

**Polyanimist Religiosity**  
The oldest storytellers and poets of all these peoples animate all things with “gods,” “genies,” “spirits,” or here, Rils. The conception of a “tree” today is fundamentally different from that of these peoples who infuse everything with meaning, perhaps incomprehensible, but nonetheless present according to them, believing it or not.   
Different regions of the world of the same People have their own myths (which justify or explain their rites), cultural practices, and local deities. The “Rils,” forces whose causes defy the senses, shape reality with a simple nod, animating everything. They are everything distinguished by an exceptional quality beyond the ordinary and inspiring reverential fear. One is more or less Rilique or “divine,” and thus more or less capable of influencing “without doing anything.” Thus, a door, a king, the wind or its breeze can seem Rilique in different degrees of influence, and influence different elements of reality “in the blink of an eye.” Indeed, even ancestors, founding figures, and heroes have all done things in life that define the limits of the person they are, and it seems that their influence, this Rilique power, spreads in life, even after theirs. Audacious spirits can challenge the Rils by ceasing offerings, threatening their existence by depriving them of sustenance or ceasing to pronounce their name so that they are forgotten.   
This “piety” is reciprocal; it is the one who knows the Ril and guarantees its divinity by pronouncing its names and through rites, hoping that afterwards it divinizes us into its realms, which is how we remember, a memory. Impiety is the ignorance of the powers of the Rilie (rather than the Rils themselves), and this disbelief is often widespread within the Discordant Narratives, promises not necessarily kept or easily observable.

**Sanctuaries & Treasures**  
Iossölu’Vvaij houses Sanctuaries for nearly 50 souls, giving birth to more than 10,000 of these sacred refuges, surpassing a million presences within the familiar lands of the Iôrs, Alds, and Sybaïs. They are found everywhere—from the crevices of a ruin on an island to the city centers of capitals, even in houses or tombs, sometimes portable, temporary or permanent, with or without a place of honoring. These sanctuaries have the main purpose of housing the Ril itself (or rather, like a refuge when speaking of powerful Rils), either containing it (in a manufactured or natural object), or attracting it, making it accessible as substitutes for approach. Sanctuaries are sometimes associated with the powers in place, the ancestors of a family or a village, or the dead, while others are linked to a mountain, for example.   
Within these sanctuaries, possessions related to the Ril in question are often presented—from works of art to mirrors—ancient Treasures, sometimes guarded, sometimes forgotten, sometimes looted... Or sometimes all three.

**Beliefs & Moralities**Their myths stem from or symbolize regrets, solitude, altruism, wishes, and denials. There is no paradise or hell or any other universe, dimension, or parallel place to life. Rather, the world of the Rils is a world that exists within this one, but in an imperceptible way, just as air is for our eyes.   
For it is not separate, it has an influence on the world, and sometimes, it would visibly intrude. Rilique religiosity usually focuses on ritual behavior rather than doctrine; it does not concern itself with things to be believed but with things to be done—making it difficult to distinguish between religion and culture. Nevertheless, one finds five points more or less expressed: family as a transmission mechanism, nature as sacred, the honor of all ancestors, health, and finally the most important: everything that affirms, promotes, and produces the force and feeling of Life, movement.   
Here, each people has their own “Good” and “Evil” more or less objective in their context within an objective reality. All judge within their own impulses and axes of values. For some, maintaining the established order and its distinction or the reverse is the scale, while for others, these are things that for the most part would not be opposed, like pleasure and autonomy, but they cherish and deeply abhor them as opposites. These pairs often oppose each other, but not necessarily, because they are neither dichotomous nor relativistic, but rather, Perspectivist. Every being has multiple impulses at the same moment, judging everything through their own more or less objective conditions.

**Cosmology & Cosmogony**  
The vast majority of cultures are convinced of living in a concave universe, a Cytocosmism—that is, a hollow universe where space and everything else sink within a rock sphere, and that the “ground” beneath everyone’s feet is probably incessant. Observations seem to corroborate this concavity through an impossible to refute or prove assumption—that light strings would be curved. Some realized, however, that it would be possible, if their senses deceived them and with some calculations, to completely reverse this vision of the universe.   
Through this troubling possibility and found within their mathematical transformations, a symbol of curved and chiral crosses is found throughout the world and cultures, expressed in their own forms. There are many ways to explain their world itself, but all or almost all do not have the concept of a creation from a zero point, but rather an infinite continuity of their universe, always in motion and without any start. One key concept is that it is customary to explain the world, its invisible phenomena (see rilique for some), as being all interconnected by Twisted Strings of two threads, tying into each element, intangible and invisible to their senses, and ultimately that the entire universe would be born from a single and same continuous string, woven upon itself in your immensity.