

# DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

*ADDITIONAL*

**Rules for Fantastic Medieval Wargames  
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*SUPPLEMENT*

## **THE AGE OF CONAN**

**BY**

**JASON VEY**

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# **THE AGE OF CONAN**

The Hyborian Age of Robert E. Howard

by Jason Vey

For use with

**DUNGEONS & DRAGONS**

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This work is respectfully dedicated to the memories of Robert E. Howard, E. Gary Gygax, and Dave Arneson.

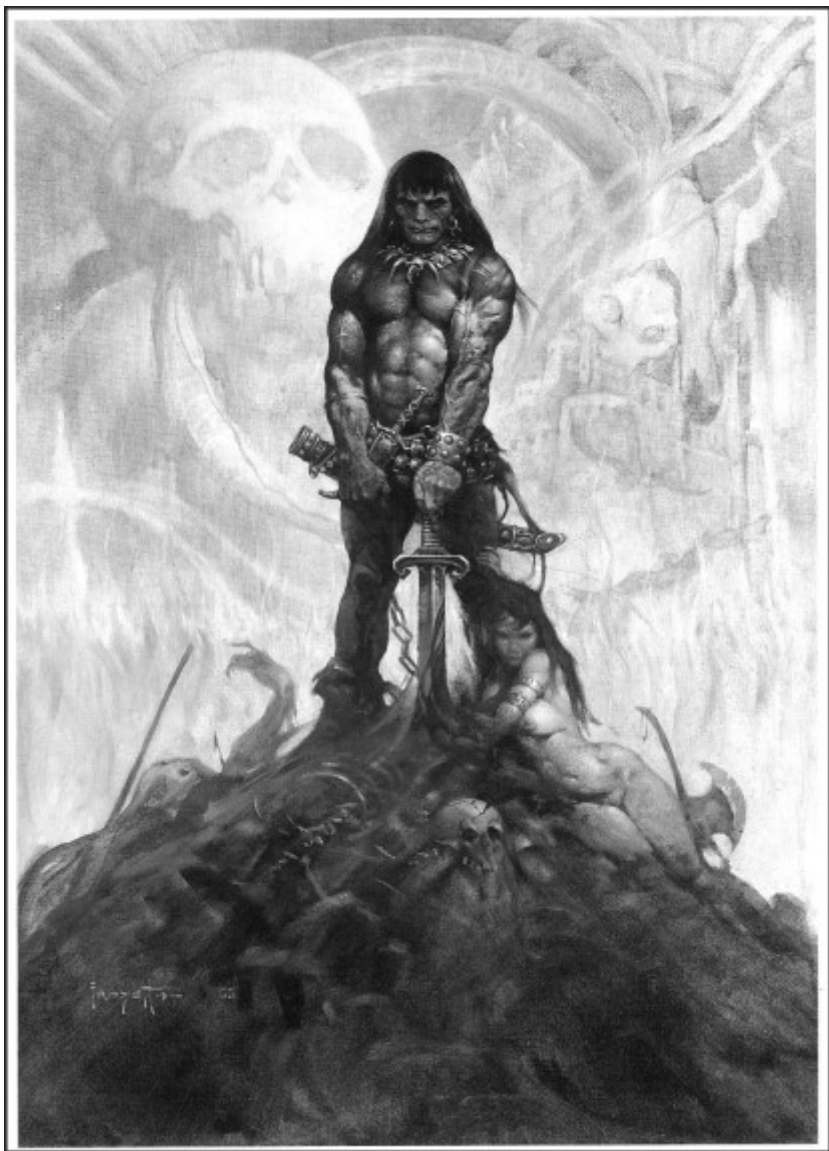
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# INTRODUCTION

*"Know, oh prince, that between the years when the oceans drank Atlantis and the gleaming cities, and the years of the rise of the Sons of Aryas, there was an age undreamed of, when shining kingdoms lay spread across the world like blue mantles beneath the stars—Nemedea, Ophir, Brythunia, Hyperborea, Zamora with its dark-haired women and towers of spider-haunted mystery, Zingara with its chivalry, Koth that bordered on the pastoral lands of Shem, Stygia with its shadow-guarded tombs, Hyrkania whose riders wore steel and silk and gold. But the proudest kingdom of the world was Aquilonia, reigning supreme in the dreaming west. Hither came Conan, the Cimmerian, black-haired, sullen-eyed, sword in hand, a thief, a reaver, a slayer, with gigantic melancholies and gigantic mirth, to tread the jeweled thrones of the Earth under his sandaled feet."*

—The Nemedian Chronicles.

Welcome, Lords and Ladies, to this, the latest in a long line of recent unofficial supplements to the original Dungeons & Dragons role playing game. What lies herein is not a slew of new rules, options, monsters, character classes, and such (though it does see its fair share of each), but rather notes for



translating D&D into the very sword-and-sorcery world that inspired the game in the first place: the Hyborian Age of Robert E. Howard.

The Hyborian Age (it is *not*, despite what some modern authors and designers like to call it, “Hyboria,” but properly called “The Hyborian Age”) was an ancient age of humankind, approximately 10,000 years ago. The old civilizations had fallen and new ones arose, achieving a technology level equivalent to the High Middle Ages before a great and unknown catastrophe wiped all traces of these great and ancient kingdoms from the Earth. Still, their influence was felt down through the ages and many later (and even modern) kingdoms have their roots in the Hyborian Age. It is not an epic fantasy world of elves, dwarves, and struggles against powerful Dark

Lords. There are no so-called “demihumans” in the Hyborian Age, and those humanoids that exist are largely degenerate and de-evolved humans, or gigantic carnivorous ape-things.

There is no great war between law and chaos driving all men forward. In a Hyborian campaign everything exists in shades of gray. Certainly there are powerful men of strong honor and values, and clearly there are black sorcerers who seek only power and tyrannical dominance over others, but the clear theme of the Hyborian Age are the twin ideas that each man’s fate is in his own hands to decide, and that barbarism is the natural state of humankind, destined always to overcome the enforced rules of civilization. It is a world forged in the pulps of the 1920’s and 30’s, and a world that firmly established, if not created whole cloth, the genre of swords and sorcery.

## **WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY**

The following books and booklets are required for play

1. The Age of Conan (You have it in your hands!)
2. Dungeons & Dragons, Tactical Studies Rules, 1975-79
3. Chainmail, Guidon Games/Tactical Studies Rules, 1971-79
4. Supplement IV: Gods, Demi-Gods, & Heroes, Tactical Studies Rules, 1976-79

The following books and booklets are *highly recommended* for play

1. Supplement I: Greyhawk, Tactical Studies Rules, 1975-79
2. Supplement II: Blackmoor, Tactical Studies Rules, 1975-79
3. Supplement III: Eldritch Wizardry, Tactical Studies Rules, 1976-79
4. Swords & Spells, Tactical Studies Rules, 1976-79
5. The Strategic Review, Issues 1 through 6
6. Return to the Road of Kings, Mongoose Publishing, 2007\*
7. Conan Role Playing Game, TSR, inc., 1985\*

\*These contain useful guides to the Hyborian Age—both would be redundant, though each has its own take on the world and are interesting comparisons for that alone. The latter has a beautiful poster map of the Hyborian Age world.

Also check Philotomy’s OD&D Musings (<http://www.philotomy.com>), a website with many excellent suggestions for the philosophy of D&D play, house rules and variant classes, and the Hyborian Age Campaign Site (<http://hyboria.xoth.net>), which contains additional excellent maps, essays, articles, and information on the Hyborian Age, most for d20 version, but still useful for D&D play.

D&D, obviously, is needed for the core rules of play. Chainmail forms the basis of the combat system for a Hyborian Age game, the reasons for which are discussed later. Gods, Demi-Gods, & Heroes has a section with D&D stats

for major deities, monsters, and treasure of the Hyborian Age, as well as for King Conan himself. It should be noted that despite having hit points and statistics, true gods in the Hyborian Age are distant and aloof; they never show their faces amongst men to battle and be killed.

Supplements I through IV and Swords & Spells all have useful information in them, be it character classes such as the Thief, Assassin, and Druid, monsters that are applicable to a Hyborian game, or stats for using spells in mass combat. The Strategic Review contains several new and variant character classes such as the Ranger and Illusionist which are highly useful in a Hyborian game. Finally, Return to the Road of Kings and the Conan Roleplaying Game both have excellent and invaluable gazetteers of the Hyborian Age.

With all that said, on with the show!

## **MEN AND MAGIC**

### **CHARACTER RACES**

There are NO demihuman races at all. However, certain cultures have (optional) benefits similar to those granted by demihuman races. Fans of other versions of Hyborian Age role playing will note that the racial divisions herein disagree somewhat with some of the others—particularly Mongoose's, which is an exceptionally detailed breakdown of races, sub-races, and pseudo-races. For D&D, it's best to try and keep things simple.

This book will not contain detailed writeups of societies and cultures here, as these can be found in Mongoose's The Road of Kings sourcebook, which is an invaluable and largely system-free resource to anyone wishing to run a Hyborian Age game using any system.





The races of the Hyborian Age (not to be confused with its cultures, though in some cases there is overlap) are as follows:

**Æsir/Vanir:** Hailing from the lands of Asgard and Vanaheim respectively, the Æsir and Vanir are actually offshoots of a single common race, the Nordheimr, and thus share many of the same racial characteristics. They tend to be a broad and muscular race, the Æsir sporting blonde hair and blue eyes and the Vanir displaying red hair and green eyes. They tend to braid their hair and their great beards, and are known for being berserk and terrifying warriors.

Æsir and Vanir may only progress as Fighting-Men, Borderers (if using the modified Strategic Review Ranger class), or Bards and as Borderers may only progress to fifth level. Bards amongst the Nordheimr are called Skalds and progress to eighth level.

Æsir and Vanir gain +1 to Constitution but have -1 to Wisdom. In addition, they can make fearsome berserk attacks which grant +2 to attack dice as described under "Viking Berserkers," in Chainmail, p. 26. If using the Troop Type system, this means that the berserk warrior throws two extra dice. If using the Man-to-Man or Fantasy Combat system, this means that the berserk warrior adds +2 to all attacks. Entering this berserk fury must be done in the first round of combat (and takes the whole round to whip the warrior into the fury), and lasts until all opponents are dead or the berserker is killed. The berserker may not voluntarily end the berserk fury, and so long as there are enemies to kill, will remain consumed by it. After the fury wears off the Æsir suffers from fatigue (Chainmail p. 11) for 1d6 turns (1d6 x 10 minutes). If using Man to Man or Fantasy Combat tables, translate the attack and defense value penalties as a -2 to all of the character's die rolls and a +2 to opponents' attack rolls.

**Cimmerian:** Cimmerians are much like their Æsir and Vanir neighbors in many ways. They are a ferocious, barbaric tribe marked by tall, muscular builds and a strong barbaric code of honor. Cimmerians sport hair ranging from tawny brown to jet black, and eye colors from pale gray to crystal blue. Where the Nordheimr are known for their endurance, Cimmerians are known for raw physical strength. Cimmerians gain +1 to Strength and -1 to Intelligence. They may only progress as Fighting-Men, Borderers, or Thieves. As Borderers they progress only to fifth level and as Thieves they progress only to eighth.

Cimmerians have the same berserk ability as Æsir and Vanir, save that they do not choose to enter the fury; rather, whenever a Cimmerian enters combat, he must make a saving throw each round against Death, suffering -1 to the save cumulative for each round he remains in combat. If he fails the save, he instantly enters a berserk fury exactly as described under the Æsir and Vanir entry. This fury occurs instantly and does not require a full round to invoke. A

Cimmerian cannot choose to enter the fury; he is simply "consumed by the fighting-madness of his people."

Finally, Cimmerians are natural hillmen and climbers. A Cimmerian character may Climb as a Thief of half their level.

**Himelian:** Dwelling in the mountains between Vendhya and Hyrkania, the Himelians are a tall, wiry, hairy and superstitious race whose tribal breakdowns include the Afghuli, Irakzai, Galzai, Dagozai, Zhaibari, and Khurakzai. They are brown-skinned with black hair and dark eyes, and often wear great beards beneath their voluminous robes. Like the above races, the Himelians are barbaric and disdain civilized codes of behavior and chivalry, but have their own code of honor. They may progress as Fighting-Men, Borderers, Thieves, and Sorcerers (though the latter are rare and progression is possibly only to level 5).

Himelians gain +1 to all checks made to perform Borderer abilities and function as though they were one level higher than they are if thieves, but suffer -2 to saves against mind-affecting magic such as hypnosis and illusion.

**Hyperborean:** Hyperboreans are tall, gaunt, broad of shoulder and rib cage, slow of speech and violent. They are a dark and corrupt race prone to black sorcery and acts. Due to their intermingling with other races, Hyperboreans exhibit a wide variety of skin, hair, and eye pigmentation. They may advance as Fighting-Men, Thieves, Assassins, or Sorcerers and are unlimited in their advancement in any of these areas. They gain +1 to Constitution, and -1 to Charisma.

**Hyborian:** Hyborians, the dominant race of the Hyborian Age, are normal Men in all respects and gain no special abilities or penalties. They may advance in all classes to any level with no penalty save Illusionists and Monks which are unavailable, though at the DM's discretion certain cultures may impart specific bonuses; Bossonian Archers, for example, might gain abilities with bows similar to those possessed by Shemites, while Gundermen may be exceptional Borderers.

**Hyrkanian:** Hyrkanians are a horse culture living on the Steppes of the Eastern Hyborian world, across the Vilayet Sea from Turan. They are roughly analogous to the Huns, Mongols, and Cossacks of history, and are known for their prowess at archery. Hyrkanians can progress as Fighting-Men, Borderers, Thieves, or Assassins, but as Assassins are limited to 6<sup>th</sup> level, and as Borderers are limited to 5<sup>th</sup>.

A hardy folk of the plains, Hyrkanians gain +1 to Constitution and -1 to Charisma, as they are not accustomed to the niceties of Western society. In addition, Hyrkanian Fighting-Men gain benefit with bows as follows:

- Hyrkanian Fighting-Men are always treated as 1 level (Man) higher than their actual level when using the Troop Type system for archery. When a Hyrkanian Fighting-Man hits 10th level, against unarmored or 1/2 armored foes, he instead inflicts an extra die of damage on a successful hit with a bow.
- When using the Man-to-Man or Fantasy Combat system, Hyrkanian Fighting-Men gain +2 to all attacks with bows.
- Hyrkanian Fighting-Men can fire bows from horseback and perform split-move and fire when mounted.
- Hyrkanians who are not Fighting-Men attack as Fighting-Men when using bows, but do not gain the other above benefits.

Due to strong racial superstitions, Hyrkanians are -2 to save vs. any sort of mind-affecting magic, including illusions.

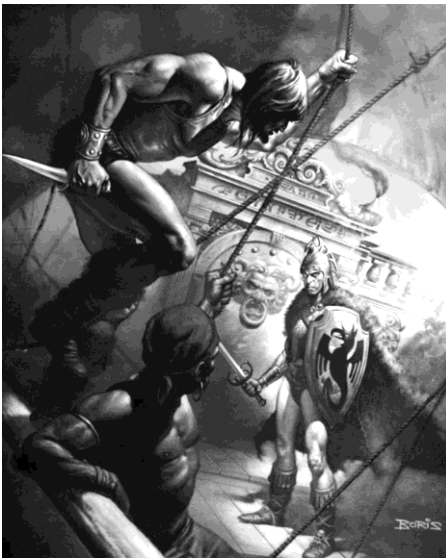
**Khitai:** The ancestors of the modern Far Eastern peoples of China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, etc., the Khitai are an exotic race with distinctly Far Eastern features. Player characters from Khitai can operate as monks, sorcerers, illusionists, fighting-men, thieves, and assassins, being restricted to 5th level as fighting-men and thieves, and 8th level as assassins and illusionists. They gain +1 to Intelligence and -1 to Constitution, being of a slight, frail build. Monks' thief abilities are as per the modified Thief class (cf. "Character Classes," below).

**Lemurian:** Little is known about the Lemurian race; they are a Caucasian, mountain-dwelling people who live in the peaks of far Lemuria, beyond the Far East of Khitai, and who worship degenerate dark gods and demons of the Outer Dark. They are included here for completeness' sake, though no Lemurians are ever encountered in Howard's writing. Lemurians should gain +1 to Intelligence and -1 to Constitution, and can advance as Fighting-Men, Illusionists, Sorcerers, Thieves, Assassins, and Monks. They are restricted to 4th level as Fighting-Men and Thieves, and 8th level as Assassins.

**Pict:** The Picts are a stone-age tribal culture who inhabit the farthest Western regions of the Hyborian Age world. They are constantly engaged in border skirmishes and wars with Aquilonia, who at one time was expansionist and imperialist and threatened the very survival of the Pictish wilderness. Though Caucasian in appearance, the Pictish culture in Howard's stories is often depicted as (badly stereotyped) Native American in type, with sprinklings of historical Pictish trappings, such as the blue face-paint with which they adorn themselves. Picts gain +1 to Dexterity and -1 to Intelligence and may advance as Fighting-Men, Thieves, Borderers, and Sorcerers (Pictish shamans), being restricted to 4th level in Thief and Sorcerer. For purposes of the Thief abilities of Hide, Listen, and Move Silently, and the Borderer ability to Track, Picts are treated as though they are four levels higher than they actually are, so long as they are in a forested, wilderness area.

**Shemite:** A proto-Arabic people, the Shemite Race covers Shem, Khoraja, Drujistan, Iranistan, Kosala, and all of the smaller tribal territories therein. Shemites tend to be tall, broad-shouldered, brown-skinned, and sport great blue-black beards and dark eyes. They are renowned as skilled bowmen and fearsome warriors. Shemites may advance as Fighting-Men, Assassins, or Sorcerers and as Sorcerers are limited to 6<sup>th</sup> level.

A Shemite character gains either the berserker ability of the Æsir/Vanir OR the archery abilities of the Hyrkanians (save that Shemites do not gain the ability to fire when mounted or perform split-move and fire on horseback). This choice must be made at character creation and cannot be changed. On the down side, Shemites being a fatalistic race, they suffer -1 to all saving throws of any kind.



**Stygian:** The demon-haunted, proto-Egyptian Stygia, the realm of the serpent god Set, produces the most feared sorcerers in the world. They are tall, thin, gaunt, and brown-skinned with black hair and black eyes. Stygians gain +1 to Intelligence and -1 to Strength. They may progress as Fighting-Men, Thieves, Assassins, and Sorcerers, being restricted to 5<sup>th</sup> level as Fighting-Men and Thieves. Stygian Sorcerers always cast spells as though they were one rank higher than they are (i.e. Seers cast as Magicians, Magicians as Warlocks, etc.), though they are still restricted as normal regarding what level of spell they may cast.

**Tribesman of the Black Kingdoms:** These cover both the civilized and semi-civilized kingdoms such as Darfar, Keshan, Kush, and Zembabwei, as well as the primitive tribes that inhabit the southernmost portions of the Hyborian world. They are black-skinned, short and slight of stature, and the more primitive stone-age tribes partake in cannibalism. Their racial characteristics are the same as those for Picts, save that their bonuses apply to desert or jungle climates (depending on the tribe; choose at character creation) rather than forests.

**Turanian:** Turanians are the ancestors of modern Turks, who live on the western side of the Vilayet sea. They share the same racial characteristics as Hyrkanians.

**Vendhyan:** The ancestors of the modern people of India, Vendhyans are an ancient, noble race known for their skill in diplomacy and their complex philosophies and society. They may progress as Fighting-Men, Thieves, Assassins, Monks, and Sorcerers with no limits to advancement, and gain +1 to Charisma. They gain +1 to all saving throws except those that are mind-affecting, including illusions, against which they suffer -2.

**Zamoran:** Zamora is a corrupt and decadent society marked by its tolerance, if not outright allowance, of shadowy violence and crime syndicates. Zamorans are of a Mediterranean countenance: an attractive people who are olive-skinned with dark hair and eyes. Zamoran characters may progress as Fighting-Men, Thieves, and Sorcerers, being restricted to 5th level as Fighting-Men or Sorcerers. Zamorans gain +1 to Dexterity but -1 to Strength, and when operating in urban or subterranean conditions, Zamoran thieves are treated as being one level higher than they actually are, for purposes of thieving abilities.

**Zingaran:** Zingarans are the ancestors of the modern Spanish peoples. They have a dark olive complexion, black hair and dark eyes, and often dress in bright, flamboyant colors. Swashbucklers at heart, Zingaran culture is obsessed with shows of honor and face, and marked by a lust for life. Zingarans gain +1 to Charisma but -1 to Constitution, and may progress as Fighting-Men or Thieves (though even Zingaran thieves are marked by their strict codes of honor). Zingarans are noted for their florentine fighting style, which uses a rapier and main-gauche in tandem, and when they enter combat if wearing armor lighter than chain may choose to gain one benefit of the fighting style each round:

- **Offense:** Gain one additional attack die in the Troop Type System (+1 to hit Man to Man or Fantasy)
- **Defense:** defend as the next higher Troop Type (or improve AC by 1 in Man-to-Man, or subtract one from opponent's roll in Fantasy).

## **CHARACTER CLASSES**

The following pre-existing character classes are appropriate for play in a Hyborian Age game, modified as listed. Careful readers will note that the class modifications herein eliminate d20's and d10's from the game entirely, leaving only d6's required for play. This is quite intentional, though if one does not have access to the requisite sources and wishes to use pre-existing classes as they stand, retaining %-based abilities and d20-based checks, this is quite feasible to do and stands as with all things in the purview of the DM.

- D&D: Fighting-Man only. There are no D&D-styled Magic Users or Clerics in a Hyborian Age game.
- Greyhawk: Thief (using the modified rules below).

- **Blackmoor:** Assassin and Monk (Monks only exist in Vendhya, Khitai, and Lemuria). Assassins' chance to assassinate is rolled on 2d6 instead of % dice, adding +1 per 10% chance to assassinate (dropping fractions), against a target number of 11.
- **Eldritch Wizardry:** The Druid, save that druids cast spells as clerical sorcerers (but from their own pre-existing list). Druids should be re-named shamans and only exist amongst the Picts.
- **The Strategic Review:** The Ranger (as modified here), Bards (as modified here), Illusionists (save that these exist only in Khitai, Vendhya, and Lemuria, and cast as arcane Sorcerers, save from their own spell lists).

## MODIFIED CLASSES

### THE RANGER (BORDERER)

The Ranger class as presented in The Strategic Review is re-named "Borderer," and being Lawful is no longer a requirement. There's nothing inherently "Good" or "Evil" about the skill set of this class, so there's no reason to require it.

The class is as written, save that tracking is not done with percentile dice, but with the roll of a d6. Outdoors the ranger has a 5-in-6 chance of tracking, this chance being reduced by one for every two days old the signs are.

Indoors the ranger tracks as follows:

<u>Monster's Action</u>	<u>Ranger needs to track</u>
Goes down a normal passage	1-4
Goes through a door (normal or trap)	1-3
Goes up/down a chimney or shaft	1-2
Goes through a secret door	1

In a city, treat empty streets as normal passages, moderately populated areas as "going through a door," and heavily populated/bustling areas as secret doors.

### THE THIEF

#### THIEF SKILLS (TARGET TO ROLL ON 2 DICE)

Level	Stealth	Locks & Traps	Hear Noise	Climb	Sleight of Hand	Scroll
1-2	7	8	8	7	8	(10)
3-4	6	7	7	6	7	1 <sup>st</sup> level (9)
5-6	5	6	6	5	6	2 <sup>nd</sup> level (8)
7-8	4	5	5	4	5	3 <sup>rd</sup> level (7)

Level	Stealth	Locks & Traps	Hear Noise	Climb	Sleight of Hand	Scroll
9-10	3	4	4	3	4	4 <sup>th</sup> level (6)
11-12	3	3	3	3	3	5 <sup>th</sup> level (5)
13	3	3	3	3	3	6 <sup>th</sup> level (4)

Sleight of Hand refers to picking pockets, palming small items, placing small items on another's unaware person, or any other act that would require deft and subtle movements. Scroll represents the ability to decipher magical scrolls and unfamiliar languages; the parenthetical target number is the target to succeed, this modified upward if the writing is of a magical nature by the level of scroll being read; the indicated level is the maximum level of magical writing that can be deciphered. Thus, an 11<sup>th</sup>-level thief could attempt to read up to a 5<sup>th</sup> level spell scroll, the target to do so being 10, a 4<sup>th</sup> level scroll with a target of 9, third with a target of 8, etc.

A thief gains maximum damage from a backstab at first level. At fourth it becomes d6+6. At seventh it becomes 2d6+6. At tenth it becomes 3d6+6.

## THE BARD

A Bard is a jack-of-all-trades in Dungeons and Dragons, he is both an amateur thief and healer as well as a good fighter. He is supposedly able to extract himself from delicate situations through the use of diplomacy, but since this does not always work he is given the innate ability to charm creatures. A Bard has the thieving abilities of a thief one half his level rounded off to the lower level, thus a Bard 11th level would have the abilities of a 5th level thief; the



sole exception is that Bards do not gain the thief's back stabbing ability. A Bard may use any weapon and for purposes of fighting capability and saving throws they are treated like D&D clerics. Bards are limited to chainmail or leather armor. If a Bard chooses to wear chainmail his chances of climbing walls and moving silently are halved.

The Bard's primary ability is that of mesmerizing any creature that can hear his song. However, creatures of more than three hit dice have a higher resistance to the Bard's charm. Any creature hearing the bard's performance,

be it singing, poetry recitals, monologues, etc., must make a saving throw vs. wands or be mesmerized, so long as the bard continues to perform. A Bard may attempt to use his charm once per day per level. When a Bard attempts to use his charm he begins performing, and all those creatures within hearing distance (app. 60 ft.), except the Bard's own party, who fail their saving throws than the number rolled are mesmerized. While a creature is mesmerized by a Bard it does nothing but listen to the Bard play, however, if it is distracted (by a loud noise, etc.) or if it is attacked the charm is broken.

For every hit die above three a creature, monster, etc., has, it gains +1 to its saving throw against the effect. Likewise, Monks gain +1 for every 2 levels he has attained to his save. Certain monsters have an especially high resistance to the Bard's charm, like undead, who gain +1 for every hit die they possess, and demons, who have a gain +9 resistance to the Bard's charm (failing only on a natural roll of 2). However, in some cases a Bard's song may be very helpful, as in the case of the harpies' song, which the Bard can negate by playing. Some monsters even consider a Bard to be a great treasure and many legends are told of Dragons who refused to let Bards stop playing their restful melodies . . .

Other things affect the Bard's ability to charm; for example, if the creatures were previously enraged or if they are particularly hungry, etc., the chances of charming them may be slightly reduced, granting them a +1 or +2 to their save.

While a Bard has the creature mesmerized he may attempt to implant a suggestion in the creature's subconscious; these should be relatively simple suggestions in the case of low intelligence creatures, the complexity of the suggestion being allowed to increase with increasing intelligence of the charmed creature. In all cases it is wise to follow the guidelines of the third level sorcerer spell 'suggestion' and saving throws are always applicable versus the Bard's suggestion. If a creature makes its saving throw from a Bard's performance then it will immediately realize what has happened and more than likely attack the party.

Bards tend towards being unaligned in nature though there exist paragons of good and evil, and champions of balance. Bards are usually wanderers and do not like to settle down, for this reason only a Master Bard may build a castle, other





Bards are expected to find short time employment or lodgings in return for their songs and legends. Bards are extremely quick at picking up languages, customs, etc, and have a vast knowledge of cults, religions, and legends. Thus Bards are allowed to speak as many different languages as their intelligence score.

A Bard's Lore ability reflects the Bard's knowledge of legends, magic, etc. This number is the bonus a Bard has on a roll of 2d6 against a target of 11, of telling what certain objects or creatures are, what they do, their properties, purposes, etc. This check also reflects his knowledge of locales and legends outside of the dungeon; the referee must decide which places and legends a Bard would have a chance of knowing on the outdoor maps. A Bard's Lore ability is especially useful when it comes to myths, legends and experience in recognizing various types of heraldry, weapons and armor, both magical and non-magical, as well as his excellent knowledge of magical writings.

The base target for this ability is 11; the Bard may gain additional bonuses or penalties based on the obscurity of the knowledge he is attempting to call forth. Common or easy facts gain +4 to the check. Trivia or lesser known, but still common, knowledge gains +2. Moderately difficult knowledge is +0. Knowledge that is somewhat obscure suffers -2, and exceptionally obscure or specialized knowledge suffers -4. The referee should use judgment when applying bonuses or penalties.

Finally, his extensive lore expertise includes knowledge of herbalism, treating wounds, and holistic medicines, enabling him to act as a healer. Once per day per patient, the Bard can make a Lore check, representing his finding or having in his possession the proper herbs, poultices, bandages, etc, and his knowledge of how to treat the injury in question. Depending the availability of resources or the Bard's current supplies affect the difficulty of the check, but generally it should be very easy (+4) to trivial (+2) as the knowledge itself is easy to come by. If successful, he can restore 1d6 hit points of damage to the wounded character, or can grant an additional saving throw against poison or disease. Treating a patient requires one turn to accomplish. At fifth level the bard can perform this ability twice per day per patient, and at tenth he can do this thrice per day per patient.

Levels and the Number of Experience Points Needed To Attain Them (Bards)

Level	Title	Lore	Dice for Accumulative hits	Fighting Capability	XP
1	Fool	+1	1	Man	0
2	Jester	+1	2	Man+1	1,000
3	Poet	+2	3	2 Men	2,500
4	Storyteller	+2	4	3 Men	5,000
5	Actor	+3	4+1	3 Men +1	10,000
6	Thespian	+3	5	Hero-1	20,000

Level	Title	Lore	Dice for Accumulative hits	Fighting Capability	XP
7	Lyricist	+4	6	Hero	35,000
8	Minstrel	+4	7	Hero +1	50,000
9	Skald	+5	7+1	Superhero-1	100,000
10	Racaralde	+5	7+2	Superhero	200,000
11	Jongleur	+6	8	Superhero +1	350,000
12	Troubador	+6	8+1	Superhero +1	500,000
13	Muse	+7	8+2	Superhero +1	650,000
14	Lore master	+7	8+3	Superhero +2	800,000
15	Bard	+8	9	Superhero +2	1,150,000
16	Master Bard	+8	9+1	Superhero +2	1,300,000

## THE SORCERER

The Sorcerer replaces standard D&D Magic Users and Clerics. Sorcerers have the fighting capability and saving throws of magic-users (save that they gain +3 to save vs. any kind of magic), but turn or control undead as clerics and have the hit dice of clerics.

The magic system is as laid out in Chainmail, p. 30-33, using Spell Complexity, with slight modifications.

- The Complexity of a spell is its D&D level. Chainmail gives 3 values (Negate, Delay, Immediate) for 2d6 roll results. These are the top values in target ranges. Thus for a Seer casting a level 1 spell, 5 or below fails, 6-7 is a delayed effect, and 8+ is immediate.
- Sorcerers are still restricted as to the maximum level spell they can cast as per D&D Clerics and Magic-Users. If a spell would be available to both Clerics and Magic-Users at different levels, use Sorcerer's order (arcane or priestly) as a guideline.
- Level titles depend upon whether the sorcerer is of an arcane bent (a secret sorcerous cabal, or a sole arcane practitioner) or of a Priestly order.
- Sorcerers advance as casters (for purposes of complexity checks) according to their level title (i.e. Seer, Magician, Warlock, Sorcerer, Wizard).
- If a Sorcerer rolls a natural "2" on his spellcasting roll, he suffers backlash—1d6 points of temporary/subdual damage, and loses access to that spell for 24 hours.
- Corruption: Magic is alien and inherently corrupting. Whenever a wizard casts a spell (successfully or unsuccessfully) he must make a standard saving throw against spells. If he fails, he gains a point of corruption. For every five points thus gained, the caster suffers a cumulative -1 to all future saves and becomes a bit less human. At first this begins with his outlook—he slides ever more towards Evil/Chaos.

Every two saves failed slide him one rank closer to evil. Once he is evil, he begins suffering physical effects. Exactly what these effects are is up to the DM, but they should include things like glowing red eyes, jet black or scaly skin, an aura of corruption that makes those around him uncomfortable, causes plants to wither, food to rot, etc., vestigial tentacles, clawed hands, gaunt appearance...the options are nearly endless.

- Sorcerers automatically sense the presence of magic energy and its general relative power to their own, be it in another sorcerer, an item, etc., simply by looking at the source of the magic.
- Sorcerers must still prepare spells every morning per the Magic-User "Spells per day" table on Men & Magic p. 17, but do not forget spells when cast unless they fail a casting check. If they fail a check, the spell energy is used and lost through a form of magical backlash, and the sorcerer cannot access the ritual for the rest of the day.
- Spell Lists are a combination of Magic-User and Clerical lists, save the following spells which are not available as they don't fit the flavor of the class. Full spell lists can be found on pages 21-22.

Generally, very "flashy" or explosive direct-damage spells are unavailable. Direct damage is generally limited to things like death spell, cloudkill, disintegrate, etc. Fireball is too much of an "artillery" type spell, though Lightning Bolt has precedent in the "evil sorcerer" mold; however, Lightning Bolt should be restricted to a single target rather than everything in a line. DMs should keep this in mind when allowing or disallowing spells from later sources.

#### Levels and the Amount of Experience Needed to Attain Them (Sorcerers)

Lvl	Title (Arcane)	Title (Priestly)	Exp.
1	Seer	Seer	0
2	Disciple	Acolyte	3,000
3	Magician	Minister (Magician casting)	6,000
4	Conjurer	Adept	11,000
5	Theurgist	Theurgist	25,000
6	Warlock	Deacon (Warlock casting)	50,000
7	Enchanter	Friar	75,000
8	Sorcerer	Brother Priest (Sorcerer casting)	100,000
9	Necromancer	Vicar	150,000
10	Thaumaturgist	Curate	300,000
11	Wizard	High Priest (Wizard casting)	450,000
12	Red Wizard	Monsignor	600,000
13	Black Wizard	Bishop	750,000
14	Master	Arch-Bishop	900,000
15	Magus	Cardinal	1,150,000
16	Archmage (+1 Casting)	Patriarch (+1 Casting)	1,300,000

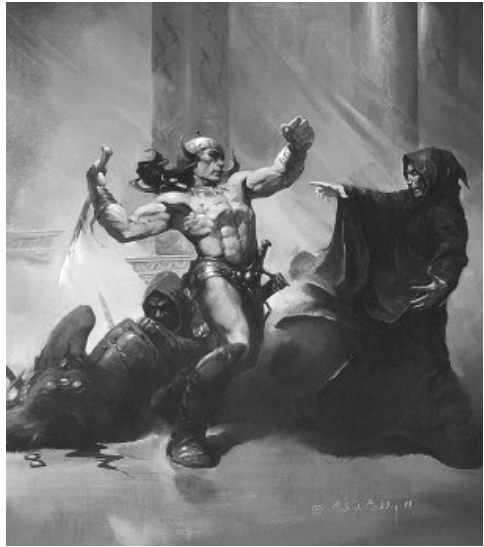
## Sorcerers and Magic

All magic users in the Hyborian age, both scholarly (arcane) and clerical, are sorcerers. Even sub-classes such as Druids and Illusionists (above) use the same system for spellcasting, though they may have their own spell lists. Generally, spells that cure wounds are not available in a Hyborian Age game, though higher level spells such as Heal may be. Any kind of true resurrection or raising of the dead is not possible without powerful magical artifacts such as the Heart of Ahriman, and even then the magic is as likely to create an intelligent undead as it is to restore true life to the dead.

For spells up to 9<sup>th</sup> level, simply extrapolate from and continue the casting progression as shown in [Chainmail](#), p. 33.

## Scrolls and Rituals

While sorcerers are still restricted by their spell list as to the spells they can cast at will, it is possible for a sorcerer to attempt to cast a higher level spell using a



ritual; this makes the seeking of ancient scrolls and books of power extremely palatable to a sorcerer, as a sorcerer can immediately cast any spell from a scroll or tome as a ritual by following the prescribed instructions therein. Casting the spell requires a standard casting check against the spell's level (complexity) as listed on the [Chainmail](#) casting matrix ([Chainmail](#), p.33) and the ritual takes 10 minutes per level of the spell, minus the caster's level. Thus, a second-level caster attempting a sixth-level spell requires a 40-minute ritual. The resulting save against corruption, however, suffers a penalty equal to one half the difference between the spell being cast and the maximum spell level the caster is able to normally cast (minimum of -1). Note that a sorcerer can also choose to cast any spell he has in his personal knowledge (ie. the spell is in his list of known spells), as a ritual, even if he has not prepared the spell for that day.

## MULTICLASSING

Multiclassing is not an alien concept to [D&D](#)—Elves can advance as both Magic-Users and Fighting-Men, while Dwarves can advance as both Fighting-

Men and Thieves. Since picking up a vast variety of skills and abilities is part and parcel of the Hyborian Age, it should be allowed here. At character creation, a player may choose any two classes allowed to his race. At the start of each session of play, the player must choose in which class his character will operate for that session, gaining none of the benefits of his other class. Note that since classes advance at different rates, it is likely, for example, that a Zamoran Fighting-Man/Thief will be higher level as a Thief than as a Fighting-Man. Players should maintain a single experience record, applying the totals as appropriate to each class.

As characters progress through the game, sometimes necessity will cause them to pick up new skills sets. Thus, it is possible for a character to begin play single-classed and gain a second class later on in his career (Conan, in Supplement IV, is a 15th level Fighting-Man and 9th-level Thief). In this case, the player must maintain two different experience records for each class, and gains experience only in the class as which he acted in a given session.

Still, unless there are exceptional circumstances (DM's discretion), no character may ever perform as more than one class in a given game session, and no character may ever have more than two character classes from which to choose.

There is one exception to this rule: No sorcerer may ever multiclass. Sorcery is an obsessive and all-consuming pursuit, and there are no dabblers in the dark arts.

## **CULTURAL SKILLS**

It is also possible, by the sacrifice of 2,000 experience points, to gain the racial abilities of a race different than one's own, in addition to abilities already possessed. This sacrifice must be made at the point where a player would normally advance, and the player must have advanced in the culture in which he wishes to gain abilities. For example, Valeria, an Aquilonian Fighting-woman, wishes to learn the Zingaran florentine fighting style. She must adventure in Zingara until she advances a level, then sacrifice 2,000 XP (forcing her to remain her current level rather than advancing) and she gains the Zingaran racial abilities in addition to her own. This WILL inflict penalties that come with the race as well as benefits (including ability score modifications).

## **LANGUAGES**

There is no common tongue in the Hyborian Age, nor are there alignment languages. All players begin with their native tongue and one other, plus additional languages as explained in Men & Magic, page 12.

## **ALIGNMENT**

Alignment is strictly optional in a Hyborian Game, though the alternate "Good, Evil, Balance, Unaligned" method from *The Wasted Lands* can help to define a character's allegiance in important conflicts. The only exception to this is the Sorcerer (See "Character Classes," above), who must choose an alignment as it is integral to his slide into inhumanity. No character class has alignment requirements.



## SPELLS TABLE

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<sup>1</sup>Located in Supplement I: Greyhawk

<sup>2</sup>Located in Supplement III: Eldritch Wizardry

\*Affects only a single target

\*\*As Cure spells, but deals damage instead of curing

### LEVEL ONE

1. Cause Light Wounds\*\*
2. Charm Person
3. Detect Snares & Pits<sup>2</sup>
4. Hold Portal
5. Light
6. Locate Animals<sup>2</sup>
7. Predict Weather<sup>2</sup>
8. Protection from Evil/Good
9. Purify Food & Water
10. Read Languages
11. Shield<sup>1</sup>
12. Sleep
13. Ventriloquism<sup>1</sup>

### LEVEL TWO

1. Bless<sup>1</sup> (Clerical Only)
2. Create Water
3. Darkness 5' Radius<sup>1</sup>
4. Detect Evil
5. Detect Invisible
6. E.S.P.
7. Find Traps
8. Heat Metal<sup>2</sup>
9. Hold Animal<sup>2</sup>
10. Invisibility
11. Knock
12. Levitate
13. Locate Object
14. Locate Plants<sup>2</sup>
15. Magic Mouth<sup>1</sup>
16. Mirror Image<sup>1</sup>
17. Obscurement<sup>2</sup>
18. Phantasmal Forces
19. Produce Flame<sup>2</sup>
20. Silence 15' Radius
21. Speak with Animals
22. Strength<sup>1</sup>

23. Warp Wood<sup>2</sup>
24. Web<sup>1</sup>
25. Wizard Lock

### LEVEL THREE

1. Call Lightning<sup>2</sup>
2. Clairaudience
3. Clairvoyance
4. Dispel Magic
5. Explosive Runes<sup>1</sup>
6. Haste
7. Hold Person
8. Infravision
9. Lightning Bolt\* (Arcane Only)
10. Monster Summoning I<sup>1</sup>
11. Plant Growth
12. Prayer (Clerical Only)<sup>1</sup>
13. Protection from Fire<sup>2</sup>
14. Protection from Normal Missiles
15. Remove Curse (Clerical Only)
16. Rope Trick<sup>1</sup>
17. Slow
18. Speak with Dead
19. Suggestion<sup>1</sup>
20. Water Breathing

### LEVEL FOUR

1. Cause Serious Wounds\*\*
2. Charm Monster
3. Confusion
4. Control Temperature, 10' Radius<sup>2</sup>
5. Fear<sup>1</sup>
6. Insect Plague<sup>2</sup>
7. Monster Summoning II<sup>1</sup>

8. Neutralize Poison
9. Polymorph Self
10. Protection from Lightning<sup>2</sup>
11. Speak with Plants<sup>2</sup>
12. Turn Sticks to Snakes
13. Wizard Eye

### **LEVEL FIVE**

1. Animate Dead
2. Cause Disease\*\*
3. Cloudkill (Arcane Only)
4. Commune (Clerical Only)
5. Conjure Elemental (Arcane Only)
6. Contact Higher Plane (Clerical Only)
7. Feeblemind
8. Hold Monster
9. Magic Jar
10. Monster Summoning III<sup>1</sup>
11. Pass-Wall
12. Quest
13. Telekinesis
14. Transmute Rock-Mud

### **LEVEL SIX**

1. Animate Objects<sup>1</sup>
2. Anti-Animal Shell<sup>2</sup>
3. Anti-magic Shell
4. Conjure Animals<sup>1</sup>
5. Death Spell
6. Find the Path<sup>1</sup>
7. Invisible Stalker
8. Legend Lore<sup>1</sup>
9. Lower Water
10. Monster Summoning IV<sup>1</sup>
11. Projected Image
12. Repulsion<sup>1</sup>

13. Speak with Monsters<sup>1</sup>
14. Stone to Flesh
15. Word of Recall<sup>1</sup>

### **LEVEL SEVEN**

1. Aerial Servant<sup>2</sup>
2. Astral Spell<sup>2</sup>
3. Earthquake<sup>2</sup>
4. Holy Word (Clerical Only)<sup>1</sup>
5. Monster Summoning V<sup>1</sup>
6. Phase Door<sup>1</sup> (Arcane Only)
7. Polymorph Others<sup>1</sup>
8. Power Word – Stun
9. Simulacrum (Arcane Only)<sup>1</sup>
10. Wind Walk<sup>1</sup>
11. Part Water<sup>1</sup>
12. Animate Rock<sup>2</sup>
13. Transmute Metal to Wood<sup>2</sup>

### **LEVEL EIGHT**

1. Clone<sup>1</sup>
2. Fire Storm<sup>2</sup>
3. Mass Charm<sup>1</sup>
4. Mind Blank<sup>1</sup>
5. Monster Summoning VI<sup>1</sup>
6. Polymorph Any Object<sup>1</sup>
7. Power Word – Blind<sup>1</sup>
8. Symbol<sup>1</sup>

### **LEVEL NINE**

1. Gate<sup>1</sup>
2. Maze<sup>1</sup>
3. Meteor Swarm<sup>1</sup>
4. Monster Summoning VII<sup>1</sup>
5. Power Word-Kill<sup>1</sup>
6. Shape Change<sup>1</sup>
7. Time Stop<sup>1</sup>
8. Wish<sup>1</sup>



# MONSTERS AND TREASURE

Many monsters, heroes, and gods of the Hyborian Age are listed in Supplement IV: Gods, Demi-Gods, and Heroes, pages 45-52, with even more creatures applicable to the age listed throughout (see the Finnish mythology section in particular).



There are many more monsters in D&D—even standards—that are appropriate for encounters in the Hyborian Age. A complete list appears below, but in general if it's a creepy crawly, has a horrific, unnatural, or Lovecraftian bent, is undead, or is some sort of mutated take on a regular creature, it's likely appropriate to the Hyborian Age. Indeed, it is rarely necessary to concoct new monsters for a Hyborian Age game, particularly since the stats in D&D are so basic. Simply use an appropriate set of statistics from a pre-existing monster, and invent a good, uniquely grotesque, unnatural, or horrific description for it.

Of the creatures listed in Monsters & Treasure, the following critters

are appropriate to the Hyborian Age:

- Men (obviously) will be the most often encountered foe.
- Goblins and Kobolds can be used to represent degenerate underground pygmy races.\*
- Gnolls and Ogres should be used to mimic beast-men and carnivorous apes.\*
- Skeletons/Zombies
- Ghouls, Wights, Wraiths, Spectres, Mummies, Vampires and all manner of undead are applicable.
- Basilisks, while not strictly Hyborian in nature, do fit in the concept of a giant serpent whose bite causes petrification.
- Wyverns are similar to the "dragons" Conan and Valeria encounter in "Red Nails."
- Lycanthropes

- Purple Worms
- Sea Monsters
- Rocs
- Djinn and Efreet though any spells worked should be as Sorcerers, albeit without corruption risks to these creatures.
- Jellies, Puddings, Slimes, Molds and Oozes
- Large Insects

\*Never refer to these creatures as orcs, ogres, goblins, kobolds, gnolls, etc. One of the keys to a well-run Hyborian Age game is description. Describe your monster not as a goblin, but as a degenerate, dark-skinned pygmy race of the hills or caves. Describe not an ogre, but a giant, 7-foot-tall ape-thing with jaundiced, watery-eyes, slavering tusks and pustule-covered skin.

#### Creatures from Supplement I: Greyhawk

- Shadows
- Will o' Wisp
- Liches (Cast as Sorcerers)
- Harpies
- Lizard Men (Called "Serpent Men," and possess the additional ability to polymorph into human form—these are rare and presumably have been extinct since the time of King Kull, thousands of years earlier. However, certain pastiche writers have included appearances by the Serpent Men.)
- Doppelgangers
- Lycanthropes
- Lamassu
- Salamanders
- Umber Hulks
- Hell Hounds
- Stirges
- Giant Ticks
- Carrion Crawlers
- Gelatinous Cubes
- Golems

#### Creatures from Supplement II: Blackmoor

- Giant Crabs, Octopi, Squid, Crocodile, Toad, Frog, Leech, Wasps, Beetle
- Fire Lizard
- Lizard
- Elasmosaurus, Mosasaurus, Plesiosaurus
- Giant Shark

- Whale
- Giant Eel, Lamprey, Sea Horse, Portuguese Man-o-War, Dolphins
- Pungi Ray, Manta Ray
- Water Spiders, Weed Eels
- Sahuagin ("Deep Ones")
- Locathah (also "Deep Ones")
- Morkoth
- Poisonous Coral
- Mashers
- Strangle Weed

Creatures from Supplement III: Eldritch Wizardry

- Demons, Type I through VI, including Succubi
- Mind Flayers (These are called Spawn of the Outer Dark)



In addition, Geoffrey McKinney has created an excellent Lovecraftian Dungeons & Dragons supplement entitled Carcosa. Most of the monsters in that particular booklet are apt for use in a Hyborian Age campaign as well.

Finally, one should not overlook Mongoose Publishing's excellent Conan Roleplaying Game sourcebooks. While designed for the 3.5 edition rules, these books contain excellent ideas and suggestions, as well as rules for creation of sorcerous abominations and generation of demons from the Outer Dark; for an enterprising DM, most monsters from later editions are easily translatable to the original rules—OD&D monsters revolve almost entirely around hit dice and special abilities.

Unfortunately, at the time of writing this game is out of print and the books are selling at a premium, but if you get a chance to snatch a few up, particularly Secrets of Skelos, Bestiary of the Hyborian Age, and Return to the Road of Kings, these books come highly recommended.

## **MAGICAL TREASURE**

Magic items of any type are rare and unique, and almost always serve a specific purpose—there isn't a lycanthrope-bane longsword; rather, there is a set of longswords constructed specifically to deal damage to the lycanthropic

monsters of a certain lost island. Outside of this lost island, the swords, while fine quality, would impart no special game benefits. Most persistent magic items are for sorcerers, though certain swords, girdles, and rings exist that can be used by warrior types. For example, in “People of the Black Circle,” Conan is loaned the use of a girdle that gives him resistance against the magic of the wizards of the Black Circle. This girdle allows him to battle in a situation in which he otherwise would have been quite outclassed. He also loses use of the girdle at the end of the adventure. In “The Phoenix on the Sword,” the ghost of the sage Epimetreus traces a magical phoenix on Conan’s sword, which enables the new king to battle a demon sent against him by Thoth-Amon. The sword, of course, is broken in the process.

Persistent magic items, such as Thoth-Amon’s Serpent Ring of Set, are singular, rare, and likely of the artifact variety; use [Supplement III](#) and the Hyborian write-up in [Supplement IV](#) as guidelines.

There are NO intelligent magic swords.



# THE UNDERWORLD AND WILDERNESS ADVENTURES

## INTRODUCTION

Many gamers reading this booklet will recognize these rules from the prior Forbidden Lore pamphlet available online. They have been included here in their entirety for completeness' sake. For further clarification and explanation, the author cannot recommend enough, Aldarron's excellent compilation of Chainmail combat rules, found at <http://stores.lulu.com/boggswood>.



It cannot be stressed enough that the Chainmail rules for combat are essential to gaining the gritty feel of a Hyborian Age game. The "Troop Type" rules function as excellent "mook rules," when Conan needs to wade through a horde of thugs, while the Man-to-Man rules are the standard means of combat resolution, and the Fantasy rules cover Conan's struggles with demons, man-apes, and giant serpents.

Tips on how to convert D&D monsters to Chainmail's Fantasy Combat system are found on page 5 of Monsters & Treasure.

The problem is how exactly to use Chainmail for Dungeons & Dragons. For years—perhaps even since the game first appeared on the scene—gamers have debated exactly how Chainmail was intended for use as the combat system for the original Dungeons & Dragons rules. There are tantalizing hints within the pages of the original three booklets, but as with much of those early games, a great deal is left blurred and to interpretation. Perhaps, in this case, too much is left for the individual players to work out. Clearly Gygax and Arneson had strong ideas in mind, but these ideas are not as clearly spelled out.

It has been pointed out by veterans of those early days that indeed almost nobody actually used Chainmail for Dungeons & Dragons combat, but in

recent years the movement known as the “Old School Renaissance” has seen a great deal of debate and theory as to the original intent.

Note: to use this pamphlet you will need BOTH the original Dungeons & Dragons booklets AND the original Chainmail rules. It does not reproduce rules from either source; it merely serves as a bridge to link the two, cross-referencing rules from D&D with those from Chainmail. If you do not own Chainmail, the d20-based “alternate” combat system will function in a Hyborian Age game, but some of the flavor and grit will be lost in the translation.

## **SYSTEMS OF COMBAT IN CHAINMAIL**

There are three distinct systems of combat in the original Chainmail rules. They are:

The Troop Type System: Wherein troops are classified by their general category (Heavy Foot, Light Mounted, etc.) and battle based on these classifications, rolling handfuls of six-sided dice and checking for “hits,” usually on results of 5 or 6. This was the original mass combat rule for Chainmail, and is recommended when higher-level (“Hero” and above) PCs combat larger numbers of single hit-die creatures.

The Man to Man System: Wherein figures are granted an Armor Class (AC) based on their protective gear, and attack opponents rolling 2d6 on a table, referencing their weapon type against the opponent’s armor.

The Fantasy Supplement: Wherein figures attack specifically fantastic creatures such as dragons, lycanthropes, Rocs, ogres and other heroes, rolling 2d6 on a table referencing the two figure types.

## **CHOOSING A SYSTEM**

How does this all come together? What system is intended for use in “Man scale” Dungeons & Dragons? It would seem that the Man to Man system is the most obvious answer, but this contradicts specific references to the Troop Type System and the Fantasy Supplement system implicit in the rule books.

The answer to the conundrum is deceptively simple: use all three.

The biggest mistake often made when trying to work this out is deciding on a single system. What many who attempt this task forget is that D&D in the early days was a mishmash of sub-systems designed in a toolkit, “whatever works for the situation” philosophy. There is nothing wrong with combining the three subsystems in Chainmail; indeed, it is reasonable to suspect that is exactly what Gygax and Arneson intended.

Below we will examine each system, with a detailed breakdown of how it all works in “Man Scale” D&D. The Troop Type and Man to Man systems are

largely interchangeable and in many situations it will be a simple matter of taste and preference which is used. Certainly the Troop Type system plays much faster, but does not include the detail and potential drama of the Man to Man system, which better represents the struggles of heroic figures such as Conan.

In the end, it is recommended that for situations such as the battles fought in Tolkien between the Fellowship and dozens of orcs, the Troop Type system works better, while when Aragorn goes one-on-one against an Uruk captain, the Man to Man system is preferable. Conan struggling against a gigantic snake or massive carnivorous ape in the dank caverns of an undercity, on the other hand, would be best served using the Fantasy Supplement rules.

## **THE TROOP TYPE SYSTEM**

In actual play the Troop Type System is exceptionally easy. It does, however, require the most explanation to understand. Thus, we will approach this system first.

### **RECONCILING CHAINMAIL TROOP TYPES**

In Chainmail there are the following classifications of troops (excluding arquibusiers, or primitive riflemen, and culture-specific troops):

#### INFANTRY

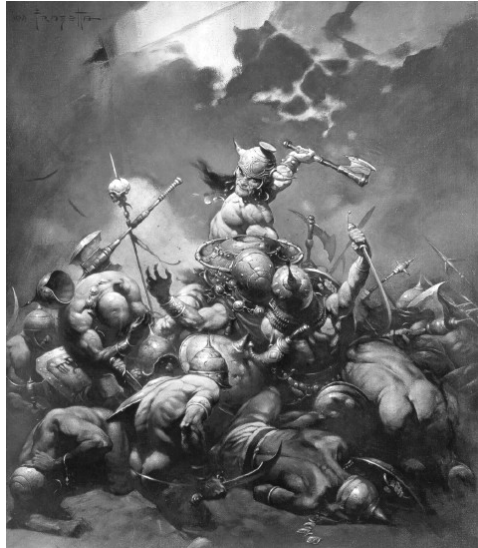
- Light Foot
- Heavy Foot
- Armored Foot

#### ARCHERY

- Archers
- Crossbowmen
- Long bowmen
- Heavy Crossbowmen

#### CAVALRY

- Light Horse
- Medium Horse
- Heavy Horse



In Dungeons & Dragons, there are eight classes of armor, ranging from AC 9 (no armor or shield) to AC 2 (Plate armor AND shield) (**Men and Magic**, page 19).

In **Men and Magic**, characters attack as x number of "Men," or "Heroes" or "Superheroes".

Page 24 of **Underworld and Wilderness Adventures** reads as follows:

“The basic system is that from Chainmail, with one figure representing one man or creature. Melee can be conducted...by the Chainmail system, with scores equalling (sic) a drive back or a kill equal only to a hit.”

This seems simple enough, but there are problems.

**Problem 1:** What constitutes a "Man"? This is unclear by the rules on their face—the terms “Figure” and “Man” are often used interchangeably, but there are sections which refer to a figure representing 20 men.

**Problem 2:** Which system is meant to be used? The 20:1 combat system, the Man to Man system, or the Fantasy Supplement system?

The answer to Problem 2 is tied up in Problem 1.

What constitutes a "Man" is clarified in Chainmail, though somewhat obscurely—it is not obvious. On the Fantasy Reference Table (page 43 in the 3rd edition), the asterisked footnote defining a "Hero" clarifies that a "Man" is equivalent to "Either Heavy Foot, Armored Foot, Light Horse, etc., depending on arms and situations..."

Okay, so “Man” refers generally to “Figure.” Now, "depending on arms and situations" now becomes the crux of the problem, though one easily resolved, as DM fiat is common, accepted, and expected in the original Dungeons & Dragons rules. The trick is dividing up armor and arms into the categories we looked at above.

**Troop Types Defined:** Chainmail gives us some guidelines as to what constitutes the various troop types, on page 14:

Light Foot: Missile troops, Swiss/Landsknechte\*, Peasants, Crews

Heavy Foot: Normons, Saxons, Turks, Vikings, Men-at-Arms

Armored Foot: Dismounted Knights, Sergeants, Italian City Levies and Condottiere

Light Horse: Magyars, Mongols, Saracens, Spanish, Turks, Hobilars

Medium Horse: Mongols, Norman Knights, Esquires, Saracens, Spanish Turks, Turcopoles

Heavy Horse: Knights, Reiter, Gendarmes



Let us return to our 8 AC ratings. At the two farthest ends of the spectrum—no armor and plate + shield—we clearly have Light Foot and Armored Foot.

Using Chainmail's Troop classifications and examining the typical types of armor and training for the troop types given, we can divide this way:

Light Foot: AC 9-8 (No Armor or Shield only—we can also assume padded armor falls into this category, having an AC of 8)

Heavy Foot: AC 7-4 (Leather through Chain & Shield—padded armor and shield would have AC 7)

Armored Foot: AC 3-2 (Plate and Plate & Shield)

OR, if the DM wants shields to make a difference, this way:

Light Foot: AC 9-7 (No Armor through Leather or Padded & Shield)

Heavy Foot: AC 6-5 (Leather & Shield and Chain)

Armored Foot: AC 3-2 (Chain & Shield through Plate & Shield)



Notes: Padded armor is not listed in Men & Magic, but there is some historical precedent for wrapping oneself in heavy layers of cloth as a form of makeshift armor. Also, if the DM wishes to take it to one final step, Plate and Shield could subtract one from the opponent's dice for defense; there is precedent for that sort of thing in Chainmail, though an opponent should never have fewer than 1 die. But we will leave that as an "optional rule" for now.

Let us further extrapolate, from looking at the Man-to-Man Table (p. 41), that weapons with a class of 1 reduce the

rank of the wearer by 1, to a minimum of Light foot, for purposes of attacking. Thus, a character with Chainmail, but wielding only two hand axes, still defends as Heavy Foot, but attacks as Light Foot. Similarly, a character clad in only leather armor but wielding a heavy, 2-handed claymore in grand Braveheart style, might attack as heavy or even armored foot, while still

defending as light. Hand Axes should be class 2 rather than 1; treat this as a suspected errata in the tables.

The above are general suggestions and guidelines from careful reading and interpretation. Every DM will have to make their own call. After the DM rules on the issue, players should note their attack and defense classes on their character sheet.

**Cavalry and Archers:** The same breakdowns apply to Horse, though the differentiation between Light and Medium Horse also is dependent upon whether or not the horse is barded and the rider using a heavy weapon or mounted lance.

Archers, as in Chainmail, always attack and defend in Melee as Light Foot.

Note: Optionally, if he drops the bow and draws a melee weapon, an archer can defend as better than Light Foot if wearing appropriate armor, though plate armor makes it impossible to fire anything besides a crossbow.

Likewise, at the DM's option, a crossbowman may opt to defend as Heavy or Armored Foot without drawing a melee weapon, but his crossbow may be destroyed, having been used to defend against attacks. Another few "optional" rules culled from interpretation and common sense.

## **COMBAT PROCEDURE**

To adapt Chainmail's Troop Type System to the original Dungeons & Dragons single-figure scale, characters throw dice based upon their Troop Type (attacker rating) vs. a defender's Troop Type (defense rating) as shown on page 40 of Chainmail. Always round dice up, so that all characters throw at least one die. Bonuses are pips added to or subtracted from the highest of all dice thrown, this extrapolated from the following passage on page 5 of **Monsters & Treasure**:

"Attack/Defense capabilities versus normal men are simply a matter of allowing one roll as a man-type for every hit die, with any bonuses being given to only one of the attacks, i.e. a Troll would attack six times, once with a +3 added to the die roll. (Combat is detailed in Vol. III.)"

Penalties should likewise be subtracted from the highest die roll. When two listings exist (i.e. "3 Men or Hero -1), always use the more advantageous rating in normal combat.

Missile fire is always resolved first in this system. Consult the Missile Fire table on page 11, and throw a number of dice appropriate to the character's "Man" ratings in **Men and Magic**. The listed casualty numbers instead become the number of dice of damage dealt to the foe. Thus, a first level Fighting Man firing a bow at an unarmored foe rolls a die; on a result of 3-6 he

deals a die of damage. The same character at level 5 will always inflict at least 2 dice of damage to an unarmored opponent, but may inflict 3 dice if he gains a result of 3-6. This fact makes missile weapons quite deadly and attractive for use by player characters; the main difference between types of missile weapons is their range. For this reason, DMs may wish to opt for the Man to Man missile fire system (see p. 10), while maintaining the Troop Type system for melee or, as I prefer, simply rule that a result of "1" always fails.

Note: I am of the opinion that "Number Firing" on the "1/2 Armor or Shield" column should read 1 under 1-3 and 2 under 4-6 instead of being 2 and 2. Not having seen errata for Chainmail, I cannot be 100% certain of this, but it seems to match the other progressions, and I suspect it is a typo on its face.

Thus, a first level Fighting Man fighting as Light Foot (Man +1), attacking an orc which defends as Heavy Foot, throws a single die and adds one to the total, even though the table lists Lt. vs. Hvy as "1 die per two men." As per the combat table, if he gets a result of 6, he scores a hit and deals 1d6 damage to his foe as in **Men and Magic**, page 19.

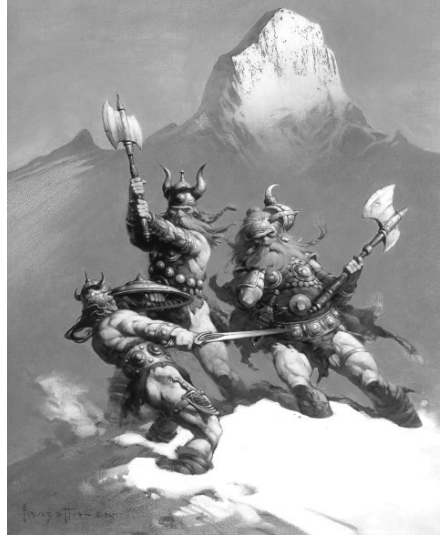
The same character at third level, attacking as "3 Men or Hero -1" would in this case throw two dice (remember, always round up), with no bonus to either, as this is more advantageous than the Hero -1 which would see two dice thrown, subtracting one from the highest. If one comes up 6, he deals 1 die of damage. If both come up 6, he deals 2 dice of damage.

However, when moving to the Fantasy Combat Table, which we shall examine later, the character would attack as a Hero, subtracting 1 from his 2d6 roll.

**Final Breakdown:** The basic process here is simple: determine troop types involved, consult the Combat Tables on page 40 of Chainmail, roll an appropriate number of dice, and count "hits."

## **THE MAN TO MAN SYSTEM**

For epic, heroic, one-on-one battles, use the Man to Man System. It is straightforward and easy, and completely ignores the "Heavy foot, light foot," etc. classifications, focusing only on the exact weapons and armor of the combatants. In this system, "Man" as defined on the Level Progression Charts in **Men and Magic**, simply refers to the number



of attacks granted in a round. Thus, a third level Fighting Man, a Swordsman, gains three attacks. Since a "Hero" is defined in Chainmail as having "the fighting ability of four figures," (p. 30), we can count "Hero" as "4 Men."

Using the Man to Man system, any time the progression reads "x Men," that trumps a "Hero" or "Superhero" designation. Thus, "5 Men," or 5 attacks, trumps "Hero + 1," which would be four attacks adding +1 to one of the four.

However, if the progression does NOT list a "Men" designation, go with what is there. Thus, the seventh-level Champion, which does NOT read, "7 Men," must fight as a Superhero -1. Superheroes are, according to Chainmail, "about twice as powerful" as Heroes (p. 30), which means that they grant eight attacks (in the case of a Champion, one of these suffers a -1 penalty).

Note: For ease of play, it is suggested any bonuses or penalties are applied to the last attack in the sequence. This keeps things fair and equal, and prevents combat min/maxing. Thus, the above-mentioned Champion would attack 7 times, the last attack suffering a -1 penalty, and the above-mentioned Hero+1 adding +1 to his last attack.

Like the Troop Type System, missile fire is resolved first. To resolve this, see the Individual Fires with Missiles Table (Chainmail p. 41); target numbers for each AC at three range increments are listed. For game balance purposes, this is preferable to the Troop Type System, if slower when rolling multiple attacks, as it allows for even higher level characters (and missile-firing monsters) to miss.



Monsters such as serpent-men, ghouls, carnivorous apes, trolls, and even giants can be engaged, with the DM improvising arms and armor based on their "Men" rating. Of course, all of these figures should gain hit dice as Fighting Men equivalent to said rating. A Giant, for example, fights as 12 Men, and thus should have 12 Hit Dice (and by extension, 12 attacks)! Generally speaking, improvisation in this area is not necessary as the hit dice totals listed in **Monsters & Treasure** will suffice. Remember that each Hit Die a monster has grants

one attack in Man to Man combat (**Monsters & Treasure**, p. 5, “Attack/Defense”).

Certain monsters, those very powerful creatures with Supernatural bents such as Elementals, Wraiths, Wights, Wyverns, etc., may not—at the DM's option—be engaged by characters of below Hero status, these young adventurers having no chance to damage such monsters. We will deal with such creatures when we get to the Fantasy Combat Table.

**Final Breakdown:** Note the weapons and armor of the combatants, calculate the number of attacks each has, and use the Man to Man system as written.

## THE FANTASY SUPPLEMENT

The Fantasy Reference Table and the Fantasy Combat Table (Chainmail, pp. 43-44) come into play only when fighting specific, high-fantasy creatures. As it stands, only those creatures listed upon the Fantasy Combat Table use this system, though the DM can add others from **Monsters & Treasure** if he feels the need and they seem equivalent to those already present.



No character with a rating below "Hero" can attempt combat on the Fantasy Table (though characters with "Hero - 1" status can try, excepting creatures that require a Hero to roll 12 to hit, such as Dragons).

The Fantasy Combat Table uses a single (not multiple) roll of 2d6, with a target number gained by cross referencing the character with the defending creature.

To repeat: characters battling on the Fantasy Combat Table do NOT gain multiple attacks.

Note: This makes Fantasy Combat somewhat drawn out—DMs may wish to offset this by allowing multiple dice of damage equivalent to the

character's rating, or half that to limit massive damage—i.e. a Hero will do 4d6 damage instead of just 1d6, or 2d6 damage if the DM opts for half rating (a Hero is worth 4 men).

Unless specified in the creature's description (a Hero must use a bow to attack a dragon, for example), ranged vs. melee attacks make no difference in the Fantasy Supplement combat rules.

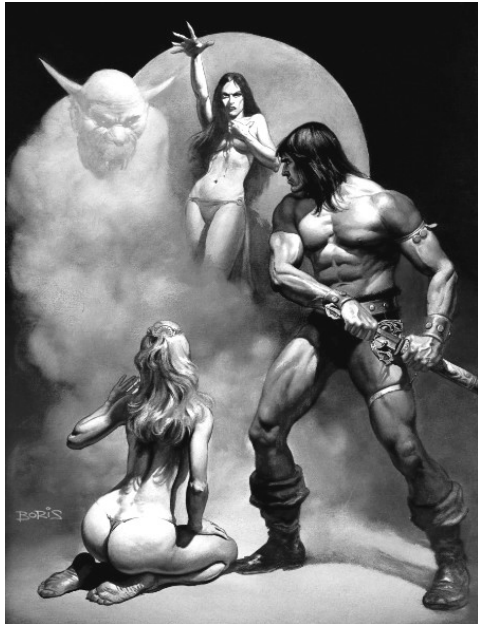
Combat progresses in this manner until one side retreats, surrenders, or dies. In many ways, the Fantasy Combat Table is the simplest form of combat; it simply does not work for more "mundane" creatures, which use the Troop Type or Man to Man rules.

**Final Breakdown:** Simply cross-reference character type based on level (as listed in his Fighting Capability Chart, Men & Magic p. 17-18) with the creature type on the Fantasy Combat Table, then roll 2d6, attempting to equal or better the listed target number.

## **SAVING THROWS**

Saving throws are important to Dungeons & Dragons, but become something of an anomaly if using the Chainmail-based combat, as they function with a d20 rather than d6's. It is possible, however, to divine a Saving Throw system based off of that suggested in Chainmail, if one keeps a few basic assumptions in mind.

Chainmail has Heroes and Super Heroes targeted by spells being saved on a roll of 9 and 6 or better, respectively. If Heroes are 4th level Fighting Men, and Super Heroes 8th, we can extrapolate a progression based upon these numbers.



The basic assumptions for this system:

1. The system replaces save categories with a single saving throw. Optional adjustments for categories extrapolated from D&D will be examined later.

2. This is not likely to be a linear progression. This should not be a problem, because it is believable that the better someone gets at something, the fewer broad leaps forward they take, and the more improvement becomes smaller increments. One who is already an expert savant rarely makes the kind of great intuitive leaps of learning that a novice or even journeyman does. Skills and abilities generally hit a plateau somewhere.
3. This system makes it much harder to save at low levels than does the d20-based one in Men & Magic, but likely much easier at higher levels.

Saving Throws by level look as follows:

<u>Level</u>	<u>Saved on:</u>
1-3	11
4-6	9
7-9	6
10-12	5
13+	4

Fighting Men includes Rangers as well as Bards, Monks, Thieves and Assassins.

Magic-Users includes Illusionists, Bards and Druids. Magic-Users see their saves advance in groups of 6 levels instead of 3 (i.e. 1-6, 7-12, etc.)

It will occur to many players and DMs that this table makes it exceptionally difficult to succeed at a saving throw at low levels. This is true, but also recall that in D&D, there is an accomplishment in making it past third level.

### **OPTION: SAVE CATEGORIES**

Men & Magic includes the standard save categories: Death Ray/Poison, Wands, Petrification, Dragon Breath, Staves and Spells. Since the new chart has only one save, it's possible to simulate these categories with bonuses to the save. If we assume a base save of 16 (as this is the worst save on the level one charts in M&M), we can assign bonuses by class as follows:

<u>CLASS</u>	<u>Death</u>	<u>Wands</u>	<u>Stone</u>	<u>Dragon Breath</u>	<u>Spell/staff</u>
Sorcerers	+1	+1	+2	+0	+3
All Others	+2	+1	+1	+0	+0

This table is not an exact translation from M&M; that would be nearly impossible. Bonuses have instead been estimated based on the difference between the M&M save and 16, divided by 2 (since the range of possibilities is nearly half that of a d20). The author has gone with instinct when rounding

off fractions up or down, and made one alteration, giving Magic Users a higher bonus against spells.

Using this system of bonuses, a roll of 2 on 2d6 always fails, regardless of bonuses, and if this system is used, sorcerers should advance at the same rate as Fighting-Men, instead of in groups of 6 levels as above.

## **ABILITY CHECKS**

Dungeons & Dragons tends to operate on a “Rule of 2,” that is to say, when the DM is in doubt whether an event occurs, the characters succeed at an action, etc., he rolls a die; on a 1 or 2, the event occurs, the effort succeeds, the characters are surprised or hear noise, a wandering monster appears, etc.

This is an elegant idea, and while it is not prescribed for adjudicating every situation, it functions as a neat fallback for a DM. The problem is that it doesn’t take player characters into account, and this is where the idea of ability checks comes into play. When an action needs to occur over which the PCs could have influence, the DM allows the players to make a check against an appropriate attribute. Some DMs prefer to substitute player creativity and ingenuity for ability checks, but the use of one does not negate the application of the other; there is a place for both player ingenuity and ability checks.

There are two ways to handle ability checks. The first is to simply roll 3d6 and attempt to get a result under the appropriate attribute. This is a basic and elegant solution.

The second method is based upon the saving throw system, above. This method takes into account character level as well as ability. Using this method, players roll 2d6 against a level-based target number, just as though they were making a saving throw. To this roll they add a bonus based on their ability score. Ability bonuses for checks are as follows:

<u>Score</u>	<u>Bonus</u>
3	-3
4-5	-2
6-8	-1
9-12	0
13-15	+1
16-17	+2
18	+3

Enterprising DMs can even, if they choose, substitute ability checks for saving throws, deciding which ability is most applicable to save in a given situation, allowing players to choose when more than one ability might apply—resisting an explosion could use Dexterity (to dive for cover) or Constitution (to absorb the damage without harm), for example. This has the side effect of powering up the PCs a bit, but it also offsets the difficulty of success at low-level saves.





*"I saw again in the battlefield whereon I was born," said Conan, resting his chin moodily on a massive fist. "I saw myself in a pantherskin loin-clout, throwing my spear at the mountain beasts. I was a mercenary swordsman again, a hetman of the kozaki who dwell along the Zaporoska River, a corsair looting the coasts of Kush, a pirate of the Barachan Isles, a chief of the Himelian hillmen. All these things I've been, and of all these things I dreamed; all the shapes that have been I passed like an endless procession, and their feet beat out a dirge in the sounding dust.*

*"But throughout my dreams moved strange, veiled figures and ghostly shadows, and a far-away voice mocked me. And toward the last I seemed to see myself lying on this dais in my tent, and a shape bent over me, robed and hooded. I lay unable to move, and then the hood fell away and a moldering skull grinned down at me. Then it was that I awoke."*

*-Robert E. Howard, The Hour of the Dragon*

# APPENDIX: THE HYBORIAN AGE (EXCERPT)

By Robert E. Howard

**O**f that epoch known by the Nemedian chroniclers as the Pre-Cataclysmic Age, little is known except the latter part, and that is veiled in the mists of legendry. Known history begins with the waning of the Pre-Cataclysmic civilization, dominated by the kingdoms of Kamelia, Valusia, Verulia, Grondar, Thule and Commoria. These peoples spoke a similar language, arguing a common origin. There were other kingdoms, equally civilized, but inhabited by different, and apparently older races...

...At the time of the Cataclysm, a band of savages, whose development was not much above that of the Neanderthal, fled to the north to escape destruction. They found the snow-countries inhabited only by a species of ferocious snow-apes—huge shaggy white animals, apparently native to that climate. These they fought and drove beyond the Arctic circle, to perish, as the savages thought. The latter, then, adapted themselves to their hardy new environment and thrived.

After the Pictish-Atlantean wars had destroyed the beginnings of what might have been a new culture, another, lesser cataclysm further altered the appearance of the original continent, left a great inland sea where the chain of lakes had been, to further separate west from east, and the attendant earthquakes, floods and volcanoes completed the ruin of the barbarians which their tribal wars had begun.

A thousand years after the lesser cataclysm, the western world is seen to be a wild country of jungles and lakes and torrential rivers. Among the forest-covered hills of the northwest exist wandering bands of ape-men, without human speech, or the knowledge of fire or the use of implements. They are the descendants of the Atlanteans, sunk back into the squalling chaos of jungle-bestiality from which ages ago their ancestors so laboriously crawled. To the southwest dwell scattered clans of degraded, cave-dwelling savages, whose speech is of the most primitive form, yet who still retain the name of Picts, which has come to mean merely a term designating men—themselves, to distinguish them from the true beasts with which they contend for life and food. It is their only link with their former stage. Neither the squalid Picts nor the apish Atlanteans have any contact with other tribes or peoples.

Far to the east, the Lemurians, levelled almost to a bestial plane themselves by the brutishness of their slavery, have risen and destroyed their masters. They are savages stalking among the ruins of a strange civilization. The survivors of that civilization, who have escaped the fury of their slaves, have

come westward. They fall upon that mysterious pre-human kingdom of the south and overthrow it, substituting their own culture, modified by contact with the older one. The newer kingdom is called Stygia, and remnants of the older nation seemed to have survived, and even been worshipped, after the race as a whole had been destroyed.



Here and there in the world small groups of savages are showing signs of an upward trend; these are scattered and unclassified. But in the north, the tribes are growing. These people are called Hyborians, or Hybori; their god was Bori—some great chief, whom legend made even more ancient as the king who led them into the north, in the days of the great Cataclysm, which the tribes remember only in distorted folklore.

They have spread over the north, and are pushing southward in leisurely treks. So far they have not come in contact with any other races; their wars have been with one another. Fifteen hundred years in the north country have made them a tall, tawny-haired, grey-eyed race, vigorous and warlike, and already exhibiting a well-defined artistry and poetism of nature. They still live mostly by the hunt, but the southern tribes have been raising cattle for some centuries. There is one exception in their so far complete isolation from other races: a wanderer into the far north returned with the news that the supposedly deserted ice wastes were inhabited by an extensive tribe of ape-like men, descended, he swore, from the beasts driven out of the more habitable land by the ancestors of the Hyborians. He urged that a large war-party be sent beyond the arctic circle to exterminate these beasts, whom he swore were evolving into true men. He was jeered at; a small band of adventurous young warriors followed him into the north, but none returned.

But tribes of the Hyborians were drifting south, and as the population increased this movement became extensive. The allowing age was an epoch of wandering and conquest. Across the history of the world tribes and drifts of tribes move and shift in an everchanging panorama.

Look at the world five hundred years later. Tribes of tawny-haired Hyborians have moved southward and westward, conquering and destroying many of the small unclassified clans.

Absorbing the blood of conquered races, already the descendants of the older drifts have begun to show modified racial traits, and these mixed races are attacked fiercely by new, purer-blooded drifts, and swept before them, as a broom sweeps debris impartially, to become even more mixed and mingled in the tangled debris of races and tag-ends of races.

As yet the conquerors have not come in contact with the older races. To the southeast the descendants of the Zhemri, given impetus by new blood resulting from admixture with some unclassified tribe, are beginning to seek to revive some faint shadow of their ancient culture. To the west the apish Atlanteans are beginning the long climb upward. They have completed the cycle of existence; they have long forgotten their former existence as men; unaware of any other former state, they are starting the climb unhelped and unhindered by human memories. To the south of them the Picts remain savages, apparently defying the laws of Nature by neither progressing nor retrogressing. Far to the south dreams the ancient mysterious kingdom of Stygia. On its eastern borders wander clans of nomadic savages, already known as the Sons of Shem.

Next to the Picts, in the broad valley of Zingg, protected by great mountains, a nameless band of primitives, tentatively classified as akin to the Shemites, has evolved an advanced agricultural system and existence.

Another factor has added to the impetus of Hyborian drift. A tribe of that race has discovered the use of stone in building, and the first Hyborian kingdom has come into being—the rude and barbaric kingdom of Hyperborea, which had its beginning in a crude fortress of boulders heaped to repel tribal attack. The people of this tribe soon abandoned their horse-hide tents for stone houses, crudely but mightily built, and thus protected, they grew strong. There are few more dramatic events in history than the rise of the rude, fierce kingdom of Hyperborea, whose people turned abruptly from their nomadic life to rear dwellings of naked stone, surrounded by cyclopean walls—a race scarcely emerged from the polished stone age, who had by a freak of chance, learned the first rude principles of architecture.

The rise of this kingdom drove forth many other tribes, for, defeated in the war, or refusing to become tributary to their castle-dwelling kinsmen, many clans set forth on long treks that took them halfway around the world. And already the more northern tribes are beginning to be harried by gigantic blond savages, not much more advanced than ape-men.

The tale of the next thousand years is the tale of the rise of the Hyborians, whose warlike tribes dominate the western world. Rude kingdoms are taking shape. The tawny-haired invaders have encountered the Picts, driving them

into the barren lands of the west. To the northwest, the descendants of the Atlanteans, climbing unaided from apedom into primitive savagery, have not yet met the conquerors. Far to the east the Lemurians are evolving a strange semi-civilization of their own. To the south the Hyborians have founded the kingdom of Koth, on the borders of those pastoral countries known as the Lands of Shem, and the savages of those lands, partly through contact with the Hyborians, partly through contact with the Stygians who have ravaged them for centuries, are emerging from barbarism. The blond savages of the far north have grown in power and numbers so that the northern Hyborian tribes move southward, driving their kindred clans before them. The ancient kingdom of Hyperborea is overthrown by one of these northern tribes, which, however, retains the old name. Southeast of Hyperborea a kingdom of the Zhemri has come into being, under the name of Zamora. To the southwest, a tribe of Picts have invaded the fertile valley of Zingg, conquered the agricultural people there, and settled among them. This mixed race was in turn conquered later by a roving tribe of Hybori, and from these mingled elements came the kingdom of Zingara.



Five hundred years later the kingdoms of the world are clearly defined. The kingdoms of the Hyborians—Aquilonia, Nemediia, Brythunia, Hyperborea, Koth, Ophir, Argos, Corinthia, and one known as the Border Kingdom—dominate the western world. Zamora lies to the east, and Zingara to the southwest of these kingdoms—people alike in darkness of complexion and exotic habits, but otherwise unrelated. Far to the south sleeps Stygia, untouched by foreign invasion, but the peoples of Shem have exchanged the Stygian yoke for the less galling one of Koth.

The dusky masters have been driven south of the great river Styx, Nilus, or Nile, which, flowing north from the shadowy hinterlands, turns almost at right angles and flows almost due west through the pastoral meadowlands of Shem, to empty into the great sea. North of Aquilonia, the western-most Hyborian

kingdom, are the Cimmerians, ferocious savages, untamed by the invaders, but advancing rapidly because of contact with them; they are the descendants of the Atlanteans, now progressing more steadily than their old enemies the Picts, who dwell in the wilderness west of Aquilonia.

Another five centuries and the Hybori peoples are the possessors of a civilization so virile that contact with it virtually snatched out of the wallow of savagery such tribes as it touched. The most powerful kingdom is Aquilonia, but others vie with it in strength and mixed race; the nearest to the ancient root-stock are the Gundermen of Gunderland, a northern province of Aquilonia. But this mixing has not weakened the race. They are supreme in the western world, though the barbarians of the wastelands are growing in strength.

In the north, golden-haired, blue-eyed barbarians, descendants of the blond arctic savages, have driven the remaining Hyborian tribes out of the snow countries, except the ancient kingdom of Hyperborea, which resists their onslaught. Their country is called Nordheim, and they are divided into the red-haired Vanir of Vanaheim, and the yellow-haired Æsir of Asgard.

Now the Lemurians enter history again as Hyrkanians. Through the centuries they have pushed steadily westward, and now a tribe skirts the southern end of the great inland sea—Vilayet—and establishes the kingdom of Turan on the southwestern shore. Between the inland sea and the eastern borders of the native kingdoms lie vast expanses of steppes and in the extreme north and extreme south, deserts. The non-Hyrkanian dwellers of these territories are scattered and pastoral, unclassified in the north, Shemitish in the south, aboriginal, with a thin strain of Hyborian blood from wandering conquerors. Toward the latter part of the period other Hyrkanian clans push westward, around the northern extremity of the inland sea, and clash with the eastern outposts of the Hyperboreans.

Glance briefly at the peoples of that age. The dominant of Hyborians are no longer uniformly tawny-haired and grey-eyed. They have mixed with other races. There is a strong Shemitish, even a Stygian strain among the peoples of Koth, and to a lesser extent, of Argos, while in the case of the latter, admixture with the Zingarans has been more extensive than with the Shemites. The eastern Brythunians have intermarried with the dark-skinned Zamorians, and the people of southern Aquilonia have mixed with the brown Zingarans until black hair and brown eyes are the dominant type in Poitain, the southern-most province. The ancient kingdom of Hyperborea is more aloof than the others, yet there is alien blood in plenty in its veins, from the capture of foreign women—Hyrkanians, Æsir and Zamorians. Only in the province of Gunderland, where the people keep no slaves, is the pure Hyborian stock found unblemished. But the barbarians have kept their bloodstream pure; the Cimmerians are tall and powerful, with dark hair and blue or grey eyes. The

people of Nordheim are of similar build, but with white skins, blue eyes and golden or red hair. The Picts are of the same type as they always were—short, very dark, with black eyes and hair. The Hyrkanians are dark and generally tall and slender, though a squat slant-eyed type is more and more common among them, resulting from mixture with a curious race of intelligent, though stunted, aborigines, conquered by them among the mountains east of Vilayet, on their westward drift. The Shemites are generally of medium height, though sometimes when mixed with Stygian blood, gigantic, broadly and strongly built, with hook noses, dark eyes and blue-black hair. The Stygians are tall and well made, dusky, straight-featured—at least the ruling classes are of that type. The lower classes are a down-trodden, mongrel horde, a mixture of negroid, Stygian, Shemitish, even Hyborian bloods. South of Stygia are the vast black kingdoms of the Amazons, the Kushites, the Atlaians and the hybrid empire of Zembabwei.



Between Aquilonia and the Pictish wilderness lie the Bossonian marches, peopled by descendants of an aboriginal race, conquered by a tribe of Hyborians, early in the first ages of the Hyborian drift. This mixed people never attained the civilization of the purer Hyborians, and was pushed by them to the very fringe of the civilized world. The Bossonians are of medium height and complexion, their eyes brown or grey, and they are mesocephalic. They live mainly by agriculture, in large walled villages, and are part of the Aquilonian kingdom. Their marches extend from the Border kingdom in the north to

Zingara in the southwest, forming a bulwark for Aquilonia against both the Cimmerians and the Picts. They are stubborn defensive fighters, and centuries of warfare against northern and western barbarians have caused them to evolve a type of defense almost impregnable against direct attack.

Five hundred years later the Hyborian civilization was swept away. Its fall was unique in that it was not brought about by internal decay, but by the growing power of the barbarian nations and the Hyrkanians. The Hyborian peoples were overthrown while their vigorous culture was in its prime.



*"I have known many gods. He who denies them is as blind as he who trusts them too deeply. I seek not beyond death. It may be the blackness averred by the Nemedian skeptics, or Crom's realm of ice and cloud, or the snowy plains and vaulted halls of the Nordheimer's Valhalla. I know not, nor do I care. Let me live deep while I live; let me know the rich juices of red meat and stinging wine on my palate, the hot embrace of white arms, the mad exultation of battle when the blue blades flame and crimson, and I am content. Let teachers and priests and philosophers brood over questions of reality and illusion. I know this: if life is illusion, then I am no less an illusion, and being thus, the illusion is real to me. I live, I burn with life, I love, I slay, and am content."*

*-Robert E. Howard, "Queen of the Black Coast"*



## APPENDIX 2: ORIGINAL GODS, DEMI-GODS, AND HEROES PAGES

*Note: Textual edits have been made for accuracy and to correct typographical errors.*

Conan's world is very real in that Robert E. Howard went to great lengths to limit his magic and sorcery to firm up the believability of his stories. The Gods of his world are of many types and go from one extreme to the next in working, or leaving alone, mankind.

### CONAN

Armor Class — As a normal man	Alignment: Neutral
Move: 12"	Magic Ability: None
Hit Points: 117	Fighter Ability: 15th Level

Strength: 18; Exceptional Strength: 100%; Intelligence: 16; Wisdom: 10; Constitution: 17; Dexterity: 18; Charisma: 15.

This mighty fighter of the 15th level also has thieving abilities of a 9th level thief as per **Greyhawk**. His animal instincts make it almost impossible to surprise him (roll of "2" on 2 six-sided dice) and his unusually keen perception allows only the most clever of traps to entangle him. If using the **Greyhawk** rules he receives a plus 4 on hit probability and a plus 6 on damage he does. He opens all doors, and wizard-locked ones on a roll of 1-3, his thief abilities allow him to open locks 75% of the time, remove traps 70% of the time, pick pockets and move silently 75% of the time and hide in shadows 65% of the time.

### CROM

Armor Class — 4	Magic Ability: (See Below)
Move: 18"	Fighter Ability: 20th Level
Hit Points: 300	

Conan's diety, a grim savage human type presides over a great hall in the high mountains filled with powerful fighters. He hates any form of weakness and to call on him in this state is to bring dooms instead of help. He has the power to teleport and fights as a Storm Giant. He wears plus 4 armor and uses a plus 3 sword.

### MITRA

Armor Class — 4	Magic Ability: 40th Level
Move: 18"	Fighter Ability: 10th Level
Hit Points: 300	

God of the Hyborians, this being has no known form, but his worshipers like to present him as a perfectly formed human male. Mitra is a 40th level magic/cleric type and uses the astral spell with no range limitation. He uses plus 3 armor and shield in battle and a plus 4 sword of cold.

### SET

The God of darkness and the Lord of Shadows. This being is wholly dedicated to evil. Take the information from the Egyptian section for his powers.

### ASURA

Armor Class — 3	Magic Ability: 20th Level
Move: 18"	Fighter Ability: 10th Level
Hit Points: 275	

Asura is able to polymorph himself into any of the human types of the world. He can use spells as a 20th level magic user/cleric and he will in times of need (judge's option) dispel any magic sent at his priest or worshipers. When fighting hand to hand, he uses a spear of light that hits as a plus 3 spear for 8 dice (6-sided).

## TSATHOGGUA

Armor Class — 4  
Move: 12"  
Hit Points: 275

Magic Ability: (See Below)  
Fighter Ability: 10th Level

Tsathoggua is a diety with a frog's head and a man's body. It has 7 eyes and the power to animate its statues in any of its temples. This God is very fond of human sacrifices and will animate a statue in a temple at any opportunity to get one. He drains energy levels at the rate of 3 per turn no saving throw applicable.

## HANUMAN THE ACCURSED

Armor Class — 1  
Move: 10"  
Hit Points: 200

Magic Ability: None  
Fighter Ability: As Storm Giant

Hanuman assumes a giant ape form when appearing on earth and strikes as a Storm Giant. His ancient religion of the East requires human sacrifices.

## YEZUD

Armor Class — 3  
Move: 16"  
Hit Points: 225

Magic Ability: (See Below)  
Fighter Ability: 12th Level

Yezud is a giant black spider able to consume energy levels, as does Stormbringer, and use all the powers of a phase spider. Its evil priests keep it in human sacrifices and for this is supplies them with tiny hand-size pearls.

These black pearls, upon a mental command, will turn into a poisonous spider, biting for 2 dice (10-sided) of damage. These pearls are usually placed in the center of a piece of jewelry that the priests give to high officials and other people of importance.

## BLOOD STAINED GOD

Armor Class — 3  
Move: 8"  
Hit Points: 250

Magic Ability: None  
Fighter Ability: As Iron Golem

The God appears as a golden idol encrusted with red jewels that appear to be of great value. The being stands about 8 feet tall and seems to be made of gold. Only plus 3 weapons or better affect the monster and it is totally unaffected by magical spells. This deity will take its own sacrifices as it animates the idol and throws any greedy robbers into a chasm in its temple.

## YAMA

Armor Class — 3  
Move: 24"  
Hit Points: 300

Magic Ability: (See Below)  
Fighter Ability: As Stone Golem

Yama can only manifest himself in the form of a huge, 60 foot tall, green stone idol of a man with many arms. The God can hypnotize 1-50 beings into motionlessness within 50 yards of its body (no magic saving throw applicable) and the only effective way to kill the God is to kill the summoning evil high priest. It has 8 arms that strike for 3-30 points of damage per arm.

*Note: There are other deities mentioned, but never explained: Bel God of Thieves, Old Ones, Jullah, Golden Peacock, Erlik, Macha, Lir, Baal, Malach, Ahriman, Ishtar, Xotli, Pteor, Decketo, Badb, Morrigan, Manannan and Taml, amongst others. In these cases, it is certain the actual mythological deities of the same names can be used as presented in **Supplement IV**.*

## THUGRA KHOTAN, PRIEST KING OF SET

Armor Class — As a normal man      Magic Ability: 30th Level  
Move: 7"      Fighter Ability: 10th Level  
Hit Points: 63

Strength: 11; Intelligence: 18; Wisdom: 16; Constitution: 17; Dexterity: 12; Charisma: 11.

Thugra Khotan, an evil wizard of the 30th level and an evil high priest of the 15th, was a bitter enemy of Conan. Khotan was able to call on Minions of Set to aid him. (Minions dealt with in another section).

## THOTH AMON

Armor Class — As a normal man      Magic Ability: 20th Level  
Move: 8"      Fighter Ability: None  
Hit Points: 56

Strength: 6; Intelligence: 17; Wisdom: 8; Constitution: 14; Dexterity: 12; Charisma: 9.

A wizard of the 20th level and an enemy of Conan, he had a ring of great magical power famed throughout the world.

## THOTH AMON'S RING

A copper colored ring in the shape of a coiled serpent with 3 coils biting its tail. When in possession of this evil artifact, the magic user of the 10th level or more will raise 10 levels in experience. This ring would be valued by a jeweler at 4 copper pieces and when using a detect magic on it, none is shown. If the ring is put on by a magic user of less than the 10th level it acts as any artifact of an opposite alignment.

## KHITAI ASSASSINS

Treat as assassins as per **Blackmoor**.

## THE BLACK SEERS

Armor Class — As a normal man      Magic Ability: (See Below)  
Move: As a normal man      Fighter Ability: None

Hit Points per magic user

Tall men with shaven heads and a definite vulture look about them, these evil magic users live high in the mountains. From the second level onwards these magicians can cast illusions and hypnotize and from the 4th level onwards they are able to animate objects which they place all over their castles.

## EPEMETREUS THE SAGE

Armor Class — ethereal      Magic Ability: (See Below)  
Move: 24"      Fighter Ability: None  
Hit Points: None

Epemetreus was a powerful sage entombed 1500 years before Conan was born. He was able, with the help of the Gods of Law and Neutrality, to contact Conan and advise him. If anyone is foolish enough to attack him treat him as a 40th level lich as per **Greyhawk**.

## PICTISH SHAMAN

Armor Class — As any normal man      Magic Ability: (See Below)  
Move: 12"      Fighter Ability: 6th Level  
Hit Points: as any cleric

These evil priests of the savage Pict race are only vaguely dealt with in the stories; treat them as Lamas per D & D. They have one special power, the ability to make a captured foe exchange minds with a snake. This takes a day's preparation and the light of the full moon to accomplish. There is never more than one of these to a village of 800.

### **PRIESTS OF THE GOLDEN PEACOCK**

As a cleric

These evil priests never rise higher than Bishop as per D&D. They have the power from the third level on to hide in shadows as a master thief.

### **GIANT SLUG**

As per **Greyhawk**.

### **DEMON OF THE BLACK HANDS**

This is a triple strength Invisible Stalker.

### **MOUNTAIN APES**

As per Ogres in **D&D**

### **BRYLUKAS**

Armor Class — 1  
Move: 12/18  
Hit Points: 50

Magic Ability: None  
Fighter Ability: 10th Level

Described as creatures neither man nor beast nor demon, but a little of all three: having near human intelligence, bestial cravings for human blood, and supernatural powers of endurance. These creatures appear as gargoyles, but that's where the resemblance ends. They have the strength of a hill giant with the intelligence to attack the strongest member of any party first. A strong light as in a light spell or pyrotechnics will cause the Brylukas to go blind for 1-4 turns and in this condition they will always retreat.

### **THAUG THE DEMON**

Armor Class — 2  
Move: 9"  
Hit Points: 70

Magic Ability: None  
Fighter Ability: 10th Level

Thaug is a 10 feet tall frog-like being with very large extended eyes and long fangs that naturally like to eat human flesh. He bites for 7 (8-sided) dice of damage and is able to sense anything invisible.

### **OLLAM-ONGA**

Triple strength Zombie as per **D&D**, but with full intelligence.

### **KRAKEN**

Armor Class — 2  
Move: 18"  
Hit Points: 100

Magic Ability: (See Below)  
Fighter Ability: 15th Level

The Kraken comes to us fully described in A. Meritt's **Dwellers in the Mirage**. It is a giant octopus which is able to live on the land. This creature must be called from another dimension where it is imprisoned, and is constantly trying to leave. It feeds on human souls/energy levels and if the victim doesn't make his or her magic saving throw all his levels are drained. He can be called on by any evil priest knowing the spell.

## **RED SHADOWS**

As in **Greyhawk** these are "Shadows," but with the difference that these creatures can transmit information to a controlling master.

## **DRAGON LIZARD**

Treat as a Crocodile of **Greyhawk**, with 3 times the power.

## **KHOSATRAL KHEL THE DEMON**

In the form of a large man completely impervious to all earthly forces, this being was only affected by a knife made out of a falling star. Treat this being as an evil 20th level priest/wizard. Within 10 yards of the knife he has no magical ability, when hit with it he dies, and placing the knife in contact with his body and not stabbing causes the being to become unconscious until the knife is removed.

## **GHOULS OF YANAIDAR**

As Ghouls of **D&D**, but double the number usually appearing.

## **FROST GIANTS**

As in **D&D**, but these are much more intelligent.

## **ICE WORM**

Treat as a purple worm of **D&D** except for his special power. Within 10 feet of it, a hypnotic power causes a victim not making his magic saving throw to walk calmly into the mouth of the worm.

## **HEART OF AHRIMAN**

Device of great power able to work over any distance, which acts as an antimagic shell for 6 persons. It appears as a heart shaped gem, with a golden glow when in use. It can restore the dead.

## **CHEST OF ZORATHUS**

A treasure chest made to be unbreakable. To open it an involved process must be gone through. It is necessary to press the 7 small skulls on the rim, one at a time, then press the head of the dragon, then press the sphere held in its claws. If the user doesn't know of the poison fang in the dragon's head he will die as the poison is so strong that no saving throw is given.

## **GIANT CARVED SERPENTS**

These are found in many of the stories always with the fear that they will animate themselves when the things they are guarding are disturbed.

## **WELL OF SKELOS**

A bottomless well found in the ruins of a city in the desert famed for the riches that an ancient race threw in.

## **VAMPIRE GORGON OF AKHLAT**

A female demon with the powers of a vampire of **D&D**, that used a large red mask with a magic gem in the center. This gem turned beings into stone as she drained the energy levels from them, no magic saving throw given.

## **GIANT MAGNETS**

These are commonly found in wizards' rooms and are perfect when a savage warrior in plate mail comes charging in wanting the poor magic user's life.

## **STAR OF KHORALA**

This gem, set in a ring, gives anyone wearing it power over the opposite sex as a human control ring, no saving throw given.

## **FLAME KNIFE**

This symbol of the "hidden assassins" can be found cut into any of their victims.

## **BOOK OF SKELOS**

This rare volume combines the knowledge of the "The Manual of Golems, Book of Vile Darkness, Book of Infinite Spells, and a Tome of Understanding" as per **Greyhawk**. This work will never disappear.

## **PURPLE LOTUS**

In powder form, one of these flowers induces a deep sleep which can last 1-12 days depending on the die. There is no saving throw for this dust.

## **ORICHALCUM**

Magic metal of Atlantis, this metal is used in any summoning spell. It acts as a Rod of Rulership on the being summoned. When the being has completed its task the metal will turn to silver and be useless for magical purposes.

## **DRAGON SHIPS**

A sailing ship in the form of a winged dragon. The wings of the ship are the sails, the front talons are used in grappling, the nostrils of the dragon shoot a type of greek fire, and the long neck and head serve as a boarding platform. In all things pertaining to sailing treat this vessel as a large galley with twice the speed.

## **GOLDEN SERPENT BELT**

One of the few magic items Conan used to fight his enemies, this time they were the Black Seers. The belt puts up an antimagic shell and dispels any lesser beings summoned with spells of the 7th level or under.

## **CLAW OF NERGA**

An evil artifact of great power used to cast spells that take over the mind. It can affect only one being at a time over any distance if the being fails to make his saving throw.

## **COBRA CROWN**

A mind control device able to work on 1-1000 beings at once. The wearer cannot be surprised and can read minds at any distance.

## **YARA'S GEM**

A gem that shoots 100 points of heat damage, with an effective range of 25 yards, every full turn.

## **BLACK LOTUS**

Powder made from one of these flowers strikes the inhaler dead, no saving throw applicable. One flower will kill one being human or monster.

## **DREAD SCEPTRE OF MUNTHASSEM KHAN**

A Staff of Commanding from **D & D**, but this works through crystal balls, clairvoyance spells, and a gem of seeing.

## HEART OF TAMMUZ

A lawful artifact used to counter the effects of the Claw of Nergal. With this, the user can undo the action of the claw without knowing who the claw affected, merely by bringing the Heart within 500 yards of a victim.

## PICTISH BAG OF DEMONS

A magical device that summons 10-100 creatures from its interior. It is 16" by 30" and sealed with beeswax. These demons are half man half bird with 35 hit points. They are as strong as a Fire Giant and they will not attack anything lying flat on the ground.

## PURPLE LOTUS

This powder, when mixed with any type of liquid and taken into the system through drinking or puncture of any type, causes instant paralysis. One flower makes one application which paralyzes for 1-12 days.

## MIRROR OF LAZBEKRI

5 feet wide and 4 feet tall, this device appears as a broken jagged mirror, but when a magic user concentrates into it, it acts as a Gem of Seeing as per **Greyhawk**. The only difference is that others may look at the same time.

## RING OF RAKHAMAN

A small ring made out of a strange dull blue metal. It's covered completely in hieroglyphs with a seal in a rhombic shape on top. The wearer of this ring, no matter what class, can defeat any summoned monster of the 8th level or less with one punch of the ringed hand. Summoned creatures will include Djinns, Efreet, Elementals, and those summoned in Monster Summoning spells.

## YELLOW LOTUS

Powder made from one of these flowers causes a light unconsciousness from which the inhaler can easily be awakened by a loud noise or a sharp slap. Powder from 2 causes death.

## WHITE PUFF BALL SPELL

This spell was used by the highest wizards of the Black Seers. It appears as a group of smoke clouds floating to the ground traveling at 15" per turn. Contact with anyone of the 30 clouds causes instant disintegration. The Seers æ able to control these balls as a cloudkill spell.

## OCTOPUS DEMON

Armor Class —1  
Move: 8"  
Hit Points: 45

Magic Ability: None  
Fighter Ability: 10th Level

Land creature with short stubby tentacles standing about 4 feet tall with its body appearing to be a mass of jelly having a fanged head in the center. Its tentacles hit for 3 dice (six sided) of damage, it has 8 of them.

## VAMPIRE VINE

Armor Class — 8  
Move: 0  
Hit Points: 50

Magic Ability: (see below)  
Fighter Ability: 10th Level

A vine with pointed leaves, crimson blossoms, and the ability to plant itself in the most severe environments. It grabs its victims and immediately begins to suck the blood out of them. This plant goes one step further in its play for survival in that it puts the victims in a stasis which keeps them alive. The plant can keep up to 4 beings at the same time.

## YAG-KOSHA

Armor Class — 2

Move: 9/18

Hit Points: 100

Magic Ability: 30th Level

Fighter Ability: 8th Level

Creature with the body of a man, the head of a small elephant, and the wings of a gargoyle. It is green in color and has the power of a 30th level wizard.

## CURSE OF LARSHA

A gelatinous cube as per **Greyhawk**.





APPENDIX 3: MAP OF THE HYBORIAN AGE

