



HEROQUEST



IMPERIAL LUNAR HANDBOOK

Volume 2: Under the Red Moon

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Issaries Publication ISS 1304.

First Printing June 2006.

ISBN 1-929052-19-7

Sedenya brightens the dark corners, and the knowledge here will lighten your souls.

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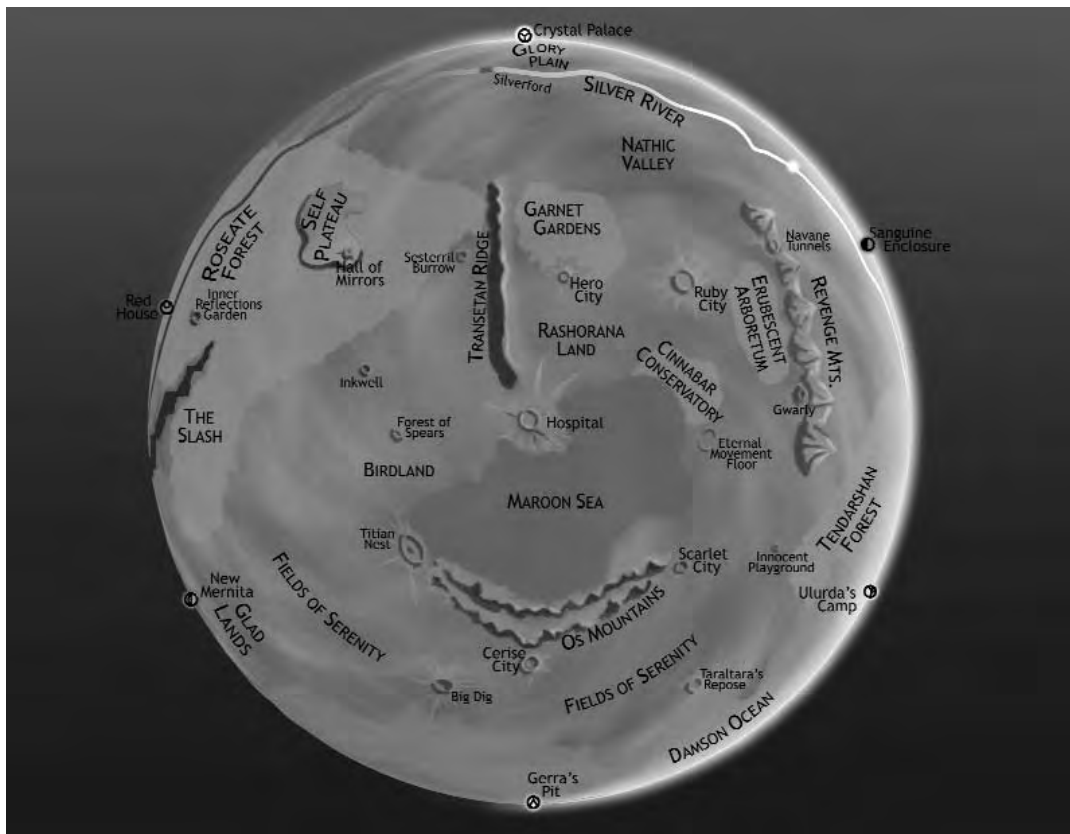
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Ann Arbor, MI 48104





The Visible Moon

Sedenya invites us to inquire about Her. She promises that anyone who looks towards Rufelza will find Her looking back. When we look at Natha overhead, we see Her benevolent face looking down upon us.

We start our search into Her Being with that which we can see most easily: We need to know what the face of Rufelza is. We look at Her in the sky and ask, naturally, "What are those marks?"

However, we must first ask, "Which marks do you see?" Rufelza has taught us over and over that our perspective is important and that not everyone always discerns all things to be the same. —Greya Stoneshaper, in *She Blesses Who Reads This*.

This book made possible by the Glorantha Trading Association

Issaries salutes the members of the Glorantha Trading Association whose contributions made this book possible. For their great generosity, we ask that Takenegi Moonson honor them.

Demi-Gods

David Hall
Sandy Petersen.

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Anonymous, Rex Andrew Bean, *The Book of Drastic Resolutions*, The Clan Coriales, Andrew Cowie, Andrew Dawson, Aidan Dixon, Reinier Dobbelman, David Dunham, Mark Galeotti, Hanataka the Stormer, André Jarosch, Andrew Joelson, Christopher Johnson, Tadaaki Kakegawa, Richard Katsaros, Hiroto Kawakami, Andrew Kelly, Thomas Laborey, Chris Lemens, Mark Leymaster of Gram-marye, Walter Manbeck, Rick "MIG" Meints, Yoko "Anesan" Miyamoto, Hayato Niitsuma, Roderick Robertson, Randy Tomaszewski, Michael Trout, Bob Vesterman, Nils Weinander, Murase Yoshiyuki.

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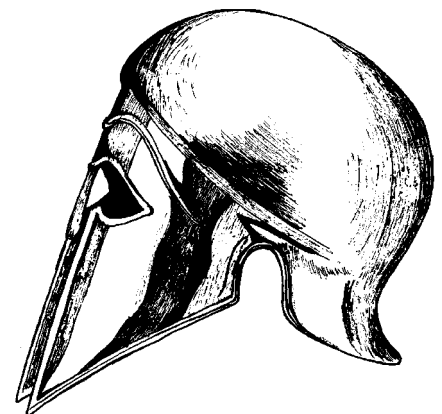
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LIFE UNDER THE MOON

This is the second in a series of Imperial Lunar Handbooks and specifically explores the Lunar immortals and way of life directly associated with the new ways of the Red Moon.

The first chapter, “Under the Red Moon,” describes the physical and magical appearance of the Moon. The phases and their effect on Lunar magic are described, and the mechanics of the Glowline are defined.

In “Our Glorious Empire,” we present the Lunars, starting with who they are. It has an overview of the organization of the religious institutions and information about citizenship and names. Finally, new occupations for *HeroQuest* are given.

Next is “Religion and Empire.” This explains the general imperial religious hierarchy and related institutions.

Next is “The Lunar Way.” It gives the characteristics and Keywords of the Way, defines the various levels of worship (adherent, novitiate, ordinate, and preceptor), and gives Hero Point costs.

In “Sevening and Illumination” we examine what it means to become closer to the Goddess.

“The Calendar” describes the Lunar Calendar. The major holy days are explained and a calendar with all the holy days of the entities in this book is included.

Finally, “The Immortals” is a list of over sixty worshipped Lunar beings that are popular in the empire. It includes the *HeroQuest* write ups for play.

Using This Book

The purpose of this book is to allow you to play Lunar characters, either as player heroes or gamemaster characters. We hope it will incite play within the empire. Adventure, opportunity, and intrigue percolate within the volatile mixture of cultures and deities, where foes hide in shadows and sit upon ancient thrones. The empire is the most liberal, enterprising, and free realm in Glorantha with the chance to do almost anything—or have it done to you.

So enter the New World. Find your place. It is the Hero Wars.

The Testimonials

“When you speak of Me, tell of yourself first,” said the Goddess when She instructed Her followers to go tell others about Her.

“How will we do that, Great One?” they asked.

“Tell who you are. Relate your first memory, your akindling, and your sevening,” she replied. Since then, all persons who speak for or about Her have followed those instructions.

These four facts are the perspective from which Her teachings must be seen and approached. These things are

stated in the Testimonial, which every Lunar being declares whenever they speak for Her. These are the essential events that shape a Lunar. They are a person’s name, the form that identifies you; a person’s first memory; a person’s first awakening to consciousness, called akindling; and a person’s sevening, or waking of the secret Lunar consciousness that leads to Enlightenment. This last is the most variable, for it changes throughout a person’s lifetime, while the others events generally do not. She continued:

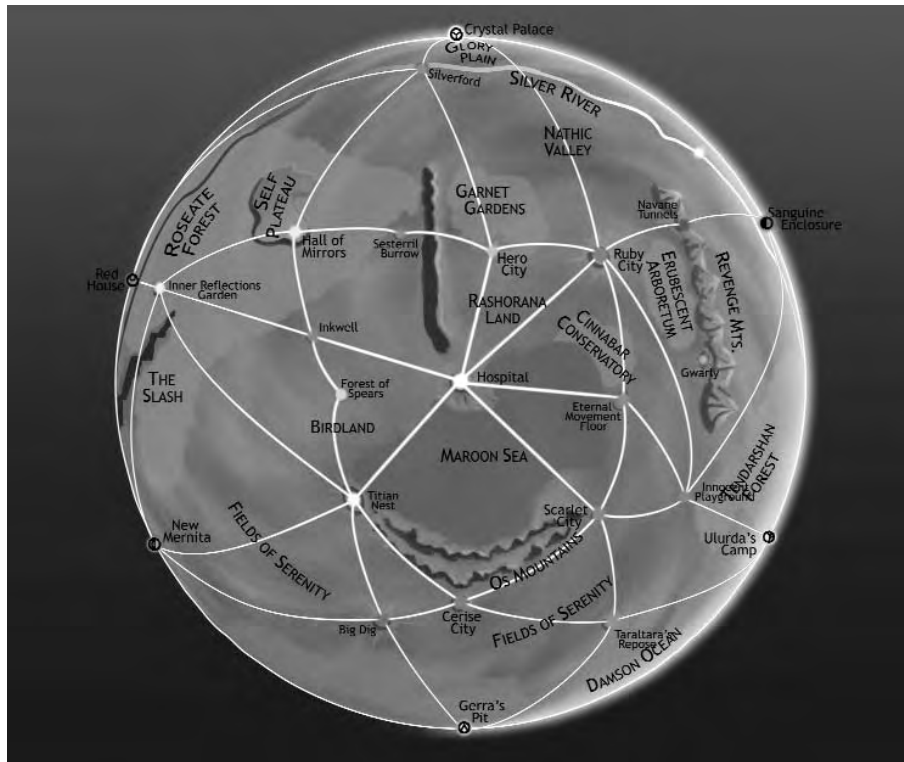
“A speaker’s name is important, for that is the key to identity which every living person has. It is what others use to identify us and to tell us apart from everyone else.” Note that the name of the Goddess often changed, and worshippers often do this too when they go through the rites; and She also went by various titles; the same is done by important people in the empire.

“Your earliest memory is important. It indicates the circumstances of our initial recognition of ourselves.” The Goddess almost always mentioned her first attraction to the Moving God as her earliest memory, though sometimes in various lives or masks, she referred to the events of that lifetime.

“The akindling is important because it reveals the act or action that brought the awareness outside of ourselves; that the individual is not the center of the universe; that we are a part of society, a part of the cosmos; and so whatever brought us that awareness is important.” Her akindling was when she bore her first Child, though in other masks it was when she performed other great deeds of compassion, creativity, or recognition.

“The sevening is important because it indicates our contact with the Great Self, our latest contact with the future of our immortal selves. My purpose is to lead you towards being one with the Great Self. Thus, your sevening is critical to your perspective of your destiny. The listeners deserve to know your contact with the Truth.” And it is critical to how others will understand the speaker as well. The listener’s perspective will be different if the stated “contact with the Great Self” is shallow, superficial, or phony. Thus, if someone is talking about the Ultimate Destiny and her own sevening was in a ceremony where it is talked about or shown, the listener knows one thing. But if the speaker has been to the Other Side and looked upon the face of Taraltara, then the weight of her words bears more significance.

Compare the different Testimonials found at the beginning of each chapter of this book. Think about which sounds more experienced, more authoritative, and more humbly true. Think of what your character will say if she is ever called upon to speak for the Goddess.



The Living Moon. In Lunar ceremonies worshippers see pulses of light moving along the web-like patterns shown here.

UNDER THE RED MOON

Dakkanat is a preacher for the poor, working out of a warehouse they found open one day. Before his weekly "riot rites," he gives this Testimonial or one similar.

"My friends, please call me Brother Dakkanat. I am from this city, an alleyway nearby, my daddy a broom boy and mother a professional mourner. The first thing I remember is that dead guy in the alley, stunk worse than dogs. I was just a kid, but I was thinkin', 'Gotta be something better.' I was ignited when I was exactly seven years, seven weeks, and seven days old. The Great Pastor reached up to Our Mother up there and brought that light down into my Number Seven. Yes Sir, as I will help you to light yours too. And the Seventh Soul? Not for me. It's an elitist license to do evil and not for the likes of good folk like us."

The Moon is a multi-faceted thing, just as Sedenya is a multi-faceted Being. Looking at the scarlet world overhead in different ways reveals different aspects of Her.

Under the Moon

The ascent of the Red Goddess into the sky released the Lunar power into the world. The Lunar power had been generally inaccessible before except to some esoteric and obscure groups that wielded no significant force. But the Red Moon hovering in the Sky gives Her Lunar magic to anyone who offers regular worship to any Lunar immortal.



Appearance Outside the Glowline

At its most base level, the Red Moon is a large planetoid, a mundane part of the Mortal World.

It hovers in the Middle Air over the Crater and the city of Glamour—quite high up, but not as high as the sun or the other planets. Its size is more or less about the same size as the sun appears to be.

Over the course of a seven-day cycle the orb gradually shades from red to black and back to red. Inspection reveals that the glowing red body of the Moon is covered part of the time in a shadow that creeps in from the right edge, spreads to cover the entire Moon, then recedes to the left until the Moon is full again. The red is visible day and night. The dark part of the moon is practically invisible in the daytime, and can only be tracked at night by the stars and planets it obscures. The shadow travels around the moon, so when it is Crescent-Go Moon day for an observer in Pent, in Dragon Pass they are experiencing a Full Moon day. Since the phases



The Divine Face

of the Moon also determine the measure of Lunar magic power available, we see that different parts of the world experience different power levels at the same time.

The visible shadow on the Red Moon is not exactly the same every week, it rocks back and forth. One week on Half Moon the “edge of light”—the division between light and dark—is perfectly upright. A week later, the edge will have “slipped” a little and appear to be slightly tilted, with the top of the edge slanted to the right. The third week of the cycle the edge is once again vertical, and during the fourth week it tilts in the other direction. Lunars know that the shadow is caused by a mystical satellite of the Moon, Destix, whose orbit is not always exactly the same but instead moves slightly above or below the “visible equator” of the Moon, on a cycle that repeats every 29 1/2 days.

Unlike most other celestial bodies, the Red Moon does not tilt with the stars on the Sky Dome.

Appearance from Inside the Glowline

Inside the Glowline, the appearance of the Red Moon changes dramatically.

First, it is lower to the ground than it appears outside. Its size seems to grow as the observer approaches the Crater, as if it is closer to the center of the empire. The dark part of the moon is visible to the naked eye during the day, and at night a red nimbus surrounds the darkened part of the Lunar orb.

The shadows slide across the face of the moon in the normal phases but do not rock as they do outside the Glowline. It is as if a different orbiter than Destix caused them or as if Destix had moved his orbit. Lunars, of course, say that neither is true and point to the fact that Destix is just one of many magical entities, whose appearance depends as much on the viewer as it does on Destix himself. The different views are just another example of Lunar magic. And the different views don't stop there.

Depending on the devotion of the viewer to the Lunar way, different aspects of the moon can be seen.

The Materialist Moon

Rufelza is the Red Moon visible with the naked eye. She is the mask, or physical part, of the Goddess. Nothing fancy, nothing else, “She is what I see,” say the beggars of Rufelza's cult. “I see that,” pointing upward.

Features roughly visible upon it create the rough appearance of a face, the “Woman in the Moon.” If scrutinized by folk with good eyesight, the features are seen to be mountain ranges, craters, great crevices, and huge forests. These features are named, as shown in the illustration on page 2.

The Living Moon

When viewed with Moon Eye, or during holy celebrations, people see the “Point and Pulse” or “Living Moon.” This appears to be circular crater marks (the points) with lines radiating from them. Along those lines, bursts of bright light move from point to point. This pattern is sometimes called the Moon Net, Energy Net, or Moon Web. See the illustration on page 5.

Different shades and tones of red color the Moon, even ranging into gentle purples and faint oranges. Some of the points are not red.

Using Other Magical Senses

When non-Lunar magicians use abilities like Soul Vision, Spirit Face, or Symbolic Sight to look at the Moon, they see something that looks like their own type of magic but distorted somehow. Maybe it is fuzzy or leaning to the side or somehow “just not right.” It is clearly not one of the other two types of magic either. So to a theist, it looks like divine magic but with something wrong. This phenomenon is one of the sources of the extreme fear and hatred many peoples have of the Red Moon, for magically it seems almost identical to chaos or an illusion.

The Divine Face

Heroes who have concentrated on the Lunar Way see Her Face—not just a planet with shadows and pulses, but an actual divine face, of tremendous and enthralling beauty. To humans Her features are human; to elves She is a dryad; to the eagle men of Yolp, an eagle. At times, especially in worship, worshippers can see Her looking right at them, eye to eye, in a moment of *darshan*, the intimate glance that the immortal grants to worshippers.

She is beautiful and gentle, and She is decorated with the Jewelry of Liberation. She wears upon Her head a gleaming white diamond, upon which is held the Vrimak Jewel of Freedom. Upon Her brow She wears a band of finest silver, and upon its sides gleam two fiery red rubies. A pair of sapphire earrings glitter brightest blue, while about Her throat is a pearl that is so black that it gleams. Finally, She wears a nose ring that is sometimes said to be rainbow colored and other times to be gently pulsing, but in fact appears differently to different people at different times.

Her Face is always half red and half black, the shadow eternally rotating in a counter-clockwise direction pivoting on the Nose of the Goddess. When mundane vision shows a Full Moon, those who use Moon Eye see a face that is bright on the left and covered in shadow on the right. Thus, the Face of the Goddess is always half obscured in darkness.

More advanced worshippers—those who have learned the secret of their immortal—see the face of the Goddess in all Her glory, unobscured by shadow.

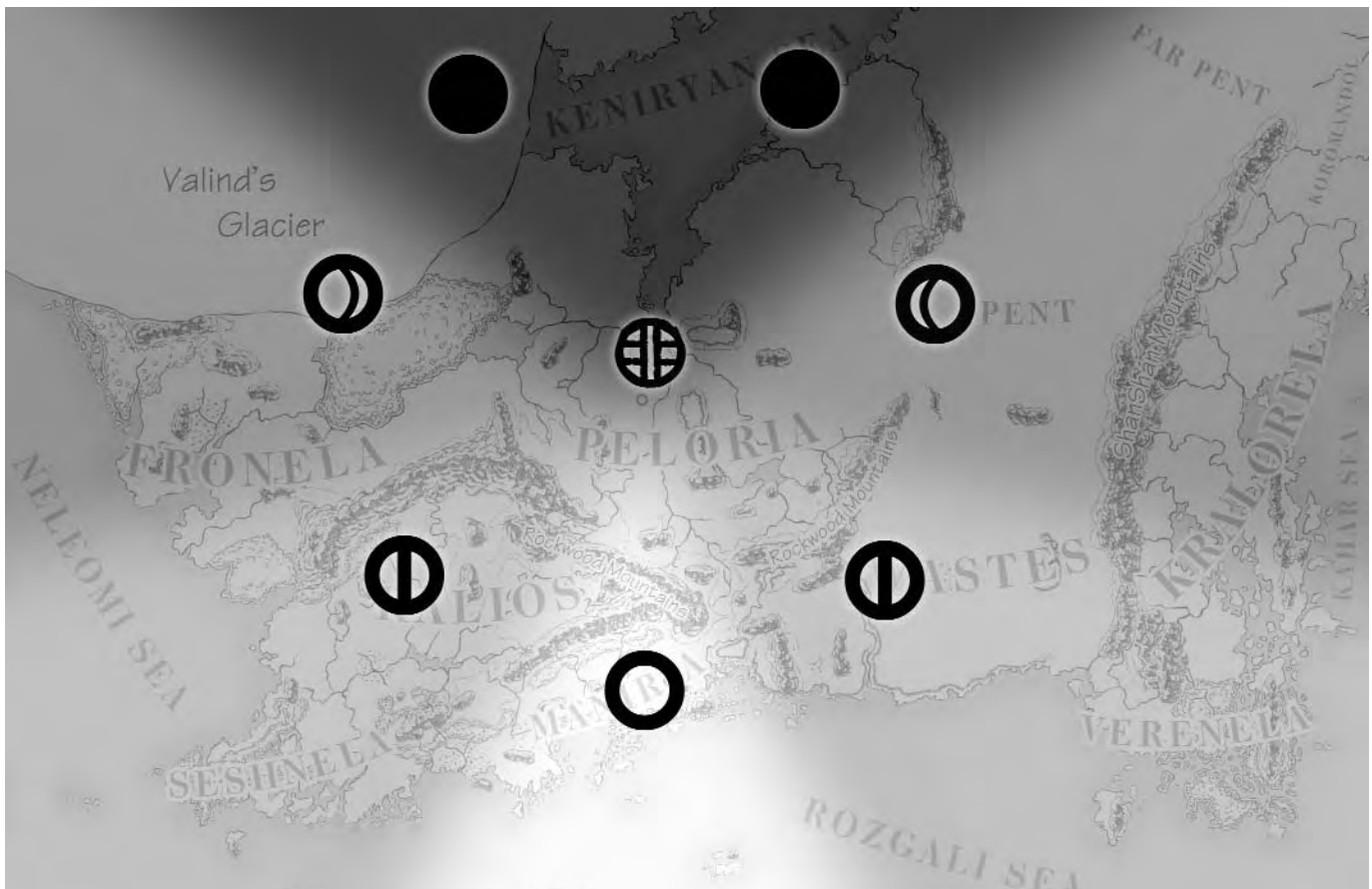
What does the Cycle feel like?

As related by a new convert to Lunar Magic:

“The feeling was strange at first. Kinda like a bunch of ants creeping around inside my bones at first, and then a rather unpleasant itch under my skin that quickly gave way to warmth, kinda flowing in ripples through my muscles, and then a huge happy feeling of profound relief. When the power started to wane for the first time, I felt dizzy, kinda like the ground was shifting one way and the sky the other way, but slowly. Kinda sick to my stomach, but when it started to come back, I felt better, then good. But all that’s gone away now, or I’m used to it. Now when I go to the holy days, I still feel that profound relief, a kinda wide happiness. I am only aware of it when I try to be.”

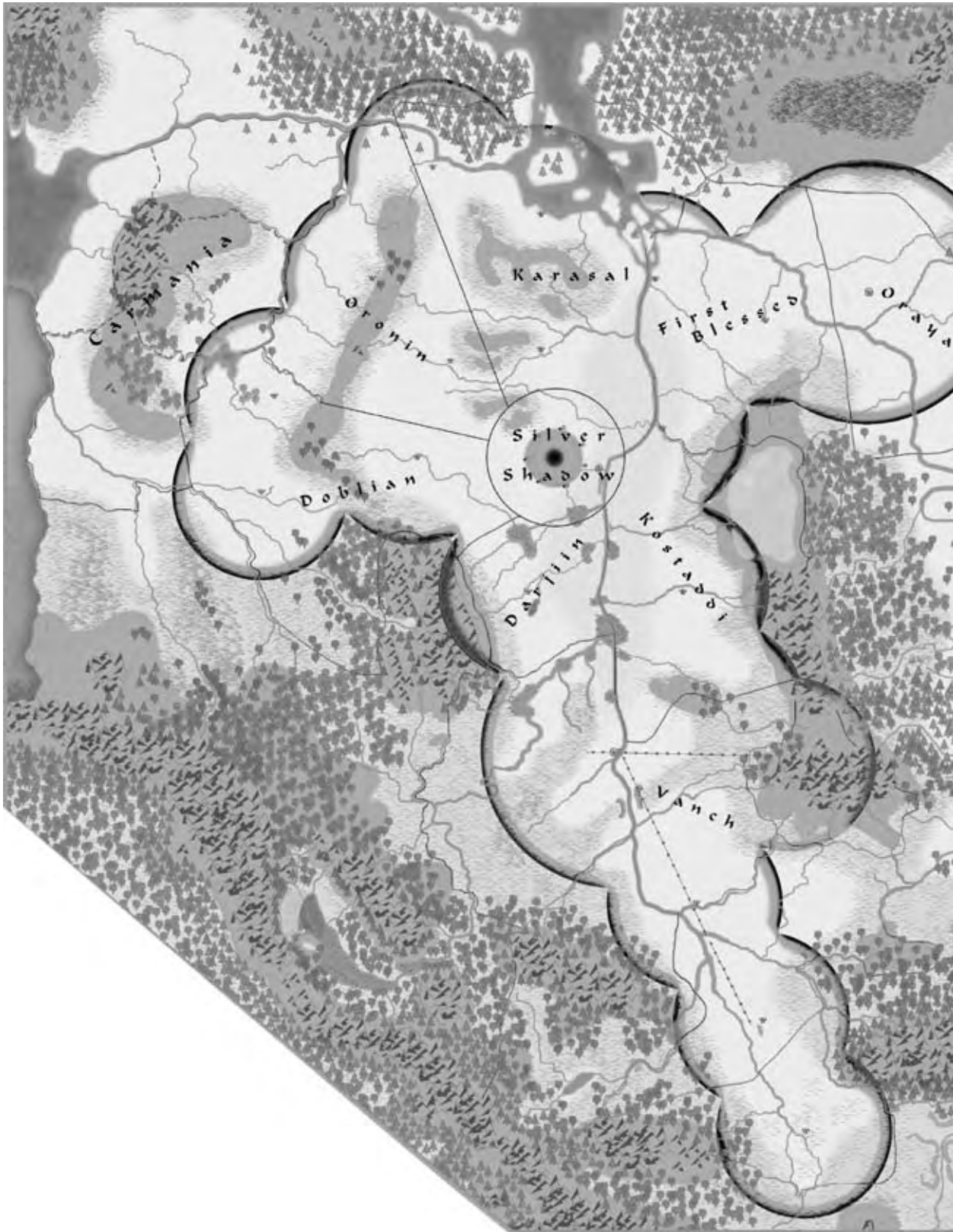
Phases and the Lunar Cycle

The effects of the Lunar cycle are dramatic and easily recognized by everyone in Glorantha. Lunar magical abilities wax and wane based on the phase of the Red Moon. However, the Red Moon is not just a planet or even the Lunar Otherworld—it is the Lunar interface between the Mortal World and the Immortal Worlds. Furthermore, the Moon is itself the source of the powers of change and illusion, and so its appearance is not fixed, instead depending both on the viewer and his or her current location in the world.



Phase of the Moon. The phases of the Moon turn in a clockwise direction, slowly changing from one phase to the next over the course of a day. A full cycle takes seven days to complete.





The Glowline

Each temple of the Reaching Moon generates a circular area within which the moon's phases act as described above. It is unknown what would happen to the Glowline should a Temple be destroyed.

