

SKYREALMS of Jorune

Ramian Caste System

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with much inspiration from Joseph Steven Coleman

The blue-skinned ramian arrived on Jorune as servitors of the Lamorri and were abandoned to their fate after the shantha expelled the lamorri from the planet. Ramian were distant cousins of the lamorri, but were considered by the lamorri as merely clever chimpanzees. After almost 5,000 years apart from their lamorri masters, the ramian culture has developed into a stoic, stratified society that is virtually closed to outsiders.

After centuries of confinement to the unhealthy realm of Voligire, the ramian took to the vast open seas they loved and which brought them peace at mind, around 1900 PC. They sought the ancient and holy lands of their gods and masters whose true identity had been lost in time. Warmer and drier lands have always been the target of the tirtive's colonising attempts, as these suit ramian better. The ancient ruins of the lamorri have been the target of the ramian priests. Ramian have now permanently established themselves at four locations on Jorune, except for Voligire, the cold country south of Gilthaw, which is the land most people associate with ramian. These main colonies are Ponteer, southeastern Drail, western Temauntro and Sillipus along with its surrounding islands. The amount of land controlled by ramians is therefore vast and much larger than humans suspect. Only by being situated in remote areas (Far enough from interfering and noisy humans, so that the ramis can feel safe.) have they so far avoided attention of humanity's greatest rivalling realms. The ramian colonisation of Drail and Ponteer in 2100-2300 PC was, however, met by tremendous force as the Erucians and emerging Holy Coronian Empire in 2342 PC tried everything in its power to liberate its colonies and drive the ramian back into the sea. The ramian initially won most of the northeastern Drail colonies but eventually succumbed to the powerful and well-organised Coronian heavy infantry. A stalemate was reached and the ramian were in Drail to stay. Their colonies were cemented in the far eastern parts of Drail (The Vareech deserts and wastelands.) and in Ponteer. Still today there is enmity between the ramian of Ponteer and Drail and the Thanterians.

Ramian are semi-telepathic or empathic. This means that they can feel the emotions of a race member (normally only at close distances) and have a very strong bond between themselves. Ramian would automatically know if a member of his race lies, is at pain, is afraid etc. Ramian who have been close together for a period of time, such as boat crews, soldiers, mates or family can even notice subtler reactions. Many humans have reported how one ramian has noticed them and the rest of the crew turned their heads their way at the same time. Chiven rachu-eh have also been known to sense empathic reactions from other species such as humans. But ramian cannot transmit thoughts, details or otherwise communicate. They receive each other's strongest emotions and reactions. Unfortunately, in this way fear or rage will spread through a ramian army like wildfire, as not only body language but also emotions are

noticed. More than once this has been used to the ramian's disadvantage. This bond between the ramian was created originally by their lamorri masters. The ramian servants were attuned to their master's minds and heeded every command they gave them. Unlike the cleash, the ramian were mindless slaves in the presence of their masters. Through this bond the ramian felt the terror and fear when the shantic evids hunted the lamorri. The Ca-Shal shanta learned how to induce this fear again by manipulating this empathic bond. All ramian fear the wrath of the shanta who can torment their minds. All ramian have inherited nightmares from the time the shanta killed their gods.

Any ramian would feel for, or take care of a race member as if he was a brother or sister, even though he has not met him or her before. Contrary to common belief, Ramian can disagree about many things and even be enemies. However, a ramian would never lift a hand against another member of the race. It would feel just as wrong or terrible as cutting of ones own hand. This is not merely a code of conduct or part of their cultural morale; this is a strong instinct, a behaviour coded into their genes. The disturbing cycle of chiveer has disrupted this behaviour. Chiveer ramian have been known to sometimes attack others of their race and always act violently. Because of this, chiveer ramian are banished from ramian cities, but are often used in ramian raiding parties as they are more fierce and fearless. Some ramian that are insane or have genetic defects that makes them uncaring of, or blind to empathic emotions have been known to have been elevated to Tirikav (kinslayers/executioners) as they can perform this task easier.

Ramian society is a complicated caste system, where passage from one caste to the other is symbolised by a destructive ceremony called Rak. The ramian that is elevated abandons all ties to his previous caste and the family that raised him. From now on he has been elevated and is more than he was before. He will not take a mate from a lower caste. Climbing the caste ranks is very hard and is not offered as a reward. Only greater deeds for the race, great mastery of ones inner self or great religious deeds allow elevation. The ramian castes are seldom broken thanks to the empathic link the ramian have with each other. These ranks are upheld in both war and common society and are strictly obeyed. A ramian would break these ranks as often as a human would seriously harm herself.

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| Tirtive | The rulers of all ramian. These four lords all come from the Urat caste and sit in Vinteer. |
| Korochka | Ramian high priests. Normally not involved in warfare but very influential among the Urat. They have ranks among themselves all the way down to the lowest acolyte. The most noted of the ramian high priests are Ortive Chorki, who is one of the Tirtive and Chokulsha, who is a Matirikiv girelord. |
| Matirikiv | Colony lords that rule in Drail (The Four Southsea Girelords), Ponteer (The Four "Fathers/Parents" of Ponteer), Sillipus (The Ruling Four of Twathigire), and northwestern Temauntro (The Four Temauntro Warlords). They are autonomous but must obey all orders from the Tirtive if they choose to interfere. |

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| Degralochi | Religious and ethical advisors to the Tirtive and Matirikiv. They also work as teachers and mentors for many Urat. They are interpreters, readers and writers of the ancient degaloch scripts. |
| Urat | The nobility of Voligire who receive their position by birth. Urat take their high office from hereditary titles that can be traced back to the lamorri servitude and is ranked according to the responsibility the ancestor held as a lamorri slave. The four greatest Urat are the Tirtive. Urat seldom leave Voligire or the colony they have been sent to willingly, but sometimes help their servants in matters where their presence is needed. Even the highest Urat lives a spartan life, surrounded by lower caste ramian and affiliated with at least one or two Chiven Rachu-eh. Urat governors studiously keep the meaningless ceremonies started by the lamorri to give the lower castes an outlet for the need most intelligent races have for ritual. They avoid dealing with non-ramian, considering such contact to be distasteful and the duty of lesser ramian. |
| Tirikav | Kinslayers. The only ramians allowed to carry out a death sentence towards another ramian. The order of kinslaying must come from a caste which is higher than the ramian to be executed belongs to. Often same ramian is used for these temporary task over and over again, and often the ramian feels great hesitation to perform the task that is very unnatural to this species. Sometimes half insane ramian are chosen, who lack this racial block. |
| Chiven Rachu-eh | The highest level in the Voligirian society is the Chiven Rachu-eh, those who are masters of themselves. Those who assert an amazing level of self-control during chiveer may burst their own blood vessels, particularly on the chest or above the ears, while resisting the desire to breed or draw much blood of those around them. No ramian is born to the caste. It is not unknown for a ramian to use chemicals or berry juices to fake the exalted bloodstains of the Chiven Rachu-eh, but discovery of the fraud results in an immediate and painful death for the imposter. Chiven Rachu-eh are chosen to govern, negotiate with other races, administer the minimal governmental structure within Voligire, Drail, Ponteer, northwestern Temauntro and Sillipus. Most bigger gire ships try to carry at least three chiven rachu-eh to give the force of authority to decisions. |
| Rochka | Lesser ramian priests. They uphold the ramian motto and help the Urat to control the lower castes through the dark religion riddled with demons. (The demons are supposedly of lamorri origin.) |
| Krokive | Warlords. They coordinate up to 10 000 ramian in battle thanks to greater empathic abilities. These abilities were originally genetically engineered by the lamorri, which has led to the fact that the Krokive title is hereditary. |
| Talanki | Leader and coordinator of an Eecroh. During more peaceful times they are slave herder superiors in Voligire or in the colonies. |
| Larchko | Provincial lords. Responsible for land, town or part of sea. |

- Zhon** The Zhon are the farmers and teachers of the ramian. Zhon maintain the plantations in Drail and teach the basic hearth skills to the young. The zhon will occasionally join a gire crew to reach a distant port for discussions with iscin and farmers to solve problems beyond the understanding of the other ramian castes. Five Zhon journeyed to the North Valley station (now called Gauss) to discuss the inability to grow a cultivated shirm-eh (the ramian healing limilate) with the scientist Iscin. Iscin travelled to Voligire with the Zhon to attempt to overcome the genetic weaknesses that causes domesticated shirm-eh to fail within three generations, necessitating the constant quest for wild shirm-eh to make healing limilates. (NOTE: It is a thriddle's purpose in life to destroy any patches of shirm-eh they discover, destroying established sites. It is also a custom among forest thriddle to mark passage into adulthood by adventuring to a shirm-eh site and salting the ground to prevent it from ever growing again. Many of the worst conflicts between thriddle and ramian have taken place because of thriddle action against a source of shirm-eh — and the thriddle are usually not the winners in such conflicts.)
- Kor** Captain of a ship. A great honour surrounded by many rituals when becoming one and receiving a ship.
- Ramis** The average ramian. Somewhat shorter and stockier than the lithe ramian gire and chiven rachu-eh, the Ramis are the common farmers, miners, fisherman and labourers. The philosophy of "powerful silence" illustrated by the Ramis – the site of dozens of blue gray Rami in the fields or the great open pit mines of Vinteer, working without uttering a word for days at a time can be very unsettling. A Rami seldom travels more than a few miles from the site of his (or is that a her?) birth.
- Gire** The Gire are the heroes of ramian society. Because shirm-eh will not germinate in domesticated fields (except for the inferior shirm-eh that can be cultivated in the fields of Drail), there is a constant need to discover fresh sources. Other nations, knowing the value of shirm-eh to the ramian, have charged outrageous prices for their supplies of the limilate and virtually forced gire into piracy to raise the jewels, gold and crystals to meet the exorbitant prices the merchants demanded. After a few thousand years, the role of gire as pirate was firmly established and their prowess in sea battles was well known. A Gire can be feted for bringing ships loaded with unprocessed shirm-eh into Vinteer, and a six day feast, called Gire-sau, is held in the heroes' honour. All non-ramian, including prisoners and slaves, become guests at the feast, with the understanding that on the sixth day everything will return to its previous status. There are several stories of captive adventurers who escaped from Voligire during Gire-sau - and they are the only ones who lived to tell the tales.
- Chiveer** Below the Gire are the chiveer. The ramian abandoned on Jorune found that their body chemistry changed as a result of being on the new world of Sho Caudal. Their normal mating cycle was changed. Where it was simple part of

the reproductive cycle in the lamorri-ramian homeworld, on Jorune the season of the chiveer ceased to be part of a normal cycle. Chiveer drove some members of the race into a bloodlust accompanied by physical transformation. Chivs, the bony projections other races use as a warning sign to mark mating-mad ramian, do not appear on all members of the race. The chiveer are driven from the main population and commonly take up with gire crews - it is one of the only places they can go and success as a gire will give them a return to society for a short time during Gire-sau and as giron, or 'heroes.'

Rochera A ramian bound by oath, gratitude, vengeance etc to someone of another race. The ramian stands outside ramian society and nothing is required from him until he has fulfilled his task. Has no authority among ramian regardless of which caste he is a member of.

Silent Ramian A colony of ramian remained in Jasp as hostages for three human generations after the negotiations of Harangire. Many of them remained and Jasp eventually conferred full citizenship and rights onto its ramian citizens. These ramian are called the silent ramian and may not complain to or address the Tirtive in Vinteer. They stand politically outside of ramian society. This has led to that ramian of the Urat pretend that they do not exist and treat them as air. Among themselves they have the titles of Larchko, Zhon, Kor, Ramis, Chiveer and Rochera. They have four leaders chosen among the Zhon for a lifetime called The Four Silent. Ramian from Jasp can be unnerving in their casual use of slang and other non-ramian flourishes in their speech (such as anecdotes and jokes). Jaspian ramian have also learned the 'showing of teeth', which most races seem to associate with pleasure, but the sight of a ramian attempting to smile is very upsetting to most intelligent species.

Thivin At the bottom of the social structure are the thivin, who are mutations of the ramian race. Thivin within the ramian societies will never be anything other than of ramian who do the dirty work, the monotonous smithing and the accounting of treasuries. There is no chance to advance or improve their station in life. After a plague reduced the population in Voligire to less than a third of normal, thivin were sent in place of Zhon to trade and negotiate with other realms. Most of the thivin who left did not return, but made new lives as respected craftsmen and artisans in the other cultures. A free thivin returning to Voligire is subject to immediate capture and will be impressed into a thivin work gang, which amounts to a lifetime slavery.