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[○ A well-organized, professional army with war elephants, cavalry, and infantry, capable of defending vast borders. 7](#_o68988odb6f4)

[○ Fortified cities with strategic defenses and espionage networks. 7](#_o68988odb6f4)

[● Naval Power & Cultural Expansion : 7](#_o68988odb6f4)

[○ Instead of large-scale conquests, the empire would focus on soft power, sending traders, scholars, and artists to Southeast Asia (like the spread of Indran-Darmist culture in Cambodia and Indonesia). 7](#_o68988odb6f4)

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[○ Missionaries would spread Indian philosophy abroad. 41](#_o68988odb6f4)

[● Indran Renaissance : 41](#_o68988odb6f4)

[○ The elite class would see a revival of Indran traditions, with grand temples dedicated to Vishnu and Shiva. 41](#_o68988odb6f4)

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# 

political strength

economic prosperity

administrative efficiency

artistic, scientific, and intellectual achievements

# Government & Administration

* Centralized bureaucracy The state has a highly organized administration, with officials overseeing provinces, cities, and villages, similar
* A vast network of spies and intelligence agents ensures stability
* The empire allows local autonomy, with guilds, regional rulers, and village councils managing day-to-day affairs.
* Base taxation is light. Sumptuary taxes and trade taxes are the mainstay
  + Local taxes are collected for local governance

# Economy & Trade

* Expansive Trade Network
  + The culture engages in extensive trade with the Hellenistic world, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia, using well-maintained roads like the Grand Trunk Road.
  + State-run industries and government-controlled economy (as seen under Ashoka) would exist for key goods like iron, textiles, and spices.
* Flourishing Private Enterprise :
  + While the state might oversee some industries, private merchants and guilds would have greater freedom.
  + Gold coinage and banking systems (as in the Gupta period) would boost commerce.

# 

## Art & Architecture

* Monumental Architecture :
  + Inspired by Ashoka’s rock edicts and pillars, the culture would build **massive stone stupas, monasteries, and rock-cut caves** (like Ajanta & Ellora).
  + Use of **polished stone pillars** with inscriptions spreading ethical messages.
* Classical Temple Architecture
  + Development of Nagara-style temples with intricate sculptures and shikharas (towers).
  + Expansion of frescos, paintings, and literature, blending Darmist, Chan, and Indran themes.

# 

## Science, Mathematics, & Education

* State-Sponsored Universities
  + Large learning centers like Nalanda and Takshashila would be state-funded, welcoming scholars from across the world.
  + Focus on medicine, ethics, governance, and astronomy.
* Golden Age of Mathematics & Astronomy
  + Advancements in decimal notation, zero, algebra, and planetary calculations (building upon Aryabhata and Eyanagupta).
  + Medical texts like Sushruta Samhita would be widely practiced.

## Military & Expansion

# **Large Standing Army :**

# A **well-organized, professional army** with war elephants, cavalry, and infantry, capable of defending vast borders.

# Fortified cities with **strategic defenses** and espionage networks.

# **Naval Power & Cultural Expansion :**

# Instead of large-scale conquests, the empire would focus on **soft power**, sending **traders, scholars, and artists** to Southeast Asia (like the spread of Indran-Darmist culture in Cambodia and Indonesia).

# A strong **navy protecting trade routes** across the Indian Ocean.

### 🚢 Naval Technology of a Hybrid Maurya-Gupta Civilization

A **civilization blending Maurya and Gupta influences** would have **advanced naval technology** for both **military defense** and **maritime trade**, integrating the **Mauryan emphasis on naval strategy and administration** with the **Gupta advancements in shipbuilding and navigation**.

## 1. Ship Design & Construction

### 🛠 Materials & Shipbuilding Techniques

* **Ships built from teak and sal wood**, resistant to water damage.
* **Iron nails and copper sheathing** to reinforce hulls (influenced by Gupta metallurgical advancements).
* **Multi-decked ships** with oar and sail combinations, allowing for versatility in navigation.

### 🚤 Types of Ships

| **Type** | **Description** | **Use** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Karpat** | Large wooden cargo ships with deep hulls | **Long-distance trade** |
| **Palliyam** | Warships with reinforced hulls and archery platforms | **Naval defense** |
| **Sanghadi** | Smaller, agile boats with oars and sails | **Coastal patrol & river navigation** |
| **Hasti Nauka (Elephant Ship)** | Warship large enough to carry war elephants for amphibious attacks | **Military transport** |

**Influence of the Mauryas**: State-controlled shipbuilding yards in **port cities like Tamralipti**.  
 **Influence of the Guptas**: Private shipbuilders flourishing under a **strong trade economy**.

## 2. Navigation & Maritime Trade

### 🧭 Navigational Techniques

* **Use of the Pole Star (Dhruva Tara)** for celestial navigation.
* **Magnetized iron pieces** (early compass-like devices) to help with orientation.
* **Palm-leaf manuscripts** detailing seasonal winds and ocean currents.
* **Advanced cartography** blending Gupta mathematics with Mauryan administrative records.

### 📜 Trade Routes & Maritime Expansion

* **Indian Ocean Trade Network**: Trade with **Rome, Persia, Southeast Asia, and China**.
* **Colonization & Naval Bases** in **Sri Lanka, Sumatra, and Malacca** for resource control.
* **Naval Diplomacy**: Using **merchant fleets as diplomatic envoys**.

**Influence of the Mauryas**: Establishing a **naval bureaucracy** under an **Admiralty Department**.  
 **Influence of the Guptas**: Strong private trade fleets supported by **guilds and mercantile families**.

## 3. Military Naval Technology

### ⚔ Warships & Tactics

* **Ballista-like weapons (Dhanurgraha)** mounted on ships for long-range attacks.
* **Fire-based weaponry (Greek Fire equivalent)** using oil-soaked projectiles.
* **Ramming prows** inspired by Greco-Roman triremes for naval combat.
* **War elephant transports**, allowing amphibious invasions along enemy coasts.

**Mauryan Influence**: A **state-controlled navy** with a well-trained officer class.  
 **Gupta Influence**: **Privately funded war fleets**, supported by merchant guilds in case of conflict.

### 4. Ports, Harbors & Infrastructure

* **Massive naval ports** in **Tamralipti, Kaveripattinam, and Bharuch** with dry docks.
* **Lighthouse towers** using **oil lamps and polished bronze reflectors** for nighttime navigation.
* **Customs offices** regulating international trade with **standardized taxation on goods**.
* **Repair stations and supply depots** for warships and merchant vessels.

**Mauryan Influence**: **Government-supervised ports** ensuring efficient naval logistics.  
 **Gupta Influence**: **Privatized dockyards**, fostering innovation in shipbuilding.

## 5. Naval Legacy & Expansion

* **Would likely establish colonies** in Southeast Asia (influencing early Khmer, Srivijaya, and Chola naval traditions).
* **Would dominate Indian Ocean trade**, creating a **stable maritime economy**.
* **Might develop advanced naval warfare tactics** through interaction with Rome and China.

### Summary: What Would Their Navy Look Like?

| **Feature** | **Mauryan Influence** | **Gupta Influence** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Shipbuilding** | State-controlled shipyards | Private shipbuilding innovation |
| **Navigation** | Celestial navigation | Early magnetized navigation |
| **Military** | State navy with war elephants | Merchant-funded war fleets |
| **Trade** | Controlled by the state | Privately driven commerce |
| **Ports** | Highly regulated | Economic hubs of trade |

**Would you like a more detailed look at their naval battles or trade routes?** 🚀

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### 🏛 Bureaucracy and Political Offices in a Hybrid Maurya-Gupta Civilization

A **civilization blending the Mauryan and Gupta influences** would have a **highly structured bureaucracy** (from the **Mauryan tradition**) while allowing for **greater decentralization and regional autonomy** (like the **Guptas**). It would be a **balance between a strong central government and empowered local rulers**.

## 1. Government Structure

| **Government Type** | **Centralized Monarchy with Regional Autonomy** |
| --- | --- |
| **Head of State** | Emperor (Chakravartin) |
| **Administrative Philosophy** | Mix of **Arthashastra (Mauryan administration)** and **Gupta decentralization** |
| **Governance Style** | **Strong bureaucracy** with **village self-governance** |
| **Law Code** | Blend of **Dharmashastra (Indran law)**, **Darmist ethics**, and **Pragmatic Mauryan policies** |

**Mauryan Influence**: **Highly structured state**, inspired by Kautilya’s **Arthashastra**.  
 **Gupta Influence**: **Greater autonomy** for provinces, with **guilds and local rulers** playing a role in governance.

## 2. Key Political Offices

A **multi-tiered administrative system** would be in place, with **officials overseeing different levels of governance**.

### 🟢 Central Government (Imperial Administration)

| **Title** | **Role** |
| --- | --- |
| **Chakravartin (Emperor)** | Supreme ruler, seen as **protector of dharma and trade** |
| **Mantriparishad (Council of Ministers)** | Advisors to the emperor on military, economy, and justice |
| **Mahamatya (Prime Minister)** | Head of administration, overseeing tax collection, law enforcement, and military |
| **Samahartri (Chief Treasurer)** | Manages state finances, tax revenues, and treasury |
| **Dandanayaka (Chief Justice & Law Minister)** | Oversees law and judicial matters, blending Indran, Darmist, and Mauryan legal traditions |
| **Senapati (Commander-in-Chief)** | Head of the imperial army and navy |
| **Navadhyaksha (Admiral)** | Supervises naval defenses and maritime trade protection |

**Mauryan Influence**: A **powerful, centrally appointed bureaucracy**.  
 **Gupta Influence**: **Advisory councils** that allow more regional autonomy.

### 🟡 Provincial Administration (Regional Rulers)

| **Title** | **Role** |
| --- | --- |
| **Rajaraja (Governor/King of a Province)** | Rules semi-autonomously but **reports to the emperor** |
| **Mahapratihara (Chief Administrator of a Province)** | Provincial version of the **Mahamatya**, managing governance |
| **Rajapurusha (Imperial Overseer)** | Sent by the emperor to ensure **loyalty & tax collection** |

**Mauryan Influence**: **Imperial oversight** over provinces.  
 **Gupta Influence**: **More independence for regional kings and rulers**.

### 🟠 City and Village Administration (Local Governance)

| **Title** | **Role** |
| --- | --- |
| **Nagaradhyaksha (City Governor)** | Oversees trade, infrastructure, and law enforcement in cities |
| **Grama Mahajana (Village Council Leader)** | Leads village self-governance |
| **Shreshthi (Guild Leader)** | Represents merchants and manages **trade guilds** (Shrenis) |
| **Dharma-Adhyaksha (Religious Overseer)** | Ensures temples, monasteries, and ashrams function properly |

**Mauryan Influence**: **State-appointed city governors**.  
 **Gupta Influence**: **Guilds and village councils play a key role in governance**.

## 3. Revenue & Economic Administration

### Taxation & Treasury

| **Title** | **Role** |
| --- | --- |
| **Samharta (Revenue Minister)** | Collects taxes, oversees wealth distribution |
| **Sulkaadhyaksha (Customs Official)** | Manages **trade tariffs** and **port duties** |
| **Panyadhyaksha (Market Supervisor)** | Regulates trade markets, fair pricing, and guild activities |

**Mauryan Influence**: **State-controlled taxation and wealth regulation**.  
 **Gupta Influence**: **More economic freedom for merchants and trade guilds**.

## 4. Military Administration

| **Title** | **Role** |
| --- | --- |
| **Baladhyaksha (Army Chief)** | Manages the **standing army and regional militias** |
| **Pattadhyaksha (Elephant Commander)** | Commands the **war elephant corps** |
| **Ashvadhyaksha (Cavalry Chief)** | Manages the **cavalry divisions** |
| **Navadhyaksha (Admiral)** | In charge of **naval forces** |
| **Koshadhyaksha (War Treasurer)** | Maintains the **war budget** |

**Mauryan Influence**: **Massive standing army with war elephants and espionage**.  
 **Gupta Influence**: **More reliance on local militia and naval strength**.

## 5. Judicial & Law Enforcement

| **Title** | **Role** |
| --- | --- |
| **Dandanayaka (Chief Justice)** | Imperial judge ensuring justice based on **Dharma and state law** |
| **Dharma-Mahamatra (Religious Ethics Officer)** | Ensures laws align with Darmist, Chan, and Indran principles |
| **Chauradhyaksha (Chief of Police)** | Maintains law and order in cities |
| **Guptachara (Spymaster)** | Head of intelligence and secret police |

**Mauryan Influence**: **Strong espionage and police forces**.  
 **Gupta Influence**: **Blending of religious ethics in legal matters**.

## 6. Public Works & Infrastructure

| **Title** | **Role** |
| --- | --- |
| **Setu-Adhyaksha (Infrastructure Minister)** | Oversees construction of **roads, bridges, and irrigation** |
| **Jaladhyaksha (Waterworks Official)** | Ensures proper **water management** for cities and agriculture |
| **Tirthadhyaksha (Head of Pilgrimage Sites)** | Maintains religious pilgrimage routes |

**Mauryan Influence**: **State-run infrastructure projects**.  
 **Gupta Influence**: **More temple and cultural development**.

### Summary: What Would Their Bureaucracy Look Like?

| **Feature** | **Mauryan Influence** | **Gupta Influence** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Central Government** | Highly centralized with strict controls | Strong rulers but with advisory councils |
| **Provincial Rule** | Governors under strict imperial supervision | Semi-autonomous regional kings |
| **Local Government** | State-appointed officials | Strong village councils & trade guilds |
| **Taxation** | Direct taxation by the state | More mercantile freedom |
| **Military** | Large standing army, spies | More local militias & naval strength |
| **Law & Justice** | Strict policing & intelligence | Dharma-based legal codes |

### 🚀 Final Thoughts

A **Maurya-Gupta hybrid** would have a **powerful central government** but allow **local rulers and guilds more control**. It would maintain **Mauryan efficiency** while adopting **Gupta flexibility**, ensuring **economic prosperity, religious harmony, and military strength**.

Would you like a deeper dive into **their intelligence network, taxation policies, or legal system?** 🏛🚀

4o

### ⚖ Laws and Punishments in a Hybrid Maurya-Gupta Civilization

A **civilization blending Mauryan and Gupta influences** would have a **structured legal system**, combining:  
 The **strict, centralized legal framework of the Mauryas** (inspired by **Kautilya’s Arthashastra**)  
 The **Dharma-based, decentralized justice of the Guptas** (influenced by **Dharmashastras and Darmist ethics**)

This system would focus on **law, justice, rehabilitation, and state control**, while also incorporating **mercy and social responsibility**.

## 1. Legal Philosophy & Sources of Law

| **Source** | **Influence** |
| --- | --- |
| **Arthashastra (Mauryan Law Book)** | Strict, pragmatic, and focused on state security |
| **Dharmashastra (Indran Law Texts like Manusmriti)** | Religious and social ethics-based laws |
| **Darmist & Chan Ethics** | Compassion, non-violence (Ahimsa), and fair judgment |
| **Customary Laws** | Village councils (Panchayats) handling minor disputes |

**Mauryan Influence**: Strong **state-controlled law enforcement & espionage** **Gupta Influence**: Emphasis on **religious ethics & self-governance**

## 2. Typical Laws

A combination of **state authority (Mauryan) and moral-ethical guidance (Gupta)** would shape the laws.

### 🟢 Criminal Law

| **Crime** | **Punishment** | **Notes** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Murder** | Execution (for intentional killing), or exile | Some cases allowed atonement through charity |
| **Theft** | Whipping for small theft, hand amputation for repeat offenders | Influenced by **Arthashastra’s strict property laws** |
| **Assault** | Fines or labor service | Lesser injuries led to fines, serious ones to corporal punishment |
| **Treason/Rebellion** | Execution, forced labor, or exile | Mauryan spies actively suppressed dissent |
| **Bribery & Corruption** | Heavy fines, removal from office | Officials caught in bribery were **heavily punished** |

**Mauryan Influence**: **Strict surveillance and punishments for treason and corruption** **Gupta Influence**: **More fines & rehabilitation than extreme punishments**

### 🟡 Social & Family Law

| **Issue** | **Law** | **Notes** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Marriage** | Polygamy allowed for kings, monogamy encouraged | Influenced by **Dharmashastra** |
| **Divorce** | Allowed in cases of abuse, infertility, or abandonment | Women had some rights under **Gupta reforms** |
| **Adultery** | Fines or temporary exile for men, social penalties for women | More severe under Mauryan rule |
| **Dowry Disputes** | Strict regulations to prevent abuse | Dowries were **not mandatory**, unlike later periods |

**Mauryan Influence**: Strong **state control over marriage contracts** **Gupta Influence**: Greater **women’s rights in divorce & property ownership**

### 🔵 Economic & Trade Laws

| **Offense** | **Punishment** | **Notes** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Fraud in Trade** | Fines and public shaming | **Guilds (Shrenis) enforced fair business practices** |
| **Debts & Bankruptcy** | Repayment via labor or property confiscation | Debtors could work off loans instead of prison |
| **Coin Forgery** | Death or lifelong exile | Money supply was strictly protected |
| **Illegal Tax Avoidance** | Double tax fines or confiscation | Tax evasion was **severely punished** |

**Mauryan Influence**: Strong state regulation of **trade & taxation** **Gupta Influence**: **More reliance on merchant guilds to enforce fairness**

### 🟠 Religious & Ethical Laws

| **Violation** | **Punishment** | **Notes** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Religious Blasphemy** | No official punishment but social exile possible | **State was officially religiously tolerant** |
| **Temple Theft** | Whipping or exile | Religious property was heavily protected |
| **Mistreatment of Monks/Brahmins** | Fines or labor penalties | Reflecting **Darmist and Indran respect for ascetics** |

**Mauryan Influence**: **State promotion of religious tolerance (Ashoka’s Edicts)** **Gupta Influence**: **Support for Brahmins and temple institutions**

## 3. Punishments & Their Implementation

Punishments in this civilization would **balance strict Mauryan penalties with Gupta-era ethical and rehabilitation-based justice**.

### 🛡 Types of Punishments

| **Punishment** | **Applied For** | **Notes** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Fines** | Most economic crimes & social offenses | Common under Gupta influence |
| **Whipping (Lashes)** | Theft, assault | Used for **repeat offenders** |
| **Public Shaming** | Fraud, small-scale corruption | Included **wearing shameful markings** |
| **Forced Labor** | Debts, minor criminal acts | Allowed criminals to **work off penalties** |
| **Exile** | Political dissent, non-violent treason | Used when execution was too extreme |
| **Imprisonment** | Severe crimes like organized crime | Jails existed but were **not overused** |
| **Execution (Beheading, Elephant Crushing)** | Murder, treason, major corruption | **Mauryan-style justice** applied to serious offenses |

**Mauryan Influence**: **Severe punishments for treason, espionage, and major crimes** **Gupta Influence**: **More emphasis on fines, rehabilitation, and social justice**

## 4. Law Enforcement & Judicial System

### 🕵 Surveillance & Police

* **Mauryan-style spies (Guptacharas)** used for intelligence gathering and law enforcement.
* **City patrol forces (Dandapala)** for maintaining order.
* **Guilds (Shrenis) enforced trade laws independently**.

### ⚖ Judicial Process

| **Court Type** | **Jurisdiction** | **Officials** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Imperial Court** | Treason, serious crimes | **Chief Justice (Dandanayaka)** |
| **Provincial Court** | Land disputes, trade cases | **Governor & legal advisors** |
| **Village Panchayat** | Minor disputes | **Elders & community leaders** |
| **Religious Courts** | Monastic issues, temple matters | **Brahmins, Darmist monks** |

**Mauryan Influence**: **State control over judiciary & secret police presence** **Gupta Influence**: **Village councils & merchant guilds handling local disputes**

### Summary: What Would Law & Order Look Like?

| **Aspect** | **Mauryan Influence** | **Gupta Influence** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Legal Philosophy** | Pragmatic, state-first laws | Dharma-based justice, community self-rule |
| **Punishments** | Harsh penalties for treason, corruption | More fines, social shaming for smaller crimes |
| **Law Enforcement** | Extensive spy networks, strong policing | Guilds & councils enforcing local laws |
| **Judicial Process** | Centralized imperial courts | Village councils & advisory courts |

This legal system would create a **strong, stable, and ethical society** where **crime is controlled, trade is fair, and justice blends state authority with local autonomy**.

Would you like more details on **specific punishments, legal trials, or espionage?** ⚖🚀

# 

## Cultural Identity

* This civilization is:
  + Politically highly organized
  + A center of learning, where scholars, monks, and artisans thrive.
  + A powerful economic hub, with both state control and private entrepreneurship.
  + Religiously pluralistic empire where Indran, Darmist, and Chan traditions flourish side by side.
  + A military and trade powerhouse, influencing regions far beyond its borders.

# Overview

# 

Cultures are comprised of people

* Who share common ground of some sort and are born of a shared set of conversations
* Who share common rituals
* Who adhere to specific goals which require the setting aside of differences
  + And demand of each member personal initiatives that create value in order for all members to benefit by their exchange of individual effort and to survive, propagate, and grow beyond the lifetimes of the current members

Subcultures - Share all the basic tenets of their main culture, but which share common ground of some sort that is not universal to the main culture. Results in a NARROWER common ground the group shares, making membership in a subculture more exclusive but also more restrictive than membership in a culture.

Countercultures (rather than a rabble)

* Contain each characteristic of a culture in a fully formed fashion.
* Provide a complete philosophy of their own , not simply state we are against the main culture.
* Provide creative, not destructive, goals for its members (creative != positive)
* Propagate by recruiting membership from those dissatisfied with the main culture who want to create something different and, in their eyes, better

# 

# 

# Environment/Setting

The physical environment (climate, landscape, resources, esoterica) shapes cultural practices, such as food, clothing, and housing

## General Climate Patterns

* Cooler Temperatures: 5–10°F (3–6°C) colder than today, with less extreme heat in summers and mild but longer winters with

Higher Precipitation: More frequent rainfall and seasonal moisture, leading to lusher landscapes.

## Regional Climate Differences in Kalifane

### East Kalifane (Near-modern Forests, Wetter & Cooler)

* **Dense oak, pine, and spruce forests** covered much of East Kalifane, similar to modern Appalachia.
* **Cooler and wetter** with frequent **rainfall**.
* **Megafauna like mastodons, giant ground sloths, and saber-toothed cats thrived in these woodlands**.

### Central Kalifane (Cool Grasslands & Savannas)

* **Vast prairies with fewer trees**, resembling modern-day **Great Plains** but cooler.
* Home to **herds of Columbian mammoths, ancient bison, and dire wolves**.
* **More seasonal rainfall** supported rich grasslands, similar to modern African savannas.

### West Kalifane (Semi-Arid, Cooler Desert)

* The **Chihuahuan Desert** did not exist yet—this area was **grassier and more temperate**.
* **Seasonal rivers and lakes** were more common due to **greater precipitation**.
* **Short-faced bears, camels, and saber-toothed cats roamed the region**.

### Coastal Kalifane (Larger Shoreline, Cooler Gulf)

* The **Gulf is much lower** due to sea levels dropping **150 meters**
* More **wetlands and estuaries**, supporting **migratory birds, giant beavers, and mega alligators**.

## Weather Patterns

* Stronger Winds: Due to glacial air masses,Kalifane experiences more frequent windstorms and dust transport, shaping landscapes like the Llano Estacado.
* More Rain & Flooding: While drier than the eastern lands., Kalifane received more rain than today, supporting larger rivers and lakes.
* Seasonal Snow in Northern Kalifane: Snow was possible in winter in North and West Kalifane, but not permanent ice.
* Less Drought: Unlike today, mega-droughts are rare due to cooler temperatures preventing rapid evaporation.

## Summary: Kalifane Today

| Feature | Ice Age Texas |
| --- | --- |
| Temperature | 5–10°F colder, no extreme heat |
| Rainfall | More rainfall, fewer droughts |
| Vegetation | Dense forests in the east, grasslands in the west |
| Wildlife | Mammoths, saber-toothed cats, giant sloths |
| Coastline | Gulf shoreline 100+ miles farther out |

## Natural Resources

* ?

## 

## Flora

* Eastern Forest Species: bald cypress, chinkapin oak, and redbud,
* Western Species: paper shell pinon pine, bigtooth maple, and madrone,
* Boreal Forest Species: spruce
* Aspen: Small populations of trembling aspen (quaking aspen) persist in the high peaks of the Guadalupe Mountains, Chisos Mountains, and Davis Mountains, surviving the harsh conditions.
* Juniper and Piñon: These species likely dominated the higher elevations and protected habitats of the Edwards Plateau.
* Other Possible Species: American smoke tree, Mock orange, Bigtooth maple, basswood, and Northern spicebush
* Wild plants of note?
  + Food?
  + Medicine or Poison?
  + Clothing, dyes, ornaments ?
  + Esoterica?
* Wild trees of note?
  + Food?
  + Medicine or Poison?
  + Clothing, dyes, ornaments ?
  + Esoterica?
* Domesticated plants of use?
  + Food?
  + Medicine or Poison?
  + Clothing, dyes, ornaments ?
  + Esoterica?
* Domesticated trees of use?
  + Food?
  + Medicine or Poison?
  + Clothing, dyes, ornaments ?
  + Esoterica?

## Fauna

* + Megabeavers
  + Giant Short-Faced Bear

## Giant Short-Faced Bear in North American during Ice Age

* + - * 4.5 Meters vertical reach
      * Can reach speeds topping 40 miles per hour
  + Saber-Toothed Tiger and Scimitar Cat
    - 600 lbs

## 3D rendering of a saber-tooth tiger

* + Dire Wolf

## An illustration of the dire wolf from the Late Pleistocene of North America.

* + Mastadon
    - ****
    - 4 M tall at the shoulders and weighing six to eight tons, a using its colossal, 5m curved tusks to dig underground
  + Giant Ground Sloths

## An illustration of the extinct giant ground sloth Megalonyx making his way through an Ice Age Ohio forest.

* + - bear-sized herbivores 4m on their hind legs and weigh up to 3,000 pounds.
  + Camelops
    - This two-toed, furry camel stood 2.5m at its shoulders, weighed 1,800 pounds and had no hump at all.
  + Giant Beaver
    - 2.5m long, > 250 pounds and its two front teeth (incisors) were 25cm long
  + American Zebra
    - 2m at shoulder
  + Mega Bison
* Domesticated Fauna of note?
  + Food?
  + Medicine or Poison?
  + Clothing, dyes, ornaments ?
  + Esoterica?
  + Hauling ?
  + Other?

## Esoterica

* Spirit winds
* Mana follows water , with Magical seeps
* How will these features affect travel time, communication, etc.?
* ?

## Other Polities

* What are the surrounding polities
  + Thenea
  + ValTier
  + Tarmane (Chihauhan desert)

# General Cultural Character

These are the cultural elements that cut across most communities within the culture

## Cosmology

Underlying everything is a diverse and pluralistic religious landscape where order is valued

## History

Basic questions and background. Secondary setting for a culture. All human cultures possess some earlier developments in their culture. Some side influences have helped to mold a culture into its condition, so it has its own set of past values, beliefs and activities.

* Where did it begin?
* What directions did it spread?
* How far back are there records or tales of historical events?
* How widely known are these stories?
* Do average people believe old tales, or do they dismiss some that have a basis in fact (e.g., Troy)?
* Historical interactions with
  + Esoterica ?
  + Non-human races?
  + Deities?
* Settlements
* Significant Conflicts ?[[1]](#footnote-0)
  + Significant victories or Defeats?
* Significant changes of
  + Rulers and/or forms of government
  + Invasions
  + Power structures
  + Movements of peoples, or dramatic mass migrations?
  + Borders
  + Rivalries
  + Alliances
  + Technology
  + Population
  + Memes
* Disasters ( plague, fire, disease, famine, pestilence, etc.)
* ✓✓Impacted by
  + Geography
  + Climate
  + Natural Resources
  + Esoterics

## 

## 

## Deities

* Are there actual gods/godlike beings?
* If so, do they take an active role in
  + The temples, churches, and religions that worship them, or the lives of everyday people?
    - Why or why not?
* How many gods are there, and is there a hierarchy among them?
* Do the gods care how people behave?
  + Why or why not?
  + Why are the gods interested in people?
* Are they like the Greek pantheon (quarrelsome, larger-than-life humans), or are they transcendent and incomprehensible?
* Do the gods have limits to what they can do?
  + on what they will do?
* If they intervene, what makes it possible ? likely?
* Can the gods make mistakes?

## 

# Religion

## Overview

* **Religious Pluralism:** Indranism, Dharmism, and Chanism would **coexist** peacefully, supported by both the state and religious institutions.
* **State Patronage:** The ruling class would fund **Darmist monasteries, Indran temples, and Chan centers**, ensuring **philosophical and artistic growth** in all traditions.
* **Intellectual Integration:** Religious thought would be influenced by the **Gupta era’s Indran philosophical advancements** while maintaining **Mauryan-era Darmist ethics** in governance.

## Indranism: The Cultural and Philosophical Backbone

* **Vedic Traditions**
* **Bhakti (Devotional Worship)** with **temples dedicated to Vishnu, Shiva, and Devi** becoming centers of learning and community life.

**Key Religious Sites:** Grand **Indran temples** in major cities, alongside **ashrams** where scholars study texts like the **Upanishads and Puranas**.

## Dharmism: Ethical Governance and Monastic Learning

* **Mahayana Dharmism** would dominate in urban centers, emphasizing **bodhisattva ideals, compassionate leadership, and large monastic universities (e.g., Nalanda)**.
* **Theravāda Dharmism** might continue in southern regions, focusing on **monastic discipline and meditation**.
* **Royal Edicts** : The empire might follow Ashoka’s model by inscribing **ethical messages** promoting **non-violence, compassion, and tolerance** on stone pillars across the kingdom.
* **Darmist Monasteries** would be heavily funded, leading to **intellectual exchanges with China and Southeast Asia**.

**Key Religious Sites:** **Stupas, rock-cut monasteries (like Ajanta and Ellora), and thriving monastic universities** attracting foreign scholars.

## Chanism: A Quiet yet Influential Minority

* **Chan merchants and scholars** would play a significant role in trade and finance, as seen in both the Mauryan and Gupta periods.
* **Chan ascetics** would focus on **ahimsa (non-violence), renunciation, and meditation**, influencing governance policies, especially in **urban economic hubs**.
* **Chan art and literature** would flourish alongside Darmist and Indran texts.

**Key Religious Sites:** **Chan caves and temples**, particularly in trade centers and pilgrimage towns.

Religious Coexistence and Syncretism

* **Temples with Shared Worship**: Some religious sites might be **shared by Indrans, Darmists, and Chans**, featuring **artistic blends** (e.g., Indran deities appearing in Darmist iconography, Chan tirthankaras depicted alongside Indran gods).
* **Philosophical Cross-Pollination**: Darmist and Indran scholars would **debate in royal courts and monastic centers**, influencing each other’s metaphysics and logic.
* **Foreign Influence**:
  + **Zoroastrianism** from Persia might have small communities.
  + **Greek and Central Asian religious elements** could influence **iconography and temple design**.

**Key Feature:** **A highly philosophical society where debates on dharma, karma, and moksha shape culture and politics.**

### What Would Religious Life Look Like?

1. **The King as a Dharma Ruler**: Like Ashoka and the Gupta emperors, the ruler would be a **patron of all religions**, upholding **Darmist ethics in governance** while **promoting Indran temple culture**.
2. **Festivals and Rituals**:
   * **Indran festivals like Diwali and Holi** would be state-endorsed.
   * **Darmist Vesak (celebrating Darma’s birth, enlightenment, and death)** would also be a major holiday.
   * **Chan Paryushana** would be observed in urban centers.
3. **Education in Religious Institutions**: Scholars would study in **Indran gurukuls, Darmist viharas, and Chan pathshalas**, contributing to a **rich intellectual tradition**.
4. **International Influence**: The empire would send **monks, traders, and diplomats to China, Southeast Asia, and Central Asia**, spreading **Indian religious ideas abroad**.

### Summary: A Harmonious Religious Civilization

* **Indranism as the cultural and intellectual base**, enriched by **Darmist and Chan ethical values**.
* **Philosophy, logic, and spirituality thrive**, leading to a **golden age of intellectual exchange**.
* **Religious tolerance as state policy**, ensuring a **peaceful and prosperous society**.

Would you like a deeper look at **religious art, texts, or daily life** in this hybrid culture? 🚀

### 

### Chan Worship and Guidance in a Hybrid Maurya-Gupta Civilization

**Chanism** flourishes alongside **Indranism and Dharmism**, supported by the **Kalifane policy of religious tolerance** and the **Gupta tradition of philosophical scholarship**.

* The **Kalifane Empire (especially under Chandragupta Maurya and Ashoka’s grandfather Bindusara)** had deep **Chan influences**, promoting **monasticism and ahimsa (non-violence)**.
* Kalifaneencouraged **intellectual expansion of Chan thought**, including **mathematics, logic, and temple architecture**.

This means **Chan worship and guidance** in this civilization would be **structured around non-violence, asceticism, temple rituals, and scholarly discourse**.

## Chan Worship Practices

Chan worship in this hybrid civilization would **blend early monastic simplicity with temple-based devotion .**

### 🛕 Temple Worship & Rituals

* **Temple construction flourishes** under Kalifane patronage, leading to **ornate Chan temples** with **intricate carvings of Tirthankaras**.
* **Idol worship (Murti Puja) becomes common**, influenced by the rise of temple culture in the Gupta era.
* **Main deities (Tirthankaras) worshipped**:
  + **Mahavira (24th Tirthankara)** – Most venerated figure.
  + **Parshvanatha (23rd Tirthankara)** – Popular among lay Chans.
  + **Rishabhanatha (1st Tirthankara)** – Associated with early civilization.

**Offerings:**

* **Fruits, rice, and sandalwood paste** (no meat or harm-causing substances).
* **Incense and lamps**, representing enlightenment.
* **Recitation of mantras** like the **Navkar Mantra (Namokar Mantra)**.

Simplicity, **focus on meditation over rituals**.  
**Temple-building, artistic depictions of Chan Tirthankaras**.

### Monastic Traditions & Ascetic Worship

* **Digambara monks (Sky-clad)** – Follow **strict nudity and complete renunciation**, emphasizing **Chandragupta Maurya’s monastic ideals**.
* **Shvetambara monks (White-clad)** – Wear **simple white robes**, allowing for **some possessions**.
* **Sallekhana (Fasting to Death)** – A highly respected practice for renouncing the world.
* **Daily worship includes:**
  + **Pratikramana (ritual introspection)** every evening.
  + **Swadhyaya (self-study of scriptures).**
  + **Ahimsa vows reaffirmed through meditation.**

**Mauryan Influence:** **Strong state support for monastic life**.  
 **Gupta Influence:** **Greater scholarly engagement in Chan universities**.

## 2. Chan Guidance & Ethical Principles

Chan life is **guided by strict ethical codes**, with a structured **path to liberation (Moksha)** through **right conduct, right knowledge, and right faith (Ratnatraya).**

### 🕊 Five Main Vows (Mahavratas)

| **Vow** | **Description** | **Influence** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Ahimsa (Non-violence)** | No harm to any living being (even insects). | Strongest Chan principle, **also influenced Ashoka’s policies**. |
| **Satya (Truthfulness)** | Never lie or deceive. | Practiced by Chan merchants in **Gupta trade networks**. |
| **Asteya (Non-stealing)** | Do not take what is not given. | Encouraged **honest business practices**. |
| **Eyanacharya (Celibacy/Chastity)** | Strict for monks, moderation for householders. | Linked to Chan monks' extreme renunciation. |
| **Aparigraha (Non-attachment)** | Avoid material possessions and wealth. | Reflected in **Mauryan-era monasticism**. |

**Mauryan Influence:** Chan monks **influencing royal courts** (Chandragupta Maurya himself became a Chan monk).  
 **Gupta Influence:** Chan principles **spreading through trade guilds (Shrenis), influencing economic policies**.

### 📜 Chan Texts & Scholarly Guidance

Chan scholars would be **highly respected in this civilization**, with **centers of learning** rivaling Darmist and Indran institutions.

* **Siddhanta (Chan scriptures) preserved and expanded** during the Gupta era.
* **Chan mathematics and logic (Nyaya-Vaisheshika school) flourish**, influencing Gupta-era scholars.
* **Tattvartha Sutra (Philosophical Text)** becomes widely studied.

**Mauryan Influence:** Chan monks as **royal advisors**.  
 **Gupta Influence:** **Chan universities** (like Nalanda’s Chan faculty).

## 3. Chan Social Life & Festivals

### 🛍 Role in Economy & Society

* **Chan merchants (Shreshthis)** become **influential trade leaders**, ensuring **ethical business** in **Gupta trade guilds**.
* **Ahimsa influences trade**, with Chans **avoiding occupations that harm life (e.g., butchery, warfare)**.
* **Temples become community centers**, with Chans funding **hospitals, waterworks, and shelters**.

**Mauryan Influence:** Chans **avoiding war and animal sacrifice**.  
 **Gupta Influence:** Chanism **flourishing through merchant networks**.

### 🎉 Major Chan Festivals

| **Festival** | **Meaning** | **How It's Celebrated** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Paryushana** | Most important Chan festival | **8-10 days of fasting, prayers, confession of sins** |
| **Mahavir Jayanti** | Birth of Mahavira | **Temple processions, charity work** |
| **Diwali (Chan Version)** | Marks Mahavira’s Nirvana | **Lighting of lamps, fasting, reciting scriptures** |
| **Kartiki Purnima** | Pilgrimage festival | **Chans visit sacred sites** |

**Mauryan Influence:** **Fasting and renunciation practices**.  
 **Gupta Influence:** **Integration of Chan festivals into larger cultural celebrations**.

### 🛕 Sacred Chan Pilgrimage Sites

* **Shravanabelagola (Chandragupta Maurya’s site of Sallekhana fasting).**
* **Mount Abu (Dilwara Temples built with Gupta influence).**
* **Palitana Temples (Chan city of temples).**

**Mauryan Influence:** **Chan ascetic sites & forest retreats**.  
 **Gupta Influence:** **Grand temple complexes with exquisite carvings**.

## Summary: What Would Chan Worship & Guidance Look Like?

| **Aspect** | **Mauryan Influence** | **Gupta Influence** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Temple Worship** | Simple meditation, no idols | Grand temples with idols & rituals |
| **Monasticism** | Renunciation, nudity, Sallekhana fasting | Chan monks involved in scholarship |
| **Ethical Code** | Strict vows, non-violence | Integration with trade and governance |
| **Law & Influence** | Chan monks advising rulers | Chan scholars shaping philosophy |
| **Festivals & Society** | Fasting, self-discipline | Public processions, cultural influence |

### 🚀 Final Thoughts

This **Maurya-Gupta hybrid civilization** would see Chanism thrive **both as a monastic discipline and a community-driven movement**. Chan merchants, scholars, and monks would **shape trade, ethics, and law**, ensuring **non-violence, prosperity, and spiritual enlightenment**.

Would you like more details on **Chan architecture, laws, or famous Chan scholars of this period?** 🚀

###### **ChatGPT said:**

### 🛕 Indran Worship & Guidance in a Hybrid Maurya-Gupta Civilization

A **civilization blending the Mauryan and Gupta influences** would create a **rich and diverse Indran religious system**, combining:  
 The **pragmatic, dharma-driven state policies of the Mauryas** (which promoted religious tolerance and simple Vedic practices).  
 The **temple-centered Bhakti and Smarta traditions of the Guptas**, which flourished with artistic, philosophical, and devotional movements.

This means **Indran worship and guidance** in this civilization would be **a balance of temple rituals, philosophical discourse, and personal devotion (Bhakti), while also being deeply intertwined with governance and society**.

## 1. Indran Worship Practices

Indranism in this hybrid civilization would evolve into **three main forms of worship**:

### 🛕 Temple Worship & Rituals

* **Elaborate stone temples** emerge as major centers of worship, with **large idol sanctuaries (Garbhagriha)**.
* **Key deities worshipped**:
  + **Vishnu (Preserver) – Central in royal patronage.**
  + **Shiva (Destroyer & Ascetic) – Popular among warriors and mystics.**
  + **Durga/Kali (Divine Feminine) – Worshipped for protection and power.**
  + **Surya (Sun God) – Linked to kingship.**
* **Temple Priests (Pujaris)** conduct **daily worship (Puja)** with offerings of flowers, incense, and food.

**Mauryan Influence**: Simple **fire rituals (Yajnas) and Vedic chanting**.  
 **Gupta Influence**: Rise of **grand temple rituals, Bhakti hymns, and deity iconography**.

### 🕉 Personal Devotion (Bhakti Worship)

* **Direct devotion (Bhakti) to deities becomes widespread**, allowing **personal connection with gods**.
* Worshippers **recite hymns (Stotras), meditate, and practice Japa (chanting mantras)**.
* **Sacred rivers (Ganga, Yamuna) and pilgrimage sites** become central to worship.

**Mauryan Influence**: **Dharma-based duties** over personal devotion.  
 **Gupta Influence**: **Bhakti movement** with devotional poetry and saint traditions.

### 🔥 Vedic Fire Rituals (Yajnas)

* **Vedic Yajnas (fire sacrifices) continue in royal and Brahmin rituals**, ensuring cosmic balance.
* **Kings perform Ashvamedha Yajna (horse sacrifice)** to assert power.
* Brahmins chant **Vedic hymns (Rigveda, Yajurveda)** in sacred ceremonies.

**Mauryan Influence**: State-sponsored **public Yajnas**.  
 **Gupta Influence**: **Smaller household fire rituals**, with temples overtaking Yajna’s role.

## 2. Indran Guidance & Ethical Principles

Indranism would continue to be guided by **Dharma (moral duty), Karma (cause-effect), and Moksha (liberation)**. The **legal and philosophical foundation** would come from:

### 📜 Sacred Texts

| **Text** | **Purpose** |
| --- | --- |
| **Vedas (Rig, Yajur, Sama, Atharva)** | Spiritual hymns & rituals |
| **Upanishads** | Mystical & philosophical teachings |
| **Mahabharata & Ramayana** | Stories of Dharma, heroism, and devotion |
| **Dharmashastras (like Manusmriti)** | Legal & social order |
| **Puranas** | Myths, deities, and Bhakti narratives |

**Mauryan Influence**: Focus on **state-backed legal Dharma (Arthashastra, Manusmriti)**.  
 **Gupta Influence**: Rise of **Puranic storytelling & devotional narratives**.

### ⚖ Core Ethical Teachings

| **Principle** | **Meaning** |
| --- | --- |
| **Dharma** | One’s duty based on caste (Varna) & stage of life (Ashrama) |
| **Karma** | Every action has consequences |
| **Ahimsa (Non-violence)** | Non-harm, influencing Darmist & Chan thought |
| **Rita (Cosmic Order)** | Maintaining universal balance |
| **Purusharthas (Four Life Goals)** | **Dharma** (duty), **Artha** (wealth), **Kama** (pleasure), **Moksha** (liberation) |

**Mauryan Influence**: Dharma as **practical state law**.  
 **Gupta Influence**: Dharma as **personal spiritual growth**.

## 3. Indran Social Life & Festivals

Indran life in this civilization would be filled with **festivals, caste-based duties, and community worship**.

### 🏡 Role of Castes (Varna System)

| **Varna** | **Duties in Society** |
| --- | --- |
| **Brahmins (Priests & Scholars)** | Perform rituals, study scriptures |
| **Kshatriyas (Warriors & Kings)** | Protect the kingdom, rule justly |
| **Vaishyas (Merchants & Traders)** | Manage trade, agriculture |
| **Shudras (Laborers & Servants)** | Work in service and crafts |

**Mauryan Influence**: **State-appointed Brahmin advisors** & strong legal caste structure.  
 **Gupta Influence**: **More flexibility in caste roles, Bhakti devotion open to all**.

### 🎉 Major Indran Festivals

| **Festival** | **Meaning** | **Celebrations** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Diwali** | Victory of good over evil | Fire lamps, prayers to Lakshmi |
| **Holi** | Celebration of colors & spring | Throwing colors, feasting |
| **Navaratri/Durga Puja** | Worship of Devi (Durga) | Fasting, night dances |
| **Rath Yatra** | Chariot festival of Vishnu/Krishna | Procession of temple chariots |
| **Maha Shivaratri** | Worship of Shiva | Night-long meditation, fasting |

**Mauryan Influence**: **State-endorsed Yajna ceremonies**.  
 **Gupta Influence**: **Rise of temple-based festivals & mass public celebrations**.

## Sacred Indran Sites

* **Varanasi (Kashi Vishwanath Temple) – Holy city of Shiva.**
* **UjChan (Mahakaleshwar Temple) – Major Shaivite pilgrimage.**
* **Ayodhya (Birthplace of Rama).**
* **Mathura (Krishna’s birthplace).**

## What Does Indran Worship & Guidance Look Like?

| **Aspect** | **Mauryan Influence** | **Gupta Influence** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Temple Worship** | Simple fire rituals (Yajnas) | Grand temples, idol worship |
| **Bhakti & Devotion** | Dharma-centered duties | Rise of personal Bhakti devotion |
| **Philosophy & Texts** | Vedic hymns, Upanishads | Puranic myths, Bhagavad Gita teachings |
| **Caste & Social Order** | Strong legal caste roles | More Bhakti openness across castes |
| **Festivals** | State-sponsored Yajnas | Public temple celebrations & chariot festivals |
| **Pilgrimage Sites** | Monastic education centers | Devotional mass pilgrimages |

This Indran tradition would be a **blend of structured Vedic rituals, temple-based Bhakti practices, and philosophical discourse**, making it a **powerful religious and social force in the civilization**.

### A Indran Pantheon Based on Ice Age Megafauna of North America

**Indran philosophical and cosmic principles** (Dharma, Karma, Bhakti, Moksha).  
 **Spiritual embodiment of powerful animals**, revered as divine beings.  
 **Sacred stories and myths** revolving around these beings shaping the world, maintaining balance, and guiding worshippers.

This would create **a pantheon where each god is linked to a megafaunal species**, embodying their traits—**strength, wisdom, endurance, destruction, and renewal**.

## The Indran Pantheon

| **Indran Deity Role** | **New Ice Age Equivalent** | **Megafauna Inspiration** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Vishnu (Preserver & Cosmic Order)** | **Matohari, the Eternal Mammoth** | **Woolly Mammoth** |
| **Shiva (Destroyer & Transformer)** | **K’óyate, the Saber-toothed One** | **Saber-toothed Cat** |
| **Eyana (Creator & Cosmic Mind)** | **Eyanun, the Great Sloth** | **Giant Ground Sloth** |
| **Durga (Warrior Goddess, Protector)** | **Ashaakari, the Great Bison Mother** | **Ancient Bison** |
| **Kali (Goddess of Time & Destruction)** | **Ankyu, the Dire Huntress** | **Dire Wolf** |
| **Ganesha (Remover of Obstacles, Wisdom)** | **Tonkawa, the Mastodon Sage** | **American Mastodon** |
| **Surya (Sun God)** | **Hinono, the Radiant Stag** | **Elk-Moose** |
| **Varuna (God of Oceans & Cosmic Law)** | **Ohanzee, the Ice Leviathan** | **Short-faced Bear** |
| **Indra (Storm & Warrior King of Gods)** | **Kuktusha, the Thunder-Hoofed** | **Horse** |

## Deity Descriptions & Worship Traditions

### Vishnu → Matohari, the Eternal Mammoth (Woolly Mammoth)

* Role: Preserver of cosmic order, ensuring the great cycle of existence.
* Symbolism: Mammoths were ancient, powerful, and enduring, moving through frozen landscapes like Vishnu navigating the cosmic ocean.
* Worship: Temples carved with massive ivory tusks; Priests wear mammoth-hide robes.
* Incarnation Myths:
  + Tundra-Boar Avatar: Rescues lost tribes from a frozen storm.
  + White-Tusked Mammoth Avatar: Stops the glacial apocalypse.

### Shiva → K’óyate, the Saber-toothed One (Smilodon fatalis)

* Role: Lord of destruction, meditation, and rebirth.
* Symbolism: The Smilodon’s fangs are like Shiva’s trident, striking down falsehood.
* Worship: Ritual dances imitating saber-toothed strikes; ascetics paint faces with claw-like marks.
* Sacred Sites: Tar pits seen as gateways to Shiva’s meditative void.

### Eyana → Eyanun, the Great Sloth (Megatherium)

* Role: The Creator God, shaping the earth with massive claws.
* Symbolism: Slow, wise, and immensely powerful—like Eyana’s infinite mind.
* Worship: Scholars meditate in caves, believing the Great Sloth’s movements created mountains and rivers.
* Myth: Eyanun carved the world’s first rivers with his claws.

### Durga → Ashaakari, the Great Bison Mother (Bison antiquus)

* Role: Fierce warrior goddess, guardian of herds and protectress of the righteous.
* Symbolism: The ancient bison’s strength and maternal leadership mirror Durga’s fierce but protective nature.
* Worship: Warrior initiations involve bison-hide armor and offering sacred grass.
* Myth: Ashaakari once defended the tundra from dire wolves, summoning warrior spirits to her aid.

### Kali → Ankyu, the Dire Huntress (Dire Wolf)

* Role: Goddess of time, destruction, and the wild hunt.
* Symbolism: The relentless dire wolf represents time’s unstoppable march.
* Worship: Priests dance in wolf masks under the full moon, celebrating the cyclical destruction of time.
* Myth: Ankyu hunts the weak and corrupt, ensuring renewal.

### Genasha → Tonkawa, the Mastodon Sage (Mammut americanum)

* Role: God of wisdom, knowledge, and overcoming obstacles.
* Symbolism: The mastodon’s intelligence and strength represent Ganesha’s wisdom and endurance.
* Worship: Writers and traders carve mastodon tusks with prayers for guidance.
* Myth: Tonkawa once lifted an entire glacial river, clearing the path for lost wanderers.

### Surya → Hinono, the Radiant Stag (Elk-Moose)

* Role: God of the sun and enlightenment.
* Symbolism: The huge antlers resemble a radiant crown, representing Surya’s sun-disc.
* Worship: Sun-worshippers wear golden stag horns and bathe in sacred light.
* Myth: Hinono’s antlers burn with sunlight, driving away the darkness of ignorance.

### Varuna → Ohanzee, the Ice Leviathan (Short-Faced Bear)

* Role: Lord of oceans, justice, and the sky.
* Symbolism: The short-faced bear is both a land and sea predator, embodying Varuna’s dual domain.
* Worship: Judges and kings make offerings at glacial lakes, praying for just rulership.
* Myth: Ohanzee created the first frozen seas by roaring into the void.

### Indra → Kuktusha, the Thunder-Hoofed (Ancient Horse)

* Role: Warrior god of thunder, storms, and battle.
* Symbolism: The ancient horse’s speed and power reflect Indra’s storm-riding chariot.
* Worship: Warriors paint lightning bolts on their arms before battle.
* Myth: Kuktusha’s hooves shake the heavens, causing storms and thunder.

## Indranism in Civilization

* Temples resemble Ice Age caves, carved into glacial cliffs.
* Priests and shamans wear furs, ivory beads, and animal bone crowns.
* Sacred animals are never hunted, except in ritualistic ceremonies with deep prayers.
* Fire altars burn whale oil and mammoth fat, representing divine light in the frozen world.
* Religious Tolerance :  
  + Following Ashoka’s policies, the empire would promote Dharmism, Chanism, and Indranism equally, supporting monastic institutions and temples.
  + Missionaries would spread Indian philosophy abroad.
* Indran Renaissance :  
  + The elite class would see a revival of Indran traditions, with grand temples dedicated to Vishnu and Shiva.
  + Sanskrit literature and philosophy (like Kalidasa’s works and advancements in Vedanta) would flourish alongside Darmist and Chan scholarship.

# 

### Core

* What role does religion play in
  + Deities lives?
  + People’s social lives?
  + People’s everyday lives?
    - In moral/ethical decision making ?
  + How do people decide
    - Whom to worship?
    - Where to worship?
  + Politics and Governance
    - Is there a state church?
  + Is there freedom of religion ?
* How do the various temples and philosophies explain the classic “problem of evil”?
* Do they think bad things are always a just punishment for some transgression, a character-building exercise, the result of an evil antagonist (Satan, Loki) or just something the gods can’t prevent?
* What are the beliefs of the society concerning life and death
* What are the beliefs of the society concerning good and evil and what was considered good and evil
* What are the static forces in action around the ... ?
* What are the dynamic forces in action around the ... ?

### Clergy/Priests/Priestesses…

* Are priests and philosophers full-time workers, or do they need day jobs?
* If they are full-time, who supports them — the congregation, a wealthy patron, the temple’s investment fund, the god they serve?
* ✓✓Impacted by
  + Class System ?
  + Education ?
  + Family Dynamics ?
  + Gender Roles ?

### Rituals

* Where do they worship?
* Are there any sacrifices?
* What are their various rites like, and why?
* What offerings are considered good, better, best?
* ✓✓Impacted by
  + Geography, Climate, Natural Resources, Esoterica ?

## 

## Language

The primary means of communication, including spoken and written languages, dialects, and non-verbal cues (gestures, body language, etc.). Language often reflects cultural priorities.

In overview

* How many languages are there?
* How many dialects?
* Which is likely to be most widely spoken?
* What is the relationship between languages ?
  + Which languages borrow words or phrases from other languages?
* Is there a “trade language” that facilitates commerce between countries that don’t speak the same tongue?
* Is there a “universal language” spoken by educated or noble persons, as Latin was in the Middle Ages?
* Is there a common second language many people know?
* For each language
  + How common is it?
  + What dialects are there ?,
  + Is the language recorded?, if so, how?
* Is the society literate or illiterate?,
* Are some or all people bilingual?
* What areas do local slang phrases come out of?
* What kinds of colorful turns of phrase do people use?
* What things in this culture would their language have many specific words for ?
* What do the people in this culture consider important enough to name?
* What does this say about the way they look at the world?
* What things would the people of this culture not have a name for, or have one word that covers numerous variations?
* What do they consider too unimportant to name?
* Are there words that must never be spoken except at particular times, in ceremonies, or under particular circumstances?
* Are there words that must not be spoken in polite company?
* Do these words differ from culture to culture or race to race?
* What will people swear a binding oath by?
* What do people use as curse words?

## 

## Calendar

While a calendar can be considered as a cultural artifact its creation usually predates written history and for the most part can be considered a driver of a culture rather than being driven by it..

* Is there a single, generally accepted calendar (including time measurements), or do different countries, peoples, and communities have different ones?
* How is the day divided into smaller time units?
* What are they (Hour of the Lark, Sunrise Bell, Nones, etc.)?
* Are the names relevant to anything?
* Is the length of an hour fixed, or does it vary depending on changes in the length of the day as the seasons change?
* What are the names of months, and how many days in each?
* How many days in a week?
* Months in a year?
* Are there leap years?
  + If so, who keeps track?
* Which days are general holidays or festival times?
* Are there any that are only celebrated in particular countries, cities, or regions?
* What event(s) do people use to date years?
* Do they use a single event (the creation of the world, the end of the Great War, the invention of atomic power, etc.) or are events dated based on recurring things (the 12th year of Tiberius’ reign, the 301st year of the Han Dynasty)?
* How do people tell what time it is?
* Are there clocks, watches, sundials, etc., or do people have to just
* listen for bells from the castle or church, or just eyeball the sun?
* Are there any days that are considered “outside the year,” like Mardi Gras or the Feast of Fools?
* How are these days customarily observed?
* How did they originate?

## 

## Ethics, morals, and mores

Mores are the established customs and norms considered morally acceptable within a society, essentially representing the societal foundation of ethics and morals; meaning your personal morals are shaped by the mores of your culture

Ethics are a system of moral principles applied within a specific context like a profession or community, May form an exception to the Mores of the culture

Morals are an individual's personal beliefs about right and wrong

### Mores

At the cultural level

* What Material is valued/not valued and why is it valued/not valued?
* What Land is valued/not valued and why is it valued/not valued
* What Skills are valued/not valued and why is it valued/not valued
* What ways of being are valued/not valued and why is it valued/not valued?
  + Integrity? Looking Good? Stoicism? Honesty? Lying?
* What Education are valued/not valued and why is it valued/not valued
* What actions/ways of being are considered normal and acceptable in this society?
* What actions/ways of being are considered shocking in this society?
  + What would be the reaction of an ordinary person who sees someone doing one of these things?
* Honesty
  + What are the acceptable limits to honor and/or honesty in this society?
  + Are “white lies” acceptable socially, or is lying in any form considered beyond the pall?
* Theft
  + Is thievery an accepted, if disreputable, occupation, or is it a crime?
  + What constitutes “theft” and what can be stolen — gems, gold, someone’s good name or reputation?
  + Are thieves independent criminals, members of an illegal guild, business people licensed by law, or what?
* Integrity
  + Is a binding oath unbreakable no matter what, or can you get out of it if the other party turns out to be evil scum or if you weren’t fully informed?
  + What is considered the right thing to do if two oaths come into conflict — do you have to decide as best you can, hold to the oath to the most/least powerful person, commit suicide?
* Boundaries
  + What are the controversial subjects?
  + What things can you start a friendly argument about in any bar?
  + What things will automatically start an unfriendly argument?
  + What are the social taboos — what things are “not done,” like wearing a bathing suit to the office?
  + What things are not talked about?
    - What would happen if someone did?
  + What are the biggest social faux pas — burping loudly, drawing steel in the presence of a queen/noble, asking a dwarf whether it’s male or female?
  + What subjects or actions cause embarrassment or discomfort?
* Social mores for
  + Courtship ?
  + Wedding ?
  + Bedding ?
  + Birthing ?
  + Sex ?
  + Work ?
* Obligations
* Who are the arbiters of mores (as opposed to law)?
  + How did they get to be arbiters?
* ✓✓Impacted by
  + Beliefs
  + Deities
  + Religion
* Who are the social arbiters?
  + Ditto, ditto.
* Moral interactions with
  + Beliefs
  + Deities
  + Religion
* Ethics interactions with
  + Beliefs
  + Deities
  + Religion
* Who are the persons or groups to which one automatically has a duty simply by being born — one’s family, one’s town/city, one’s country, one’s ruler/president, the gods?
* What is the hierarchy of duty among them — is it considered more noble to follow your mother’s teaching or to follow your emperor’s orders?
* What are the standards of beauty for people?
* Paintings and sculpture?
* Clothes and furniture?
* How do they differ from the standards in your culture (example: a country which considers fatness a highly desirable beauty trait)?
* How do standards of beauty reflect the physical traits of the various races (examples: dwarves might consider excessive height unattractive; werewolves might be attracted by long teeth or a particular scent)?
* What is the ideal life that people aspire to?
* Do people mostly want to retire to a little house in the country, buy the most “toys,” serve in the army/navy?
* What kinds of people are the rebels and outcasts of this society?
* How does society deal with them?
* What actions or ideas will get you made an official outcast/exile?
* What happens to people who don’t fit the accepted social order — do they have their own sections of town, or are they invisible (“in the closet”), or do they get kicked out of the country altogether?
* What are the static forces in action around the ... ?
* What are the dynamic forces in action around the ... ?

## Social Structure and Social Behaviors

Class system: Are there distinct social tiers, and how is mobility between them?

Family dynamics: How are families structured, and what are the roles of different family members?

Gender roles: What are the expected behaviors and power dynamics between genders?

### Class System

* What classes exist?,
* How is the hierarchy of classes organized?
* Upon what is the stratification of the classes based?
* What are the roles of the men, women, and children?
* What is the family structure?
* What social problems exist?
* Who cares for and provides education to the children?
* Is there prejudice, persecution, etc.?
* If so, what groups are involved?
* How are the children socialized?
* Who provides care for the infirmed?
* Who cares for the elderly?

### General Traditions and Rituals

* What are the common holidays?

### General Childbirth Traditions, Rituals, Expectations

* Traditions
  + What preparations for the birth do the parents make before birth?
  + Are there any taboos that must be avoided?
  + Are there any foods that must be eaten, or clothes that must be worn, or colors that must be avoided.
  + What restrictions are put on the mother during her pregnancy?
  + What restrictions are put on the father during her pregnancy?
  + Is the birth surrounded by fear or by joy?
  + Are evil spirits considered present, so that they must be warded off?
  + Are good spirits lured in?
  + Is the process moved from the realm of the natural into the realm of the medical, with families held apart from the woman in labor, and the entire endeavor treated as a disease, or a problem that must be fixed?
  + Is the new child welcomed or dreaded?
  + During childbirth, do families gather while the woman is celebrated and cheered, or is she hustled away to a dark tent somewhere, looked at as filthy, and treated as if she were in need of cleansing?
  + Under what circumstances will the newborn be welcomed?
  + Under what circumstances will the newborn be welcomed: Does gender matter?
  + Under what circumstances will the newborn be welcomed: Does health matter?
  + Under what circumstances will the newborn be welcomed: Does parentage matter, or the social status of the family, or the marital status of the parents?
  + How is the newborn welcomed?
  + Does the culture in some way test its newborns for their ability to survive (as the Romans did with some newborns and exposure)?
  + Are there circumstances in which a newborn might be marked for death, as were firstborns offered as sacrifices in some cultures?
  + Will some babies be killed before or after birth because of issues like gender, known or suspected deformity, questions about paternity, or something else
* Rituals
  + Does the family have community obligations to fulfill before, during, or after the birth of the child? If yes, describe them.
  + Does the family have religious obligations to fulfill before, during, or after the birth of the child? If yes, describe them.
  + Does the family have government obligations to fulfill before, during, or after the birth of the child. If yes, describe them.
* Expectations
  + What expectations does a family have regarding the birth of the child? That it will be male? That it will be Female? That it will be Healthy? Have a specific birthmark? Fill a specific role in society when it grows up?
  + Does the time or date of birth figure into these expectations? .

While in general a live birth and a healthy mother will be considered successful, and a dead mother or child will be considered a failure, there might be circumstances where this will not be true.

* If there are, what are the circumstances?

The culture might have other criteria that determine the success or failure of the birth, from the gender of the child to whether the child was a lucky or unlucky number (the lucky first kid, the unlucky fourth), to whether the child had a specific birthmark, or was born at a specific date or hour, or whether the child did something at birth that was considered good or bad.

* What sort of other criteria does the culture use to determine the success or failure of the birth?

## 

### General Childhood Traditions, Rituals, Expectations

* Traditions
  + Before they can walk and talk, how are children treated and tended, and by whom?
  + Once they are able to walk and talk, how does this change?
  + Once they can reason (about age six), how does this change?
  + At what age are they considered useful?
  + How are these stages of their lives marked off?
  + Do they have special clothes that they wear?
  + Do they have hairstyles that mark their status?
* Rituals
  + Does the culture celebrate rituals that mark the passing stages of childhood?
    - If so, what are the stages, and what are the rituals
* Expectations
  + What expectations do parents have of a child at each stage of childhood?
  + How do these expectations vary from child to child in a family?
  + Do boys have different roles than girls?
  + Are expectations different for the firstborn than the lastborn? (For example, the firstborn is expected to take over the family farm, the lastborn is expected to stay home,never marry, and take care of the parents as they grow old.)
  + How are expectations different across social strata?
  + How do the occupations of the parents affect expectations on the children? .
* Value of Education
  + How is the education of the young carried out in your culture?
  + By apprenticeships?
  + By learning at home?
  + By fostering out?
  + By mentoring with masters? By sitting in a classroom reading textbooks?
  + What sorts of careers are possible in your culture, and how do children prepare to achieve them?
    - Are they chosen by status?
    - By ability?
    - By competition?
    - By lottery?
    - By gender?
    - By race?
    - By oracle from the time of birth?
  + Aside from innate intelligence, are there barriers that prevent a child of your culture from obtaining the education another child could have?
    - Slavery or caste status?
    - Poverty?
    - Illegitimate birth, ill-favored birth, bad birthmark, ugliness, race, gender, or something else?
* Why
  + So. How does your culture answer the question “Why?”
  + How does it treat those who persistently dare to ask “Why?”
* Success or Failure
  + The perfect child of your culture will do.... What?
    - Will be.... What?
    - Will achieve what by the end of the age that your culture defines as the end of childhood?
  + The failed child of your culture will do.... What?
    - Will be.... What?
    - Will achieve what by the end of the age that your culture defines as the end of childhood?

### General Young Adult Traditions, Rituals, Expectations

* Traditions
  + How does your culture determine who is and who is not a young adult?
  + What part do the actions of the would-be adult play in becoming a young adult?
  + Is adulthood seen as an achievement, or do people glorify the more helpless state of childhood as some sort of ideal lost Eden?
  + What privileges does the young adult earn by making this passage?
  + What privileges are withheld for a later level of achievement, or later status? (If any)
  + How are these later increases in achievement given?
* Rituals
  + What family rituals mark the entrance of the child into young adulthood?
  + The choosing of a spouse?
  + Sending off to a craft master for additional education?
  + The deeding of a piece of land?
  + The building of an independent home?
  + The gift of money, or a set of tools?
  + What community rituals mark the entrance of the child into young adulthood?
  + Hazing?
  + A huge party?
  + A gathering in which young adults are presented to society as available for matrimony?
  + What religious rituals mark the entrance of the child into young adulthood?
  + A coming of age ceremony?
  + The assumption of a role in the religion, either as an acolyte or a full member?
  + The taking of vows to the religion?
  + What government rituals mark the entrance of the child into young adulthood?
  + Swearing fealty to a king or lord?
  + Entrance into military service?
  + The duty of taxes?
  + The requirement of a gift to the leader?
  + Right to vote, own property, become self-determining?
* Expectations
  + Is the young adult a fully functioning member of society, or is he still considered untried?
  + How does gender, race, or social status change the expectations with which the culture views the new young adult?
* Expectations of Work
  + What work is open to the young adult that is not open to full adults or children?
  + What work is closed to the young adult that is available to children or full adults?
  + How does the young adult in your culture regard future career improvements?
  + Is it possible to change jobs?
  + Is it possible to choose different work?
  + Is it possible to pursue dreams?
* Expectations of Sex
  + How will the young adults of your culture find a mate?
  + Will he or she seek one out, or will the culture provide approved methods of presenting acceptable candidates?
  + Does your young adult have any choice in the selection process?
  + Is the creation of a family an immediate requirement of the young adult, or is a period of singleness (with or without possible experimentation) permissible, or expected?
  + If singleness is permissible or accepted, what expressions of sexuality are permitted within your culture?
  + What happens to those young adults who stray outside of the permissible?
  + Punishment, shunning, banishment, execution?
* Conformism and Rebellion
  + How does your culture view the rebellion of the young adult?
  + How does it treat the rebellious young adult?
  + How does the young adult who wants to rebel do so and still survive the experience?
* Success or Failure
  + The perfect young adult male in your culture will ....?
  + The perfect young adult female in your culture will ....?
  + The failed young adult male in your culture will....?
  + The failed young adult female in your culture will ....?

### General Adulthood Traditions, Rituals, Expectations

* Traditions
  + How does your culture determine who is and who is not a full adult?
  + Are there tests?
  + Rituals?
  + Mandatory forms of government or religious service?
  + Gender barriers?
  + Race barriers?
  + Caste barriers?
  + What part do the actions of the young adult play in giving him access to full adulthood?
  + Is full adulthood seen as an achievement, or is it something people just age into?
  + How does your culture view full adulthood?
  + What privileges does the adult earn by achieving this passage?
  + Are there multiple layers of full adulthood?
  + What privileges are withheld for a later level of achievement, or later status? (If any)
  + How are these later increases in achievement given?
* Rituals
  + What family rituals mark the entrance of young adulthood into full adulthood?
  + The successful birth of a first child?
  + The opening of a personal business, studio, or craft?
  + A place of prestige in the family hierarchy?
  + What community rituals mark the entrance of the young adult into full adulthood?
  + Admission into a secret society?
  + A place of prestige in a community group?
  + The newly minted full adult taking on apprentices?
  + What religious rituals mark the entrance of the young adult into full adulthood?
  + The assumption of a role in the religion, either as an elder or a full member?
  + A ceremony?
  + The assumption of a leadership role that will see the new leader teaching, or in other ways presenting the religion to others?
  + What government rituals mark the entrance of the young adult into full adulthood?
  + Recognition by a king or lord?
  + Completion of military service, or a raise in rank or status?
  + The right to collect taxes?
  + Ability to become a leader?
  + Right to bestow property, or bestow rank or privilege on others?
* Expectations of Work
  + Is the full adult expected to innovate, to teach his craft, to explore new ideas?
  + Conversely, is his role to prevent innovation, to guard tradition, to maintain an unbroken line from past history to the future?
  + How does gender, race, or social status change the expectations with which the culture views the full adult and his work?
  + What work is open to the full adult that is not open to young adults or children?
  + What work is closed to the full adult that is available to children or young adults?
  + How does the full adult in your culture regard future career advancements?
  + Is it possible to change jobs?
  + Is it possible to choose different work?
  + Is it possible to pursue dreams?
* Expectations of Sex
  + How will the full adult of your culture find or keep a mate?
  + How will he or she replace an unsatisfactory mate?
  + How will he deal with a mate lost to desertion or death?
  + How will he deal with sexuality if single?
  + Does the culture press the full adult to continue adding to family, to expand numbers of wives or concubines, to support the households of his young adult children and their families?
  + Must the full adult gather dowries?
  + Is the full adult permitted sexual experimentation of any sort, or is that something that must be put aside?
  + What happens to those adults who stray outside of the permissible modes of sexual expression?
  + Punishment, shunning, banishment, execution?
* Conformism and Rebellion
  + How does your culture view the rebellion of the full adult?
  + How does it treat the rebellious full adult?
  + How does the full adult who wants to rebel do so and still survive the experience?
* Success or Failure
  + The perfect full adult male in your culture will ....?
  + The perfect full adult female in your culture will ....?
  + The failed full adult male in your culture will....?
  + The failed full adult female in your culture will ....?

### General Old Age Traditions, Rituals, Expectations

* Traditions
  + How does your culture determine who is and who is not an elder?
  + What part do the actions of the full adult play in moving him into the category of elder?
  + Is old age seen as an achievement, or is it something people just age into? Do people attempt to fend it off? How does your culture view old age?
  + What privileges does the elder earn by achieving this passage? Are there multiple layers of old age?
  + What privileges or later status are withheld for elders, if any?
  + How are these later increases in achievement given?
* Rituals
  + What family rituals mark the entrance of full adulthood into old age?
  + The successful birth of a first grandchild?
  + The wedding of the last child?
  + The giving of a place of honor in the family hierarchy?
  + Leaving work to retire?
  + What community rituals mark the entrance of the full adult into old age?
  + A place of leadership in a secret society?
  + A place of prestige in a community group?
  + A master- raftsman status that brings other masters to study with the elder?
  + What religious rituals mark the entrance of the full adult into old age?
    - The assumption of a role in the religion, or the handing off of responsibilities to someone younger?
    - A ceremony?
    - Becoming overseer of the new leaders who teach the religion?
    - What government rituals mark the entrance of the full adult into old age?
    - Recognition by a king or lord?
    - Retirement from military service with or without pension?
    - Release from the payment of taxes?
    - Ability to become a leader?
    - Right to bestow property, or bestow rank or privilege on others?
* Expectations of Work
  + Is the elder expected to teach his craft or transmit the culture’s heritage, mores, and conventions?
  + Is the elder expected to explore spirituality, to transmit or create laws or other forms of guidance for those coming behind?
  + Is the elder expected to find lessons from his long life and turn them into something useful for younger generations?
  + How does gender, race, or social status change the expectations with which the culture views the elder and his work?
  + What work is open to the elderly that is not open to others?
  + What work is closed to the elder that is available to others?
  + How do the elders in your culture regard future career advancements, or career continuance?
  + Does the elder look forward to a future in which he is secure, or into an abyss of gradual poverty and darkness?
  + Is he/she permitted control of his own destiny?
* Expectations of Sex
  + How will the elders of your culture deal with a mate lost to desertion or death?
  + How will he or she replace a lost mate?
  + How will he deal with sexuality if single?
  + Does the culture press the elder to maintain and support numbers of wives or concubines, and assist in the upkeep of households of his adult children and their families?
  + What are the responsibilities of the elder to his progeny?
  + Is the elder permitted sexual experimentation of any sort, or is that something that must be put aside?
  + What happens to those elders who stray outside of the permissible modes of sexual expression? Punishment, shunning, banishment, execution?
* Conformism and Rebellion
  + How does your culture view the rebellion of the elderly?
  + How does it treat the rebellious elder?
  + How does the elder who wants to rebel do so and still survive the experience?
* The Cost of Aging
  + Does your culture fight to prolong life?
  + In which cases?
  + What place has it made for dying elders?
  + How do families care for dying elders?
  + How does the community care for them?
  + How does religion care for them?
  + How does the government care for them?
  + What respect does the culture show dying Elders?
* Success or Failure
  + The perfect elderly male in your culture will ....?
  + The perfect elderly female in your culture will ....?
  + The failed elderly male in your culture will....?
  + The failed elderly female in your culture will ....?

## 

### General Death Traditions, Rituals, Expectations

* Traditions
  + How does the culture treat the death of one of its members? Does it treat the death differently by age, by status, by gender, by singleness, or if the dead were paired, or familied?
  + Does it treat the death differently when it occurs by different means–suicide or murder,disease or illness, when caused by congenital problems, accident or old age?
  + How does the family deal with the death of a member, and those bereaved?
  + How does the community deal with death and those bereaved?
  + How does religion deal with death and those bereaved?
  + How does the government deal with death and those bereaved?
* Rituals
  + What rituals do the family and/or friends perform or require for the dead?
  + What rituals does the community perform or require for the dead or from the bereaved?
  + What rituals does religion perform or require for the dead or from the bereaved?
  + What rituals does the government perform or require for the dead or from the bereaved?
* Expectations
  + How does the culture as a whole view the future of the dead person?
  + How does that future vary related to the life the person lived?
  + How does that future vary related to the person’s status, or gender, or age at death, or religious or government affiliation?
* Success or Failure
  + So with that in mind, how does your culture define a success in death?
  + How does it define a failure in death?
  + What variables in religion, age, status, gender and so on will change whether the deceased dies a success or a failure?

## 

# Government, Leadership, Power Structures

In this civilization shaped by Indran philosophy and megafauna worship, power is rooted in divine right, natural law, and wisdom, blending the structured state bureaucracy with the decentralized, guild-driven governance. Power is drawn from three main sources:

1. Divine Mandate – Rulers are believed to be chosen by Matohari, the Eternal Mammoth (Vishnu) or other sacred beasts.
2. Wisdom & Tradition – Leaders must prove themselves through rituals, trials, and council approval.
3. Natural Order (Rta & Dharma) – Society follows a rigid but flexible caste system, with power shared between rulers, warrior-priests, and merchant guilds.

## Who Are the Rulers?

* The realm is ruled by a Chakravartin ("Universal Monarch"), believed to be chosen by the sacred mammoth god and blessed with divine right.
* Twin Moieties (Dual Governance):
  + The Great Tusks (Warrior-Kings & Strategists) – Secular rulers overseeing war, justice, and governance.
  + The Whispering Sages (Priest-Kings & Mystics) – Spiritual leaders guiding dharma, rituals, and divine law.

## How Are Rulers Chosen?

* The next ruler is determined by divine omens, sacred trials, and council consensus.
* Potential heirs undergo three tests:
  1. Trial of Strength (Ashaakari’s Rite) – A symbolic battle or hunt proving their physical and martial ability.
  2. Trial of Wisdom (Tonkawa’s Challenge) – A debate with sages on governance, ethics, and history.
  3. Trial of Endurance (Ankyu’s Ordeal) – A pilgrimage into the frozen wilds, returning with a sacred relic.

This system prevents unworthy rulers from taking power and ensures a balance between strength, wisdom, and divine favor.

## How Is Power Passed On?

* If a ruler proves unfit or dies, the Council of Elders & Guildmasters selects from eligible heirs.
* Two main paths of succession:
  1. Hereditary Succession (Warrior-Kings, The Great Tusks) – Direct heirs take over unless proven unfit.
  2. Spiritual Succession (Priest-Kings, The Whispering Sages) – The next leader is determined by divine signs and wisdom trials.

The system blends bloodline inheritance with meritocratic spiritual leadership.

## Who Holds the Most Political Power?

| Group |  |
| --- | --- |
| The Great Tusks (Warrior-Kings, Military Elite) |  |
| The Whispering Sages (Priest-Kings, Oracle Council) | Interpret omens, lead rituals, and declare divine will. |
| The Shreshthi (Merchant Guild Leaders) | Control trade, taxation, and economic policy. |
| The Frostborn Sentinels (Royal Guard & Intelligence Network) | Protect the realm and the ruler from threats. |
| The Mammoth Clan (Ancient Families of Power) | Hold ancestral claims to leadership and land. |

✅ The most powerful factions are the warrior-priest rulers and merchant guilds.

| Role & Power |
| --- |
| Control armies, strategy, and external policy. |

## 🔹 5. What Style of Rule Do They Follow?

* **Semi-Theocratic Monarchy**: A **dual rule** system where **warrior-kings** manage the physical realm and **priest-kings** interpret divine will.
* **Council Governance**: Decision-making is guided by **a grand council of generals, sages, and guildmasters**.
* **Legal Code (The Laws of Ice & Fire)**: Justice is based on **Dharma (moral law), Guild Agreements (trade laws), and Ancestral Trials (bloodline rights).**

✅ **Combines Mauryan imperial structure, Gupta decentralization, and shamanic traditions.**

## 🔹 6. Who Takes Over If the Ruler Is Incapacitated?

* **If a ruler dies or is unfit**, the **Council of Elders** selects a **Regent from the priestly order** until a successor is determined.
* If the heir is a **minor**, the **High Sage of the Mammoth Temple** serves as the protector until they come of age.
* If no heir exists, a **ritualistic council vote** determines the next ruler.

✅ **No power vacuum exists, as governance is split between the military and priesthood.**

## 🔹 7. Who Gives Orders & How Are They Picked?

* **War & Defense:** Commanders are chosen based on **battle skill & lineage**, with **Kuktusha’s Warriors (Elite Horse Lords)** leading cavalry.
* **Trade & Economy:** Merchant lords (Shreshthis) form powerful **guild alliances** to manage wealth.
* **Spiritual Law:** High Sages of the **Frozen Sanctum** interpret divine will through astrology and animal behavior.
* **Justice & Diplomacy:** **Royal Judges (Dandanayakas)** oversee legal cases and treaties.

✅ **Each sector of governance is led by its most skilled and time-honored representatives.**

## 🔹 8. Who Protects the Ruler?

* **The Frostborn Sentinels (Royal Guard & Spies)** – An **elite force of shadowy warriors** who operate in secrecy, trained in detecting assassins, poisons, and magic threats.
* **The Stonefang Knights (Titanic Dire-Wolf Riders)** – Noble warriors riding **giant Ice Age wolves**, serving as the ruler’s personal enforcers.
* **The Oracles of the Whispering Tundra** – Priestesses who interpret omens and **ward off spiritual threats** through magic.

✅ **This civilization takes security seriously, blending military, intelligence, and mystical safeguards.**

## 🔹 9. What Defenses Exist Against Assassins & Magical Attacks?

| **Threat** | **Safeguard** |
| --- | --- |
| **Physical Assassination** | **Bodyguards (Stonefang Knights, Frostborn Sentinels)** always present. |
| **Poisoning** | **Royal Tasters & Alchemists** test all food and drinks. |
| **Magic Attacks** | **Anti-magic priestesses chant warding spells at all times.** |
| **Coup Attempts** | **A secret intelligence network** monitors nobles and military leaders. |

✅ **Multiple layers of protection exist, from martial defense to spiritual magic countermeasures.**

## 🔹 10. What Role Do Magic & Magic Users Play in Power?

* **Magic is sacred but regulated** – only **priest-kings, oracle-seers, and mystic warriors** are allowed to practice divine arts.
* **Forbidden Sorcery (Blood Magic & Soul Manipulation)** is outlawed and punished by **exile or execution**.
* **Magic is used in governance** for:
  + **Divination** – Predicting future threats.
  + **Healing** – Prolonging the ruler’s life.
  + **War Magic** – Enhancing weapons and defense.

✅ **Magic users are highly respected but closely monitored by the ruling elite.**

### 🔥 FINAL SUMMARY: POWER STRUCTURE

| **Aspect** | **How It Works** |
| --- | --- |
| **Source of Power** | Divine Mandate (Sacred Beasts), Military Strength, Trade & Wealth. |
| **Rulers** | Dual Rule – **Warrior-Kings (Great Tusks) & Priest-Kings (Whispering Sages).** |
| **Succession** | By **trial, omens, and council selection**. |
| **Main Power Groups** | **Ruling elite, warrior orders, priesthood, and merchant guilds**. |
| **Safeguards** | **Magic, elite guards, tasters, and spies**. |
| **Role of Magic** | **Essential but strictly controlled**. |

Would you like **more detail on trials, assassination attempts, or internal power struggles?** 🏛🔥🐘🚀

4o

### Power and Authority

* What are the rules?
* Who made the rules?
* How does society get its rules?
* What is the source of power?
* What groups have the most political power?

### Sources of Power

* What are the sources of power?

### Governance

What is the basic style of government: feudal, aristocratic, oligarchy, absolute ruler, democracy, what?

#### Executive Power

* Who or what is the recognized head of your government?
* Is the executive office a figurehead office, or one with real power?
* How are the rulers chosen?
* Who will take over running the government if the current head of state is incapacitated?
* How is this determined?
* Is there an heir apparent (either actual or political)?
* What happens if the heir is a minor?
* How does your leader delegate power?
* To whom does your leader willingly listen and from whom does he willingly take advice? Why?
* To whom does your leader unwillingly listen, and from whom does he unwillingly take advice? Why?
* How deep does the power of your head of government go?
* Is he responsible for the gathering and ordering of armies?
* The making of laws?
* The dispensing of justice to individuals?
* How is power passed on to the next leaders?
* If your leader is a figurehead, who holds the real power?
  + How did that person or group get real power?
  + How does he or the group hold it?
* Interactions with Esoterica?
  + Are Esoterics barred from certain kinds of government jobs or offices?
  + Do some government jobs require that their holder be an Esoteric?
* Who provides support services for the head of state?
  + What are they called: King’s Counselors, Cabinet Ministers, Secretary of State, Good Ol’ Girls?
* Is the relative power of a country or ruler usually measured by the size of its army, the number and ability of its wizards, or the amount of money/trade flowing through it?

#### Citizenship

* Who is considered a citizen, with the rights and privileges thereof?
* What are those rights and privileges (voting, protection from thieves, the right to a hearing in Rome) and what responsibilities go along with them (jury duty, providing funds or knights for the lord’s army?
* Are there certain classes of people (wizards, foreigners, children, peasants, women) who have fewer legal rights or less recourse than full citizens?
* Why?
* Are they considered mentally or morally deficient, a danger to the state, or is there some other rationale?
* What are the easiest/most common ways to advance in status — amass more money, marry well, get the ruler’s eye, etc.?
* How much resistance is there to someone advancing in social status?

#### Legal System

* Who makes the laws in your culture?
* How did this person or group get the job?
* How do they deal with old laws?
* Do they have a guiding principle around which they must form their laws (a constitution, a religious book, a historic epic poem, a collection of antiquated laws)?
* Are there areas or subjects about which they may not make laws (religion, sex, pregnancy and childbirth, composition of additives to coffee, availability of booze)?
* Are the laws required to represent everyone, or do separate laws apply to separate people?
* Who is responsible for coinage: the ruler, local barons, someone else (merchant guilds)?
* Are there generally acceptable standards?
* How easy/common is counterfeiting?
* How has the presence of Esoterioca affected law and government?
* How has the presence of Esoterica and Esoterics affected law and government?
* Are Esoterics barred from certain kinds of government jobs or offices (judge, jury, police)?
* Do some government jobs require that their holder be an Esoterics?
* What are considered normal and legal ways of gathering evidence and determining guilt?
* Is torture allowed?
* Are arbitrary judgments by the lord or landowner allowed, or is there an independent standard of justice?
* What personal weapons are available to anyone who can afford them?
* Are some considered “for nobles only” either by custom or by law?
* Are there laws forbidding certain classes from being armed at all?
* Are there laws requiring certain classes to learn particular weapon skills, as England for some centuries required yeomen to be proficient with the longbow?
* Is forensic esoterica possible?
* Commonly used?
* Used only for certain types of crimes (and if so, what)?
* Are the results of forensic spells admissible in court as evidence?
* Is it something any esoteric can do, or do you have to specialize?
* Are certain esoteric actions (as opposed to generally) illegal?
* Why — because of the effect of the esoteric actions, or because of the ingredients or procedures needed to cast it, or what?
* If so, how would a criminal esoteric be detected? Apprehended? Punished?
* Is catching and punishing illegal esoterics the responsibility of the esoteric’s guild, or do the ordinary courts have to handle it?
* Are there separate civil and criminal courts?
* Human and non-human courts?
* Is there a separate court or procedure for esoteric crimes?
* What is different about each type of court?
* Are judges or other court officials required/forbidden to know esoterica ?
* Is evidence obtained by esoterica acceptable in court?
* Is evidence obtained by esoterica considered more reliable or less reliable than physical evidence or eyewitness accounts?
* What things are considered truly serious crimes and why?
  + Murder ?
  + Rape ?
  + Suicide ?
  + Assault?
* What are the normal punishments for serious vs. minor crimes?
* Are there prisons, or are people punished and released?
* Are there degrees of punishment — branding vs. cutting off ears vs. cutting off a hand vs. decapitation — or do they just hang everybody?
* Who is responsible for catching criminals?
* Who pays the crook-catchers — the ruler, the city government, a consortium of merchants, somebody else?
* How are they organized — into independent police precincts, or into overlapping districts, or just according to whoever wants to hire them?
* Are they full-time, part-time, or volunteers?
* Private or public?
* What sort of facilities do they have?
* What arms are they allowed to carry?
* Are there lawyers or advocates?
* Who can afford them?
* Who trains/certifies them?
* Are people guilty until proven innocent, innocent until proven guilty, or does it depend on the mood the lord is in when they bring the case before him?
* Are there judges other than the ruler, lord, or landowner?
* If so, how are they chosen, how are they paid, and who pays them?
* Are appeals possible, and if so, to whom?
* How often are outlying areas likely to see a judge?
* Is “mob justice” common or uncommon?
* Approved of or disapproved of?
* Are there sumptuary laws regulating what different classes/races may wear?
* Do judges and lawyers wear special clothes (robes, wigs) to indicate their calling?
* Are wizards above or below the law i.e., do they have full rights as citizens, no rights, or can they do as they like without regard to anyone else’s rights
* Are highwaymen, muggers, and pirates common or rare? What sorts of crimes is the average citizen likely to run across during his/her lifetime?
* Who can make or repeal laws — a group (an elected Senate, an appointed Council, or an hereditary House of Lords), or only the ruler or head of state?
* How much can the nobility, middle class tradesmen, etc. influence the laws that are made?
* How are alleged criminals treated before and after their convictions?
* Do the police/military/city guard make a practice of roughing up suspects, or is this frowned upon?
* Are there separate civil and criminal courts?
* Human and non-human courts?
* Is there a separate court or procedure for esoteric crimes?
* What is different about each type of court?

#### Services

* What services does the government or head of state provide: schools, wells, courts, an army to protect people from the Vikings?
* What services are provided locally or privately?
* Are they hereditary offices, civil servants, appointees, military,elected?
* Is there an organized system of education?
* If so, who provides it: government, churches, private persons?
* How is it supported?
* How much formal spying and intelligence gathering is normally done by governments?
* The military?
* Merchant guilds and wealthy tradesmen?
* Are there actual organizations, or is spying done by diplomats and/or freelance agents?
* How effective is it currently?
* Do relations between countries depend mainly on the relations between the heads of state, or can two rulers hate each other’s guts without being able to just declare war and drag their countries into it? Are there times when people are expected to fast, or feast (e.g., before solstice, after the birth of a child, during Lent or Ramadan, after the death of a ruler, etc.)? Are there occasions when the ruler is expected to provide a celebration or spectacle for the people to enjoy, (e.g., the Roman gladiatorial games)?
* How much influence do “special interest groups” such as merchants, wizards, or various religions, have on court politics?
* How do they exercise their influence — indirectly (by talking nobility or council members into taking their sides) or directly (by bribery, coercion, having their own representatives on the council)?
* Are there any shaky political alliances between disparate groups?
* Why were they formed?
* How long is it likely to be before they fall apart?
* When they do, what will the effects be?
* What ancient rivalries and hatreds still affect current attitudes and political positions (examples: Scottish and Welsh separatist groups; Catholics vs. Protestants vs. Muslims; dwarves vs. elves; Hatfields vs. McCoys)?

#### Military Power

* Who can call up men for an army, and how?
* Does the ruler ask the nobility for men, who in turn draft their peasants, or can the ruler go straight to the bottom?

#### Taxation

* Who has the right to levy taxes?
* For what?
* On what or whom?
* Can taxes be paid in kind, or do certain things require money?

#### Justice

* What sort of justice system prevails in your culture?
* How is justice dispensed?
* How are criminals apprehended?
* Who judges presumed criminals?
* Are there checks and balances–a mandated government or private representative for the accused, a jury of peers?
* Or is guilt presumed with the judge holding the role of judge and jury, and the accused forced to speak for himself and prove his own case?
* How are sentences given?
* Is there a code with fixed sentences for certain crimes?
* Are there restrictions in the form of sentencing, or can the judge require the convicted criminal to run in circles naked in the town square because he thinks it would be funny?
* Who carries out sentences?
* Is there a prison system, a series of work farms, a mandatory slavery system, automatic execution?
* Are there guards, bailiffs, slave markets, overseers?
* Is the family of a criminal subject to the same punishment as the criminal?
  + Can, for example, an entire family be sold into slavery to pay off one man’s unpaid debts? Can an entire extended family be executed because of a “contagion” theory of criminality, where anyone who is related to a criminal is guilty of being a criminal, too
* What punishments are used?
* Interactions with Esoterica?

## Leisure and Recreation

* In what sports does people participate?,
* What games are played?,
* What institutions or organizations provides recreation?
* What type of sports are considered spectator sports?
* What toys does children use?,
* What other types of participatory recreation exist?
* What other types of spectator recreation exist?
* What do people at various levels of society do for fun?
* What sports or pastimes are common (hawking, hunting, skiing, baseball)?
* Which ones take skill, money, and/or leisure time?
* What games are commonly known — chess, dice, poker?
* Which are common among everyone, and which are limited to the peasantry or nobility?
* Are certain countries/cities known for a passion/expertise for particular games or pastimes?
* Do non-human races have their own games and leisure pastimes?
* How do they differ from human games?
* How do they reflect the physiology and/or particular magical talents of the various non-human races?

## Architecture

* What is the most common building material?
* Why is it used (availability, cheapness, legal requirement)?
* Does it have any major drawbacks (e.g., the Great Fire of London)?
* How tall a building can be constructed at a reasonable cost and in a reasonable time?
* What are typical floor plans like — can people afford to waste space on hallways, or do they just have a series of rooms opening into other rooms?
* Are buildings normally built square, triangular, domed, what?
* How many people usually live in a typical house?
* How large is a typical house?
* What are the differences in materials and appearance between a lower-class, middle-class, and upper-class type house?
* How do people decorate buildings (e.g., carvings vs. paint vs. patterns resulting from the use of different building materials)?
* Are there differences in ornamentation depending on the purpose of the building (e.g., gargoyles and carvings of saints used mainly on cathedrals)?
* Has technology or magic progressed to the point of making window-glass?
* If so, how expensive is it?
* If not, what do people use to cover windows necessary for ventilation and light?
* How are living quarters arranged?
* Are bedrooms on the top floors for privacy or on the ground floor for convenience?
* Are parlors or libraries common?
* How are houses heated/cooled?
* Are wars and insurrections common enough that castles and cities are built with an eye to military defense first and appearance later, or are palaces and wall-less towns the rule?

## Culture and Arts

Forms of creative expression, including art, music, literature, dance, and architecture.

Reflects the culture's sense of beauty, symbolism, and storytelling.

* What are the standards of beauty for people?
* Paintings and sculpture?
* Clothes and furniture?
* How do they differ from the standards in your culture (example: a country which considers fatness a highly desirable beauty trait)?
* How do standards of beauty reflect the physical traits of the various races (examples: dwarves might consider excessive height unattractive; werewolves might be attracted by long teeth or a particular scent)?
* What is the status of the arts (dance, music, theater, etc.) in this society?
* Are artists revered or mistrusted?
* Are they considered noble or immoral?
* Who supports the arts?
* Which arts are most highly valued and why?
* Are there permanent theaters or concert halls for the performing arts?
* If so, who owns and runs them?
* Are they profitable?
* Are there also traveling troupes of players/musicians/dancers?
* How do their performances differ?
* Can magic be used in the arts, and if so, how — paint that glows, pictures that move, flutes that play themselves, etc.?
* How do “normal” artists feel about this?
* Is there a separate branch of purely magical art, such as illusion?
* Have paper-making and the printing press been invented, or are books and scrolls rare, expensive, handwritten items?
* What things are considered appropriate subjects for representational arts such as painting and sculpture?
* Which are not? (Examples: some cultures/religions forbid the painting or sculpture of the human figure, and have abstract art; some have limited painters to doing only “uplifting” religious works, etc.)
* Are there non-human races who tend to be naturally talented painters, dancers, etc.?
* How does this affect human practitioners of these arts?
* Are certain races/cultures considered better at some arts than other races/cultures?
* Where do the best dancers, painters, musicians, actors, etc. come from?
* What are the mediums of the graphic arts?
* What dances do the people do?
* What types of music are there?
* What themes are present in art, music, dance?
* What is the source of these themes?

## Clothing

* What do people wear?
* How expensive is it?
* Can the material be produced locally, or must some or all of it be imported?
* Are weapons a standard part of dress for any/all segments of society?
* Are certain clothes customary for certain occupations — e.g., military uniforms, judges robes/wigs, sports teams uniforms, etc.?
* How much variation is allowed — could a scholar wear a day-glow green robe as long as the cut is right, or would that be too much?
* Is it color or style that is most important?
* Are the dyes for certain colors — purple, indigo, etc. — rare, making cloth of that color more expensive and/or reserved for nobility or other high-status people?
* Are there sumptuary laws, defining who can wear what?
* What are the penalties?
* Who decides when changes are needed?
* How often are they adjusted?
* Are there fashions/fads in things besides clothes — styles of carriages, furniture, etc.?
* Are there fashions/fads in magic — are herbal spells “in” this year and ritual spells “out,” or vice versa?
* How many changes of clothes can a normal person afford?
* A noble person?
* A peasant?
* What is the current fashion in clothes?
* Hats?
* Jewelry?
* Shoes?
* Do such fashions differ for humans/non-humans?
* Between city and country?
* What materials are appropriate to the climate?
* What materials must be imported, and are therefore for expensive upper-class clothes only?
* What things are considered tacky and vulgar, and what things are stylish?
* What types of decorations and accessories are common?
* What colors and combinations of colors are thought to look well or to clash?
* Do opinions on this vary from race to race?
* What physical types and characteristics are currently fashionable — tan vs. pale skin, the “consumptive look” vs. robust good health, fat vs. thin, blonde vs. brunette, muscles vs. “dead poet”, etc.?
* How do non-human fashions reflect their physiology?
* Do dragons dress for dinner?
* Do mermaids have a nudity taboo?

## Food and Diet

The types of food a culture prepares, how it is cooked, and its significance in social or ceremonial contexts. Example: Mediterranean cultures are known for olive oil and seafood, while Japanese cuisine emphasizes rice and fish.

* Sweping adventure means nothing if you cant buy a bite to eat.
* What dishes are considered holiday food?
* What foods/drinks are associated with particular holidays, events (e.g., funerals, weddings) or times of the year?
* What distinguishes a formal, high-court dinner from an ordinary meal, besides quantity and variety of food?
* How do high-court manners differ from everyday ones?
* When a guest arrives, is food or drink offered immediately, after an interval, or only on request?
* Is there a particular food or drink that is customary to offer a newly arrived guest?
* A guest who is just departing (stirrup cup)?
* Is sanitation good enough for untreated water to be safe to drink?
* If not, what do people drink instead?
* What things, while edible, are never eaten (what’s not kosher)?
* Why?
* Are some common human foods poisonous to dwarves or elves (or vice versa)?
* Given the magical/technological level of this society, what is an appropriate ration of farmers or food producers to urban residents?
* If farm production is based on magic, how many urban residents are going to starve if the spells supporting farming (weather, land fertility, etc.) fail suddenly?
* How many meals are considered normal in a day?
* When are they served?
* Which are substantial and which are smaller?
* Are certain foods (e.g., eggs and bacon) reserved mainly for a particular meal?
* What dishes or seasonings would be considered typical of this area?
* What wines or beers?
* What foods are considered peasant food?
* What foods are staples, commonly eaten every day?
* What foods are rare?
* What foods are normally eaten cooked/raw?
* What is the food like?
* What herbs and spices are readily available, and what must be imported?
* How common/expensive are imported foods and spices?
* What spices and herbs are produced locally, and which are rare and expensive?
* Which are most commonly used?
* Do people tend to like highly spiced food or not?
* How is food preserved for use during the off-season — smoking, canning, salting, drying, etc.?
* How reliable are the methods used — how often does “preserved” food spoil?
* When food is in limited supply, who gets first crack?
* The laborers and farmers who have to work to produce more, or the children who are the next generation, or the wise and revered elders, or the nobility?
* What foods and seasonings do non-humans like, and how do these differ from those favored by humans?
* Are some foods poisonous or distasteful to one species that are delicacies or necessary to another?
* Are there times when people are expected to fast (e.g., before solstice, after the birth of a child, during Lent or Ramadan, after the death of a ruler, etc.)?
* Given the state of roads and transportation, how much food is it possible to ship to a given location before it spoils? (This limits the size of cities.)

## 

## Technology

Level of technological advancement: What tools and machinery do they use?

* Is the level of technology in this society comparable to that of ancient Rome, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Industrial Revolution, what?
* What important inventions or advances have been made (the wheel, gunpowder, printing, flush toilets)?
* Have any of them reached the point of affecting the daily life of the average person, or are flush toilets a luxury for the nobility only?
* What inventions or advances have not been made that you would normally expect to see at this stage of technological development?
* Which ones are about to be made?
* How much is known about the laws of nature, physics, and magic?
* How much of what is commonly known is wrong (e.g., Aristotle’s ideas about human anatomy, which were wrong but accepted for centuries)?
* Are the laws of nature and physics actually different in this world, or are they the same as in real life?
* How does magic fit in?
* How do magical beasts fit in?
* Where is scientific and/or magical research done — universities, private labs, under the auspices of the ruler/government, etc.?
* In what areas might magic replace technology, and thus suppress its development (example: if a spell to keep food cold is easy and cheap, there’s no need to invent refrigerators)?
* In what areas might magic cause more rapid technological or scientific development (example: common use of crystal balls might lead someone to think of inventing the lens or the telescope sooner)?

### Transportation

* How common is travel (for any reason)?
* Does the concept of travel “to see the world” or for fun, even exist?
* How dangerous is travel?
* How large a group is considered safe?
* How much traffic is there inside and outside the main cities?
* Which areas are best/worst?
* Are some classes of people (slaves, peasants) not expected to travel at all?
* Are some (heralds, messengers) expected to travel constantly
* What is the fastest means of traveling long distances over land?
* Over water?
* Which methods are safest?
* What is transportation like?
* Where would a traveler stay at night?
* Are there enough travelers to support inns, or do people have to stay at some equivalent of medieval monasteries?
* What are the common domesticated animals used for transportation at various levels of society — e.g., oxen, horses, donkeys, camels, etc.?

#### Roads

* How commonly are they used, and for what purposes (industrial shipping vs. travel for fun)?
* For traveling short distances within a city, what are the alternatives?
* Can people hire a cab, a litter, a rickshaw, or do they have to walk or rely on their own servants or horses?
* Are there good roads?
* Who built them?
* Who is responsible for maintaining them?

#### Water

* How available is water transportation?
* How reliable?
* How dangerous?
* How expensive?

#### Esoterica

* Are there magical means of transportation (teleport spells, magic carpets, dragon-riding)?
* How do they compare in speed, safety and expense to non-magical means?
* Are there any drawbacks to magical travel (for example, teleport sickness)?

### Communication

* How are messages sent when necessary?
* Is there a public/private postal system, or does everyone of importance have to send messengers?
* How fast can news get from A to B?
* How do people find out what is happening in the world — rumor, town crier, newspapers, TV and radio?
* How slanted is the news they get this way, and in what direction?
* Is there freedom of the press?
* If not, who controls/censors it and by what means?
* How are books produced?
* Are they common (has the printing press been invented) or are they rare, valuable, expensive, hand-written objects?
* If the latter, who has the time and skill to produce them?
* Where are the great libraries or collections of books/scrolls/manuscripts?
* How accessible are they to scholars, wizards, the general public?
* Who supports them?

### Metallurgy

### Building

### Weapons

### Medical

* Is healing generally a magical process?
* If so, how does the magical healing talent work?
* Does a magical healer have to consciously direct the healing process (meaning that lots of knowledge of anatomy, etc., would be required), or oes magical healing simply speed up the normal, unconscious healing process in the patient?
* Is there more than one kind of magical healer (as there are surgeons, eye doctors, etc.)?
* Are there both magical and non-magical healers, and if so, are they rivals or simply different specialties?

## 

## Economy

How resources are produced, distributed, and consumed.

Examples: Subsistence farming, industrial economies, or global trade networks.

Primary industries: How do they sustain themselves, through agriculture, trade, or manufacturing?

* Type of economy?
* Is this a money-based economy, or mostly barter?
* How important is trade to the economy?
* What does this country import? Export?
* Which peoples/countries/races fought, allied, traded, or were traditional rivals?

### Currency/Coinage

* How is currency exchange handled, and by whom?
* What is the system of coinage, and who mints it?
* Is currency and coinage standardized, or is there a system of exchange?
* What are typical denominations?
* What types of currency is a traveler or merchant likely to carry on a trip?
* What are different coins called, and what are they worth?
* Who is responsible for coinage: the ruler, local barons, someone else (merchant guilds)?
* Are there generally acceptable standards?
* How easy/common is counterfeiting?

### Organization

* How is business organized?
* Are there trade unions?
* Guild structures?
* Multi-state corporations?
* International cartels?
* Are people able to cross-craft, I.e., learn or perform different trades?
* Does cross-crafting require guild permission, a write from an overlord, or is it automatically guaranteed by law?
* How strict are craft restrictions — are carpenters the only people allowed to build houses?
* What types of trades would be represented in a small town?
* A middle-sized town?
* A large city?
* Are industrial processes (e.g., swordmaking, weaving, etc.) considered “trade secrets,” or are they common knowledge?
* What is the process a young person goes through to enter a craft or trade?
* An apprenticeship?
* Four years of college?
* Are the craft requirements for various skill ranks (such as apprentice, journeyman, master, or med student, intern, doctor, specialist) standardized, or does rank depend more on the good favor of a mastercraftsman than it does on skill?
* Do different regions/cities specialize in specific crafts, processes, or products (examples: Damascus steel, Bordeaux wines, Chinese silk, Wisconsin cheese)?
* Do different races specialize?
* How are records kept — tally sticks, parchment, clay tablets, beads?
* Is there a merchant class?
* Where do they fit in society?
* Are there trading guilds?
* If so, how are they organized?
* How much power do they have to control trade?
* How much infighting is there among them?
* Are there trading organizations that transcend countries (like the Hanseatic League)?
* How large a presence do they have locally?
* What goods are commonly available in small town markets?
  + In large towns?
  + In cities?
* How do goods get to market?
  + What industries — mining, fishing, shipbuilding, lumber, farming, manufacturing, etc. — are important, and in which areas?
  + Which depend on materials from other areas (as shipbuilding on wood, or weaving on wool)?
* What happens if supplies are disrupted?

### Constraints

* How much do official attitudes toward other countries affect commerce and trade?
* Do merchants pretty much ignore tensions between government as long as they can make a profit, or will this get them into trouble?
* Are there Customs inspectors or their equivalents at border crossings?
* Is the export/import of some technologies/magics/commodities regulated by the government, or by non-governmental cartels?
* How does this affect political relationships between countries?
* What regulations, if any, has the government/ruler placed on business practices?
* Are there antimonopoly laws?
* Anti-pollution?
* Are there standardized systems of weights and measures, or does a merchant have to specify “a London bushel” of grain rather than “a York bushel”?
* How do differing systems affect shipping and trade?
* How much smuggling is there?
* Of what, from or to where?

## 

## Military

* What sort of military does your culture have?
* To whom or what does it swear allegiance?
* Does it have a history of coup attempts, or successful coups?
* Is it permanent in nature, or is it something that gathers during threats?
* What sort of training does it get?
* What sort of hierarchy does it have?
* Is military membership voluntary or involuntary?
* Are there benefits to belonging to the military, such as citizenship at the end of service (as in Rome), or healthcare and housing, or regular meals?
* Are the families of military members cared for in any way?
* What are the dangers of military membership?
* Does the surrounding population approve of the military, or are parts or all of it anti-military?
* Does the military have definite outside threats to deal with?
* Is the culture or country at war?
* Is it threatened by invasion?
* Is it threatened by war?
* Does the military have a positive peacetime role?

## 

## Esoterica

Level of technological advancement: What tools and machinery do they use?

Primary industries: How do they sustain themselves, through agriculture, trade, or manufacturing?

* Is esoterica a profession, an art, or just a job?
* What is the status accorded to esoterics in this society?
* Are they the equivalent of shyster lawyers, politicians, and used car salesmen, or are they considered average working stiffs, or are they looked up to and admired?
* Can you make a living practicing esoterica, or do you have to have independent means?
* If you can make a living, what are you doing — making esoterica swords, or making it rain for local farmers?
* What’s an esoteric’s job market like?
* What’s an esoteric’s average income, relative to the rest of society?
* Are esoterics a force in politics, or are they above it?
* Are there national politics that revolve around esoterica/esoterics (i.e., trying to outlaw, protect, or promote certain kinds of esoterica licensing of esoterics,
* Does it require a license to be an esoteric? Who certifies wizards: government, wizard’s guild/AMA, local priests?
* How do local people view esoterics? Are they good guys, bad guys, Clint Eastwood (call in only to get rid of dragons), regular working stiffs, ivory-tower academics, nuisances who make it rain when you’re plowing, dangerous folks to stay away from?
* Are esoterics barred from certain kinds of government jobs or offices?
* Do some government jobs require that their holder be an esoteric?
* If esoterica requires study, where do you go to learn about it?
* How do people fund their training?
* Is there an apprenticeship system, or are there wizard schools, or is it one-on-one tutoring/mentoring?
* Are there fashions/fads in esoterica — are herbal spells “in” this year and ritual spells “out,” or vice versa?
* Are there esoteric means of transportation (teleport spells, esoterica carpets, dragon-riding)?
* How do they compare in speed, safety and expense to non-esoteric means?
* Are there any drawbacks to esoteric travel (for example, teleport sickness)?
* How commonly are they used, and for what purposes (industrial shipping vs. travel for fun)?
* Are there esoteric means of rapid communication?
* How commonly are they used?
* For what purposes?
* Are esoteric weapons available?
* Can esoterica be used in warfare?
* In what ways?
* Is esoterica legal?
* All esoterica, or only some types?
* Do laws vary widely from country to country, or is the attitude generally similar?
* Is esoterica legal here?
* All esoterica, or only some types?
* Do laws vary widely from country to country, or is the attitude generally similar?
* Is the relative power of a country or ruler usually measured by the size of the army, the number and ability of his wizards, or the amount of money at his disposal?
* We have classic sorcery, wizardry, psionic, as well as divine power. The big question is how rare is divine intervention what effect do spell books have do they exist?
* Is forensic esoterica possible?
* Commonly used?
* Used only for certain types of crimes (and if so, what)?
* Are the results of forensic spells admissible in court as evidence?
* Is it something any wizard can do, or do you have to specialize?
* Can esoterica be used in the arts, and if so, how — paint that glows, pictures that move, flutes that play themselves, etc.?
* How do “normal” artists feel about this?
* Is there a separate branch of purely esoteric art, such as illusion?

# 

# Communities

A community within a culture can be distinguished by the presence of shared values, beliefs, customs, traditions, and practices that are unique to that group, shaping how its members interact, understand the world, and identify with one another, often manifested through language, food, celebrations, and social norms; essentially, a collective identity that sets them apart from other communities.

Key points to identify a community within a culture:

1. Shared history and heritage - A common understanding of their past events and ancestors contributes to a distinct cultural identity.
2. Language variations - Specific dialects or vocabulary used within the community that differentiate them from others.
3. Rituals and ceremonies - Traditional practices and celebrations that hold special meaning for the community.
4. Social norms and expectations - Unwritten rules about behavior and interactions considered appropriate within the community.
5. Art and expression - Unique forms of art, music, dance, or storytelling that represent the community's identity.
6. Food and cuisine - Distinctive dishes and culinary practices that are part of the community's cultural heritage.
7. Sense of belonging - Members identify strongly with their community and feel a sense of connection to its shared values.

What is the predominant culture?

What are the individual communities…

For each community

* Δ Resources?
* Δ Deities/religion?
* Δ Languages?
* Δ Calendar
* Δ Ethics, Morals and Mores
* Δ Classes
* Δ Childbirth
* Δ Childhood
* Δ Young Adulthood
* Δ Adulthood
* Δ Old Age
* Δ Death
* Δ Leisure
* Δ Arts
* Δ Clothing
* Δ Diet
* Δ Technology
* Δ Esoterica
* Δ Trade

# How it Looks in Life

How the general shaping influences above show up in most lives

## General Daily Life

### Greeting and Meeting

* When meeting someone, how are they greeted — wave, handshake, bow, some other gesture?
* How did the greeting gesture originate (example: shaking hands to prove one’s weapon hand was empty)?
* Is there a special I-am-not-armed gesture for wizards?
* Is there a difference between the greeting offered to an equal and that offered to a superior or inferior?
* Is there a difference between the greeting offered by a man or a woman?
  + Human/non-human?
* Is there a way of changing a greeting gesture to make it insulting?
* How are two people who have never met normally introduced to each other?
* What is the order of precedence when there are several people of differing sex or social status present, all of whom need to be introduced to each other?
* Are there classes of people/beings who are never introduced to other classes of people/beings?
* Are “true names” significant, and if so, under what circumstances would someone be given another person/being’s true name?
* Are there customs involving the way in which someone is named when being introduced
* Is there any difference in the way you greet someone you already know, compared to greeting a stranger (or does everybody just always hug or shake hands?
* How does someone acknowledge seeing an acquaintance at a distance (passing on the other side of the street) — by a nod, tipping the hat, wave, smile, or not at all?

### Gesture

* When meeting someone, how are they greeted — wave, handshake, bow, some other gesture?
* How did the greeting gesture originate (example: shaking hands to prove one’s weapon hand was empty)?
* Are gestures and body language in this society generally subtle or not?
* Do people talk with their hands, or is that considered vulgar?
* Is there a way of changing a greeting gesture to make it insulting?
* What is a comfortable and polite speaking distance for people in this culture?
* Other cultures/countries/races?
* How aware are people of these differences?
* What gestures are insulting?
* What do they mean?
* Do some gestures differ in meaning depending on the culture, race, or time (example: the American “V”-for-victory sign, which became the peace sign, and which is/was highly insulting in Europe)?
* How do gestures and body language differ between countries?
* Between species?
* Are there things that don’t matter in one area that are mortal insults in another (eating with the left hand, etc.)?
* What are the ways of showing respect (bowing, saluting, etc.)?
* To whom is one expected to show such respect — one’s elders, superiors in rank, teachers, priests, etc.?

### Visiting

* Are there questions that must be asked or avoided (how’s the family, how’s the business, never talk politics or religion, etc.)?
* Are there topics that can only be raised by the host?
* The guest?
* How seriously does the culture take the responsibilities of host and guest?
* What rules define when someone becomes a host or guest (e.g., in mid-eastern countries, giving bread and salt to someone makes the person your guest; giving a 5-course meal without bread or salt doesn’t)?
* What things are considered courteous to offer a guest: food, reading material, personal guards or attendants, music/entertainment, a person of the opposite sex to sleep with?
* What is considered a courteous response to a host’s offer?
* Are there things it is considered rude to accept?
* Rude to turn down?
* Rude to ask for?
* Rude not to ask for?
* When a guest arrives, is food or drink offered immediately, after an interval, or only on request?
* Is there a particular food or drink that is customary to offer a newly arrived guest?
* How do different eating customs of the various cultures and races interact and conflict?
* Example: a person from a culture that considers it impolite to refuse an offer of food being the guest of someone whose culture considers it impolite to stop offering food until the guest says “when.”

### Conflict and Change

Weapons

## Urban Life

## 

* What is considered a small town/large town/city in terms of number of people?
* Is population shifting from rural to urban, south to north, mountains to coast, etc.?
* Why — invasion, plague, gold rush, etc.?
* What effects has this had on the places being left?
* The places gaining people?
* Does city layout reflect some philosophy (religious or otherwise), such as that the “head” of the city must be at the center or at the highest point or at the most strategic location?
* Or were layout considerations mainly practical?
* Or did most cities “just grow”?
* Are there public or private parks in most/any cities?
* Are cities generally laid out on a square-grid system of streets, or do they just grow?
* How wide are the streets and alleys?
* What are the landmarks in each city?
* Where are the interesting neighborhoods, like Chinatown or the dwarvish section, and what gives each its special character?
* Do the neighborhoods have names?
* Where do people go to shop?
* To eat?
* To have fun?
* To do “touristy” things?
* What sorts of goods/food/entertainment are available in large cities that are not available in the country?

## Rural Life

* Is the population shifting from rural to urban, south to north, mountains to coast, etc.?
  + Why — invasion, plague, gold rush, etc.?
  + What effects has this had on the places being left?
  + The places gaining people?
* Given the magical/technological level of this society, what is an appropriate ration of farmers or food producers to urban residents?
* If farm production is based on magic, how many urban residents are going to starve if the spells supporting farming (weather, land fertility, etc.) fail suddenly?
* Are peasants/farmers/yeomen/serfs tied to their land by law or custom, or can they move to town if they feel like it?
* Can they own their farms and property, or is it all “common land,” or is it rented from a lord or landholder?
* Given the state of roads and transportation, how much food is it possible to ship to a given location before it spoils? (This limits the size of cities.)
* Are rural areas primarily farms, forests, fields for grazing, or “waste land”?
* In outlying areas where there aren’t many people, how many roads are there, who builds them, and who maintains them?
* How reliable is the weather from year to year — is crop production relatively dependable, or do people have to cope with regular famines due to drought or floods?
* What kinds of catastrophic weather are common — tornadoes, hurricanes, blizzards, waterspouts, dust storms?
* How do people cope?
* How do non-humans cope?
* How are farming/food-producing areas divided up between humans/nonhumans?
* What kinds of conflicts are likely to result?
* (Example: Expanding human farms encroaching on a forest that dragons or werewolves use for hunting.)
* Can peasants/yeomen own their own land, or does it all belong to the lord?
* What kinds of rights over land, crops, game, etc. does a lord/landowner have?
* Is poaching a problem?

# 

# Cities of Note

For each city

How many people are there in this country?  
 How does this compare with world population?  
 What is considered a small town/large town/city in terms of number of  
 people?  
   
 Is population shifting from rural to urban, south to north, mountains to  
 coast, etc.?  
 Why — invasion, plague, gold rush, etc.?  
 What effects has this had on the places being left?  
 The places gaining people?  
   
 Does city layout reflect some philosophy (religious or otherwise), such  
 as that the “head” of the city must be at the center or at the highest point  
 or at the most strategic location?  
 Or were layout considerations mainly practical?  
 Or did most cities “just grow”?  
   
 Are there public or private parks in most/any cities?  
   
 Are cities generally laid out on a square-grid system of streets, or do  
 they just grow?  
 How wide are the streets and alleys?  
   
 What are the landmarks in each city?  
 Where are the interesting neighborhoods, like Chinatown or the dwarvish  
 section, and what gives each its special character?  
 Do the neighborhoods have names?  
   
 Where do people go to shop?  
 To eat?  
 To have fun?  
 To do “touristy” things?  
 What sorts of goods/food/entertainment are available in large cities  
 that are not available in the country?  
 What are the static forces in action around the ... ?  
 What are the dynamic forces in action around the ... ?

# General Esoteric Design Questions

SHould go into arcanum

General Stuff about Esoterica  
How do you get to be a wizard/esoterician?  
Does it require inborn talent, study and hard work, practice, or all of the above?  
Does esoterica requires study, where do you go to learn about it?  
Is an untrained esoteric dangerous, or just an ordinary person?  
Do wizards have a special language that is used for esoterica?  
If so, where do they learn it?  
Is it safe to chat in this language, or is everything said in it  
 automatically a spell?  
If so, how can it safely be taught to new students?  
Is esoterica considered a science, or are scientists and wizards enemies or rivals?  
Are esoterica and science compatible?  
To what degree does the presence of esoterica, esoteric objects, and wizards replace technology ?  
Can two or more wizards combine their power to cast a stronger  
 spell, or is esoterica done only by individuals?  
What makes a powerful esoteric?  
  
What do you need to do to cast a spell — design an elaborate ritual,  
 recite poetry, mix the right ingredients in a pot?  
Are there things like a staff, a wand, a familiar, a crystal ball,  
 that are necessary to have before casting spells?  
If so, where and how do new wizards get these things?  
Do they make them, buy them from craftsmen, inherit them from their  
 teachers, or order them from Wizardry Supplies, Inc.?  
  
Where does esoterica power come from: the gods, the “mana” of the world,  
 the personal willpower of the esoteric?  
Is esoterica an exhaustible resource?  
Are spells fast enough to be useful in hand-to-hand combat, or is esoterica more of a siege weapon, used only for long, slow things?  
How has the presence of esoterica affected weapons technology?  
Can esoterica make weapons more effective?  
Do you have to do anything special to walls, armor, or weapons to  
 make them better able to resist enemy spells?  
  
How has the presence of esoterica affected weapons technology?  
 Can an ordinary, non-weapon-type object be enchanted to make it  
 extremely lethal or will this work properly only on things that are  
 already weapons?  
 Can ordinary objects be enchanted to make them (or their user)  
 supremely good at something (the Frying Pan of Ultimate Gourmet  
 Cooking)?  
How common and useful are such enchantments?  
  
Can spells and/or esoteric items be mass-produced?  
Are there esoterica carpet factories and boutiques selling esoterica  
 rings?  
  
Can spells and/or esoteric items be used to increase the efficiency  
 of manufacturing or mass production?  
Do businesses keep a wizard on retainer, as modern businesses might  
 keep a lawyer or efficiency expert?  
What, exactly, are they paying for?  
  
  
Are there esoteric artifacts (rings, swords, etc.)?  
If so, who makes them and how?  
Are the spells permanent, or do they wear off after a  
 while?  
  
Where is scientific and/or esoteric research done — universities, private labs, under the auspices of the ruler/government, etc.?  
Given the esoterica/technological level of this society, what is an appropriate ration of farmers or food producers to urban residents?  
If farm production is based on esoterica, how many urban residents are going to starve if the spells supporting farming (weather, land fertility, etc.) fail suddenly?  
Are the laws of nature and physics actually different in this world (to accommodate esoterica), or are they the same as in real life?  
How does esoterica fit in?  
How do esoteric beasts fit in?  
In what ways can esoterica or spells be abused?  
How often does this happen?  
Make a list of the esoteric items and actions that are impossible.  
What cannot be done in this world?  
What are the actions that are now possible that cannot be done in the real world.

# Leftovers

# Military

How do the weapons of this country compare with those of surrounding  
 cities and countries?  
 Have there been recent innovations that may upset the balance of power,  
 or is everyone more or less equal?  
  
 Are magical weapons available?  
 Can magic be used in warfare?  
 In what ways?  
 Are spells fast enough to be useful in hand-to-hand combat, or is magic  
 more of a siege weapon, used only for long, slow things?  
  
 How has the presence of magic affected weapons technology?  
 Can magic make weapons more effective?  
 Do you have to do anything special to walls, armor, or weapons to make  
 them better able to resist enemy spells?  
  
 How much has the presence of magic affected strategy and tactics in  
 general?  
 Is magic used primarily for intelligence gathering (spells of  
 invisibility, scrying, etc.), or are there spells that are of use on the  
 battlefield (summoning a demon to attack the enemy, casting fire storms at  
 them, etc.)?  
 If battlefield magic is possible, how can it be defended  
 against?  
  
 How has the presence of magic affected weapons technology?  
 Can an ordinary, non-weapon-type object be enchanted to make it  
 extremely lethal (the Frying Pan of Death) or will this work properly only  
 on things that are already weapons?  
 Can ordinary objects be enchanted to make them (or their user) supremely  
 good at something (the Frying Pan of Ultimate Gourmet Cooking, the Comb of  
 No Bad Hair Days Ever)?  
 How common and useful are such enchantments?  
  
 What personal weapons are available to anyone who can afford  
 them?  
 Are some considered “for nobles only” either by custom or by  
 law?  
 Are there laws forbidding certain classes from being armed at  
 all?  
  
 What is the level of weapons technology?  
 Are there guns, and if so, how sophisticated (flintlock, matchlock,  
 rifle, Uzi)?  
  
 What major weapons of war are available (e.g., siege towers, catapults,  
 cannon, A-bombs)?  
  
 What weapons and armor are standard for armies?  
 Mercenaries?  
 Nobility?  
 Your average peasant trying to defend his/her home?  
  
 Are weapons, such as swords or pistols, a standard part of dress for  
 any/all segments of society?  
  
 What are the accepted conventions of making war (e.g., only fight in  
 winter when nobody is busy with crops; don’t make war on civilians; only  
 certain kinds of weapons are available, etc.)?

What major weapons of war are available (e.g., siege towers, catapults,  
 cannon, A-bombs)?  
   
 How much has the presence of magic affected strategy and tactics in  
 general?  
 Do army commanders have unusual formations or techniques to deal with  
 various magical attacks?  
 How can magic be used as part of a battle plan, given various levels of  
 technology (example: getting a weather magician to make it rain so that  
 enemy cannons will be harder to maneuver in the mud)?  
   
 Is magic used primarily for intelligence gathering (spells of  
 invisibility, scrying, etc.), or are there spells that are of use on the  
 battlefield (summoning a demon to attack the enemy, casting fire storms at  
 them, etc.)?  
 If battlefield magic is possible, how can it be defended  
 against?  
   
 How are armies usually structured?  
 Is there a formal, independent command structure, or is everybody  
 officially under the command of whoever brought them to join the ruler’s  
 army, or what?  
 If there is a formal structure, what are the various ranks and titles  
 used?  
   
 Is weapon usage restricted according to social class, such as only  
 knights being allowed to use sword and armor, yeomen using bows and staffs,  
 peasants using whatever scythes, hammers, etc. are available?  
 Are there restrictions, either legal, customary, or biological, on the  
 types of weapons different races or magical beings can use (e.g., elves not  
 being able to wield weapons made of cold iron)?  
   
 Are battlefield commissions or knighthoods possible during wartime, or  
 must such promotions wait on formal ceremonies?  
 Do normal social restrictions apply during times of war, or is everyone  
 equal on the battlefield?  
   
 Who can call up men for an army, and how?  
 Does the ruler ask the nobility for men, who in turn draft their  
 peasants, or can the ruler go straight to the bottom?  
   
 Are there professional soldiers/mercenaries?  
 Is a career in the army possible, or would you have to become a  
 mercenary or sell-sword in order to make a living as a soldier?  
 Does the army accept volunteers, or only draftees?  
 Can you rise to officer level by displaying courage and merit on the  
 battlefield, or are officer positions reserved for a particular type of  
 person only — people who bought commissions, people who graduated from  
 military school, sons of famous warriors, etc.?  
   
 How large is a typical army?  
 What percentage of the soldiers in it will be trained (knights,  
 professional soldiers, guards, mercenaries) and what percentage will be  
 untrained recruits?  
 Are recruits given training, or are they expected to learn on the job  
 (i.e., in battle)?  
   
 How is the army supplied?  
 Are soldiers allowed to live off the peasantry, or do they pay for what  
 they take?  
 What happens if the supply caravan gets lost or captured?  
 How are supplies handled during long campaigns?  
 How many days’ worth of supplies can the army haul along with  
 them?  
 (Ref. Alexander the Great and the Logistics of the Macedonian Army for  
 the math on how much a horse can carry, how much it needs to eat,  
 etc.)  
 What are the accepted conventions of making war (e.g., only fight in  
 winter when nobody is busy with crops; don’t make war on civilians; only  
 certain kinds of weapons are available, etc.)?  
 Do they differ from race to race?  
 How does the presence of non-humans (dwarves, vampires, etc.) affect  
 strategy, tactics, and battles generally?  
 Are special weapons required if an army is facing certain kinds of  
 non-human armies?  
 How could non-human soldiers turn their physical differences from humans  
 to their advantage?  
   
 Are particular non-human races traditionally better with certain weapons  
 (e.g., dwarves with axes, elves with bows)?  
 Why — because they have greater strength, better eyesight, more manual  
 dexterity, etc.?  
   
 Do relations between countries depend mainly on the relations between  
 the heads of state, or can two rulers hate each other’s guts without being  
 able to just declare war and drag their countries into it?  
   
 If there’s a long-term war in progress, how has the home front been  
 affected?  
 Are people being drafted much younger/older than they used to  
 be?  
 Have people been forced to step into nontraditional roles — peasants  
 managing a business, women shoeing horses, children making bullets,  
 etc.?  
 How have these changes affected society?  
 How will they affect relationships between races/clans/sexes/social  
 classes when the war is over?  
   
 Is the army integrated (i.e., men, women, elves, dwarves, purple people,  
 and green ones, all serving together)?  
 How does this affect battle formations?  
 Strategies?  
 Are certain races or groups isolated in particular units?  
 If so, are those units considered elite troops or the most expendable  
 soldiers on the battlefield?  
 How do these attitudes affect strategy?  
 Has science or magic been advanced in general by specific developments  
 in the fields of weaponry, tactics, or strategy?  
 Are there natural or imposed limitations prohibiting the development or  
 use of certain types of weapons (e.g., only muscle-powered weapons because  
 the “laws of physics” in this world don’t allow the combustion of  
 gunpowder)?  
 To what degree has technology changed the face of war?  
 Are there internal combustion engines useable for large troop movements,  
 or steam powered ships?  
   
   
 Standing  
 Command  
 Routine  
 Arms  
 Outfitting  
 Theory

## Foreign Relations

Does this country have formal relationships with other  
 countries?  
 If so, who can be an ambassador?  
 Are there standing embassies and consulates, or are special envoys sent  
 only when something comes up?  
 How are treaties arranged?  
 Are there any significant ones currently in force or coming up for  
 signing?  
 How much do official attitudes toward other countries affect commerce  
 and trade?  
 Do merchants pretty much ignore tensions between government as long as  
 they can make a profit, or will this get them into trouble?  
 Are there Customs inspectors or their equivalents at border  
 crossings?  
 Is the export/import of some technologies/magics/commodities regulated  
 by the government, or by non-governmental cartels?  
 How does this affect political relationships between countries?  
 How much formal spying and intelligence gathering is normally done by  
 governments?

The military?  
 Merchant guilds and wealthy tradesmen?  
 Are there actual organizations, or is spying done by diplomats and/or  
 freelance agents?  
 How effective is it currently?  
 Which countries/races are traditional allies?  
 Which are traditional rivals?  
 How do these traditions affect present-day relations between countries  
 and races?  
 Which heads of state are related by blood or marriage, and how important  
 is this in determining foreign policy?

## Structures

How much influence do “special interest groups” such as merchants, wizards,  
 or various religions, have on court politics?  
 How do they exercise their influence — indirectly (by talking nobility or  
 council members into taking their sides) or directly (by bribery, coercion,  
 having their own representatives on the council)?  
   
 Are there any shaky political alliances between disparate groups?  
 Why were they formed?  
 How long is it likely to be before they fall apart?  
 When they do, what will the effects be?  
 What ancient rivalries and hatreds still affect current attitudes and  
 political positions (examples: Scottish and Welsh separatist groups; Catholics  
 vs. Protestants vs. Muslims; dwarves vs. elves; Hatfields vs. McCoys)?  
   
  
  
 In terms of political systems themselves - there is a vast spectrum of  
 possibilities -Anarchic, Aristocratic, Autarchic, Authoritarian, Autocratic,  
 Bureaucratic, Capitalist, Collectivist, Colonialist, Commercialism, Communist,  
 Confederates, Constitutional, Constitutional monarchy, Democracy, Despotism, Direct  
 Democratic, Dynastic, Ecclesiastical, Ethnocentric, Expansionist, Fascist,  
 Federalist, Fundamentalist, Gerontocratic, Imperialist, Internationalist,  
 Interventionist, Isolationist, Matriarchy, Meritocracy, Monarchy, Orthodox,  
 Parochialism, Paternalist, Patriarchy, Pluralist, Plutocracy, Police State,  
 Protectionist, Regionalist, Republican, Separatist, Socialist, Theocratic,  
 Totalitarian, Utilitarian, Utopian. Each system experiences different forms of  
 intrigue. Feudalism and other aristocratic forms of governance tend to be subsumed  
 by court intrigues revolving around legacies, dynasties, succession, etc. Republics,  
 on the other hand, obsess over questions of law, rights and public resources.  
 Finally, just as in the real world, a nation might call itself one thing, yet behave  
 quite the opposite. Humans might be treated quite well, but minorities of other  
 races (or the same race), might be subject to entirely different laws, slavery,  
 forced exile, etc.

## Education

How much does it cost to get various levels of education?  
  
 Is there an organized system of education?  
 If so, who provides it: government, churches, private persons?  
 How is it supported?  
 Is magic considered part of the general college curriculum, or do you  
 have to study it privately?  
  
 What sort of education is available, and where?  
 Are there schoolhouses in every town, or do ordinary people have to  
 travel if they want to be educated?  
 Are there universities?  
 Private tutors?  
  
 What is the level of literacy in the general population?  
 Is literacy considered a useful/necessary skill for nobility, or  
 something only scribes/clerks/wimps/bourgeoisie need?  
 How common are books?  
 How are they produced?  
  
 Who are the teachers?  
 How are they trained?  
 Who pays them?  
  
 How much education is considered usual at each of the various levels or  
 classes of society?  
 What things are considered absolutely necessary for a gentleman/noble to  
 know?  
 A tradesman?

## Daily Life

How do ordinary people feel about foreigners?  
 Non-humans?  
 How ready are they to accept different ideas?  
 How cosmopolitan are they?  
  
 How much social mobility is there?  
 Is it easy or hard for a person born a peasant to advance to the middle  
 class, or a middle class person to the upper class or nobility?  
 How much resistance would there be?  
 Would such a person ever be accepted socially?  
  
 What items or foods or materials are luxuries — chocolate, coffee, silk,  
 spices, flush toilets?  
 Why?  
  
 What do people generally look like?  
 Would a blonde (redhead, brunette) stand out in a crowd?  
 Someone 5' 10?  
 tall?  
 Do non-humans stand out in a crowd, or are there enough of them around  
 that they’re considered ordinary?  
  
 What are accepted norms of personal hygiene?  
 Do most people bathe regularly, or is bathing considered a health  
 hazard?  
  
 How is garbage and other waste material disposed of?  
  
 What is furniture like — big and blocky, delicate, simple, elaborately  
 carved, painted?  
 What is it mostly made of — cloth, wood, stone?  
 Are certain things (like chairs with arms) reserved for high-status  
 individuals?  
  
 In what ways does furniture design reflect the customs and lifestyle of  
 the people (example: beds with bed-curtains for privacy in medieval homes  
 where servants wandered through rooms without warning; futons that can be  
 rolled up and put away instead of beds in a country with little  
 house-space)?  
  
 What are the plumbing and sanitary systems like?  
 Who builds and maintains them?  
 How reliable are they, and who do you call when the drains back  
 up?  
 How do they differ from city to farm?  
  
 How do people cope with various disasters — fire, floods, tornadoes or  
 hurricanes, blizzards, plague, etc.?  
 How common are such disasters?  
  
 How early do people get up in the morning in the city?  
 Country?  
 Are clocks common, or do people tell time by the sun or by listening for  
 church bells?

## Daily Life Eating

Do men and women, parents and children, servants and master, eat  
 separately, or does everyone eat together?  
 How is status displayed at the table (seating above or below the  
 salt, near or far from the head, etc.)?  
 What dishes are considered special fare?  
 What foods/drinks are associated with particular events (e.g.,  
 funerals, weddings) or times of the year?  
 What distinguishes a formal mealfrom an ordinary meal, besides  
 quantity and variety of food?  
 What eating utensils are used, if any?  
 Forks, eating knife, spoons, chopsticks?  
 What is the order of a typical upper-class meal — do they start with  
 wine, then a sweet, then a stew, then a salad, or do they bring  
 everything in at once?  
 Are special arrangements necessary for entertaining guests of  
 different races/species — taller chairs for dwarves, raw meat for  
 werewolves, perches for harpies, etc.?  
 Is sanitation good enough for untreated water to be safe to  
 drink?  
 If not, what do people drink instead?  
 What shapes are tables/eating areas (round, oblong, square,  
 rectangular, etc.)?  
 Where is the “place of honor” for a guest?  
 Where do the important members of the household  
 sit/recline/whatever?  
 What things, while edible, are never eaten (what’s not  
 kosher)?  
 Why?  
 Are some common human foods poisonous to dwarves or elves (or vice  
 versa)?

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 church bells?

## Weaponry

How do the weapons of this country compare with those of surrounding  
 cities and countries?  
 Have there been recent innovations that may upset the balance of power,  
 or is everyone more or less equal?  
  
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 No Bad Hair Days Ever)?  
 How common and useful are such enchantments?  
  
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 them?  
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 all?  
  
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 Are there guns, and if so, how sophisticated (flintlock, matchlock,  
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 What weapons and armor are standard for armies?  
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 Your average peasant trying to defend his/her home?  
  
 Are weapons, such as swords or pistols, a standard part of dress for  
 any/all segments of society?  
  
 What are the accepted conventions of making war (e.g., only fight in  
 winter when nobody is busy with crops; don’t make war on civilians; only  
 certain kinds of weapons are available, etc

## Battle

How much has the presence of magic affected strategy and tactics in  
 general?  
 Is magic used primarily for intelligence gathering (spells of  
 invisibility, scrying, etc.), or are there spells that are of use on the  
 battlefield (summoning a demon to attack the enemy, casting fire storms  
 at them, etc.)?  
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 against?

## Education

How much does it cost to get various levels of education?  
   
 Is there an organized system of education?  
 If so, who provides it: government, churches, private persons?  
 How is it supported?  
 Is magic considered part of the general college curriculum, or do you  
 have to study it privately?  
   
 What sort of education is available, and where?  
 Are there schoolhouses in every town, or do ordinary people have to  
 travel if they want to be educated?  
 Are there universities?  
 Private tutors?  
   
 What is the level of literacy in the general population?  
 Is literacy considered a useful/necessary skill for nobility, or  
 something only scribes/clerks/wimps/bourgeoisie need?  
 How common are books?  
 How are they produced?  
   
 Who are the teachers?  
 How are they trained?  
 Who pays them?  
   
 How much education is considered usual at each of the various levels or  
 classes of society?  
 What things are considered absolutely necessary for a gentleman/noble to  
 know?  
 A tradesman?  
   
 What things are considered absolutely necessary knowledge for a courtier  
 (poetry, languages, skill at arms, etc.)?  
 Which are nice but not necessary?  
 Which would be highly embarrassing if anybody found out about them (a  
 passion for comic books, etc.)?  
   
 How respected are teachers and scholars?  
 Who supports them?  
   
 If magic requires study, where do you go to learn about it?  
 How do people fund their training?  
 Is there an apprenticeship system, or are there wizard schools, or is it  
 one-on-one tutoring/mentoring?  
 Is an untrained wizard dangerous, or just an ordinary person?  
   
 Do wizards have a special language that is used for magic?  
 If so, where do they learn it?  
 Is it safe to chat in this language, or is everything said in it  
 automatically a spell?  
 If so, how can it safely be taught to new students?

## Relationships

Does this Moiety have formal relationships with other Moieties?  
 If so, who can do the negotiations?  
 Are there structures, or are special envoys sent only when something  
 comes up?  
 How are alliances arranged?  
 Are there any significant alliances currently in force or coming up  
 ?  
 What impact does that have on other Moeities  
 How are rivalries structured?  
 Are there any significant rivalries currently in force or coming up  
 ?  
 What impact does that have on other Moeities  
 How much formal spying and intelligence gathering is normally done by  
 Moieties?  
 How effective is it currently?  
   
 What is the Structure  
 What it looks like, formalisms and informalisms, etc...  
 ASpecialized language, etc...  
   
   
 How is the structure maintained  
   
 How firm are the divisions between strata — is it disgraceful for a  
 noble to engage in trade or for a warrior to help with the harvest?  
 How difficult is it to rise or fall from one strata to another?  
 What forces resist changes in strata?  
   
   
   
 How does it change  
   
 How difficult is it to rise or fall from one social level to  
 another?  
 How firm are the divisions between social classes — is it disgraceful  
 for a noble to engage in trade or for a warrior to help with the  
 harvest?  
 How difficult is it to rise or fall from one social level to  
 another?  
 How much social mobility is there?  
 How much do people think there is?  
 What forces drive changes in strata?

## Rural

l  
   
 Is population shifting from rural to urban, south to north, mountains to  
 coast, etc.?  
 Why — invasion, plague, gold rush, etc.?  
 What effects has this had on the places being left?  
 The places gaining people?  
   
 Given the magical/technological level of this society, what is an  
 appropriate ration of farmers or food producers to urban residents?  
 If farm production is based on magic, how many urban residents are going  
 to starve if the spells supporting farming (weather, land fertility, etc.)  
 fail suddenly?  
   
 Are peasants/farmers/yeomen/serfs tied to their land by law or custom,  
 or can they move to town if they feel like it?  
 Can they own their farms and property, or is it all “common land,” or is  
 it rented from a lord or landholder?  
   
 Given the state of roads and transportation, how much food is it  
 possible to ship to a given location before it spoils?  
 (This limits the size of cities.)  
 Are rural areas primarily farms, forests, fields for grazing, or “waste  
 land”?  
 In outlying areas where there aren’t many people, how many roads are  
 there, who builds them, and who maintains them?  
   
 How reliable is the weather from year to year — is crop production  
 relatively dependable, or do people have to cope with regular famines due to  
 drought or floods?  
   
 What kinds of catastrophic weather are common — tornadoes, hurricanes,  
 blizzards, waterspouts, dust storms?  
 How do people cope?  
 How do non-humans cope?  
  
 How are farming/food-producing areas divided up between  
 humans/nonhumans?  
 What kinds of conflicts are likely to result?  
 (Example: Expanding human farms encroaching on a forest that dragons or  
 werewolves use for hunting.)  
 Can peasants/yeomen own their own land, or does it all belong to the  
 lord?  
 What kinds of rights over land, crops, game, etc. does a lord/landowner  
 have?  
 Is poaching a problem?

1. Keep in mind recovering from war takes about a generation without any major wars. [↑](#footnote-ref-0)