

ARITÉA

ARITÉA

A world on the brink of collapse

Aritea is a world of **Kamrans**, **Aritéans**, **Minu**, **Númarí**, **Maldorians** and **Demure**. All are, in some form or another, at odds. All are in some form or another entangled. None hold ultimate power, and all strive to keep the little they have. The **Kamrans** and the **Aritéans** are at a standstill after a bloody conflict that left hundreds of thousands dead. The **Minu** have closed off all relations to other parties and are hiding in their mountain sanctuaries. The **Númarí** and the **Demure** which have managed to stay out of conflict with each other are facing interpersonal turmoil after the **Númarí** denied request for political asylum for a would-be king fleeing persecution after a militant uprising.

At current day, a new threat looms. A mystifying mist that moulds that which it touches into fragmented nothingness. The cities touched by this mist scatter to the wind, and refugees are rampant in larger cities. The gods which once answered the pleas of the broken, no longer bare witness on **Aritéan** plights.

With old conflicts and new conflicts coalescing into a potential collapse of all, fate lies within the few that dare defy norms and boundaries to step into the light and cast their lives into the fire.

Will you be the hero? Or the beginning of the end?

Races

Kamrans

Broad shouldered with large ivory protrusions on their head that signify lineage these giants loom over other races at 2.4-2.7 meters tall. They reach maturity at 14 and live on average to be 70 years old, with some living to 80 or even 90 in extreme cases. With a traditionally nomadic lifestyle and a love for heat and dust, they call the southern split their home. They are skilled warriors and put might and tact front and centre. Their culture derives from old scriptures of a warrior poet that called for honor in all things.

Kamrans are a split race spanning both the northern hemisphere with the nation of Mekorokkan, and the south with the nation of Gargosh. Both of these nations harness that warrior poet spirit, however the northern nation is much more violent and tribal in nature.

Aritéans

Slender and quick these medium sized humanoids carry thin skin that show their complex stochastic skeletal structures. With a bronze tone and dehydrated look they carry themselves tall with intellect and powerful control over the magical undertones of the world. They live on average 160 years with some living as long as 200. They have had a lot of inner turmoil as the ideological belief of meritocracy was usurped by a communal theory of equality. This new ideology has not worked out as well as the

revolutionary party had hoped, and cities are running rampant with offshoot parties and sectarian movements that splits from the original umbrella group.

Númarí

With sharp teeth and piercing gold slitted eyes, this medium sized race though not tall or broad carry slightly elongated arms with large hands. Harkening back to their evolutionary roots, some have back protrusions that once carried wings. Some even sprout small non usable wings while some have nothing at all. They live around 80 years with some living to 100 on rare occasions. They are quick and lethal in combat but have mostly stayed secluded from conflict.

Minu

Short and stout, with a broad stature and thick limbs, these skilful craftsmen and technicians are renowned for their inventions and complex structures. With their stout exterior and proficiency with all thing's extraction, they usually grow out their hair and beard to survive the cold depths. The eyes of the Minu have become pale white and most Minu struggle with bad eyesight in the light. However, their lack of light-based sight come with a most wondrous upside. Their sense of touch can identify precious metal or gems with the slightest brush of a finger. Their smell, especially for chemicals, metals and minerals are second to none. Their ears can hear the pinprick moment a drop of water falls from the cave roof. Minu live for a very long time. They have a natural ability to shrug of disease and their immune systems are hardened over long and cold periods of time underground. They can become as old as 350 years, but on average live until 270 due to the natural dangers of living in caves.

Demure

These tiny humanoids stand at 1.50 meters or smaller and have slender, lanky proportions. They have unusual markings on their skin that are passed down through generations, though each new generation carry small differences. None except the Demure themselves can really tell the difference. They are especially religious as a people, and have a complex religion based on the grand narrator that prescribes narrative in all happenings. A red thread that flows through the world. The world began with the start of a story. A demiurge of narrative from which their name derives. The recent nonresponse from their prime mover has left their cities in disarray. Panic and revolt have caused governments to fail; mutinies and militant uprisings are a plenty and the conflict with the Númarí have led to the Demure's coming end. The Demure live for 60 years on average, with some members reaching close to 70. With such a short span, they tend to do a lot with their time. Demure are not known to sit idly by.

Maldorian

The Maldorian are a medium sized humanoid with large piercing black eyes, pale skin and wide mouths who cover their bodies in tattoos usually a combination of lines and circles. They signify heritage, deeds, titles and much more. Over the lifetime of a Maldorian their pale white bodies become more and more filled like a canvas. They have excellent vision and can see colors other races can't. They can see further than other races with clear detail. They make excellent painters, cartographers, archers and sailors. They inhabit a large portion of the western Aritéan continent. They make for tacticians and though not expansionist or imperial, they are excellent at repelling forces. Maldorians are long lived with an average lifespan of 140 years. Both, Ar Mineroth, Mekorokkan and Aritéa Imond nations

have launched attacks on the Maldorian people. With their fortresses and tall towers, they have repelled all of it.

Languages

Aritéan Language *Skaethar*

Cultural roots:

- Language is precise, mathematical, almost architectural. It takes its time and prefers detail and eloquence. This makes Skaethar a very long winded language with lots of complexities and alternative punctuation. Lovers of all thing's semicolon, these skilled debaters and writers are at a constant intellectual battle to create the longest, most flowing and eloquent sentences ever made. This also makes them quite boring at parties.

Phonology:

- Recurring letters: **th, ae, ir, sk, v, ll, sh**
- Frequent internal vowels: **ae, eo, ia**

Grammar:

- Adj-Noun order. In Skaethar a noun is incomplete until its qualities are fully specified. Where most languages would say the "marble tower" Skaethar would say "the refined-light-shining, tower. The name (marble) is less worth than the qualifiers connected with that name. Not all marble is refined and light, but this specific statue is, so marble will not do as descriptors.
- Embedded clauses; long compound sentences. Skaethar loves to connect several sentences into compound sentences with semi colons instead of stopping a sentence and starting one a new with periods. They are also big fans of parentheses to insert or add credentials and important knowledge.

Normal claus: "I assert the theorem"

Skaethar claus: "I, Theraine (skeletal-web of sword, student of all things cutting), assert the theorem; the theorem is to bind light, one must draw power from motion."

- Avoids contractions. No "I'm" or "you're", it is "I am" and "You are". No abbreviations allowed. Its not UiB, it is the University of Bergen.
- Uses three-part parallelism often. This often comes in the form of point, counterpoint, synthesis or quality, refinement, conclusion. It bleeds into sayings and quotes. Much like in English "I came, I saw, I conquered" someone speaking Skaethar says "The meek seeks harmony, the meek fears fracture, the meek earn balance"

Syntax:

- Very structured subject – qualifier - action
- Often inserts parenthetical modifiers:
“Theraine (third of her cohort) speaks.”

Example phrase:

“Skaeth llorae ir vannor.”

“Clarity reveals true merit.”

Númarí Language *Veshtan*

Cultural roots:

Númarí are descendants of winged creatures who hunted in flock. Coordinating in a flock like the Númarí once did requires quick reaction and short form information transferring. This can be seen in their verb first structure which weights action as the most important part of a sentence and short clauses. Compared to skaethar where compound sentences and long clauses are normal Veshtan is very much a concise language.

Phonology:

- Recurring letters: **sh, sr, x, v, z, fth, rr**
- Hard edges mixed with airy vowels
- Many words end in **-ir, -esh, -an**

Grammar:

- Verb-first structure, because action matters. In the common tongue this would occur as “Hunt she deer” or “walk he to the plane-lower”
- Short clauses, no wasted breath. Long phrases are wasteful, and when you are engaged in battles of hundreds of flying creatures, a lot of information is less worth than important information transferred quickly.
- Animistic metaphors tied to weather, sky, flight. They anthropomorphise the concepts of weather and wind to create metaphors for daily life.

Syntax:

- Verb - Subject - Modifier
- Example: “Runs he farwind” instead of “He runs far.”

Example phrase:

“Vesh-an srakkir vhoz.”

“Wind carries truth.”

Name example:

Fethon of the Silver Spiral, Xiraan of the Broken Helix, Veshril of the Dawnwing

Demure Language *Narrik*

Cultural roots:

Narrik is very much a language built on storytelling traditions. Within sentences it places both narrative importance on the sentence itself, but also places the subjects and objects within frames that show what they are to the story. With prefixes and suffixes up the ass for anyone interested in learning this difficult language. The language is hypertextual, and therefor often impossible to follow by the uninitiated, however its gentle sound and fluidity makes for a pleasant experience despite the difficult leaning curve.

Phonology:

- Recurring letters: **r, n, l, m, v, ai, ei, ua**
- Gentle, fluid consonants
- Loves alliteration (Just like me and Lars)

Grammar:

- Hypewrtextual grammar is a must in formal speech. Nouns are not objects, they are references to story. They use markers in the form of prefixes to show what type of reference it is.

She- (origin in an old tale)

Ra- (origin in a family story)

Vi- (origin in a prophecy or omen)

Nel- (Origin in an event witnessed personally)

- Uses story tense, a grammatical marker for fate or prophecy. Story-tense are events that are happening, have happened and will happen all at once. It takes the form of the suffix -vai. It is a shorthand often used by Ramani priests in sermons and when telling stories.

- Heavy use of suffixes to mark narrative function (hero, witness, ending).

-sel (protagonist)

- var (witness)
- mur (antagonist)
- thar (guide or mentor)
- ril (background)
- esh (not related to)

“Ramai-sel rithan parishen-var.”

“Ramai retells the parable as its witness.”

Syntax:

- Noun - Verb - Narrative-role suffix
- Example: “Thread speaks-protagonist.”

Example phrase:

“Ravernai talumei am-anar.”

“The thread-tale already knows your steps.”

Name example:

Ramani Ropewalker, Seluun the Twice-Told, Marivell Threadborn

Kamran Language *Gorakh*

Cultural roots:

Gorakh is a harsh and animalistic language that invokes the fierce battle cries of men and beasts alike. It is supposed to be intimidating, assertive and chant like. It has a sharp rhythm that is felt in the stomach and easy to make into a war chant. It puts honor and lineage first using descriptors and prefixes to mark things as witnessed or unwitnessed. A Kamran does not say I, but invokes the whole name and title when talking.

Phonology:

- Recurring letters: **gr, kr, gh, u, o, rr, kh, br**
- Guttural stops and back-of-throat consonants
- Heavy use of rolled **r**

Grammar:

- Name-first sentences (invoking lineage first). A Kamran does not merely say that “I strike down the enemy” They invoke their whole being into the sentence “Eldrog of the Curled Twins, Facebreaker, strikes down his enemy”. The expansion of name and also marking the enemy as a personal enemy, is a very Kamran thing to do.

- Uses declarative honor markers like

-grak (honorable declaration)

-dra (humility marker)

-kor (challenge marker)

-vorr (witness marker)

“Eldrog-kor faraakh karosh!”

“Eldrog challenged the enemy”

- Dual conjugation for “deeds done” vs “deeds witnessed”

It is very important to for Kamrans to stress things that were witnessed by others and things that were done alone. A deed witnessed is more honourable and believable in Kamran culture. Using Korr-form and Vorr-form a sentence changes to include this information

Eldrog rraghen = I struck

Eldrog rraghvorr = People saw that I struck

Syntax:

- Subject - Honor marker - Action
- Example: “Eldrog-grak breaks stone.”

Example phrase:

“*Korrak gruun-rrakh!*”

“Stand in honor!”

Name examples:

Eldrog of the Curled Twins, Brorrak of the Stone Lash, Korran of the Ember Jaw

Minu Language *Tactum*

Cultural roots:

Tactum is so heavily tied to the Minu’s lack of sight that most of their language has evolved to have lots of other sensory descriptors. They are prone to touch based metaphors, a vibrant language

describing smell, vibrations and textures, and uses phonetics that carry in the caves and chasms where they live. The sound of Minu speaking can be a humming or whistling combination that makes for a musical experience.

Phonology:

- Recurring letters: **b, d, m, h, u, o, th, sh**
- Soft, hum-like consonants; lots of nasal resonance
- Words often end in **-um, -oth, -ar**

Grammar:

- Verbs include sensory nuance: “to know” = “to feel-know”, “to hear” = “to cave-hear”. There are specific prefixes that alters how something is known. Touch (tact-), hearing (murm-), scent (shur-), vibrations (thrim-), Temperature (hon-).
Heloth = to feel. Tact-heloth = feel by touch. Thrim-heloth = to feel by vibrations.
- Adjective stacking is normal. It is not enough to describe something as “the cold stone”. Minu require a plethora of adjectives to fully get a picture of what the other part is trying to tell. “the smooth, cold, heavy stone” Is a more Tactum described rock. This also plays out in greetings where you don’t ask another minu if they are having “a good day” You ask them “Is your day warm, embraced, calm?” A fellow Tactum speaker would answer by correcting one or more descriptors, or agreeing with the full sentence.

All of this combines to make a sentence like “Through vibration-listening, I sense the deep resonant-stone with smooth-heavy feeling.”

Syntax:

- Subject - Texture-adjective - Verb
- Example: “Stone rough-sure speaks.”

Example phrase:

“*Duum-shara heloth mul.*”

“Truth is felt more than spoken.”

Name examples:

Bristle of Coldroot Hall, Mothrum of Emberdeep, Sharum of Frost Hollow

Maldorian Language *Veldren*

Cultural roots:

The Maldorian language has evolved to be precise, clear, but with a philosophical underpinning of contradiction. There is a balance in the way Maldorians form sentences preferring to counterweight statements with counterstatements. This can be seen in the famous Claus A – Divider – Claus B structure of how they tend to speak. Or the marked nouns Vaelon and Dovoren.

Phonology:

- Recurring letters: **v, d, l, ae, o, u, st, cl**
- Crisp consonants, vowel clarity
- Prefers symmetry in word structure

Grammar:

- Dual clauses: every statement prefers a balancing counterpart. See the Claus A, Divider, Claus B example under syntax
- Uses oppositional pairs (“light/dark”, “high/low”, “seen/unseen”). Most nouns, though not all, have a contradictory twin.
- Nouns are marked for “certainty” vs “uncertainty” with the suffixes -ael (certainty) and -esh (uncertainty), so to quickly give qualifiers within statements. These are called Vaelon (certain) and Dovoren (Uncertain). Examples beneath:

clumair-ael

“the lighthouse (confirmed as real in this moment)”

clumair-esh

“the lighthouse (suspected, possibly mis-seen in fog)”

venlor-ael

“the verified map”

venlor-esh

“the questionable or outdated map”

Syntax:

- Clause A - Divider - Clause B (mirrored meaning)
- Example: “Wind steadies the course; the course steadies the wind.”

Example phrase:

“Vaelum dostar; dostar vaelum.”

“Clarity guides truth; truth guides clarity.”

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Name examples:

Stillwind Blackmaw, Highclear Oarlock, Dawnsoft Ledger

Naming Schemes

Kamran

The naming scheme of the Kamrans incorporate both lineage and titles. No name is alike and there are millions of combinations between the chosen name, the pattern of the protrusion and the deeds of the Kamran. Since Kamrans don't enter the world with deeds or protrusions this means that names are grown throughout their lives starting as single word names and gaining pattern and deed names.

[Given Name] of the [Ivory Pattern], [Personifying Deed]

Example: Eldrog of the Curled Twins, Facebreaker

Aritéan

The Aritéans focus on merit and incorporates their skeletal structure. Since the merit of a character is a latter thing in life they usually start with a given name and skeletal pattern and add on the merit later.

[Given Name] [Skeletal Pattern] of [Expertise]

Example: Theraine Web of Swords (This is the common version of an Aritéan name.)

Númarí

Númarí were once great flyers and their back protrusions are still of great importance to them. Each lineage are tied to certain winged looks. These are described in old scriptures and texts. Anyone born without a clear lineage and without indication of wing patterns get labelled unwinged or flightless. To differentiate within lineages there is also the addition of the current state of wings that separate one from another within family circles

[Given Name] of the [Aerial Lineage], [Wing-State]

Fethon of the Silver spiral, Unwinged

Minu

The Minu focus their names less on aesthetic appearance and sight based descriptors and have a more scent and touch based scheme for their names. The Minu last names are focused less on lineage and more of the area they come from. So a Minu born in Coldroot Hall will have the last name Coldroot or the full Coldroot Hall

[Given Name] of [Place]

Example: Bristle of Coldroot Hall

Demure

Demure are excellent storytellers and live for stories and narrative. They believe everything is narrative. There is a red thread of plot winding through every last thing on this mortal coil. They often choose names that have something to do with the family narrative, or something that references and important event, or after an important character from a narrative. There is no strict rules except for the fact that the name needs to hypertextually reference some sort of grand narrative.

Example: Ramani Ropewalker (Ramani a play on Raman, the name of a priest in a specific sect of the Narratol Vosh) (Ropewalker, a reference to how the main characters in verse 21:3 of the Narranor managed to escape the castle of the giants)

Maldorian

Maldorians believe in clarity and pragmatism. Their names derive from the conditions of their birth and a important family landmark, structure or item.

[Birth Condition] [Family landmark, trinket or structure]

Stillwind Blackmaw (Stillwind being the condition of the wind at birth) (Blackmaw being a family sword and heirloom)

Important Historical Events

The Battle of Amitash River (Kamran and Minu)

Fought between the Minu and the Kamran this battle lasted for 3.5 years and ended in clearly defined southern borders between the two nations, and the construction of the Weeping Warrior statues. One of the grandest structures ever built. The river continues to be subject to skirmishes and smaller attacks, but at this point it is futile and mostly for show.

The Battle of the Rotten Fields (Minu and Maldorian)

Fought between Paleharbor and Morn Guldar for a bloody 4 years, the ground of the battle went from green field to muddy marsh within 10 years. The blood and rotten smell keep even most animals at bay. Though carrion and worms are feasting to this day.

Fall of the The Avenari Concord (Aritéan)

7 years ago **The Avenari Concord** faced heavy criticism after the war with Gargosh put Aritéa Imond into a state of crisis. Several factions and parties rose up and held an unofficial vote of no confidence. The vote got a large majority, but the **Concord** did not recognize the result. After which there was a violent uprising mainly led by **The Aritéan People's Continuum** whom killed the leaders of the **Concord** and put in their own. However, the first year was extremely turbulent and there was a lot of backstabbing among the inner circle as different parties tried grabbing power. To this day, sects and off shoot parties rise up in militant ways, but the **Continuum** holds strong, for now.

The Partition of the Four Courts (Aritéan)

92 years ago, the Aritéans operated under four philosophical courts (Merit, Geometry, Inquiry, and Temperance). A violent ideological schism split them, leading to the collapse of two and the rise of the Meritarchate.

The Demure Eschaton Crisis (Demure)

Over 40 years ago a false prophecy spread across Demure territories predicting the “end of the red thread.” Mass migrations, purges of rival sects, and the burning of several cities followed, only to be proven baseless. The aftermath of the panic still linger in ruins and broken lineages.

The Maldorian Maritime Reform (Maldorian)

After losing half their fleet to a volcanic eruption at **Cindercrest Isle**, Maldorians restructured their entire naval strategy and created the famous **Twin Lighthouse Doctrine**.

The Kamran Exodus of the Burning Plain (Kamran)

An enormous drought forced Kamran clans to abandon the ancestral Ember Basin which now lies in ruin. Fourteen clans merged into three, forming the **Tripartite Lineage**, a rare moment of unity in their history. Now those three clans have been split into countless sub clans.

The Grain Riots of Aritéa Imond (Aritéa)

A famine hit a major Aritéan city. The Meritarchate ordered grain to be distributed “by achievement,” sparking riots that later fuelled the revolution. It is viewed as a ignition point in the Aritéan history books.

The War of the False Wing (Kamran vs Númarí)

A Kamran chieftain claimed he was descended from an ancient Númarí flight line, demanding control of the city Thelaurian. The Númarí denied it. A brutal winter war followed, ending in stalemate.

The Maldorian Counterstrike at Riftwater Lake (Maldorian and Kamran)

The Mekorokkan nation attempted a coordinated invasion of Maldorian territory.

Maldorian archers and mapmakers lured them into the **Riftwater sinkline**, ambushing them with perfect precision. When enemy forces captured watch towers and small fortresses along the road to Highwind, skilled cartographers left maps containing errors and misinformation leading enemy forces into an ambush point where the invasion ended in half a day.

The Great Debate of Arinéa (Aritéan)

A public intellectual duel between two Aritéans the Meritocrat Vassiren and the proto-Communist Oréthin. The debate lasted for several days as both parties refused to give up. Their arguments shaped the next 20 years of Aritéan philosophy and was a big reason for the Concords revolution.

The Minu Renaissance of Tactile Arts (Minu)

Unable to see well, Minu artisans developed a culture of touch-based art, creating carvings, sculptures, and instruments meant to be experienced with closed eyes.

These works became prized across Aritéa. Several Minu museums were set up to display these wondrous works, however the recent closing of borders have caused these museums to be mostly empty.

The Maldorian Spectrum Expedition (Maldorian)

Maldorian scholars discovered “invisible colors” only they could see, leading to new maps, star charts, and a full revision of navigation techniques. These charts and maps have caused Maldorians to become a wanted commodity in other nations ships. Maldorians can get paid a hefty amount to leave their homes to seek employment for foreign freighters and battleships.

The Silent Alignment (Demure)

A planetary event where all moons and major stars aligned perfectly. During this time, people had visions and experienced clarity. Ancient texts suggest this was the last time the creator’s mind was fully present. Shortly after this astral phenomenon the mist appeared and the gods stopped answering.

The Pilgrimage of the Seven Threads (Demure)

Seven Demure prophets walked across the entire continent, tracing what they believed were the original contours of the world’s story. Their route now forms a sacred pilgrimage trail. There are small cloisters built on the path and each contain books with stories and tales of the pilgrimage. Pilgrims are implored to write down their own tales and leave them in the cloisters.

The Vanishing Choir (Demure)

A whole demographic of Demure Ramani preists began speaking in gibberish, which is now believed to be early signs of the Mist’s influence. They disappeared shortly after, believed to have been “unwritten.”

Traditions

Aritéan

Triadic Debates

Public debates that follow strict rules and structure where interruptions are considered bad manners and rarely happens. They follow the structure of, thesis, antithesis and synthesis. To only represent a thesis and a synthesis is considered bad manners, one must consider the counterpoint.

These debates can last for a very long time and its usual to take breaks between days. There are usually transcripts of arguments released ahead of time so to give opponents a chance to come up with well-articulated arguments to counter them. The point of these debates are not to win but to dive deeper into topics and evolve society as a whole.

Skeletal Celebration

At the age of 25 Aritéans are considered adults, and their skeletal structures are fully developed. At this point there is a feast that consists of courtship and formal dancing and at the end, the skeletal structure of the Aritéan is highlighted with paint which they wear as a sign of personal pride for the next week. People often give gifts and shops may give free wares to a person in skeletal celebration.

The Lattice

The Aritéans believe there is a structure in all things that keeps entropy at bay. To celebrate this great cosmological lattice, they gather once a year to feast. Children make shapes and structures that decorate homes and universities. Adults make food that though tasteful, is also presented with structure and geometry in mind. There are several kinds of food that are looked upon as almost sacred regarding the feast. Honeycomb is one such food, another one is maize.

Númarí

Cliff vigil

When a young Númarí comes of age at 15, they are forced to sleep on a cliff near a great fall. This is done to remember the conditions of their ancestor's rest. It is very unusual for Númarí to fall of the edge, but it is known to happen. After this vigil, they are given a bone feather related to the lineage wings. This is carried throughout life as a reminder of their past.

Wings of Remembrance

Fallen Númarí have their wings harvested so that they can get bones which they keep as a family tree of each member. These wing collections can grow to be quite substantial and take up a lot of space. The practice has become lesser during the latter part of the century with smaller families with vaguer lineages opting out of the tradition all together. Númarí without wings or nubbins do not get remembered by family lineages and usually fade out. Families do this so to keep their lineages more prestigious.

Kamran

The Trial of Thirst

When a Kamran comes of age, they must venture into the burning plains with no water and no food. They can only return once they have killed something of worth and brought it back. Only those worthy may survive and the dead do not get a funeral rite, their bodies are left to be picked clean by the coarse sand and harsh winds, left as a warning to those who come after.

If the Kamran survives, they are considered their own, a grown up in society with the same rights and autonomy as the rest. The skeleton of the thing they killed will hang above the entrance to their home as a signifier of worth.

Mourning of ash and dust

When a Kamran dies within the clan, fellow clan members burn the body and rub the ash on their horns to show other Kamrans that they just lost someone. It is customary to lower one's head when mourning Kamrans walk past, especially if they are high ranking. If Kamrans are mourning, they do not have to accept duels or challenges for the next 26 hours. Any attempt to break this rule is regarded as treason and is punishable with death by sanding. A practice where a Kamran's mouth is forced open with metal prongs and sand is forced down their throat until they die.

Demure

A lot of Demure traditions are related to the [Narratol Vosh](#) and so to get a better understanding of Demure tradition you can read about them on page x.

The First Word Rite

On the 1st of the 1st month Demure people gather in family clusters to celebrate the first word and the beginning of time and space. It is a joyful day with hymns and food. Whatever food has been preserved past winter tide is usually thrown into giant communal pots where they make Allbrown stew. A hearty and healthy meal of vegetables and meats.

In the evening are collective storytelling events where people take turns telling stories, but also creating stories about things that never happened in a creative and communal activity.

Minu

Deep Listening

A communal gathering where all the Minu in a given city or village gather to hum tones that resonate with the caves. It is customary to listen and respond to the other families' hums and this creates an echoing effect in the large caverns and mines. It is a way of connecting with the stone. A way to resonate with the earth. A way to become one with the vibrations of the world. They touch the walls to feel the hums. They run fingers across each other's necks to feel the vibrations of the voices.

A game has developed from this as in the aftermath Minu try to guess which hums they heard from which family.

Scent Mapping

A family's scent is a distinct and important thing in Minu society. Minu spend a long time mapping out changes in scents around them describing in great detail what changes and what used to be. Family trees can more often be about the scent of the family home rather than names. When two families merge or intertwine, scents become mixed and become defined anew. And so starts another round of scent mapping.

Maldorian

The Twin Lighthouse Doctrine

Two Beacons, One Truth. Absolute certainty.

After the incident on Cindercrest Isle, the body of Maldorian governments decided such a thing may never happen again. They put their brightest and most skilled on the task of creating a protocol that when used would lead to no failure. The Maldorians are skilled mathematicians and even though their mapping of geological data should have foreseen some volcanic activity, it didn't.

At its most basic, the doctrine is a philosophical framework, most often used in navigation, where one should never trust a single data point. No Maldorian vessel should ever rely on just one lighthouse when navigating stony shores. Every course must be confirmed through two independent sources.

This doctrine is not just a military or naval philosophy, it has become seared into the culture of the Maldorians who use this framework in all walks of life.

During the panic at Cindercrest people fled and tried to pack themselves onto boats that would take them to the mainland. However, due to heavy smog and changing currents do to geological shifting, the two lighthouses couldn't give a full picture of where to go and what to do. Only by using both did one of the captains manage to make it out.

Now no Maldorian only carries a single map. They carry two maps from two different cartographers. Each Maldorian listen to two different political viewpoints. Each Maldorian believes in a opposed dialectic from where truth can arrive. (*Fichte's Dialectic: thesis, anti-thesis, synthesis*)

Narratol Vosh

Myths, Parables and Narratives

The Parable of the Broken Loom

A tale of a world that lost its Weaver and slowly frayed. Demure priests now see this as prophecy of the current crisis. The Parable of the Broken Loom is one of the oldest stories in the Narratol Vosh and holds significant weight in Demure society. It is often told to children to make them understand how important the weaver of stories is to the fabrics of Aritéa.

The Tale of Seven Spindles

Seven heroes, each holding a spindle of fate, wander Aritéa to re-thread broken stories. Their journey maps roughly onto the Pilgrimage of the Seven Threads. Not just an oral tradition, this tale combines the act of generational storytelling with the act of visiting all the six nations. It encourages both the retelling of old stories and the creation of new ones. The oldest stories in the cloisters scattered about Aritéa are centuries old.

The Story of Nar-Voshl, the Story Thief

A demon-like figure who steals words and memories. Before The Mist existed, Nar-Voshl was a symbol for unwriting, forgetting, and shame. Nar-Voshl exists as a metaphor for the horrors of things being forgotten. How a story forgotten is a story never told. Stories hold morals, ethics, culture and lineage, and forgetting stories is forgetting who the Demure are.

Narratol Doctrines

The fundamental beliefs that define Demure cosmology.

The First Thread Doctrine

All existence began with The First Word spoken by the Grand Narrator. This Word unravelled into threads of time, matter, identity, story. To understand anything is to trace its thread back to its origin. The Demure are extremely afraid of forgetting the stories that string back to the first word for if a thread is cut, so will their connection to their narrator.

Doctrine of Interwoven Destinies

No one's story exists alone. Every action touches another line. Every death is a severing, a knot, or a thread-break. They believe in being careful when intervening in others lives and stories. And it is strictly forbidden to lie, embellish or misrepresent ones own story or others story. The method of bookkeeping is almost more important than the act of book keeping itself.

Doctrine of Hypertextual Reality

Reality is layered:

- The Outer Story (the world)
- The Inner Story (one's purpose)
- The Hidden Story (what the Narrator intends but never explains)

Demure believe interpreting signs, coincidences, scars, markings, or dreams reveals hidden plot structures.

Doctrine of The Unfinished Chapter

Life does not end it concludes. The dead become "unwritten," but their narrative resonance remains and shapes ongoing plots. Every person lives on as long as their stories live on and can be traced. Their threads weave into others through morals, ethics, teachings and sayings.

Doctrine of Narrative Debt

When one's actions harm the thread of another, the offender owes a "narrative debt," repayable through acts of restoration, storytelling, or sacrifice. To be in debt is to be in sin. One must repair the broken threads.

Narratol Structures and Roles

Ramani Priests

Interpreters of stories, dreams, and "plot knots." They dress in layered robes with thread-like tassels. They carry threads which they weave into knots of different kinds. The knots represent an action, or a consequence, or a choice. Ramani priests often carry meters upon meters of thin thread tied in series of knots, remembering each and every one of the stories tied to them.

Spindle-Monks

Traveling keepers of oral traditions. They believe walking the world tightens its loose stories. They weave stories as they travel, digest stories from other cultures and divulges stories of their own to anyone who cares to listen. The spin webs of narrative connection across borders, across nations, across land and sea. (Brothers Grimm style)

The Quiet Chorus

A now-diminished sect of Demure who once sang the sacred verses. After the Vanishing Choir, the Chorus is nearly extinct. There are still those who sing, but ever more are leaving to become silent.

Thread-Mothers

Elders who tend to family stories, genealogies, and narrative debts. In some cities, their authority is higher than any priest. Grand plots that carry nations and narratives of kings and kingdoms are well and good, but many of the poorer areas focus more on the importance of the personal stories. The inner story. These Thread Mothers spend time within small communities and document and carry all their stories. When the young reach the age of 6 and until 25, thread mothers will gather them in groups and tell stories through the generations.

Rituals and Traditions

The Knotting Rite (Birth)

A newborn receives a red cord tied in three knots:

- one for origin
- one for self
- one for fate

The cord is kept for life and buried with them. This thread is continually knotted throughout their lifetime when big life scenarios happen. Marriage, birth of a child, moving to another town, etc.

The Unrolling (Coming of Age)

Adolescents unroll a long parchment and write the first line of their own story. Every Demure is tasked with writing their own story in their own words. When becoming a Ramani priest, it is important that this is kept both detailed and concise. The quality of the narrative determines if a Demure may become a Ramani. People who don't write their own story are often thrown out of their communities.

The Severing (Death)

When someone dies, their thread is symbolically cut. Families keep the fallen's last knot, believed to hold residuum of their narrative. The knot is usually kept by the married counterpart or the closest family member if unmarried.

The Marriage Knot (Marriage duh)

When two Demure get married, they literally tie the knot. The tied knot is then kept in the house of the married couple. Divorces are finalized with a separation of the knot.

The Telling Vigil

All-night storytelling gatherings held during crisis or mourning. Participants weave tales into one another's to strengthen communal identity. When someone dies, it is normal to spend the entire day with close family, a Ramani and people from the community where they tell stories from the dearly departed's life while eating food and drinking.

The Mirror Scribes

A ritual where two scribes write the same event from opposite perspectives. Both accounts are considered sacred. The reason behind this ritual is to further knowledge of perspective and the inherent bias in storytelling. These rituals are used by the Ramani to teach scribes how to transcribe and how to avoid pitfalls. These accounts are then recorded in the cloister and kept for reference and safe keeping.

Sacred Texts and Verses

The Narratol has no single holy book. It is a compendium of evolving stories, constantly retold and revised. But several core works exist:

The Narranor

The primary scripture. Written in verses, each telling a mythic tale. It is not canonized, variations exist across cities. The Narranor is a combination of oral tradition and written tradition, and such a lot of its teachings cannot be gathered by just reading the book, but must be observed throughout the Demur nation by gathering with storytellers that tell the holy stories.

Example verses:

Verse 12:4 The Loom of Beginnings

"Before the world had breath, the Loom hummed in the dark. And the First Word pulled its thread across the void, etching paths where light could walk."

Verse 21:3 The Ropewalk Escape

"On the twenty-first turning, the giants closed the iron gate. But the Thread-Twins walked the rope that was not there, for faith can weave a bridge where stone denies."

Verse 3:17 The Faded Scribe

"The Scribe forgot the color of the dawn. And the dawn forgot the Scribe. Thus began the first unravelling."

Symbols

Symbol: The Threadwheel

A circular emblem with seven radiating lines. Represents the seven narrative elements: Origin, Conflict, Revelation, Loss, Choice, Change, Ending.

Colors

- Red: divine story / the thread
- Blue: memory
- White: narrative purity
- Grey: forgotten tales

Sacred Numbers

- 1: The First Word
- 3: The narrative triad (beginning, middle, end)
- 7: Highest sacred number, symbol of journeys and transformation

Nations

Ar Mineroth

Kragmoor

Kragmoor is a giant circular fortress with most of its inhabitants living beneath the ground. During the great war between Gargosh and Ar Mineroth, Kragmoor, which used to be more of a fortification, became the home of many masons, smiths, artificers, warriors, trainers, engineers and so on. This influx of Minu capital created an expansion of the cave systems into more housing and mining activity. After the war so many Minu remained in their new homes that the **Council of Caves (CoC)**, the ruling body which used to inhabit Morn Guldar moved to Kragmoor to gain a more central position.

The war segmented Kragmoor as an impenetrable indestructible structure. This safety caused mass migration from the outer villages and hill communes. It might seem counter intuitive to move closer to the main enemy, however, since the Kamran lost the war in such an embarrassing fashion, it is considered safer than being close to the more open areas of Ar Mineroth.

In the aftermath of the war, the new capitol expanded mining operations for Durum and other black steel components. New refineries and smithies were constructed and soon Kragmoor, the military outpost, became a renowned exporter of all things metal. The Maldorians need Durum for parts in their Lethan battleships, Númarí use durum in their cliffside support beams and Aritéans need Durum for spellcraft and alchemical purposes. This new political and economical capital created a new dynasty segmented the leadership of the **CoC** as not just a governing body, but a new aristocracy.

The subsequent increase in income inequality between the **CoC** and their adjacent key members have been a continuous problem. Uprisings and union strikes are causing internal and external problems as Durum demands are not being met and key members slowly lose status.

After the mist arrived, all trade relations stopped and the **CoC** forced a full lockdown of all things import and export. Immigration and migration also stopped. As Ar Mineroth hide away in their caves, their poorest grow hungry, and their richest grow mad.

The area around Kragmoor is mountainous and arid, which makes growing food nearly impossible. However Minu are hardy and tough and have cultivated an entirely different cuisine. Mushrooms, algae and moss are all cultivated and grown in large damp caverns known as Bruth'kalen or Mossvault in common. Together with herding Goats in the mountain region which is used for meat and dairy Minu culture is culinarily unique to any other nation.

Maldoran

Paleharbor

Paleharbor is a large coastal city based on the western part of Aritéa. Its massive pale white walls and scattering of lighthouses upon ivory rocky shores gives this city a distinct sheen in the cold sunlight. As one of the oldest capitol in Aritéa it has seen many a revolution and uprising which can be glimpsed in its disparate ruins and architecture. No one district in Paleharbor is the same in aesthetic and it is not unknown for old ruins to be found in the midst of neighbourhoods.

As one of the largest port cities, it functions as a trading hub with the smaller Maldorian cities and Aritéa Imond's port cities. This, along with the demand for Maldorian captains, painters, and cartographers have made Paleharbor one of the most powerful cities in Aritéa. It is an economic powerhouse and a defensive titan. It stands upon its white shores as a beacon to all who sail past its harbor.

Its history is filled with war as both Ar Mineroth, Merokorran and Aritéa Imond have launched full scale wars on the city. The walls and defensive structures peel away like layers on an onion. It is labyrinthine to explore, and walking amidst the plethora of broken wall segments, burnt down houses and large trebuchet boulders reveals a lot about its history.

Paleharbor has one of the largest fishermen populations on Aritéa. Seafood is cheap and plenty, and with the nearby grain and root vegetables farms the most common food types is fish soups and stews. Dried fish, salt cured fish, fish buried in the ground, cooked fish, raw fish, fermented fish; no matter where you go in Paleharbor, it smells like fish. It is home to many delicacies such as Saltjaw (Head of fish salted and dried), Rootmarsh (A sludgy vegetable and fish stew cooked until everything is dissolved and brown), Groundflop (Fish buried in the ground, left to ferment and eaten as a post dinner treat).

Paleharbor is governed by a political party with its own inner structure for how to choose a leader and ministerial positions. Elections are held every five years, with potential votes of no confidence happening 2.5 years into a party's rule. Political parties need to gain a 2/3 majority to gain the position of ruling body, and parties can form coalition governments, but only in so far as other parties can leverage voter bases off of getting important policies through if the main party wins and takes seat. Current ruling party **The Stout United Front**, an agrarian fishing party has been ruling for 9 years. Inner party turmoil has riddled the party weak as Paleharbor is going into its election cycle. Several cabinet members have exited the party after rumors of leader **Blackstorm, The Seaborn Prism** Has been caught making deals with the aristocracy for post rule luxuries.

Númer

Alderon

Alderon is the capitol of the Númarí nation. It is a web of ladders and rope bridges that leed between several cliff faces overlooking Eastern shore. Half the city is ground level while the other half is built into or protruding the cliffs. Númarí are expert hunters and tamers; one of the main food sources for Alderon is the use of tamed falcons to hunt for cliff and sea-based fowl. By the ground level part of the city are other fertile hunting grounds in the Alderion woodlands where Brown Tusked Pigs and Deer roam. During droughts Alderon and other hunting-based cities in the Numari empire have managed better than farming-based nations, especially Demure. Usually, Númarí have helped the Demure with preserved meats in return for vegetable and fruit exports during more fertile times. Númarí are excellent preservers and have large cave networks where meats are dried and aged for long periods of time.

Alderon is a Númarí city in all its essence. Due to the cliff-based nature of the city it is not an easy tourist destination, and throughout the years little to no trade routes pass the city. It is cut off from naval routes and land routes and so stands mostly self-sufficient, yet with very little political capital.

Númarí are fearsome warriors and their other mountain and cliff-based cities, especially Thelaurien, have been the target of many a Kamran attack. However, the Númarí persevere through their unique ambush fighting styles and guerrilla warfare. Considered cowardly by Kamran forces, Númarí don't care as they have been victorious in most battles.

Alderon is ruled by the great **Broken Spiral** Lineage, the only lineage of Númarí that have functioning wings (Only in so far as they can fly about as well as a chicken). However, this lineage is viewed as the sacred leader of the Númarí, chosen to lead them into flight once more. It hasn't happened yet, but I'm sure it will. It functions as a monarchy, but with an elected godking, chosen by all the great lineages. Current **Queen Eftheron of the Broken Spiral, Winged**, once a warm understanding leader, turns ever more tyrant as *the Mist* consumes her villages.

Gargosh

Kemarash

Kemarash is the capitol of Gargosh, the southern Kamran nation. It consists of a scattering of villages made up of hide and leather tents. Kamrans are mostly nomadic and thrive off hunting and fishing along with foraging. Some parts of Kemarash is stationary, like watch towers, defensive structures and mines. But most of the living population moves a lot. It is therefore hard to say how many people live in Kemarash as Kemarash's borders are loose and not well defined. There is a free flow of Kamran migration and immigration between the other Gargosh cities or settlements. The only truly stationary city of Dorr Barrok, which used to be a Númerian city which was overtaken centuries ago.

Kemarash does not have a set ruling body or government. There are traditions and rules that govern the land, and all nation-wide decisions are made bilaterally by clan leaders when such a time would arise. Tradition as rule has led Kamrans into forming a special tribunal called **blood tribunals** that specialize in making judgement about situations regarding its relation to tradition. There are records kept about past rulings, and the corpus of rulings form how traditions adapt to new environments. However, the lack of an official ruling body has made certain societal maladaptation's rampant. Even with honor and respect as a core component of traditions, there are still those who bend and step out of line, and without the checks and balances of a typical court, there really is no stopping this form happening before it becomes a large problem for the tribunal

Kemarash was the closest military outpost for the [Battle of Amitash River](#). In the aftermath of the battle, a lot of Kamrans from the more southern parts of Gargosh moved to the settlement to be closer to relatives who died in the battle. The loss was very extreme for the Kamrans who's honor and battle prowess was no match for the heavily fortified walls and the Minu's general knowledge of all things engineering.

Kemarash has large extraction pits in the desert where they extract several precious materials including coal and oil. Kamrans have no use for oil and coal themselves, and have no knowledge of how to refine and use it, and so this has become an important export which they trade for Iron and food.

Aritéan Imond

Merith Khaelen

Merith Khaelen is the capitol of Aritéan Imond or Aritéa Proper in common. It is one of the largest cities in the whole of Aritéa both in areal and in population. It is home to the **Tree of Reason**, said to contain all Aritéans reason, logic and philosophy. The tree itself is suspended on a floating island above the rock with around the cycle surveillance. It houses the **Aphallus Ermitun**, the largest and most expansive library in the world and the most decorated university, The **University of Merit**, known for producing some of the finest debaters, scholars, philosophers, arcanists and logicians of all time.

As the capitol of Aritéa Imond, it stands as both the cultural and economic hub being the number one exporter of expert researchers to other universities and laboratories. UoM has a lot of contracts with other nations universities for studies and exploration for the joint benefit of both. Except for a brief stint of aggression towards the Maldorians and a long-lasting defensive war against the Kamrans, Aritéa Imond has kept a low profile on the war front. Especially after *The Mist* the UoM has been working tirelessly with other nations to stop it.

Merith Khaelen have a dense forest of **Damson Trees**, outside their walls. These are used for both lumber and food as the Damson fruit, also known as **Dhaethon**, is used in tons of recipes or eaten on its own. Together with innovative agrarian methods for water irrigation, Aritéa Imond has a lush and diverse portfolio of greens and fruits. The diet of Aritéa Imond is rather pescetarian, as hunting is considered a lower intelligent activity, however fishing is still prevalent.

The Avenari Concord

Merith Khaelen was ruled by the cities most intelligent. A body of intellectuals known as **The Avenari Concord**. A university degree was a must. One could only make decisions on things within one's sphere of study. Every facet of life was controlled by a collection of highly educated Aritéans. Should any one of the Aritéans become a problem a vote would be held to cast the disturbance out of office. Yearly debates were held with judges, and the winner got to partake in decisions within one's field. This system treated Aritéa Imond well on a whole as monetary waste on sub optimal political choices diminished. However, due to the prolonged war with Gargosh, some atrocious decisions within food redistribution, and a shift in ideological thought the Avenari Concord was cast out.

The Aritéan People's Continuum

The current ruling body was a party of more proletarian roots. Led by some of the Avenari Concords former members, some especially aggrieved, the Continuum, through violent revolution cast out the intelligence community and tried to insert a more democratic way of ruling Aritéa Imond.

Demuri

Threadspire

Threadspire is a religious commune and the capitol of Demuri. It is in essence, as most Demure cities just a large collection of farming villages and religious web gardens. Threadspire contains the largest web gardens and the most people, and so the religious council operates from the cloisters there.

The Web Gardens are large maze-like structures of hedges, trees, flower gardens and cloisters. Wandering the garden, depending on route, you encounter cloisters in different sequences. The cloister contains several nonlinear story fragments that when read in the random sequence tell a new story each time. Through this interaction the Demure believe they are experiencing hidden messages from the Grand Narrator.

The main food source for Threadspire is vegetables, fruits and livestock. As an agrarian culture, the Demure value an equilibrium with the surrounding nature. The area in which they live are prone to droughts and so the Demure have formed a close alliance with the Númarí in which they trade their fresh produce for preserved meats. Food is a large part of Demuri culture and celebrations. They believe all food tells a story. From seed to tree to seed to tree, you can trace back the story of a

fruit to its lineage like any person or thing. These object stories are improvised by Demure around the feasting table.

The governmental structure of Demuri is a bifurcated cooperation between the religious council of Ramani Narrators and a civil council. Due to recent unrest the civil council and several Ramani Narrators have been dismantled as smaller sects of the religion has broken off into their own pseudo communes.

After a prominent Ramani priest was denied political asylum in Alderon, as the Númarí closed their borders due to The Mist, the tension between the two nations have grown into a cold stalemate of almost conflict.

Mekorokkan

Uldram Skarr

Uldram Skarr is the further most northern city in Aritéa and the Capitol of Mekorokkan. It is a place where strength and honor rules all. Juxtaposed to Gargosh, where honor overrules strength, in Mekorokkan, Strength is king. Their leader **Karrsh of the Daemon Crown, Kingkiller**, became ruler and godhead after defeating **Agrov of the Cracked Spirals, Deathbound**, in mortal combat. Under his rule Mekorokkan raid and initiate war on an almost yearly basis, especially against the northern Minu cities and Maldorian cities.

Having its base in the frigid cold, this lumber and hide based city are primarily hunters. The creatures they hunt are used as wall mounts and monuments as well as food and resources. To kill a creature of great might is not just about surviving the cold, but just as much about the honour of defeating a great foe. With Brafsk's, a large quadrupedal, amphibian and land crawler being at the top of the list. With its long prehensile tendrils, it latches onto prey from small openings in the ice and drag them into the deep dark northern waters.

The nation of Mekorokkan is not a united nation, but more like a constant tension of clans that fight, kidnap and bully each other for land and status. The only thing that manages to bring Mekorokkan clans together is the promise of great reward and honor, like constantly invading the Maldorian and Minu people. This is mostly done for smaller villages and territories, as no major cities have been breached by Mekorokkan forces, ever.

The split between Gargosh and Mekorokkan happened centuries ago, and the similarities are very much bifurcated between the Kamrans. Even with some similar cultural artefacts, the two nations function very differently and if they were to ever meet, there would not be any affection between the kin.

Magic

Magic in Aritéa is a mysterious thing. It is not fully understood, but Aritéans and Demure are, through their own methodological approaches trying to figure out how it works. Magic in Aritéa is an artform that requires a deep connection to the hidden story of the world. Every living being is born of story, of plot, of narrative, and to harness the power of that is to manipulate the world itself. To speak the story of a tree, to harness the power of the story is to make it grow, to make it move.

In practice this plays out in a philosophical and emotional way. The Demure so deeply tied to narrative and story, have a natural ability to move the world in fantastical ways. Aritéans with their superior focus on philosophical understanding also move the world in wondrous ways. In a slightly different way, but equally as moving.

Aritéa is not a world of hard-set spellcasting, with incantations and components and movements and symbols. It is a nebulous and complex system of understanding the connectedness of the world. As every actant, every molecule and every object is in some form a narrative agent. To connect and feel this web of narrative, is magic.

Certain Kamran traditions have a rather ceremonial form of magic, where they gather around a bonfire sing chant and dance while calling out to great ancestors. This, they say, gives boost in battle and prowess in hunting. Though since Kamrans and Aritéans are very much at odds, no official documentation exists.

Maldorians do not practice magic very often, it is viewed as an abnormality and a archaic. This archaic nature is an unknown variable and therefor does not fit within the doctrine of their beliefs. There are those who practice magic, especially some of the more religious fishermen, but the wild nature of magic is at odds with the core of Maldorian culture.

The Númarí do not engage much with magical abilities, though several prominent Númarí scholars have pondered the idea of using magic to relearn how to brace the sky and fly.

Aritéan Nature

Rivers

Amitash River

