



HEROQUEST



HeroQuest Voices *Peoples of Glorantha*

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A Personal View of Grazer Life, The Endless Pastures of the Sun
David Dunham



*Legion are the peoples of the world, many and varied are their ways.
All are connected by the cosmic webs of Arachne Solara
Who brings and binds all together, in life as in this book,
Who takes and rends apart those who would tear her webs.*

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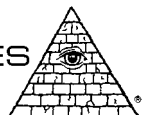
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A Personal View of Grazer Life

What the War Chief Told Me

Who are you?

I am Jalorast Shining Arm, son of Yaranrast Night Gallop, son of Jalorast Bright Lance, descended from Yu-Kargzant the Imperial Sun.

Who are we?

We are the Pure Horse People, tenders of the sacred herds that are descended from the Great Horse. Outsiders call us Grazers.

We belong to the Hoof-Dancer Clan. Our horses are branded with two horseshoes, and are renowned for their nimbleness and speed. You can recognize the men of our clan by our beaded anklets, and you can recognize the women of our clan by the same beadwork in their hair.

What makes us great?

We are the only people who still follow the true example of Yu-Kargzant and his sons, and care for and worship Horse. Others may ride horses, but they do not know the right forms of worship, and pollute themselves by herding other beasts.

Where do we live?

We live in the Grazelands, territory granted to us by Ironhoof the Centaur generations ago. Each spring the clan splits up, and takes the herds into the hills above Maregraze Vale or to the banks of Jaldon's Wrong River. In winter, we reassemble in the valley.

The Feathered Horse Queen lives in North Post, but frequently travels among the clans.

How do we live?

We live off Arandayla's bounty. We drink the milk and blood of our herds. We eat their flesh at our most important ceremonies, and women make cheese, yogurt, and koumiss. In addition, we eat the wild animals hunted by our men, and plants gathered by women or grown by the vendref. The vendref also make bread, wine and beer. And we receive exotic foods, cloth, and gold from the traders who wish to pass through our territory.

Our herds provide for us in many other ways. Our tents are sewn from the hides of many horses. Our pants and women's dresses are also made from their hide, and the hair from their mane and tail is woven into ropes and rugs.

But most of all, the herds carry us and our possessions, so that we don't have to live in one place forever, which is a sign of poverty.

What is important in my life?

You are now a Rider, and have moved from my tent to those of the Riders along the edge of the camp. You are responsible for tending the herd and bringing home game, and for learning the skills of the Warrior.

In eight years, your age group will be initiated as Warriors, and will be responsible for bearing arms in the defense of the clan. You will live in the Warriors' tents by the entrance to the camp. Once you have sufficient wealth for a gift to a girl's father, you may marry and set up your own tent. Your gift should be generous, for this helps bind her clan and ours together.

My own age group is the Leader. Leaders are chosen to direct slaves, to lead small bands, or for special functions, as I led a delegation to the Sun Dome last Storm Season.

In time, you will attain the Elder age group. These men speak with the voice of experience, and lead larger groups, even the clan. Their advice is sought and revered.

When you die, let your body be burned in a great pyre, so the sparks will carry your soul to Yu-Kargzant, who will judge if you are ready to be reborn, or must spend time in the Underworld until you are purified.

Who rules us?

Bandroste Brave Charge leads the Hoof-Dancer Clan. Like all clan chieftains, he wears a band of feathers on his right arm to indicate his descent from Yu-Kargzant, and carries the Five Stars Whip. He appoints men of other noble families from the Leader age group to advise him. Dinalish Mighty Leap also gives advice, consulting with the spirits and requesting their aid when necessary. My cousin Taradarin Ten Day Run leads the clan into war; his bravery is noted throughout the Grazelands.

Bandroste is loyal to the Feathered Horse Queen, Bearer of the Head, who incarnates the powers of the Feathered Horse Goddess. Her magic unites all of us, even the women and vendref, and she appoints the rulers of the trading posts. Bearer of the Head rules the tribe in times of peace.

Bandroste also owes allegiance to Jarsandron Ten-Herds, whom he helped elect as Chief. Jarsandron rules the Grazers in times of war.

What makes a man great?

A great man owns many horses and slaves, and wears glittering gold. Bravery, honesty, generosity, and obedience are the mark of a great warrior, as are the many scalps he's taken in battle.

What is evil?

Chaos is evil. It was let into the world when the Rebel Gods slew the Sun, and ever since, we've had to fight it.

Failure to follow Yu-Kargzant's rules always takes a heavy price, if not in this life, then after death.

Never commit the folly of adding beasts to your herd heedlessly. They might fill your belly, but they can't nourish your soul.

What is my lot in life?

You show much promise in target practice, and I think you may someday qualify to join the Brotherhood of the Golden Bow. You will then be able to win much glory by participating in the most daring raids.

Strive to become prosperous, increasing your herd through raiding and careful breeding. Maybe you will become wealthy enough to take a second wife.

When I become an Elder or die, I will divide my herds among my sons. As the eldest, you will receive the most, Jalasdrad half as much, and Melipolti half that.

What is the difference between men and women?

Men are the protectors, providers, and leaders. Women are gifted with the powers of life, bearing children and caring for mares during foaling. They are in charge of the herds, and decide when it's time to move to a new pasture. When you are married, your wife will do your bidding, but in turn you must care for her and be kind to her with words and deeds.

I know your sister thinks she will grow up and become a shaman in the service of the Feathered Horse Queen, but I asked Dinalish about this, and he believes she is not blessed by the spirits.

How do we deal with others?

We can always trust everyone in our clan. If your herd sickens or is stolen, or if you are wounded, our clan will help you. You must always offer what aid you can to a member of our clan.

Other Grazers may help you as well, but you will then owe them a favor. If you ever need to seek their aid, go first to your mother's Sun Ring Clan, and avoid the greedy Sky Bows.

The vendref, our slaves, should be treated strictly but fairly. For the most part, they are hard-working and loyal, but they are prone to temptation from their cousins in Sartar or Tarsh.

Ironhoof aided us long ago, and the people of Beast Valley are our friends. But be warned: minotaurs mean well, but they can easily forget who their friends are, especially when they drink or are consumed by the battle frenzy.

Dragonewt cities are located to the east and north of the Grazelands. They sometimes act as our intermediaries with other lands, but you would do well to avoid them, because none can truly predict their actions.

Years ago, Sartar came to challenge the Feathered Horse Queen, but ended up marrying her. For a while, his kingdom was on good terms with ours. However, the Orlanthi are an unruly lot, and some tribes have raided us.

Other foreigners should be treated with suspicion until they perform some act to earn your trust. If you offer your friendship, be sure it is as constant as the Sun.

Our war bands often serve in the armies of other lands. The Feathered Horse Queen makes sure that our employer will be trustworthy and generous. If she is unable to find such an

employer, then our war bands make swift raids deep into foreign lands and carry off great treasure to glorify her and Yu-Kargzant.

Who are our enemies?

The tribesmen of Prax, who ride unworthy beasts and long ago sought to enslave our entire tribe, are our enemies. Our shamans set up altars in the Guardian Hills to keep the beast-riders out of Dragon Pass.

Trolls, who skulk in darkness and eat our horses, are always our foes.

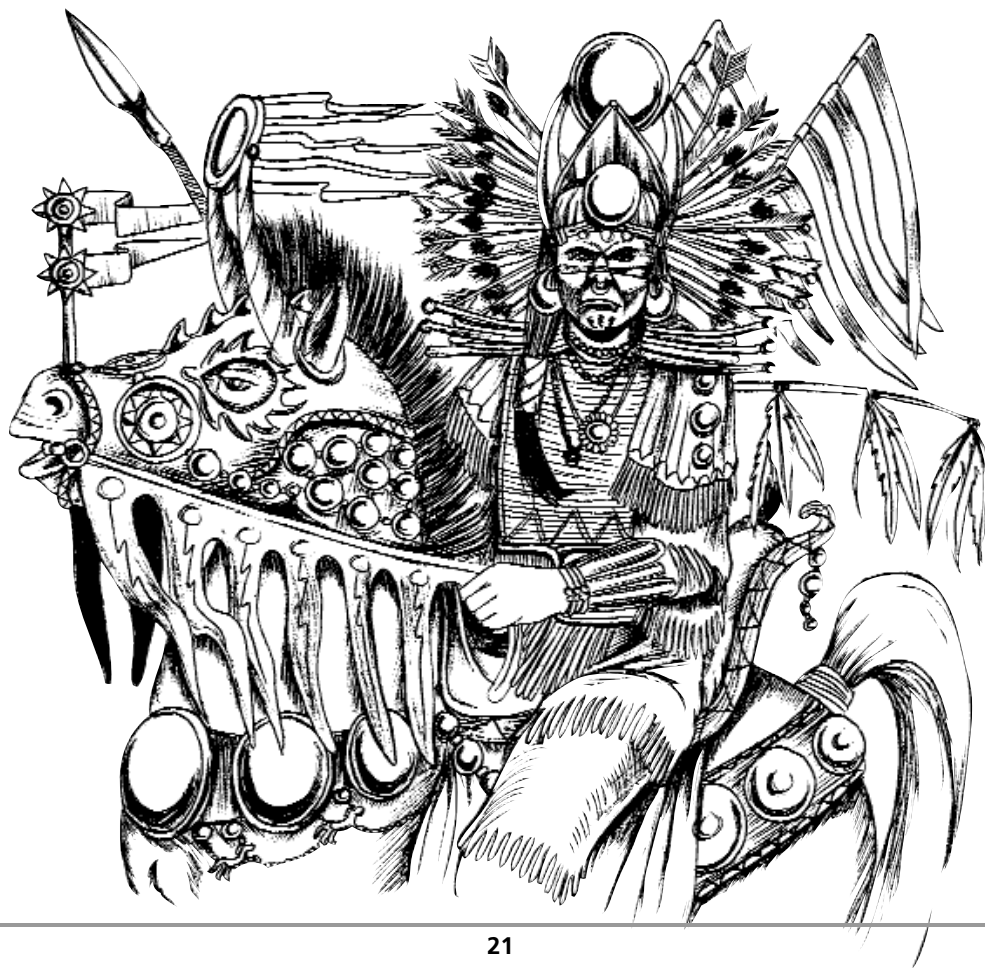
Who are my spirits?

Radiant Yu-Kargzant is our ancestor as well as our great spirit, and we follow his laws. Men worship his sons Dastal the Hunter, Jordan the Warrior, Henird the Leader, and Josad the Elder, depending on their age group. Most women worship Arandayla, the Horse Mother, as well as the spirit for their age group: Charai for girls, Lereen for mothers, Estei for teachers, and Henedra for elders. Our shamans contact Light spirits from the Sky World, each of which gives us good magic. And never forget that our herds are holy, too.

The vendref have their own gods; never worship them, but know who they are: Kenkacho the Loyal Slave, Kanestal One-hand who runs the trading posts, Ernalda the cut earth, Barntar plower of barley, Lodril plower of wheat, and Hiia Swordsman, who serves the Feathered Horse Queen.

What is there to do around here?

In Dark Season when the entire clan camps in Maregraze Vale, we hold feasts and dances; compete in horse races, hare-spear- ing, chadash, and archery contests; play Horse-and-Vulture; arrange marriages; and tell stories and listen to songs.



The Pastures of the Endless Sun

What the Grazer Shaman Says

Where did the world come from?

Creator made the sky first, then the earth.

Where did I come from?

Our people and our cousins the horses came down from the sky to conquer the earth. Our ancestors touched down at First Hoofprint, and traveled many times to where there was better grazing. We won't stay in the Grazelands forever.

Why do we die?

Monsters came up out of the ground and began destroying the perfect world. They mutilated Arandayla, taking her wings, fangs, and claws, leaving her crippled. Yu-Kargzant sent Jordan to save her from death, but he could not be everywhere, and so the monsters tore our ancestor Venst Voloi to bits and ate him.

What happens after we die?

Your body will be placed on a platform so that the beasts can't defile it, or if you fall while on a distant raid, it will be burned. Your spirit will then travel to the Pastures of the Endless Sun, where you will continue to serve Yu-Kargzant until La-Ungariant sends you to be reborn.

Why am I here?

We await the Sun Bells, which Yu-Kargzant will ring to call us back to the sky to fight for him there. Until then, we are on the earth to rule over inferior people.

How do I do magic?

Denbitos taught us how to tell the good spirits from the bad ones. He teaches us how to ask the good ones to help us. He teaches shamans how to drive off and crush the bad ones. I will give you charms to hold the spirits you should deal with, which will use their powers for you.

Some people use other magic, too. The Innocent Magics are not from Denbitos, but they are not bad, either. But don't be seduced by the Guilty Magic that taints your spirit.

I have heard of other powers. Can you tell me the truth about...

...Chaos?

Some think that change is the same as motion. This is not so.

...Darkness?

Kanvak is ruler of the monsters and demons of the night, such as the trolls. Within his shadows, Enkrevia the Night Huntress chases down her prey outside the light of the campfires.

...Ernalda?

This earth goddess was kin to La-Ungariant, but she lets her body be cut with plows. Thus, she is weak, as if bled white from a hundred slashes. She is fit only for vendref to worship.

...the Ocean?

The ocean is like a river so wide you can't see the other side. The waters were defeated long ago, and are unimportant.

...the Moon?

This goddess of the River People tricked them into worshipping her as a False Sun. But her color is not gold, and she was not

strong enough to rise all the way into the Sky Realm. She even tricked some Pure Horse People, but our chief now sees through her lies. We dance to the Sun to make sure she falls again.

...Storms?

Wingkoalad, whom the Sartarites call Orlanth, once defeated Yu-Kargzant by trickery. We are now on guard against this, and await the time when we will drive his clouds from the sky, so that the Sun and stars can shine clearly on us.

...Yelm?

The River People could not understand the glory of Yu-Kargzant, even though our ancestors tried to show it to them. This is because they are not from the pure lineages. Instead, they worship a False Sun, which they call Yelm. It does not ride, and so can never join us in the Pastures.

I have heard of other peoples. Tell me the truth about...

...the Beast Riders?

The spirit of the beast-riders is not a powerful one, but he can stir up trouble and seduce weaker people into performing bestial acts. Our shamans keep him safely at a distance, just as we cleverly keep the plow people between us and the beast-riders.

...Dwarves?

The dwarves refuse to listen to the great spirits, and so they hide underground, where they hope Yu-Kargzant cannot find them. They forget that La-Ungariant knows all the secrets of the earth, and will one day direct us to plunder them.

...Elves?

The mother of forest once choked the entire world with trees. But she had no light of her own, and so she and her people withered during the Dark Time, leaving the grazelands for us.

...Sorcerers?

The Black Horse Troop get their magic from marks on dead skins they bind into "books." But their scribblings and scrolls have no life in them, and soon neither will the Troop nor the demons they ride.

Spirits of the Majestic Horses Tradition

Arandayla, the Horse Mother

The horse mother serves, but she serves best when loved, and we have always loved her. When she was whole, we loved her. When she was crippled, we still loved her. We love all of her children, especially our sacred goldeneye brothers, which can see into the Pastures of the Endless Sun and run faster than any other horse. We live off her bounty.

Folorene, the Wanderlore Spirit

Folorene was a man in a woman's body, or both, or something else entirely. Or perhaps he was a horse that became a person, or vice versa; or maybe a star that fell and did not return to the sky; or perhaps a spirit that had no mother or father. She belongs nowhere, but Denbitos told everyone they must accept him as one of the tribe, and still today she is the protector of those who have no other place, but are still Grazers.

La-Ungariant, the Feathered Mare

La-Ungariant is the daughter of Orest, the Earth. She is the source of earth, mares, good women, nurturing, virtue, good animals, and life itself. She bested her sister Tara to become the Firstwife of Yu-Kargzant, and thus is mistress of the Grazer women. Her daughters teach all women their place in society, according to their age.

Charai, the Rider

Charai is a maiden's First Friend. She teaches women's secrets and the Six Ways to tend horses. Charai is seen in the western sky, staying up late into the night like most young women.

Lereen, the Mother

Lereen is the Mother, loving and respectful of her husband, caring and responsible for her children. She is a source of blessings and healing. Lereen is seen in the northern sky, often up late in the night nursing and tending her children.

Estei, the Teacher

Estei the Firstwife organizes all the other women, and instructs them as to how to best perform their tasks. She is so busy that she is not seen in the sky.

Henedra, the Elder

Henedra has experience and knowledge of many things, and her advice is always welcome. She is seen in the eastern sky, awakening early in the morning like many old people do.

Tamar, Lord of Wild Beasts

Tamar is the lord of all wild beasts. If he does not receive sacrifice before a hunt, the prey will be angry and unpredictable, the take meagere.

Tara, Lady of the Wild

Tara is the untamable daughter of Orest. She holds the secrets and terrors of the mountains, rivers, and other places where horses do not go. She loved Yu-Kargzant as La-Ungariant did, and she even let him catch her and father a child. But she would not let him tame her, so La-Ungariant became the Firstwife, and Tara became the Lady of the Wild.

Yu-Kargzant, the Burning Stallion

Yu-Kargzant is lord of the Majestic Horses Tradition. He is the source of fire, stallions, good men, action, morality, good weather, and life itself. He made himself visible to ordinary people, and so gallops across the sky each day, blazing with life and light. At night he raids the Underworld and releases the spirits of his people from Hell. His wife, sons, and daughters all serve him faithfully, as do a host of stars, planets, horses, and other spirits

Dastal, the Hunter

Yu-Kargzant's youngest son Dastal allows all men into his dances and ceremonies. He is the patron of young men, obedience, archery, hunting, and herding. He is chief of the Hunting Spirits, which he dispenses to men of all ages. Every night and year Dastal circles all the way around the sky performing his duties.

When Jordan saved Arandayla, he tried to force her to serve him as a slave, but she would not submit. Then Dastal came and spoke to her of an alliance, and so she agreed to serve as an equal.

Jordan, the Warrior

Jordan is the patron of fathers, of stallions, of flutes, and of lancers and all who strive face-to-face against their foes. He rides across the sky every night, keeping lonely patrol over the herds of horses and sleeping peoples. Jordan is also patron of the Golden Bow Society, who dedicate themselves so completely to him that they no longer worship Yu-Kargzant directly. Each of them rides a goldeneye.

Henird, the Leader

Henird is patron of war leaders, chiefs, and kings. He can sense enemy spirits and knows how to deal with them properly. His tent is in the precise center of the sky, and from there he leads the tribe, even as Yu-Kargzant leads the universe.

Josad, the Elder

Josad is the first son of Yu-Kargzant and La-Ungariant. He is the wise counselor who has acquired great knowledge through experience. He is intimately familiar with the Sky World. Josad circles his younger brother's tent every night, sharing his great wisdom with the whole tribe.

