

# The Supernatural

## The Nature of Magic

Magic is a natural force within the world. Similar to water, it permeates everything as vapor in the air, but flows mainly in predictable patterns like ocean currents or rivers. These ley lines can be tracked by experts and places where they cross are fonts of great power. The use of magic drains the local area of mana, though ambient sources will rush to fill the void, creating a form of cycle that refreshes the area with new mana. However, large scale magic works over long periods of time are able to exhaust the regional sources completely. Because nature abhors a vacuum, this deficit must be filled. The most similar form of energy is that of the abyssal realm. A corrupting influence that alters physical laws and the biology of local creatures, this 'anti-magic' is able to create permanent pockets of unreality within the material world. If left to heal, the natural magical forces will return to the area and out-compete the abyssal energy, but even once this negative influence is purged, the physical manifestations will remain.

## Magic Items

There are several classifications of items: Wonders, Natural Magic, Engineered Magic and Relics. While magical wonders are relatively rare, with each sorcerer generally only able to complete a handful of them over the course of their entire life - Rumahl has been inhabited long enough that these scant few wonders have built up over time. Natural magic are items that have simply awakened with purpose over time. No one worked to create them, they simply came to be with repeated use. A relatively common example would be the veteran's sword - a scimitar that when kept near a campfire and present when the collected company complains about how bad the food is will cause anything they eat to be as nourishing and filling as the feast of a high holy day. Engineered magic items are quite new. They are created using science and artifice, binding spells and drawing forth their power at will rather than using traditional enchantment. To most typical users, there is no difference, though the method of creation and potential power level are night and day. Finally, relics. These are artifacts of a bygone era. Each is unique and was either created by an archmage of power unrivaled in the modern day or was the result of a divine intervention or martyrdom. Even a single relic may contain enough power to turn the tide of an entire war.

## On Djinn

The djinn are not elemental beings tied to the earth or air or anything else. Rather, they are beings of smokeless fire who reside in the hidden places of the world - created alongside humankind by Ish Ammon, though serving a very different role in the universe. Djinn come originally from a separate plane, though they are quite comfortable in the material realm and in fact trade heavily in their home plane with goods found only here in the material world. Because of this, they are truly creatures trapped in two different worlds governed by the rules of both but

natives of neither.







There are three varieties of djinn. Generally, these classifications also correspond to the power or age of the djinn, though not always. The most common type are genies. These djinn tend to acquire power by distributing power. They help allies reach influential positions and use their connections to further their own goals. This is contrasted with efreeti, the next type of djinn. The average efreet is more powerful than a genie and works to gain more power via direct acquisition. While subterfuge is certainly a tool at their disposal, an efreet is more likely to get into direct conflict with a rival. The final type of djinn is a marid. Marids are so ancient and powerful that they are mostly incomprehensible to humanity. Their physical forms also tend to defy explanation, with body parts connected at impossible angles or existing in only two dimensions. They strike fear in the hearts of genies and efreeti alike, but are generally mad enough that they cannot form a unified war front against them.

The king of the djinn is known as the Dao and he rules over the legendary City of Brass.

## On the Granting of Wishes

While djinn are mostly immune to the standard weaknesses that spirits all seem to share, such as the ability to be relatively easily bound into fetishes, entreated into pacts, etc - they are strictly constrained by what the sha'ir call the Code of the Shayateen. These are a set of laws woven into in the tapestry of reality itself, more similar to the laws of gravity or inertia than the laws of man against theft or murder. While this Code isn't exhaustively described even in the modern era, after centuries or millennia of interaction with the djinn, a significant body of knowledge has been produced on how these creatures interact with the Material Plane. One of the most prominent sha'ir, Sol-Amur, used this knowledge to generate a set of seals and incantations that can be used to exploit the Code and force djinn into servitude. While originally this was used to seal away the mischievous spirits so they could not bring ruin to humans, it took only precious little time before the sha'ir began using these enslaved djinn to gain power and influence.

When an enslaved djinn is abandoned by its master - whether through spite, negligence or simply the death of the sha'ir - if their vessel is found, the Code requires that they perform 3 tasks for their new master to break the seal binding them to their prison. What these tasks can accomplish are limited by the power level of the djinn itself, and as the new master drags out the time between requests, the djinn may become annoyed and go further out of its way to twist intent and wreak havoc as they await their freedom.

## Religion

Religion is a major part of daily life in Rumahl. While there are many minor religions, such as the ancestor worship of the steppelanders or the strange Prime Mover cosmology of the dwarves, nearly every citizen is an adherent of Ishurism. Even outside the cities, it accounts for about half the Bedua people as well.

## Ishurism





A faith that is forever intertwined with its prophet, Mithustra. This is a honotheistic religion that exalts a single creator deity, Ish Ammon, above the other deities of the Tribunal, Ish Alara and Ish Arum. Thus, the Ishura are made up of:

- Ish Ammon the true god, the giver of laws and creator of the universe. Associated with the Sun
- Ish Alara an emanation of wisdom, called upon to interpret and understand these laws, reflecting Ammon's divine power in a way that mere mortals can understand. Associated with the Moon
- Ish Arum the god of death and navigation. Associated with the stars and the night sky. Arum is seen as an emanation of intelligence and is invoked often by explorers and travelers. This is pragmatic in that while Arum is the god of navigation and finding one's way, it is also the god of death and leading souls to paradise, meaning that even if a traveler dies in their journey and never arrives at their destination, they've already hedged their bets with the death god.

Because Ish Ammon created the universe as well as the laws that govern it, a major tenet of Ishurism is that of scientific and mathematical understanding. There is no greater way to show tribute to your god than to study the great works of that god. Madrasas are universities that teach physical sciences through the scope of the religious works and writing. There are even a sect of mystics that believe there are further facets of reality bubbling underneath the surface that they are able to influence with the proper formulae.

While adherents to the Old Faith would have you believe there is some sort of war raging between

it and Ishurism, this could not be further from the truth. In fact, Ishurism's greatest enemy is itself. With so many people living in densely packed cities all 'agreeing' on the matter of religion, countless mystery cults and schisms have formed with people arguing the minutia of dogma despite being in complete agreement in so many other ethical and cosmological matters. Some common sects are those who believe the clergy should give all their money to the poor vs those who believe the clergy should be well funded in support of missionary work; those who believe Ish Ammon created the universe wholesale vs those who believe Ammon simply manipulated an existing energy source; those who believe Mithustra was (or rose to become) divine vs those who believe he was never more than a mundane person; and the list of potential splits goes on and on.

## The Old Faith



An ancient religion of a huge number of monstrous gods with domains such as blood and stone; filth and plenty; or iron, rust and rain. Once the most widespread religion among the city dwellers, it quickly fell off when sultan Omar III adopted Ishurism as his personal faith and the power of the Tribunal brought prosperity back to the region. Today, it is an openly accepted minority religion within the sultanate and the majority faith within Niphea, an enclave for days long past. They believe in both major and minor gods, with the idea of a national deity still accepted by extreme traditionalists, though modern dogma has deemed that belief antiquated.

## Beluhtu



A word meaning 'fear of the lords' in Gnoll, this faith is generally just referred to as Shamanism or Elementalism. The priests, or shamans, of this faith venerate the five elements and the primal gods that represent them. These are:

- the Sea, represented by Apsu
- the Storms, represented by Emmu
- the Sands, represented by Anu
- the Sun represented by Basmu
- the Stars, represented by Iju

Because there is no central authority and this religion is practiced by many disparate communities of varying species, it is a highly personal faith with no strict dogma. The only common tenets are a respect and reverence for the natural world, making sure not to take for granted either the great gifts nature gives nor the massive destruction any of the five elements can cause to a community.

## Seekers of the Way





A small, non-dogmatic religion completely foreign to Rumahl, the Seekers are utterly devoted to service. They follow the path of the Erendem, heroes from the Barbary States that walked across the entire world, solving the problems of the common people and spreading goodwill before attaining apotheosis in return for their lifelong commitment. The Seekers follow the way of the Erendem by feeding the poor, tending to the sick, housing the downtrodden, protecting the weak and other such acts - while some truly devoted members of the faith literally tread the path of their holy forebears and walk the face of the planet. As such, they can be counted as a minority religion in every region of the world. While there is no church hierarchy or restrictive dogma, Seekers do celebrate certain religious holidays and are tasked with always carrying the five Articles of Faith on their person:

- A source of light, to guide their way
- Blue fabric, to honor the clear sky from which divine power emanates
- Cooking gear, to always be ready to prepare a meal for a hungry supplicant
- An uncovered head, to show you do not hide from the gods
- A vial of dirt from their place of birth, to never forget their kinfolk, no matter how far away they may be

## Technology





The sultanate as a whole and Medhir in particular is in the middle of a magical industrial revolution. The wide spread of Ishurism and its focus on natural laws has led to a renewed interest in science and math. Transmutation via alchemy, gunpowder, water conservation and control and many other modern marvels are starting to take hold after several generations of use. Of course, science takes a different route in a world where magic is real in a literal sense. Utilizing an offshoot of the binding tactics the sha'ir use to shackle djinn, artificers are able to take ambient magic and give it a specific form, then lock it into mechanical devices. This roughly mimics an enchanted item, but with much less power and with much less hassle to create. The emir of the Nassarid Emirate is making an effort to sponsor the top thinkers in Highmont both as a sign of devotion to his faith as well as to gain power for the region - both economic and military. This does not sit well with some factions within Medhir, for obvious reasons.

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Revision #25

Created 26 January 2022 17:22:52 by ray

Updated 5 August 2023 13:47:40 by ray