Table of Contents

1 Urizen 1

1.1 Five things to know about Urizen 2
1.2 What the citizens of Urizen are not 2
1.3 Further Reading 2

2 Urizen people 4

2.1 Overview 4
2.2 Archetypes 5
2.3 Names 6
2.4 Further Reading 7

3 Urizen culture and customs 9

3.1 The Net of the Heavens 9
3.2 Arete 9
3.3 Poise 10
3.4 Sigil 10
3.5 Privacy and Politeness 11
3.6 Communal meals 11
3.7 The Heliopticon 11
3.8 Funerals 12
3.9 Spring Flower Festival 12
3.10 Icons and Artistry 13
3.11 Further Reading 13

4 Urizen look and feel 14

4.1 Overview 14
4.2 Garments and Accessories 16
4.3 Colours and Materials 17
4.4 Gallery 19
4.5 Battle 22
4.6 Religion 24
4.7 Magic 24
4.8 Outside The Brief 26
4.9 Further Reading 28

5 Urizen hearth magic 29

5.1 Overview 29
5.2 Assurance 29
5.3 Cession 30
5.4 Essence 32
5.5 Space 33
5.6 Witness 33
5.7 Illumination 34
5.8 Truth 34
5.9 Further Reading 35

6 Urizen history 37

6.1 Overview 37
6.2 The High Peaks 37
6.3 A Sanctum of Stars 38
6.4 Heralds of Twilight 38
6.5 A Light in the Darkness 38
6.6 A Brighter Future 39
6.7 Imperial History 40
6.8 Recent History 41
6.9 More Urizen History 42

Table of Contents

6 Urizen history

6.10 Further Reading ... 42

7 Urizen leadership ... 43

7.1 Overview ... 43
7.2 Truth ... 44
7.3 Leading a territory ... 44
7.4 Prominent Spires ... 46
7.5 Dicta ... 46
7.6 Further Reading ... 48

8 Urizen economic interests ... 49

8.1 Overview ... 49
8.2 The Mana Trade ... 49
8.3 Ushabti ... 49
8.4 Imperial Bourse ... 50
8.5 Further Reading ... 50

9 Urizen military concerns ... 52

9.1 Overview ... 52
9.2 Citadels and Fortifications ... 53
9.3 Imperial Armies ... 53
9.4 Supply ... 54
9.5 Additional Information ... 54
9.6 Further Reading ... 54

10 Urizen religious beliefs ... 56

10.1 Overview ... 56
10.2 Temples ... 56
10.3 Orthodoxy ... 57
10.4 Hetrodoxy ... 57
10.5 Soul Net ... 58
10.6 Further Reading ... 58

11 Urizen magical traditions ... 59

11.1 Overview ... 59
11.2 Esoteric Lore ... 59
11.3 Resonance ... 60
11.4 Politics ... 61
11.5 Prognostication ... 62
11.6 Urizen Lore ... 63
11.7 Further Reading ... 65

12 Urizen territories ... 66

12.1 Overview ... 66
12.2 Morrow ... 66
12.3 Redoubt ... 66
12.4 Sarangrave ... 67
12.5 Zenith ... 67
12.6 Further Reading ... 67

13 Urizen children ... 69

13.1 Things every Urizen child should know ... 70
13.2 Further Reading ... 70

Table of Contents

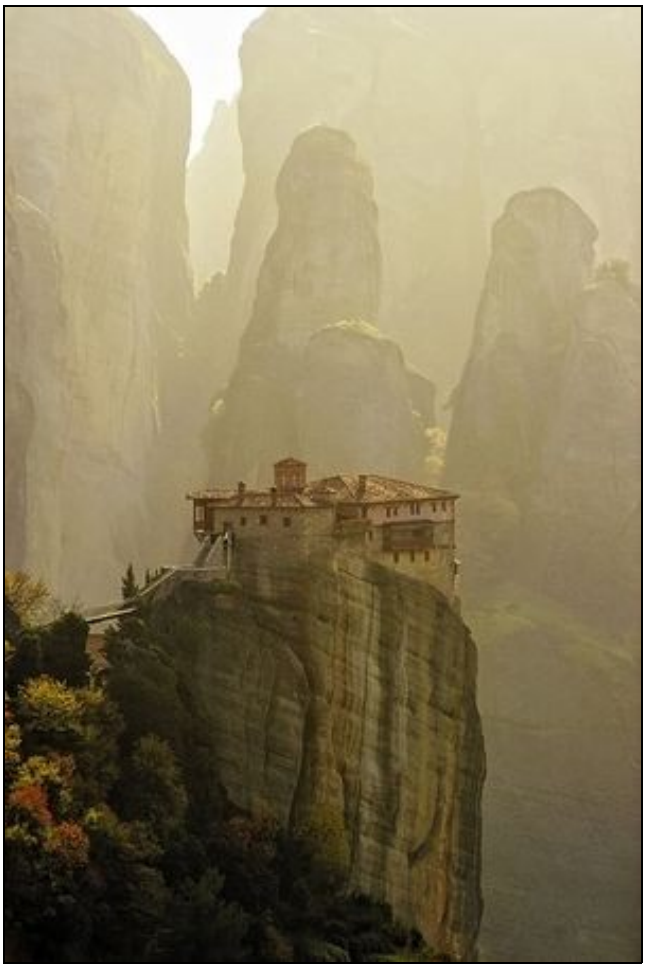
14 Urizen music **71**
14.1 The Music of Urizen 71
14.2 Further Reading 72

15 Urizen people **73**
15.1 Overview 73
15.2 Archetypes 74
15.3 Names 75
15.4 Further Reading 76

16 Urizen groups **78**
16.1 Overview 78
16.2 Spires of Morrow 78
16.3 Spires of Redoubt 80
16.4 Spires of Sarangrave 84
16.5 Spires of Spiral 85
16.6 Spires of Zenith 89
16.7 Contributing 93

17 Urizen Egregore **94**
17.1 Menos 94

1 Urizen



"Where there is darkness, we will make light."

Urizen is a nation of magic forged from boundless ambition, of decisive action guided by reason. It is a realm of wonders; of majestic spires and citadels that reach toward the azure sky; of glittering lightstones that send messages arrowing across the mountain valleys in the blink of an eye; and of artificial labourers powered by magic that toil tirelessly in the fields to support the magicians and scholars of this mighty nation.

The mountains of Urizen rest on three pillars, magic, reason, and ambition.

The first pillar is magic ? they see magical prowess as the highest achievement, and there are few places in the world where magicians are as influential as they are in Urizen. Magical prowess is not an end in itself, but rather a means to an end, a way to change the world. It is a tool forged through study, honed by reason, and wielded with absolute certainty. The Urizen see themselves as the only people in the world wise enough to understand the consequences of using magical power to achieve their goals.

The second pillar is reason ? only those who understand the world are fit to change it. The Urizen devote themselves to study and learning, striving to perfect their understanding of the world and their place in it. Nowhere else in the world is education seen as a necessity the way it is in Urizen, a consequence of the natural drive to perfect the self. The superior understanding of the Urizen has allowed them to intervene at key moments in the past to move the Empire onto a better path. The risk is that without the light of knowledge the great experiment can only end in darkness and failure.

The third pillar is ambition ? the Urizen are utopian, wanting nothing less than the perfection of all humanity. They seek to achieve excellence in the things they do, the better to perfect the world around them. There is nothing that cannot be made better by someone with the vision and will to do so. These lofty aspirations drive them to carve mountains into cities, to educate the ignorant, and to shape the fate of nations.

In Urizen the most important lesson is this ? that a single individual can change the world if they have sufficient will to do so.

1.1 Five things to know about Urizen

- **They study magic as the highest discipline.** Not everyone is a magician, but in Urizen magic permeates everything.
- **They live their lives by reason.** Rationality and logic are the tools with which they pick apart the secrets of creation.
- **They aspire to mastery of themselves and the world around them.** They prize personal excellence and seek to build a better world for everyone.
- **They value elegance and precision.** The best course of action is the one that produces the biggest change with the least effort.
- **Education is the greatest gift.** People who understand the world are simply better than people who do not.

1.2 What the citizens of Urizen are not

- **Pacifists or procrastinators.** They are reasonable people, but are quite prepared to fight to get what they want ? they're just likely to consider for a moment if violence is the best course of action before they attack.
- **Asian or East Asian.** Urizen draws inspiration from high elves, classical Greece, and societies of wizards, but not directly from Asia or East Asia.
- **Unarmed combatants.** When the Urizen think of martial skills, they think of weapons. Wrestling or even touching your enemies is a distasteful idea. Much better to keep them at bay and overwhelm them with your consummate weapon skills than let them get close to you.

1.3 Further Reading

Core Brief

- Introduction
- The people
- Culture and customs
- Look and feel
- Hearth magic

Additional Information

- History

- Leadership
- Economic interests
- Military concerns
- Religious beliefs
- Magical traditions
- Territories
- Children
- Music
- Archetypes
- Groups
- Egregore

This selection of articles can be **downloaded as a PDF book** (or as html only)

2 Urizen people

An ambitious people with a desire for order in all things.

2.1 Overview

The Urizen live in the mountains in settlements called spires: clusters of buildings, halls, galleries, and balconies that are carved into a hilltop or the side of a mountain peak. Spires tend to specialise: a given spire might be known for its fine craftsmanship, the beauty and artistry of its musicians, its dedication to martial affairs, or its mastery of one or more spheres of magical power.

These majestic peaks have shaped Urizen society. They are defensible, but can only support a small population. As a result, Urizen is the smallest nation in terms of population, although its numbers have been slowly increasing since it joined the Empire. The small size gives every person a clear sense of their own importance and their place in the community. The Urizen philosophers claim that the high peaks allow them to maintain a sense of perspective on the world, giving them a physical distance from the turmoil of day-to-day life in the Empire that allows them to be able to consider problems dispassionately.

The Urizen prize rationality and learning above all other qualities. They favour an ordered approach to life and their culture is shaped by the philosophies and ideals they have embraced. They are an ambitious people with a desire for perfection in all things and most Urizen spend what time they can in study, contemplation, and practice. Scholars and philosophers are prominent, but magic is considered the highest discipline of all in Urizen and their most prominent citizens are usually powerful mages.

Urizen love to see practical applications of knowledge, lore, and philosophy. While learning for its own sake is laudable, the Urizen value much more highly knowledge that is used to create tangible benefit ? to change the world, even in a small way. They are credited with creating whole branches of natural philosophy and mathematics, formalising and codifying ideas such as algebra, geometry, and trigonometry. They are most proud of practical inventions such as the telescope, or the many magical rituals they have created. They apply their learning to make their lives more comfortable and fulfilling, and strive for the ideal of achieving something elegantly and with the least expenditure of effort.

All people by nature desire knowledge.

Aristotle

Urizen aspires to a sense of timeless tranquillity. They seek to cultivate serenity and calm in themselves and in their environment. Most Urizen live a structured life that provides a foundation for them to build their identities around. They are not moribund or calcified, but disruption of the personal daily

routine is a clear sign that there are problems that demand their attention.

Many Urizen spires embody the Urizeni search for arete aiming to serve as a centre for the pursuit of excellence in a specific specialism; to study a particular kind of magic, to embody an ideal, or to defend a region. It is common for Urizen citizens to move between spires if they wish to pursue a different path, to find a spire that best suits their temperament and interests, so most welcome new members who can contribute to the spire's arete. Some Brass Coast families take advantage of this welcoming attitude, seeking out a welcoming spire for a merrow child who might find the calm of Urizen more appealing than their raucous home. The Freeborn refer to this practice as the Gift.

A desire for order and perfection in all things is what drives most Urizen. They seek mastery of the self, often through philosophies such as arete and poise, and they employ the teachings of the Net of the Heavens to make the world around them flawless and sublime. Most strive to move the Empire towards a utopia. While different spires disagree on what constitutes the perfect society, they broadly agree it should involve the largest amount of happiness for the largest number of people.

The archetypal Urizen is an educated person who applies their learning and discipline to every part of their life. An individual Urizen might easily be an implacable blade-master, oratorical reformer, dedicated natural philosopher, wise theologian or powerful magician. Wherever possible, they seek to expand their understanding of the world and their role within it, and apply that understanding to achieve their goals.

2.2 Archetypes

The contemplation that leads to perfection.

Urizen Archetypes	
Arbiter	Sentinel
Architect	Stargazer
Illuminate	Sword Scholar
Mage	Torchbearer
Seer	Questor

There are magicians, priests, warriors, and traders of every stripe in every nation in the Empire. An archetype represents a specific attitude or approach to a given role that reflects cultural values and common ambitions of a nation. Choosing an archetype helps to define your character; it provides roleplaying hooks and ready-made character goals, but it also places demands on your character in terms of how you portray them. Selecting an archetype is optional, and it's better not to pick one if none of them appeal to you.

Urizen is a nation of magicians, and the average citizen aspires to master magic if they can. Among the most accomplished magicians there are several identifiable roles that citizens gravitate to. Stargazers are scholars of magical lore who possess a deep and powerful love of magic in all its forms. Even the most cerebral stargazer is excited by magic - exuberant in their desire not just to perform it, but to deepen their understanding of it. They push the boundaries of magic, seeking out new understanding, uncovering new secrets, and performing new rituals that have never been cast before.

In contrast, both seers and magi see magic as a tool with which to achieve a higher goal. Seers believe that perfect understanding is the key to unlocking the Net of the Heavens. Seers strive to direct the future by discovering everything they can about the world, especially through magical means, and sharing that information with those they believe can use it best. The mages (or magi) are the political magicians of Urizen. They see the

application of magic as fundamentally political in nature, something that can be used to change the world for the better, but only when used wisely. They use their magical abilities to help their allies to try to build webs of favour and influence.

Although Urizen is famed for its magicians, it is also a nation of philosophers. In Urizen priests who use their understanding of the Net of the Heavens to perfect the world are called illuminates. Unlike many other Imperial priests, their focus is on trying to enable virtuous citizens to gain power in the Empire, preferably at the expense of those whose actions demonstrate a lack of virtue. By contrast a questor is any Urizeni priest who wishes to perfect the Doctrines of the Faith. They pursue deep philosophical questions searching for new insights into moral philosophy, the mind of the creator and the telos or purpose of life. Rather than guide the actions of others, they prefer to use probing questions to encourage their congregations to seek their own conclusions.

Urizen is threatened by the Druj to the east and by the Grendel to the south. For defence it relies on the dedication of its sentinels, who embrace the arts of war with the same passion and commitment that their fellow Urizeni study magic. A respected sentinel is much more than just a skilled warrior - they are expected to study strategy, tactics, logistics, history, magic, and diplomacy. Anything that might influence the outcome of a battle falls within the domain of the sentinel. Their great rivals are the sword scholars, warrior priests with a passionate dedication to wisdom and reason. They exhort the virtuous to test what they learn, and oppose the Imperial Synod because they believe that obedience to a higher authority stifles virtue. They challenge anyone who presents claims of revelation, rejecting everything that is not founded in logic and evidence.

For leadership, Urizen looks to it's arbiters. Arbiters are civic-minded administrators chosen to lead the spires, citadels, and temples of Urizen by their fellows. They are focussed on ensuring the good of their spire, their territory, and their nation, usually in that order. Committed to the wellbeing of their community, arbiters are the backbone of Urizen, collectively striving to ensure the safety and prosperity of all. If you are part of a group then it is good idea to create your own spire and choose one among you to be your arbiter.

Few people in Urizen are motivated by money for its own sake but architects are interested in economics and fascinated by the way that money moves around and influences the world. Much more than mere traders, they see money as a powerful tool for influencing people and changing society for the better. Through investment and mercantile activity they seek to change the world around them.

One of the most famous Urizen archetype is the torchbearer. Magician, priest or warrior, anyone who has a commitment to the truth can be a torchbearer. They strive to keep their fellow citizens informed about current events, but they also delve into the past to make sure that the Empire is built on solid foundations. They dislike falsehood and secrets, especially political secrets, and regularly clash with those who value a palatable lie over a painful truth as well as those with something to hide.

2.3 Names

Urizen names are inspired by Roman and Byzantine names. They do not use the classical Roman three part name, and comic pidgin Latin should not be used, but the classical roots give a single name the right air of timelessness.

Formally, all Urizen append the name of their spire to their title. Spires are small enough that the occupants can avoid naming children with names used by other living residents of the spire, so the Urizen have no need of family names. If two Urizen with the same name do end up living in the same spire then one or both of them are usually given an appropriate epithet by the peers, e.g. "Portia the younger".

Philosophers and teachers who favour an ordered approach to life.
Spire names tend to be in English, and are usually descriptive. For example; Evenspire, White Marble Temple, Citadel of the Immaculates.

2.3.1 Sample names

Adula, Aeneas, Alba, Aquila, Belisari, Camilla, Cyrus, Drusus, Felix, Flavia, Florian, Hadrian, Julia, Livia, Majorian, Martina, Marcus, Megaris, Nicasia, Octavia, Octavius, Priscilla, Portia, Sabina, Seneca, Severus, Sophia, Tacitus, Tiberius, Tatiana, Vaanes, Valeria, Zeno.

N.B. Whilst some names are inspired by real world names which may be given to specific genders, Empire is a gender blind setting and people of any gender choose any name they like that is appropriate to their nation.

2.3.2 Naming resources

- Roman names
- Byzantine names

2.4 Further Reading

Core Brief

- Introduction
- The people
- Culture and customs
- Look and feel
- Hearth magic

Additional Information

- History
- Leadership
- Economic interests
- Military concerns
- Religious beliefs
- Magical traditions
- Territories
- Children
- Music
- Archetypes

- Groups
- Egregore

3 Urizen culture and customs

We do not act rightly because we have virtue or excellence,
but we rather have those because we have acted rightly.

Aristotle

3.1 The Net of the Heavens

The Urizen embrace an image of the world they poetically call the Net of the Heavens. It is a metaphor that defines human interaction and history as being made up of ?nodes? or ?knots? ? pivotal people and events that shape everything around them. For actions to be effective, they must operate on these nodes, otherwise effort is wasted. By influencing a powerful node, an individual can exert influence over events and individuals they have no personal connection to, and produce results out of all proportion to the energy expended. Learning to possess arete and poise are seen as prerequisites for being able to reliably manipulate the Net of the Heavens.

The First Empress is often used as an example by Urizen who wish to explain the Net of the Heavens. She was a pivotal individual whose actions changed the destiny of thousands of other individuals when she was alive and continue to influence people four hundred years after her death. In turn, those influenced by her vision have influenced others, and that influence stretches far beyond the borders of the Empire to impact the entire known world, more or less.

Arete and poise are inextricably linked.

3.2 Arete

The principle of arete, the idea of excellence in all things, is central to the Urizen way of life. The word means something close to "being the best you can be" or "reaching your highest human potential". It encompasses courage and strength in the face of adversity. Arete is frequently associated with bravery, but more often with effectiveness. The person of arete is a person of the highest effectiveness; they use all their faculties: strength, bravery, wisdom, and guile, to achieve real results. Arete involves all of the abilities and potentialities available to humans.

Anybody can become angry ? that is easy, but to be angry with the right person and to the right degree and at the right time and for the right purpose, and in the right way - that is not within everybody's power.

Passions are channelled, as fuel for action.

3.3 Poise

Linked to arete is the idea of poise. The Urizen are wary of instinct and emotion, believing that people who allow their passions to move them rather than their higher minds are prone to acting irrationally and ineffectually. To allow the self to be overwhelmed by emotions undermines the basic goals of arete. ?When one speaks angrily,? an old saying goes, ?only the anger is heard.?

Many Urizen actively disdain uncontrolled public expressions of emotion, and this gives them a reputation for being haughty, cold individuals. In truth they feel their emotions as deeply as any, but they strive to master their emotions and subordinate them to their rational spirit. The Urizen believe that you draw your strength and impetus from your emotions, but the emotions must be controlled for this to be usefully directed.

Rather than subdue or suppress their emotions, poise is the practice of allowing yourself to feel your emotions as deeply as possible yet retain perfect self-control. Practitioners seek to hold themselves in a state of equilibrium so that they channel the strength of their emotions at the perfect moment. A common drill used to develop poise is the ?deep breath? ? a simple meditative technique where before undertaking any challenging activity, the individual takes a breath and holds it while taking a moment to harness their emotions and decide how they will act. When the student breathes out, often explosively, they spring into action.

Mastering poise is often a challenge for briars who are naturally mercurial and prone to spontaneous displays of emotion. There is no overt prejudice against briars, as there has been elsewhere in the Empire at times, but briars are often encouraged to become sentinels, where their restless demeanour and physical nature allows them to achieve high levels of arete.

3.4 Sigil

Every Urizen magician is eligible to carry a sigil, a personal symbol that reflects their mastery of the basic principles of magic. Most apprentices are awarded their first sigil by their tutor when they have mastered the skills necessary to perform operate portal, detect magic, and create bond. While a

magician will have only one personal sigil at a time, it's common for the actual object to evolve over time as the magician pursues the path of arete. The most common form for a sigil is an implement of some kind ? a wand, staff, or rod. Often they are carefully decorated works of art ? they are symbols of a magicians abilities after all.

A sigil may be a magic item or even a hallowed relic, but it can be just a simple amulet, a plain staff, or similar. They are a signifier of the owner's identity and status as a magician and the theft or destruction of one is considered tantamount to assault. Most magicians are buried with their sigils when they pass away, but some spires keep the sigils of past wizards, to preserve the memory of those who have gone before and inspire the next generation.

3.5 Privacy and Politeness

Urizen place great stock on politeness and good manners. Their nation is a place of competing and sometimes incompatible philosophies. It is also a nation where it is easy to become isolated from your neighbours. As a consequence, a level of assumed respect reduces the likelihood of a misunderstanding souring relations.

Bowing

Bowing is an important part of Urizeni culture, especially as it largely replaces the handshakes and hugs. The simplest way to bow is just to keep your body straight and slowly lower your head, either straight down or with a slight inclination so your chin moves towards a shoulder.

There are more complex bows that you can attempt if you want. Urizen tends to favour subtle minimal gestures but you can use the kind of flourish involving the hands and body that are common for a courtly bow if you want to. Your spire might adopt their own formal bow, either to others or between members and some Urizen players have created some simple bows that involve hand gestures that you can use to communicate respect, gratitude or condolences.

Please avoid bowing from the waist with hands together in front of the body. Bows such as the namaste or other traditional Asian or East Asian bows such as those in this video should not be used.

Urizen tend to value their privacy, and be very aware of their personal space. Theirs is a mountainous nation, but the spires are built on a larger scale than most Imperial citizens would be familiar with. The citadels, towers, balconies and houses of Urizen often extend a short distance into the stone of the mountain itself, and these galleries are intended to be as airy and open as Urizen engineering can make them. As a consequence, some Urizen suffer from symptoms akin to mild claustrophobia.

This extends to their social lives as well ? Urizen generally have a larger ?personal space? than other people, and some become uncomfortable if they are pressed together with other people for long periods of time. Even spouses tend to maintain separate apartments, albeit with a shared communal area.

Urizen bow to others as a mark of respect rather than shaking hands. A handshake is a greeting between close friends, while a hug or embrace is rare except among lovers, trusted confidants and close family members. Physical intimacies are always offered, rather than forced on someone.

3.6 Communal meals

Urizen food tends to be simple, but supplemented by a dazzling array of spices and sauces designed to make a limited palette of foodstuffs raised on the mountainsides more interesting. Most Urizen communities make an effort to attend a communal evening meal, characterised by lively discussion and debate. This expectation that the day will end in a communal meal helps to create a feeling of community and continuity for the Urizen people. Many spires add additional traditions, such as music and poetry, to cement the importance of this ?community time". A religious spire may add prayers before and after the meal, while a martial spire might use regular sparring to ?work up an appetite for supper."

3.7 The Heliopticon

Much of Urizen is hard to cross and physical messengers travel slowly. The nation is united through the use of the heliopticon ? a series of polished bronze mirrors used to send messages across great distances to nearby spires using a simple code of short and long flashes (this is represented by international Morse code). To an outsider, the heliopticon is a technical marvel, but the Urizen appreciate that the true brilliance of the heliopticon is the cipher of flashes used to send the messages rather than the method used to create them.

With the destruction of the central Heliopticon tower by the Druj during their invasion of Morrow following the Summer Solstice 382YE, the capabilities of the heliopticon were much reduced. The heliopticon still functioned, albeit barely, but its ability to quickly convey messages across the whole of Urizen was greatly impeded. Messages were slow, and could no longer be routed quickly though a central point rather relying on individual spires to them along. This led to more miscommunications and garbled messages, greatly reducing its effectiveness.

In Winter 382YE, however, the Senate voted to commission extensive repairs to the towers, replacing the ruined central towers in Spiral and Morrow, and replacing many of the damaged mirrors. Following the reconstruction work, the heliopticon was restored to peak function ? at least in the three territories still in Imperial hands. More impressively, following a proposal by Portia the Elder, a former Provost of the Halls of Knowledge turned civil servant, the heliopticon was committed to a new use ? the codification of magical rituals. Today, in addition to transporting vital messages between spires, the heliopticon serves as the backbone of the largest college of magic the Empire - indeed the world - has ever seen. A college composed of all the magicians of Urizen, guided by the unique Doyen of the Spires title.

3.8 Funerals

Most Urizen embrace the idea that this flesh is just a vessel through which the soul happens to be passing on its road to enlightenment. After an individual is dead, the body should be treated with respect but it is fundamentally an empty husk. Bodies are interred with minimal ceremony in quiet mausolea built on the lower slopes beneath a spire. They are rarely entombed with grave goods, nor is a gravesite marked with any great ornamentation. Influential and inspiring figures are recalled in bas-reliefs and statuary that decorates a spire, but it is a rare Urizen whose biography, journals and collected letters cannot be found in the library at the heart of a spire.

Coloured flowers are symbols of virtue in Urizen

3.9 Spring Flower Festival

During the Spring Equinox, Urizeni celebrate the festival of flowers. Sometimes called the "Festival of the Net", it involves giving flowers to those with whom one feels an important connection. These flowers often have a great deal of personal symbolism but for most Urizeni, the colour is the essential feature. Each of the seven virtues is assigned to a specific colour; a gift may either imply that the person inspires this virtue or possesses it in notable quality, or that they should strive to practice that virtue more in the coming year.

Blue flowers represent Loyalty; Red flowers represent Courage; White or silver flowers represent Wisdom; Purple flowers represent Ambition; Pink flowers represent Pride; Yellow or Gold flowers represent Prosperity; and the virtue of Vigilance is represented either by green flowers or by a bouquet of green leaves. These colours are recorded in a helpful Urizen folk song that is often sung at this time of year.

In some parts of Urizen the festival can have a deeper, more romantic meaning. By tying the flowers with ribbons an Urizen can communicate an interest in deepening an emotional relationship

Cautela (or "Last Lighthouse")
What portly priests on padded seats decry,
A scholar seeks on mountain peaks alone.
Our best bequest for you to wonder "why?",
The question quelled by minds behind the Throne.

A righteous rage at liars laid the way,
For prey to see the puppetry ordained.
How poisoned peers of night do fear the day,
when those abused can ne'er be used again.

And yet some set their will against the rest,
So thus we must raise sword in proud salute.
Those whole of heart and mind display their best,
With they we pray we cannot find dispute.

Our fall shall call to all enthrallen youth,
Example made, they find their Way to truth.

Calgacus Apulian of the White Stork School

3.10 Icons and Artistry

The Urizen have a great appreciation for symbols, rooted in their understanding of the nature of essence. The most common are the constellations rather than runes or other magical symbols. They are used as decoration throughout the nation, often appearing in visual art, or embroidered onto clothes or banners. The most common symbol for the nation as a whole is the Phoenix, generally presented as a brightly coloured fantastical bird. The Mountain, representing ideas of enlightenment, poise, and arete, is another popular image, in part because it is a triangle, and the Urizen love geometric shapes of all sorts.

Stars appear in many Urizen symbols, and a circle of stars is sometimes used to represent the nation. The net and web are both symbols associated with Urizen, often shown with stars at each node, as a symbol of the fundamental interconnectedness of all things. A jewelled net is often worn on the head, and it is common for hair to be braided and ornamented with tiny beads or gemstones, again referencing the image of the net.

Every spire in Urizen has a ?sigil? that represents the settlement. These tend to be simple images, usually an object on a coloured background. It is very rare for a spire to choose a mundane animal as a symbol; common symbols include musical instruments, tools, implements of magic, mountains, stars and (for citadels) weapons. Spires with a close connection, especially parent and child spires, often have similar sigils.

Many Urizen enjoy poetry, but their work tends to follow strict structural rules such as those found in the sestina, sonnet, or ode. Writers are expected to be technically skilled and are applauded for their clever use of structure and meter. There is a similar aesthetic for sculpture and painting, and pieces that demonstrate mastery of the form or make clever use of geometry and perspective are particularly popular.

3.11 Further Reading

Core Brief

- Introduction
- The people
- Culture and customs
- Look and feel
- Hearth magic

Additional Information

- History
- Leadership
- Economic interests
- Military concerns
- Religious beliefs
- Magical traditions
- Territories
- Children
- Music
- Archetypes
- Groups
- Egregore

4 Urizen look and feel

4.1 Overview

Elegant, graceful, serene, refined, poised, focused, subtle

The Urizen look draws heavily on classic fantasy images of high elves and scholastic wizards. Robes are common, and most folk wear several layers to protect against the cooler environment of their mountain homes. The nation emphasises control and poise, and citizens of Urizen try to project a calm, serene exterior. Urizen citizens prize beautiful garments, made from the finest materials available, but they eschew the more flamboyant approach of the League and the Brass Coast, preferring clothing that is exquisitely made rather than ostentatiously adorned.

Most outfits employ light or pastel colours with layered garments in similar shades. Contrasting or complementary colours are reserved for highlights or decoration. Some spires keep the Urizen style of layered shades of similar hue but adopt a rich, dark shade like a midnight blue or wine red for the base colour.

Decoration is popular on clothing, weapons, implements and armour but tends to be stylised or even abstract, seeking to express the essence of something rather than reproduce it. Complex embroidery of looping spirals, or representations of the stars and constellations are particularly popular. These are usually in metallic shades or subtle shades designed to complement the whole outfit.

4.2 Garments and Accessories

Layered Robes: The iconic look of Urizen is long robes in layers, with the outer robes typically cut to show off the lower layers underneath. This can be achieved by having an open front or leaving the hems progressively shorter on the outer layers, to create a graduated effect. Often the outer layer of robes will have short, split, or voluminous sleeves (or even be sleeveless) in order to show off closer fitting long sleeves underneath. Lower layers are often fastened close to the body with a belt or sash, allowing the outermost robe to hang loose. Outer layers are often cut to swirl elegantly to emphasise poise.

While the archetypal Urizen robes are floor length, the "Anvil cut" of mid-calf length is popular for Urizen attending summits, since the fields of Anvil are often wet and muddy. Cloaks are sometimes worn for warmth, usually coloured to match the wearer's robes. Heavier or waterproof materials are popular at Anvil.

Sash: Sashes and belts are used alone, or layered together, both to fasten robes and to add detail to outfits. They are often decorated with Urizen designs that depict sigils, constellations, or runes.

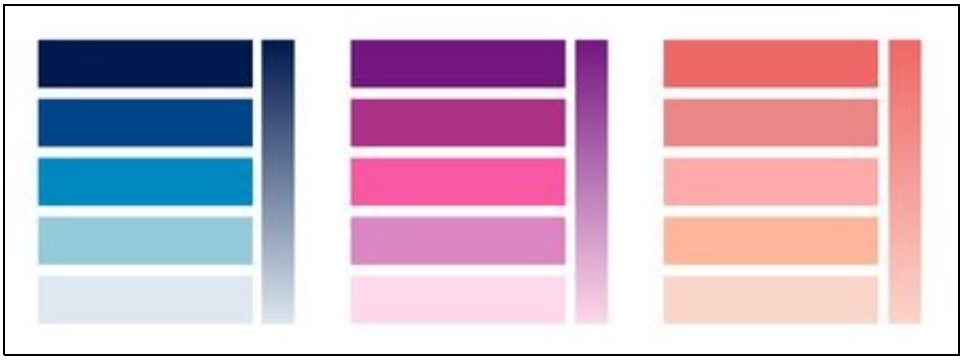
Spire or Stargazers belt: Some Urizen have a long vertical decorative pennant, often heavily embroidered, hanging at the centre from their sash or belt. Each pennant is unique but it is usually referred to as a spire belt if decorated with symbols representing a person's spire or a stargazers belt if decorated with stars or constellations.

Trousers: When worn, trousers are either tight like leggings, or loose and flowing to look as if they were another underlayer of robes.

Hood or Hat: A hood is a common way to cover the head in Urizen. They are usually part of a robe; a heavy outer robe with a hood is the ideal way to protect against the cold and the rain. You can also use a wide, flat-brimmed hat (such as a traditional petasos). These are usually made of felt, but can be other materials and can have additional fabric draped from the brim to tie the hat on or provide additional shade or decoration.

Shawl or Scarf: Some Urizen wear a shawl or scarf designed to be pulled up on to the head to shelter it from the elements. It is usually draped over the shoulders when not in use rather than wrapped round the neck. Shawls and scarves are often decorated with designs intended invoke the Net of the Heavens

Jewellery: Silver and gold jewellery is common, usually worn around the neck, brow or hair. The ideal pieces are long interlocking chains suggestive of a net. Jeweled circlets representing the power of the will or the mind are also common.



4.3 Colours and Materials

Base Colours: Most individual garments use a single colour, either white, a light shade (such as pale green or pastel yellow), or a rich dark shade (like burgundy or ink blue). Urizeni weavers have mastered the art of using iridescent gloaming to create ombré effects in the most desirable and expensive fabrics.

Shades: The ideal outfit is composed of pieces belonging to the same colour or colour family, for example four shades of blue ranging from sky through to midnight or two purples paired with two pinks. The emphasis is on elegance and simplicity in colour choice, rather than the brash contrasts of nations such as Dawn, Highguard, or the Brass Coast.

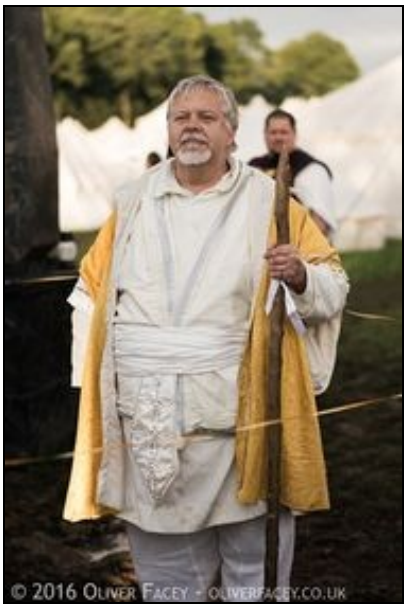
Lustrous Fabrics: Materials in Urizen are usually plain rather than patterned, aiming to show off the fineness of the cloth itself and any decoration on it. Fabrics are often shiny - satins and silks are popular - with cotton sateen providing a good compromise between sheen and durability. Shot fabrics such as shot silk and shot dupion are favoured for the iridescent effect they create.

Damask: Damask, patterned silk, and jacquard are also popular but **always** using one colour throughout, so that the pattern subtly catches the light, rather than being bold ornamentation. Avoid patterned materials with obvious East Asian motifs such as dragons, phoenixes, lions and storks as these are not appropriate for Empire.

Patterned Weaves: Although less common than plain materials, fabrics with a subtle pattern using pale colours are used, especially those with a regular geometric pattern.

Practical Materials: The high mountains of Urizen are cold and thicker cottons and linen as well as finely woven wool of any weight are worn whenever warm costume is needed.

4.4 Gallery


© 2016 Oliver Facey - oliverfacey.co.uk

© 2018 Oliver Facey

4.5 Battle

The ideal Urizen armaments are inspired by the aesthetics of the Noldor in Lord of the Rings and High Elves warriors in Warhammer Fantasy. Helms tend to cover the head, with curving sections to protect the face and cheeks while shields and armour are shaped and curved in stylised ways to appear more elegant. Armour may be banded or segmented to emphasise flexibility and ease of movement, while Urizen weapons emphasise grace and speed rather than weight and power.

Armour: A breastplate that is fluted or decorated with subtle filigree and curved vambraces and greaves to match is the ideal for an Urizen dressing for battle. The armour made of overlapping bands worn by Elrond in Lord of the Rings is also ideal. Mail is an excellent way to cover gaps in the armour, but can also be worn alone, especially if sandwiched between layers of robes.

Helm: A barbute with either an open or closed face is ideal for Urizen with its distinctive sweeping curves and strengthening ridge. You could also use a traditional hoplite's helm although the heavy plume is better replaced with something more elegant if you can manage it.

Shield: Urizen shields should have stylized shapes and be curved to remain close to the body in use. The historical Pelte but made of metal is a good starting point. Kite shields, heater shields or round shields are all fine, but the more stylised the shape, the better.

Weapons: Swords are favoured in place of axes or maces - the ideal weapons are light and designed for swift graceful movements. The blades used by the elves in the various Lord of the Rings films with their slightly curved blades and intricate decoration are perfect for Urizen. Pole-arms such as spears or glaives are favoured over longer or heavier equivalents like pikes or halberds. Bows are preferable to crossbows, because of the emphasis on graceful movements.

4.6 Religion

Urizen priests draw heavily on the hearth magic of Essence to demonstrate their calling and most will adopt a symbol that denotes their approach to the Way. Sashes and stoles are often embroidered or decorated with stylised symbols of the Way. Jewellery incorporating symbols of the Way are employed in nets worn on the head, short-chained pendants, or brooches worn on the chest, to bring the symbol close to the head, the voice, or the heart respectively. Urizen tradition associates each of the seven virtue with one colour, most commonly seen during their Spring festival of flowers, but some priests might use that colour as the dominant hue for their layered robes.

Astronomantic constellations are some of the most popular symbols in Urizen, but there is no simple relationship between the stars and the Virtues. As a result, Urizen pilgrims often adopt one or more constellations that are relevant to their specific approach to the Way and use them to decorate their robes. It is also common to see pilgrims carrying scrolls containing a soul net, either rolled up and tied to the belt or in a scroll case hanging from the belt.

4.7 Magic

More than any other nation, an Urizen should not feel they have to be a magician to make use of magical symbols as part of their costume. Magical symbols are often added to garments, using techniques such as embroidery or appliqué. Constellations are more popular than runes or aspects and are often mapped out with sequins, gems, or beads made of coloured glass or precious stone.

Mage armour and implements are often decorated with precious stones, semi-precious stones, or crystals, or have magical symbols traced out with filigree. Rods, staffs, and wands are more likely to be made from metal than wood - most often mithril - and they are often surmounted with a carefully shaped piece of dark coloured crystal or stone.

Illumination is an important hearth magic in Urizen and implements, jewellery, and even robes sometimes have lightstones fused into them to create beautiful patterns of light. More than any other nation, the Urizen are likely to carry a light stone or a device with one or more light stones set into it. Urizen magicians often create ornamental light stones that emit light that scintillates or changes colour.

4.8 Outside The Brief

To define the ideal look and feel for Urizen we have deliberately chosen to exclude some themes. This is important because it helps to create a clear visual aesthetic for the nation. The goal is to make members of the nation visually distinct from the other nations in play and to ensure that the costume guidelines don't become diluted by including ideas for costume from similar sources. We explicitly define some costume ideas and inspirations as not part of the brief for Urizen to make what definitely does fit the brief clearer and more distinct.

Most things that are not part of a nation's brief are considered to be less appropriate as they are not not strictly part of the costume brief. This means that you can still use them if you need to but they are not something that you should actively aim for when you are creating or buying something for your Urizen character. Creating a costume is always a compromise as time and money are limited, so it is sensible to use a garment or prop that is less appropriate if you already own it, if that allows you to focus on improving other parts of your costume.

A few things are explicitly defined as inappropriate. These are things that you should not use when you are in-character at an event, because of the real-world connotations or imagery associated with them. We have deliberately omitted these elements because they are so striking and memorable that it is impossible to see them without thinking of the themes associated with them.

Whilst this look and feel page provides the ideal costume for the nation, it is important for players to familiarise themselves with the general costume rules for further guidelines, including those for inappropriate costume.

4.8.1 Less Appropriate

The look and feel of Urizen is heavily inspired by the depictions of high elves in films and games. Some of these visuals are themselves influenced by Asian styles, but the key thing to avoid is creating an entire costume that looks unmistakably Asian or East Asian in origin. A plain kimono or a crossover robe is fine, but adding a traditional kataginu with its wide, pleated shoulder flares on top, or carrying a katana, makes the whole ensemble look more specifically like a samurai and thus much *less appropriate*.

The squared/rectangled-off sleeves of kimonos, or the cupped sleeves of hanfu or shenyi, are *less appropriate* than a western cut. Likewise, garments made with distinctive East Asian brocades, silks and patterns such as yuzen or shibori are *less appropriate* then plain pastel fabrics. Again, the overall look is the important thing to consider; a traditionally cut Chinese shenyi with wide sleeves is fine if it's made with Urizeni appropriate fabrics and worn with an elven circlet and a sash embroidered with constellations.

The elven swords in Lord of the Rings fit Urizen better than a katana or similar.
If you want a weapon that captures some of the graceful style of East Asian weapons but has a more Urizen feel to it, then the curved blades used by the elves in the Lord of the Rings films are closer to the brief. Although these swords are probably inspired by real-world blades like shamshirs and tulwars - the decoration gives them a character that fits better with Urizen.

Japanese armour made of scales laced together with silk is also best avoided, but if it is the only armour you have, then you can disguise it by wearing robes over the top. Iconic Asian and East Asian weapons like a katana are also *less appropriate*. If a katana is the only live roleplaying sword you own then it is ok to use one, but more traditional western weapons are better if you have access to them.

The characters from Asian scripts such as Kanji, don't have an in-character equivalent in the world of Empire, so as with Futhark and Ogham, costumes and props with them on are *less appropriate* than those without.

4.8.2 Inappropriate

Avoid a sash tied in a giant bow like this obi.
A sash or belt is an important part of Urizen costume, but the ideal sash is tied with a simple knot and secured at the front or side. Sashes tied with a large, decorative bow such as the kind of obi that is worn with a kimono by Japanese women are inappropriate.

Please don't wear an Asian conical hat.
Asian conical hats are *inappropriate* in Empire. They are unmistakably associated with the Asian region and have often been used to present prejudicial depictions of people from the region. All live roleplaying games adopt costume and imagery from real-world sources, but we want to avoid using elements from other cultures in ways that are disrespectful. Because of this, these hats should not be worn at Empire. We recommend a hood or shawl for Urizen characters, or a wide flat-brimmed hat (such as a petasos), but you could also wear something inspired by a pileus, or even a Phrygian cap if you want to create something else.

A Kabuto is a helmet that is part of the traditional armour worn by the samurai class and their retainers in feudal Japan. The iconic version that is uniquely associated with that region has a very distinct crescent attached to the brow which is impossible to mistake for anything else. It is difficult to associate these helmets with anything other than Shogunate Japan so they should not be used at Empire. Likewise, outfits that are iconically tied to historical conflicts from the Asian region like Shinsengumi are also *inappropriate*.

Huabiao are the traditional ceremonial columns found in Chinese architecture. Their distinctive profile and prominent placement make them emblematic of Chinese culture and they are often found outside tombs. Because of the important religious significance of huabiao, they are *inappropriate* as camp dressing and props that are decorated in a similar style are *less appropriate*. Likewise, the same rules apply to Japanese Torii which are also found outside Shinto tombs. Iconic Asian animal iconography like Chinese guardian lions are *inappropriate*. Western versions of related iconography like dragons and phoenixes are ideal.

4.9 Further Reading

Core Brief

- Introduction
- The people
- Culture and customs
- Look and feel
- Hearth magic

Additional Information

- History
- Leadership
- Economic interests
- Military concerns
- Religious beliefs
- Magical traditions
- Territories
- Children
- Music
- Archetypes
- Groups
- Egregore

5 Urizen hearth magic

5.1 Overview

In the world of Empire, formal magic is the application of learning and willpower to create supernatural effects. There is another form of magic, however which does not require the user to be a magician. Hearth magic employs the innate natural magic of the world to produce subtle but significant effects in much the same way that a compass needle always points true north. The magic is not based on the abilities of a magician, but relies on the innate mystical properties of the world. Hearth magic is usually subtle rather than potent, and where formal magic is predictable and reliable, hearth magic is none of these things.

While the principles that underlie hearth magic are common throughout the world, among every nation there are certain specific practices, customs, or traditions that draw on the power of the world's innate magic. Often these proud customs are nothing more than traditions - but sometimes their practice taps into some facet of the world resulting in a truly magical effect. The Urizen are no exception to this - but their understanding of hearth magic reflects the emphasis they place on philosophy and scholasticism.

You can learn more about hearth magic, what it is and how it works, here.

5.2 Assurance

Oaths, vows, debts, and obligations represent some of the best known hearth magics in the Empire. In Urizen it is understood that simply to give your assurance that you will do something creates a change in the world - one that can be for weal or woe. Some philosophers believe that a person's words shape their destiny - others claim that it is the Creator who holds you to account, demanding that you make good on your claims or else face the

consequences. Nobody is certain why this hearth magic works the way it does - only that it works.

The most common view of assurance, is that the degree of passion, the level of commitment to the words spoken is important, as is the nature of the thing to which you commit yourself. A casual statement that you intend to take supper after dark is not going to move the stars no matter what time you eat. But a sworn vow to destroy the Druj, sealed with a drop of blood taken from each thumb, before a circle of seven of your peers is a thing of power.

The Urizeni practice of perfecting poise is an important asset for those who seek to master the hearth magic of assurance. Those who give in to their emotions can easily find themselves moved to speak in anger, committing them to a path they cannot travel. Those who master their emotions release them only when the moment is right gaining power from their words by committing themselves to a path they have rationally chosen.

The Druj famously do **not** keep their word, and many Urizen scholars argue that the debased nature of their society is the inevitable consequence of just such foolishness. Those who do not wish to suffer the same fate as the Druj take care with the commitments they make and provide assurances only after careful consideration. They strive to be as clear as possible about their intentions lest they unwittingly give their assurance to something over which they have no claim.

Assurance in Play

The simplest way to invoke the hearth magic of assurance is be measured in your speech, and be mindful of any claims you make. You don't want to suffer the misadventure that befalls those who inadvertently commit themselves to some undesirable course of action, so control your emotions and be certain that you can make good on what you say. By roleplaying the belief that breaking your word, even unknowingly, will bring consequences on your head then you can add weight and importance to all the things you say you will do.

If you do have cause to give an assurance, perhaps to swear an oath or a vow of some kind, then you should throw caution to the wind and invest your words with as much emotion and significance as possible. The Urizeni are not passionless, they seek to channel the strength of their emotions at the perfect moment. If you are certain that this is the right course of action, then this hearth magic encourages you to play up the drama and significance of such things to maximise the benefits.

If you are forced to break your oath or repudiate some assurance you have given, then you can roleplay the misfortune that is bound to come your way as a result. Leaning in to the roleplaying around breaking your word is a great way to create drama for yourself and others, even if that just means roleplaying that any misfortune that falls on your head is a result of your perfidy or mistakes.

When dealing with others, especially eternals, it can be appealing to try to find some clever interpretation of a promise that perfectly fits an agreement but is not what either party expected. A deal *"to provide Prospero with that which you value above all other things"* could be satisfied in a number of ways, depending on your characterisation. But this hearth magic is largely impervious to grammatical pedantry because it is rarely satisfying to welch out of your sworn oath by finding some rhetorical trick that renders your words moot. Doing that just renders your own actions meaningless and robs the things you have done of drama and significance.

5.3 Cession

A considered gift is deep magic.
There is a deep hearth magic in the giving of gifts - in the ceding of something to another. To be most effective the offering must be meaningful and significant to the person who gives it up and to the person who receives it. A small gift of money from one merchant prince to another is of little note - but a steel ring from their third finger has powerful meaning for both of them. Gifts given in this way may gain power or significance out of proportion to their value. It is very rare for a gift to gain magical powers as a direct result, but the act of giving it up may change it in some way. It is an observable fact that many notable items in Imperial history were at some point significant gifts. Much more common is that the gift will prove crucial at some future time, changing the fate of those who are tied to it.

While other nations often view cession in material terms, the Urizeni understand that knowledge is often the most significant thing one person can give another. Urizeni teachers shared their knowledge of ritual magic with every nation when their joined the Empire, and they did so again when the Imperial Orcs were admitted. Knowledge is only rarely seen as a gift in other nations, because the naive assume that nothing is given up by sharing it. But knowledge is power - those who give knowledge away choose to give up that power. It is one thing to be the only coven in the world with mastery of a given ritual - it is quite another for it to be a part of the common knowledge of Imperial lore. Choosing which knowledge to conserve and which knowledge to give up is a dilemma faced by many Urizeni

Gifts must be given freely to work their magic though - cession cannot be compelled or obligated. Stealing something of significance can bring hearth magic consequences - there are plenty of stories in the Empire of how the theft of an important item or secret lore backfired on the thief. In particular, stolen artefacts or magical knowledge can twist and distort when used, bringing fitting curses on the one who stole them. The strength of this hearth magic appears to require an element of betrayal - stealing from someone who is your friend or ally is much more likely to have a bad result than stealing from an enemy. As with the giving of gifts, there is an element of significance here - the more the parties involved consider the theft to be a betrayal the more backlash there is.

Gifts are usually important and significant - but they are not always beneficial. A gift given in malice or treachery can be dangerous if accepted. It is wise to consider carefully the provenance of any gift as well as who it comes from. If it is truly a gift - then it can be declined without consequence - but it

cannot be accepted without consequence.

Cession in Play

If you want to influence an important character - someone connected to you in the net of the heavens - then think about a gift you might give them. You might try and find out as much as you can about their character to seek out a gift that is particularly fitting. A present doesn't need to be in-character or out-of-character expensive - the best gifts are things that have a credible but interesting story. Giving a quill that was once owned by the founder of your spire is a rare gift that a character might realistically be able to acquire that doesn't need a ribbon or an expensive phys-rep. In some ways the roleplaying that surrounds the actual gift-giving is more important than the physical item itself.

If you accept a gift, then look for ways to make it meaningful in a way that adds to your character's story. Use the gifted quill to address your winged messengers. Carry the sword into battle. Wear the gifted sash when you go to the Senate. Leaning in to the idea that gifts are important can lead to all kinds of emergent narrative as well as reflecting the roleplaying of the person who gave it to you. When recounting stories, it can be fun to assign any success or good fortune to the influence of a significant gift.

Bear in mind that not all gifts bode well for those who accept them - both the white elephant and the trojan horse represent gifts that are intended to bring harm to the receiver. It is entirely appropriate to ask after the provenance of the gift, where is it from, who made it, what purpose is it intended for., and more importantly *why* someone is giving it to your. It is also perfectly acceptable to refuse a gift, and finding a way to do so politely or without giving away your distrust of the gift or the giver can be a fun roleplaying challenge.

5.4 Essence

An important idea in formal magic and hearth magic is the principle that everything has an intrinsic essence, a fundamental set of characteristics that make it what it is. The essence of something is irreducible; it literally represents the qualities which are *essential*. If you remove an essential part of something then the thing ceases to be what it was and becomes something else.

The essential nature of a thing is much more than just its physical essence. A suit of armour worn by a hero might endure unchanged for centuries. Over time parts of the armour might become damaged beyond repair and need to be replaced by an equally skilled smith. But if is treated well, it is still the same suit of armour even if every part of it is replaced, because its essential nature endures untouched.

The use of symbols is the most common way to employ the hearth magic of essence. For example certain animals and birds are understood to be connected to the virtues, so an association with the appropriate creature will work to make someone more virtuous. Of course most people don't carry a bird with them but art that depicts a bird still works, because it shares many of the essential qualities of the bird itself. Such art might painstaking attempt to faithfully depict the bird in question or, as with Wintermark drawings of birds, but is equally effective to reduce the image to something more essential. These symbolic forms are just as effective because they capture the immutable nature of the bird in question.

For the Urizen, the purest expression of these symbolic forms are to be found in the astronomantic constellations. A door that is marked with a faithful image of the Lock becomes harder to open without the key. A garden planted in the shape of the Fountain will grown lush and wholesome plants. The hearth magic can be invoked by laying things out in the shape made of the constellation, or by employing an image of the thing the stars represent. For example, the Urizen banner that hangs in the Senate uses both an image of a bird with bright plumage and a depiction of the stars themselves to invoke the symbolic power of the Phoenix.

Essence in Play

The easiest way to evoke essence is by including images and sigils on your costume, using them to decorate your tent, or painting them on your body. You might try to reduce something down to its barest essentials - four circles in a lopsided rectangle to evoke the Door. You might lean toward something more geometric - painstakingly drawing lines to connect the nodes of a constellation at just the right angle. You might go the other way, and evoke the Phoenix by creating representative or abstract paintings to hang in your tent to impart the idea of learning and seeking perfection to anyone who spends time in your tent.

Another way to invoke this hearth magic is to be constantly alert for symbols and signs, and draw attention to them. It can be tricky to do effectively, but finding a symbol, talking about what it means, and using it to guide your roleplaying can lead in very interesting directions. Simply saying "that Jotun has a wolf head cloak, so we should expect them to act like a wolf, and we can weaken them by separating them from their friends" may go horribly wrong or it may lead to a great emergent narrative.

Talking to people about the symbols they surround themselves with is also a way to start a conversation - either by making assumptions about them based on the essential nature of those symbols or by simple enquiring as to their meaning.

5.5 Space

The notorious Urizeni insistence on personal boundaries is not just a matter of etiquette, it is informed by their understanding of the magic of boundaries. Many people are aware that spellcasting requires touch to be effective, that a pronouncement of doom can only be delivered by someone who is close enough to touch you, but the truth runs much deeper than this. Contact between people creates associations between them which can have unforeseen consequences. Such consequences might be minor, an interruption that disturbs your arete or your poise, but the risks are potentially much higher. Letting another person into your personal space, lowers your defences and leaves you vulnerable, so it is only prudent to be careful.

Urizeni often set their personal space based on three fundamental boundaries. The first boundary is the limits of the human body, the point at which another being physically touches you. The second boundary is the point at which a person enters your personal space, the point at which they come close enough to touch you. The final boundary is when a person enters your property, where someone enters the physical space over which you claim dominion. For most Urizeni that is their personal rooms, but an arbiter might well see their entire spire in such terms, and a senator might see their entire territory that way.

Space in Play

The Urizeni understanding of space complements the nation's social customs and provides a metaphysical basis for their approach. If a character asks why the Urizen are so stand-offish about personal contact you can explain the dangers involved in allowing another person to cross one of your personal boundaries.

This hearth magic is about much more than simply justifying an insistence on personal space. Using the hearth magic to mark out a space over which you can claim dominion allows you to determine who enters and who doesn't - and creates opportunities for conflict with people who trespass on a place you have claimed for yourself. The obvious place to do this at Anvil is with your tent or your camp - but you don't have to restrict it to this. If you are part of a coven that uses the Imperial regio for example, then you might take steps to claim it as your own by marking the boundaries in an appropriate fashion or by otherwise stamping your coven's identity onto the area for the duration of your ritual. When visiting someone else's camp or tent, waiting until you are invited to enter and insisting on an invitation can emphasise the idea that you are passing through someone's outer boundary and evoke this hearth magic.

The importance of space also gives you a basis to make issues about your personal space significant. Allowing someone to pass one of your boundaries without comment, or inviting them to do so, can create a powerful character moment. You can invest emotional weight in a scene simply by inviting someone to take a seat next to you - or simply by accepting a hand outstretched in greeting. Equally you can make your feelings clear about someone by pointedly refusing such a gesture, or by moving yourself so that they are no longer close.

5.6 Witness

Deeds become more consequential when people witness them. They gain meaning and significance - and in the right circumstances they gain power. An oath sworn alone may be important, but a ceremonial oath pledged in front of an audience assembled to hear it is far more potent. Urizen ritual groups sometimes invite people to act as witnesses to their rituals for this reason.

A witness need not be living for to be effective. A human statue looking out from a fountain is still a witness, even if it is forever mute to what it has seen. Many people across the Empire will carve gargoyles and other watchers onto buildings, gables and lintels, with little true understanding of what they are doing other than the knowledge that such things can help to keep the occupants safe some how. The more sophisticated approach employed in Urizen, is to reduce the power of witness to its essential form, the eye. This is one of the reasons that the eye is such an effective symbol of vigilance. In Urizen, eyes are often carved or painted onto surfaces to give additional significance to events that take place near them, and to remind those present that their deeds are seen. The sun and the moon are sometimes used to symbolise the ?Eyes of the Heavens.? Events performed when the sun is clearly visible in the sky are ?witnessed? by the sun. At night the moon, especially the full moon, observes events. If one truly wishes to act in secrecy then one should act under the new moon, or when the moon is not visible in the sky.

A carved eye cannot be controlled, it stares unblinking, witnessing all - but you can always control where your own eyes fall. What this hearth magic shows is that there can be no impartial witness, standing on in mute testimony to events. Merely to observe something is to empower it - simply watching someone act is lending them your support.

Witness in Play

Using this hearth magic is often about being generous with other people's roleplaying. If someone is swearing an important oath - then the best way to make that moment significant is for an audience to gather to witness it. By working with other players, you can make important roleplaying moments be crucial for the game just by choosing to be there to see them happen. And you don't have to be silent throughout - while it's best not to detract from a dramatic moment - it's not a breach of poise to applaud, cheer, or salute when the time comes.

If you're careful, you can also use this hearth magic in reverse. If there are ignominious deeds taking place of which your character does not approve, then you might proclaim your refusal to stand witness to such things and turn on your heel and walk away. Doing so at the right time can add to the drama of the moment for everyone - especially if others follow your lead.

Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that.

5.7 Illumination

Light dispels darkness and allows one to witness deeds that might otherwise go unseen. It drives away confusion and mystery, and exposes poisonous secrets. Natural light is potent, but artificial light - light harnessed with mirrors or lenses, or produced by lightstones - is much more effective in this regard. People in well lit rooms find it easier to concentrate or focus. It can have a calming effect, dispelling confusion and bringing clarity. It's easier to learn, and easier to teach, in brightly lit environments.

The heliopticon is an example of the Urizen skill with manipulating light, while the magical lightstones they invented are another. A common light in Urizen homes is a single lightstone or brazier surrounded by mirrors and lenses that focus and direct the light into all corners of a chamber. In enclosed environments such as Urizen spires and mines, fire is less than ideal. Consequently they prefer to light these places with either natural light, luminescent plants and crystals, or the reflected light of the sun or a single beacon.

Light can reveal falsehoods, or hidden details. Divinations performed in illuminated areas may sometimes prove more effective, while liars often turn their face away from a source of light before they utter a falsehood. It can also penetrate disguises - there is a common element to Urizen stories that the shadow cast by a shapechanger will match its true form or otherwise betray its sinister nature. Many unnatural creatures - especially malignant ghosts, spiteful tulpas, and malicious heralds find it difficult to enter well-lit areas and may in some cases actually be harmed by a bright, clear light.

The other side to this hearth magic is that events that take place in complete darkness often acquire a sinister overtone. Some groups actively exploit this. Conspirators for example might do well to meet under cover of total darkness - apart from the obvious advantages in concealing people's identities, there is some evidence that it makes it much harder to uncover details about such a meeting with magic. Eternals such as Kimus and the Whisper Gallery in particular are known to struggle to learn about things that happen in pitch blackness. There is a common belief in Urizen that things that happen in dark or shadowy environments naturally tend toward the nefarious and underhand.

Illumination in Play

More than any other characters, an Urizen is likely to ensure they have a personal light source if they go out in the dark. Lightstones were created specifically to give Urizen players in particular options to use more modern lighting solutions that also have the feel of being magical.

Illumination can't provide a source of spiritual strength by itself - although for an Urizen it makes sense to create consecration or magically enchanted areas such as the Chamber of Pallas in areas that are well lit. Rather, when you are in a place with good illumination, you are free to change your roleplaying slightly. To feel more focused, or to master confusion, pain, or negative emotions to some degree. It's obvious that one requires light to read something, but its entirely natural for an Urizen to want the best light available before they will read anything on the understanding that the better the light the easier it will be for them to take in. Insisting on taking a letter or a book to a well lit area - where coincidentally there are a number of other Urizen - can also be a way to involve other people in your roleplaying.

Light is not a truth spell - nothing in Empire can compel you to be honest. But if you're roleplaying an emotional scene, especially one with another Urizeni, and you want to give away the fact that your character is being deceptive, subversive, or holding something back, then turning your face away from the light when you speak is a great way to dramatically signal what you're doing. If you want to be more subtle, you might put your hand briefly between you and the light to cast your mouth in shadow when you speak. Alternatively, if you've decided that the moment has come to confess something, then entering a brightly lit area might be the final justification your character needs to spill their darkest secret.

The belief that conspirators and schemers meet in darkness can be flipped over such that an Urizen character might insist on having all significant meetings in areas that are as brightly lit, and being suspicious of anything that is done in darkness or shadow. People who go about without lights, for example, are often up to no good in the eyes of many Urizen.

5.8 Truth

Truth has a way of making itself known. Deception is fragile and can shatter at any moment, as the truth reveals itself. All mortal beings feel a desire to tell the truth - though some are more practised at resisting that urge. People have an instinctive ear for truth - they know it when they hear it - and speak of words having the "ring of truth" to them. All of these things are a reflection of the fact that the truth strives constantly to be discovered.

Reams of philosophy have been written in Urizen about the power of truth. A common Urizeni view is that the world is divided into those things which are truth, and those which are only supposed or imagined. As a result, some Urizen devote themselves to personal quest for truth, whether that be

self-knowledge, gnosis, or political or historical truths like those pursued by many torchbearers. This pursuit of truth exacerbates conflict between Urizen scholars who insist that the quest for unvarnished truth is the only correct way to proceed, and the more popular Highborn approach that truth is different to fact and that inspirational fiction is more valuable than unvirtuous fact. Others adopt a more nuanced interpretation, claiming that truth is a quality that an idea or a thing might possess to a greater or lesser extent. After-all, the most effective lies are those that contain a kernel of truth.

Wisdom teaches that all knowledge is incomplete. Truth is a powerful hearth magic; plans based on truth will succeed where others fail, but it is not necessary for every assumption to be correct. The key to effective action is to know one thing truthfully - and to make that the keystone of your actions. The truer the foundations, the stronger the building you will erect.

Revealing the truth can be destructive. The truth destroys falsehoods, tearing them apart, shattering the lives of people or communities whose foundations are built on those lies. Despite this, Urizen scholars largely agree that there is no truth that "humans were not meant to know". The truth wants to be known - that is its essential quality. A truth may be unsettling or upsetting - it might even harm people when it comes to light - but these effects come from the destruction of comfortable lies not from the truth itself. The idea that simply knowing a fact might somehow harm the mind, or drive someone mad, is laughable.

Truth is also a requirement for any magic to function at all. Only a fool would imagine that you can deceive the law of presence by falsely claiming to be in the presence of something when you are not. But nor can you fool the law of dominion by claiming to have authority over something when you do not. The laws of magic only work on the quintessential truth of something. So an army can be enchanted by targeting the general who has authority over it, or by targeting the egregore who has a bond with it, but it can't be enchanted by targeting the adjunct, because their authority lacks the fundamental truth of dominion.

Truth in Play

Seeking out the truth can be a character calling, but regularly asking "Is that true?" or "What actually happened?" can lead to interesting roleplaying moments. Likewise, questioning the provenance of information you receive from another character, or examining truths people take for granted, can lead your character in unexpected directions. Be careful not to take this too far - there is no value in questioning the information presented in winds of war and winds of fortune - but it can be interesting to challenge people when they put forward their character's opinions and views on things.

You can practice this hearth magic simply by sticking to the truth and the facts as much as possible. This can be especially true when you are writing things down, in a journal or report, or when you are presenting something to a group of people. The Urizen don't believe that truth is subjective or relative - something is either true or it isn't - and taking this slightly adversarial stance can also lead to interesting roleplaying moments for you and the people you deal with.

This hearth magic concerns important truths - the facts that people base their decisions on. It doesn't preclude the kind of social falsehoods we all practice day to day - the Urizen do not believe it is dangerous to tell someone they look nice if that's not entirely true for example. Urizen writers are no less likely to use poetic language than anyone else - everyone understands that metaphors are not meant to be taken as literal fact. But they do believe that truth should be the basis for action. Attempting to build a magical ritual on a false premise is to invite disaster; Urizen characters would argue that this applies to everything in all levels of Imperial life.

Finally, when the truth does come out, or something built on a foundation of lies collapses, it is entirely appropriate for Urizen characters to be the ones to say "I told you so" and point out the many ways in which avoiding the truth has led to disaster.

5.9 Further Reading

Core Brief

- Introduction
- The people
- Culture and customs
- Look and feel
- Hearth magic

Additional Information

- History
- Leadership
- Economic interests
- Military concerns
- Religious beliefs

- Magical traditions
- Territories
- Children
- Music
- Archetypes
- Groups
- Egregore

6 Urizen history

The Urizen combine a relentless will with an unquenchable ambition ? and an unmatched understanding of magical lore.

6.1 Overview

Urizen is arguably the oldest Imperial nation, established before the fall of the empire of Terunael, but they were almost not part of the Empire at all. Having prospered for centuries in the high mountains of the south-east, they refused the initial invitation of the First Empress. They eventually reconsidered, choosing to become an Imperial nation during the reign of Emperor Giovanni, once it was clear that the Empire could be something more than an alliance of conquerors. The Urizeni helped lay the foundations for the modern Empire, building the Conclave, spreading egalitarian ideas of education for all Imperial citizens, and providing a unique artefact that has fundamentally shaped Imperial attitudes to warfare.

6.2 The High Peaks

The Urizen are numbered along with the Terunael, the Ushka, the Kallavesi and the Suaq as the "original" human inhabitants of the Bay of Catazar. Most historians believe that they are cousins of the Ushkan people of the ancient north; either they share a common ancestry or they are descendants of people who left the haunted forests for more welcoming lands south of the Semmerlak. There is some speculation that they also share a heritage with the people of Axos, as the two nations are geographically close and both place great emphasis on magical power.

Many centuries ago ? most likely before the decline of Terunael and perhaps even before the establishment of that ancient empire ? several groups of humans ascended the mountains of Morrow to escape the orcs' domination of the fertile plains. When they reached the peaks, they found ruins that were clearly not of human origin. There were simply great, empty halls carved into several of the most richly magical peaks. The people who made these galleries were probably humanoid, albeit larger than humans, and spent a lot of time studying the night sky.

They discovered no remnants of the original inhabitants, nor any suggestion of where they had gone. While the ruins were clearly old, there was no suggestion that their inhabitants had been destroyed in a catastrophe ? or at least not a catastrophe that affected their structures. These forerunners had an advanced grasp of the lore of the realms of Day and Night, but no apparent concept of the other four realms. These echoing galleries formed the heart of the first Urizen spires, and remain an enduring mystery that is still debated by scholars.

From Morrow, the first Urizen spread across the peaks claiming Spiral and establishing outposts in Zenith and Redoubt. At first, the main appeal of the mountains was their defensibility, but as they expanded their holdings, they discovered many places with strong natural auras of magical power. These

lands were also rich in mineral wealth that helped artisans create numerous wonders. As their numbers grew, they used magic to overcome the challenges of creating dwellings and producing food from the inhospitable terrain, but even with these advances the new nations remained sparsely populated.

6.3 A Sanctum of Stars

The inaccessible terrain allowed the Urizen to remain secluded. They were untouched by the magical apocalypse that destroyed the Terunael and created the vallorn and remained aloof from the nascent Navarr civilisation. For the most part, they simply stayed in their mountainous homes and observed, choosing not to become involved in the struggles that marked the centuries after the fall of Terunael. When the Urizen were troubled by invaders, their spires were ably defended by the sentinels and the strategically placed citadels.

This changed with the arrival of the Highborn from across the sea. The newcomers were ambitious and expansionist, and there was a period of open conflict as they attempted to expand across the river into Morrow and Redoubt. Ultimately these initial struggles gave way to a more cordial relationship ? especially once it was clear that the Highborn cavalry was at a significant disadvantage in the rugged terrain favoured by the Urizen. The conflict made it clear that Urizen were more than capable of defending their lands and they slowly abandoned their policy of isolation. They initiated diplomacy with the Highborn and made eventual contact with the settlers of Dawn, and despite occasional strife maintained cordial relations with both groups thereafter.

The greatest achievement of pre-Imperial Urizen was the creation of the heliopticon network. Originally developed by a pair of architects, their prototype demonstrated how an arrangement of lights and mirrors allowed swift communication across the mountain tops. The benefits for defence and for collaboration between scholars in distant spires were plain for all to see. Interest continued to grow and eventually arbiters from spires across Urizen came together at the first recorded Grand Conclave to agree the construction of a single heliopticon network across the entire nation.

6.4 Heralds of Twilight

A century after the completion of the heliopticon network, the Urizen settlements in Spiral were threatened by a resurgent Grendel. Opposition to the invaders was led by a charismatic battlemage named Vaanes, the arbiter of the Citadel of Mezudan. Adored by the sentinels who trained under him, Vaanes was widely recognized as the most brilliant tactician of his age after he masterminded the defeat of the barbarian armies at White Falls. Vaanes used this triumph to gather support from spires across southern Spiral and the coasts of Redoubt whose citizens were all too familiar with the threat of invasion. He argued that only by uniting under a single banner would the nation be strong enough to crush the orcs and drive them from Spiral completely. Although his vision proved appealing, many spires balked at Vaanes demands, loathe to give up their independence. Fearing a split in the nation, the arbiters ultimately rejected Vaanes, and the battlemage himself was killed by the Grendel soon after.

This was not the only time philosophical differences would split the nation. Following the Highborn civil war, the Revelation of the virtues brought Highborn wayfarers to Urizen, keen to share the truths they had uncovered. Their belief that faith and visionary revelation gave them a deep understanding of spiritual mysteries angered the influential questor and warrior-philosopher Sulemaine. She sought the missionaries out, denouncing and executing any whose beliefs she considered insufficiently grounded in reason and logic. Many who refused to accept the Highborn faith flocked to her banner, determined to preserve Urizen's more individual and scholastic approach to religion. In the decades following her death, these sword scholars grudgingly adopted the virtues, but they remained fiercely opposed to the new religion, arguing that embracing the Way risked Urizen falling under the influence of the Highborn assembly.

At the height of their power the temples of the sword scholars were a significant military force within Urizen, but opposition to them continued to grow as more of the nation adopted the Way. Increasingly violent clashes broke out between sword scholars and those who attempted to defend the Highborn missionaries. Despite their martial discipline, the fiercely independent scholars were often outmatched by the more disciplined sentinels who protected the opposing spires and they suffered a steady decline. This conflict rumbled on for many years and only came to a head when Urizen over the decision to join the Empire.

6.5 A Light in the Darkness

A handful of Urizen attended the First Empress' historical meeting at Anvil, and invited her to present her vision to the Grand Conclave of arbiters. The First Empress was a powerful warrior and an inspirational speaker, but the nation were unmoved by her vision. The seers and prognosticators predicted disaster if their nation led by a conqueror and the gathered Urizen concluded that it would not be in their interests to join the Empire. One of her loudest critics, Tiberius of Sunspire asked "*Who will rule your empire when you are gone?*" Her inability to provide a convincing answer firmed the resolve of the arbiters to reject her invitation. Despite efforts to persuade them that their concerns were unfounded the conclave remained adamant; they would not join the Empress' cause.

At the same time, the First Empress was making her overture to the spires, another group was attempting to recruit the Urizeni. The powerful boyar Alderei the Fair was founding his own empire, rivalling that proposed by the First Empress. Among his supporters were a group of powerful undying sorcerers known as the volodny. Born of the Ushka, sometimes considered to be distant cousins of the Urizen, some of the volodny assumed that their

shared heritage, common interest in magic, and refusal to join the Empire made the Urizen their natural allies. One of their number, a clever negotiator named Kareina of the Swans, initiated secret negotiations with the Urizen to seek support for their plans.

The Grand Conclave considered her offer with as much weight as they did that of the First Empress, and came to a similar decision. The arbiters presented a neutral face to Kareina, and encouraged her to reveal the volodny's plans, before they were roundly rejected. "*We would not support a conqueror whose heart was filled with the best of intentions,*" said Tiberius of Sunspire to the outraged Kareina. "*Why would you believe we would support one driven by bitterness and spite?*"

When the inevitable war erupted between the followers of Alderei the Fair and the founders of the Empire, the Urizen officially remained uninvolved. However, a group of magicians who favoured joining the Empire travelled to Varushka to offer covert support to the Imperial forces. The volodny had raised a dread pall over Alderei's armies that spread fear and confusion among his opponents. The Urizen magicians used powerful Day magic to penetrate the magical effect and then to scatter it, allowing the Imperial forces to attack Alderei. With their aid, the Imperial armies defeated the wicked boyar and scattered his forces.

Some of the Empress' supporters assumed this assistance meant the Urizen were prepared to join their cause. Once the battle was over, however, the remaining Urizen ? many of them shattered in spirit, exhausted in body, or casualties of the battle ? simply returned to their mountains. They took no part in mopping up the remainder of Alderei's supporters, and gave no indication that joining the Empire was any more appealing than it had been before.

Costume created by Simone McIsaac

6.6 A Brighter Future

The Urizen observed the development and consolidation of the Empire with interest. They welcomed diplomats and trade, but maintained their distance. After the death of the Empress, they watched as her successor was appointed by the Senate. Emperor Giovanni travelled personally to the mountains along with a number of ranking civil servants, and met with many influential arbiters. He laid before them his plans for a rational, ordered society based on merit and personal drive. He made it clear that the Empire would remain militarily powerful with or without the support of the Urizen, but their involvement would keep it from collapsing into anarchy or becoming focused entirely on conquest.

Swayed by a vision of a civilised society, the prognosticators consulted their auguries again. This time Urizen seers predicted disaster if their nation did *not* join an Empire led by the Peacemaker. After several more weeks of debate and discussion, the Grand Conclave agreed to become the ninth

Imperial nation.

This move was not universally popular, and led to an unexpected resurgence in the power of the sword scholar temples. Disgruntled Urizen were drawn to their particular philosophy of isolation and opposition to authority. Many refused to bond themselves to the new Urizen egregore in open defiance of what they considered to be a tyrannical Imperial presence and eventually their opposition became so disruptive that the Senate and the Synod called for the suppression of the remaining sects. A brutal crackdown ensued, forcing the scholars underground as one-by-one their temples were destroyed. Gathering at the Temple of the Winds in Morrow, the survivors were confronted by an army of sentinels and ordered to disband. Despite being heavily outnumbered they refused to submit, and the resulting battle saw hundreds killed on both sides before the defeated sword scholars were forced to scatter.

6.7 Imperial History

Urizen benefited greatly from joining the Empire. Food imported from the Marches allowed the spires to grow and freed people to devote even more time to training and study. This allowed Urizen to achieve the level of magical and scholastic mastery they enjoy today. Likewise, the support of the Imperial military helped defend the borders of Morrow and Spiral, and secure the Urizen claim to both Redoubt and Zenith. These benefits ensured a steady increase in the population of the previously isolated nation, which led to the establishment of many new spires.

In return, the Empire gained access to Urizen's tradition of scholasticism and its body of magical lore. Urizen taught the Empire how to perform effective prognostications, massively improving its ability to plan for the future. Even more importantly, shrewd interventions by the first Urizen senators transformed the Test of Citizenship, adding literacy, numeracy, and theology to the requirements needed to pass. In the decades that followed, their commitment to universal education was instrumental in raising standards of living across the Empire.

6.7.1 The Imperial Conclave

In the years before Urizen joined the Empire, magicians would hold informal meetings at Anvil, to discuss magic and exchange ideas. A few Urizen wizards attended, keen to observe developments, but they were disappointed when they found that the meetings lacked structure or any formal powers. When Urizen were asked to join the Empire for a second time, their key demand was the constitution be updated to include formal recognition of an Conclave. Rather than being a mere adjunct of the Military Council or the Senate, the Urizen were very clear that it must have equal precedence with those august bodies and with the Synod and the Bourse.

The newly recognised Imperial Conclave adopted many rules and procedures that were modelled on Urizen's Grand Conclave. Urizen magi ensured that the body would be arranged along partisan lines, by insisting on the system of Conclave orders. They wanted to be certain that the Conclave would be an active political body, one that considered the political ramifications of magic, rather than be arranged by magical realm or by nationality as many assumed.

The Imperial Senate was not minded to agree to the creation of the Conclave, though the idea of political rather than purely magical body was well received in the League, the Brass Coast, and Varushka. Urizen mages worked to build support for the new Conclave in every nation, but it was the involvement of the stargazers of Urizen that proved pivotal. They were visiting covens across the Empire sharing some of their own lore, and learning everything they could from their fellow Imperial citizens. Their idea to create a body of lore that magicians everywhere would have access to was popular with almost every magician, as well as with several influential members of the Military Council. The resulting groundswell of support was impossible for the Senate to refuse.

6.7.2 The Sentinel Gate

Perhaps the greatest benefit to the Empire was the Sentinel Gate. The Gate is a unique artefact uncovered by the Urizen in the mountains of Spiral some twenty years before the foundation of the Empire. The magical structure seems to break several magical laws and is tied in some poorly understood fashion to the concept of fate and serendipity. The gate was secured at the Citadel of Mezudan where it allowed the sentinels to respond to threats against Spiral. It was such a closely guarded secret that its existence was largely unknown outside the territory.

Shortly after the Senate confirmed the foundation of the Imperial Conclave, the arbiter of the Citadel of Mezudan and the two Urizen senators unveiled the Gate and presented it to the Empire. Relocated to Anvil, it allowed Imperial heroes to teleport to critical locations in the Empire, but only at a solstice or equinox. The Urizen seers taught the Empire how to make full use of the gate's powers. Imperial prognosticators learned to identify imminent conjunctions, and how to combine that information with divinatory spells and reams of intelligence to determine how the conjunction might best be employed.

The Gate is now a pivotal part of the Empire's military planning ? the ability to strike against their enemies at critical locations has been so decisive that it influences the entire way the Empire plans and conducts their wars.

6.7.3 The Mad Emperor

To date only one Urizen has occupied the Imperial Throne, and he is perhaps the most infamous person to have worn the Crown. Elected in 200YE, at first Emperor Nicovar was an excellent Throne. His attention to detail made him a brilliant administrator, and his court was hailed as a place of learning. He expanded the Civil Service, establishing multiple ways for them to support and aid the people of the Empire, and was expected to usher in a new golden age of reason and expansion. Unfortunately, it was not to be.

A decade of micromanaging every detail of the Empire slowly drove Nicovar mad. Things came to a head after nine years when he sent out troops to burn down the libraries and archives of the Empire ? even his home spire of Ankarien was not spared. In the end, his rampage ended only when his trusted bodyguard Isaella assassinated him ? but not before he had done irreparable damage to the Empire by destroying many of its largest repositories of history and scholarship.

6.8 Recent History

6.8.1 Zenith Falls

A month after the Spring Equinox 381YE, the Druj barbarians invaded Zenith from the Mallum. The initial attack swept the unprepared defenders away, and Lustri and Occursion fell to the orcs in short order. Only a brave defence by the three Highborn armies ? the Seventh Wave, the Granite Pillar, and the Valiant Pegasus ? stopped the Druj from conquering the entire territory, but the Empire was unable to prevent them destroying the Golden Cascade. The resulting catastrophic flood ruined the fertile plains of Proceris and pushed the defenders back west to a thin sliver of higher ground to face a major assault from the invading orcs. Despite their best efforts, the Highborn armies were forced to retreat to Morrow. Throughout their invasion the Druj took a malicious delight in destroying both captured spires and numerous sinecures, as well as the Gardens of Pallas.

Apart from a few isolated spires hidden beneath veils of Night magic, much of the population of Zenith was forced into exile. The loss of life in Zenith was much smaller than it could have been ? the courageous defence of the territory by the Highborn armies allowed many who might otherwise have fallen into the hands of the eastern orcs to escape that dread fate. Refugees fled to Redoubt and Morrow, while those who were unable to escape were enslaved by the Druj.

Flush with success, the Druj armies regrouped and then poured into Morrow. Despite the continuing efforts of the Highborn armies, the orcs conquered Peregro and Caeli. In the process they destroyed not only the recently relocated Halls of Knowledge but also the central heliopticon tower, the Glorious Fountain of Dawn and Dusk, and the Gardens of Morrow. They also destroyed the Temple of the Winds, slaughtering nearly two thirds of the remaining sword scholars in the process.

The Druj advance was finally slowed and they were held at the borders of Operus until Spring 383YE, when a concerted Imperial effort led by the Citadel Guard and supported by the eternal Phaleron managed to drive them back into Zenith. Imperial heroes took the opportunity to launch a raid into Zenith to rescue as many captured Urizeni as possible. Not only were they able to free nearly two-thirds of those enslaved by the orcs, they were also able to liberate a number of Highborn soldiers who had been captured when the territory fell. These survivors were escorted to safety in Morrow and Redoubt, and brought with them tales of the terrible miasma that now cloaks the entire territory of Zenith.

6.8.2 Grim Awakening

Bordering as it does the Grendel territory of Mareave, Spiral has long been a battleground. Lost to the southern orcs in 331YE, it changed hands several times in the following years. After a brief period when the territory was entirely in Imperial hands, the Grendel launched a major offensive on all fronts in 381YE. This saw Imperial forces driven back to Cinion, and control of the territory again fell into barbarian hands. Over the next year, war raged relentlessly across the territory, causing a slow rousing of the Black Plateau in Screed.

The situation came to a head shortly after the 381YE Winter Solstice when the Varushkan army of the Iron Helms were unleashed against the Grendel. During the Battle of Solen's Doubt in Apstrus, three Grendel armies were destroyed by a wave of madness that swept through both Imperial and orc forces at the culmination of the awakening of the . Whatever power rests at the heart of Spiral ? whatever power emanates from the ? was moved from fitful sleep to wakefulness. Now, a terrible nightmare aura permeates the entire territory, making it hostile to human and orc alike.

The Urizen managed some success in shielding individual spires from its influence thanks to the creation of the Block ? a structure of specially enchanted mithril that allowed the populace to slowly return to their abandoned spires. However in Autumn 383YE, as part of a peace treaty, those areas of the territory that were not already in the hands of the orcs were ceded to the Grendel. Imperial citizens have been urged to quit the territory and leave it to its new masters.

6.8.3 Magical Renaissance

The loss of the Halls of Knowledge and the destruction of the central heliopticon tower marked a nadir for the people of Urizen. Rather than wallow in despair however, their brightest minds looked for opportunity in disaster. With the assistance of the Senate, the heliopticon towers were restored, accompanied by a new drive to harness the collective magical knowledge of the people of Urizen. The establishment of the Doyen of the Spires allowed Urizen magicians to cooperate on the codification of ritual texts on a scale hitherto unknown.

With the assistance of the Archmage of Day, a unique bargain was struck with the eternal Phaleron ? also called the Celestial Library ? which led to the establishment of Urizen lore ? a body of arcane ritual knowledge created, curated, and available only to citizens of Urizen. Connected to the newly transformed Grand Library of Canterspire, the full potential of this new technique is slowly being explored; in conjunction with the Doyen of the Spires, it presents opportunities to forge a uniquely Urizen corpus of magical lore.

6.9 More Urizen History

- Citadel Guard
- People of the North
- Mareave and Urizen

6.10 Further Reading

Core Brief

- Introduction
- The people
- Culture and customs
- Look and feel
- Hearth magic

Additional Information

- History
- Leadership
- Economic interests
- Military concerns
- Religious beliefs
- Magical traditions
- Territories
- Children
- Music
- Archetypes
- Groups
- Egregore

7 Urizen leadership

The Senators of Urizen are selected for their magical ability and for their cleverness.

7.1 Overview

Magic is seen as a mark of a rational and learned mind and more importantly as the most powerful tool that an individual or group can wield. The Urizen maintain that those who best understand the world are the ones best suited to lead it, and they look to their most powerful mages for leadership. Every citizen is encouraged to learn a little magic, whether it is practical spellcasting or superior craftwork, but ritual magic, the mastery of the lore of the realms, is regarded as the highest calling.

Most Urizen spires appoint an arbiter whose role is to resolve disputes, and represent the spire to others. Traditionally the individual who is deemed to demonstrate the most complete Arete is asked to take the position. In most spires this will be the wisest and most skilled mage, but a martial spire is more likely to choose a weapon-master than a magician.

Although arbiters are expected to provide leadership, they are usually chosen by, and serve at the pleasure of the members of the spire. In effect they are *"first among equals"*, no more or less powerful than any other member of the spire, but accorded respect owing to the importance of their responsibilities. This same principle is applied to *anyone* in a position of authority, especially those with an Imperial title, whether they're Urizeni or not. Politics is a popular topic of discussion and debate among the spires, and few Urizen would balk at the idea of politely asking someone to explain the reasoning behind their decisions whether they are an arbiter, a senator, or the Throne themselves. Senators in particular, are expected to be answerable to their fellow magicians and they can expect to be challenged on the progress of any public commitments they have made.

There is little history of open military conflict between Urizen spires. Cooperation between neighbours is the norm in Urizen, but disputes between spires whose councils differ on political, social or ideological grounds are commonplace. Even before Urizen joined the Empire, such conflicts were almost always settled through debate, often with the assistance of a judge or mediator from a neutral spire.

Urizen are passionate about politics. Being able to debate competing points of view and achieve consensus is seen as a high art form that raises

humans above animals. It also makes civilised people superior to barbarians who practice brute force approaches to leadership. The Imperial Senate is held up as a great triumph of the Empire, although they are often disappointed by the way the other nations choose to exploit the Senate, especially how they pick their Senators.

There are three principles in a person's being and life, the principle of thought, the principle of speech, and the principle of action. The origin of all conflict between me and my fellow-people is that I do not say what I mean and I do not do what I say.

Martin Buber

7.2 Truth

Urizeni politics prides itself on being based on truth. Not the brazen honesty of the Brass Coast, but the certainty that comes from dealing with past and current events as they are rather than as one might wish them to be. The Urizen expect a high degree of transparency from their political leaders whether they are the arbiter of a spire, or the senator of an entire territory.

The torchbearers are a well-established political movement committed to the idea of truth and accountability. They are dedicated to uncovering the truth about important events - both current and historical - and sharing their findings to as many people as possible. They adhere to a philosophy that suggests the only way to ensure the Empire remains "honest" is to ensure that the citizens are kept informed of what is going on around them, so they can make sensible decisions and appoint virtuous Senators.

7.3 Leading a territory

Urizen senators are elected as the culmination of the demos, a gathering of Urizeni citizens that takes place at Anvil for the purpose of discussing the challenges facing the nation and debating the best way forward. The structure and format of the demos bears striking similarities to the format of the Imperial Conclave, a reflection of Urizen's role in its creation. It usually begins on the afternoon of the first full day of the summit; the egregore of the nation will announce the opening of the demos and call the citizens to order.

The purpose of the demos is for the assembled citizens to agree on a set of resolutions that they wish to see their senators achieve. To achieve this, any arbiter of a spire in the territory may present the egregore with a single dictum they wish the demos to consider. A dictum should be in writing and given to the egregore no later than an hour before the demos is due to start. The egregore curates an agenda from the list of suggestions they have been given, merging any duplicate ideas. Usually the egregore will serve as the chairperson for the meeting, but occasionally they will delegate to a civil servant or a trusted citizen who has demonstrated the capacity to be fair and unbiased to run the demos.

Each dictum must be in the form of an action or outcome that the new senator is expected to try achieve. Thus a dictum might call on the senator to commission a port in Apulus, or disburse funds from the Imperial treasury to buy mana for Urizeni magicians, but the egregore would discount a dictum calling on Urizen to commit funds to support a new fortification. The egregore will usually invite whoever submitted the dictum to speak first, giving them a chance to make their case. They will then call on other citizens to support or rebut the dictum, but each citizen is permitted no more than a single minute to speak on each dictum, and no citizen can speak more than once on a single dictum. It's expected that each speaker will add something to the debate; citizens who use their minute to simply agree with other speakers are often criticised for wasting time.

Once each debate concludes, the magicians from the territory who are present indicate their support or opposition by raising their hand with the issue decided by majority vote. In the case of a tie, then a dictum is considered to have failed to gain the support of the demos. It is not possible to change the wording of a dictum raised to the demos - the vote is always to either support or reject the dictum as written - another reason that brevity and clarity are considered ideal.

The demos concludes once all the dicta have been voted on. At this point, all candidates for the senatorial position are expected to present themselves. Most Urizeni expect their senator to be a resident of the territory they are standing for, but there is no legal requirement for that to be the case. Only Urizeni magicians from the territory may vote. While the candidates formally announce themselves at the conclusion of the demos it is much more usual for them to do so before it begins - so that they can then use the demos as an opportunity to canvas for undecided voters.

The egregore then goes through the list of dicta that the demos has supported asking the candidates if they will pledge to enact them or not. Candidates are not given any time to debate a dictum at this point, since they have already had an opportunity to explain their stance on any given dictum to the demos. They must either commit to enact the dictum or reject it.

Once it is clear which candidate supports which dicta there a final vote to select the senator. The candidates spread out and every magician from the territory present indicates their support for their preferred candidate, usually by moving to stand behind them if they are physically comfortable doing so. Only magicians who are present at the demos can vote - but it is fine for a magician who needs to remain seated to ask a colleague to register their support for their chosen candidate on their behalf. Only magicians who have not voted in another Urizen senatorial election in the past year may participate in the vote.

The candidate with the most votes is duly elected. The dicta are displayed after the election in the Hub for any citizens to view and when the summit is over a written record is then made of the dicta that the winning candidate committed to. The expectation is that the senator will be able to explain what they are doing to achieve these policies or be able to show that they have advanced them.

The senators for each Imperial territory are re-elected at specific equinox and solstices during the year. The senator for Redoubt is elected at the Summer Solstice, the senator for Morrow is elected at the Autumn Equinox, the senator for Zenith is elected at the Winter Solstice, and the senator for Sarangrave is elected at the Spring Equinox. When Spiral was an Urizen territory, its senator was elected at the Spring Equinox.

7.3.1 Foci of the Silver Flame

The Silver Flame of Cinion are foreigners who have pledged to provide each of the Urizen senators with a foci once a year. The foci is received the season after the senator is elected, and can be used to enhance a ritualist's knowledge of a specific realm for the performance of a single ritual each day. The Silver Flame will continue providing these rings for as long as the Silver Flame are recognised as foreigners, and Spiral is not an Urizen territory.

OOC Note: The newly elected senator should email plot@profounddecisions.co.uk before downtime closes after the event they are elected, and choose which realm they want the ring to benefit.

Those who best understand the world are best suited to lead it.

7.3.2 Incumbent

The current Urizen senators are listed below - see the individual territory pages for a full election history for each position.

- Morrow - Ismene of the Scarlet Guard
- Redoubt - Thalia of Netherwatch
- Zenith - Delara of the House of the Wanderer
- Sarangrave - Bartimaeus

7.4 Prominent Spires

A list of well-known spires who have attended Anvil in recent years can be found here.

7.5 Dicta

After the demos, once the dicta are agreed, they are copied down by the egregore and the Civil Service. Copies of these are posted up in the Hub for all to see, and commonly distributed to Urizen citizens who do not attend Anvil but have an interest in their nation's politics. The winning candidate is expected to stand by the commitments enshrined in the dicta, as per the Urizen ideals of Truth.

7.5.1 Summer 388YE

In the election for **Redoubt**, the following dicta were agreed at the demos. The winning candidate was **Thalia of Netherwatch**.

Spring 388YE Dictum	Agreed?
Does the candidate commit to improving the defences of Redoubt during their term?	Yes

7.5.2 Spring 388YE

In the election for **Sarangrave**, the following dicta were agreed at the demos. The winning candidate was **Bartimaeus**.

Spring 388YE Dictum	Agreed?
Will you engage with the orcs of the Sarangrave in a fair and equitable manner that benefits the people of Urizen and the nation as a whole?	Yes

7.5.3 Winter 387YE

In the election for **Zenith**, the following dicta were agreed at the demos. The winning candidate was **Delara of the House of the Wanderer**.

Winter 387YE Dictum	Agreed?
The candidate sears to work alongside the architects of Urizen to help relieve the national debt.	Yes

In the election for **Sarangrave**, the following dicta were agreed at the demos. The winning candidate was **Bartimaeus**.

Winter 387YE Dictum	Agreed?
Do you agree to be guided by the national assembly in how best to approach the problems affecting the Sarangrave?	Yes

7.5.4 Summer 387YE

In the election for **Redoubt**, the following dicta were agreed at the demos. The winning candidate was **Thalia of Netherwatch**.

Summer 387YE Dictum	Agreed?
The Senator gives assurance they will work towards helping to raise funds to repay the raising of the Argent Sword.	Yes
The Senator agrees to hold at least one hour per summit as an office hour where they will be in a known location in Urizen to talk to the people of Redoubt.	Yes

7.5.5 Winter 386YE

In the election for **Zenith**, the following dicta were agreed at the demos. The winning candidate was **Herminius of the House of the Wanderer**.

Winter 386YE Dictum	Agreed?
The Senatorial Candidate will ensure the commencement of the construction of the new mountain to house the displaced spires of the Arch of the Skies.	Yes
I agree to start building the beneficiary of the Golden Cascade within this term of office.	Yes

7.5.6 Autumn 386YE

In the election for **Morrow**, the following dicta were agreed at the demos. The winning candidate was **Sejanus of the Scarlet Guard**.

Autumn 386YE Dictum	Agreed?

Autumn 386YE Dictum	Agreed?
To appoint a proxy from outside their spire or citadel: to train and encourage them; to grant them one motion of their own design, advise them on it, and prepare them to present it.	Yes
The Senator commits to the building of a fort in Morrow within the year.	No
To build at least one improvement to the infrastructure of Morrow and ensure that appropriate Senate funding is sought.	Yes
To maintain harmonious relations with the Marches, I give my assurance I will endeavour to support Marcher interests in the Senate where not in conflict with the interests of Morrow, or Urizen as a whole.	Yes
The Senator for Morrow commits to do all in their power to secure the Arch of the Sky as an Urizen National Bourse seat.	Yes

7.5.7 Summer 386YE

In the election for **Redoubt**, the following dicta were agreed at the demos. The winning candidate was **Thalia of Netherwatch**.

Summer 386YE Dictum	Agreed?
The Senator gives Assurance that they shall seek an appraisal that would increase Spiral?s prosperity and give Urizeni a reliable voice in its future.	Yes
The Senator gives Assurance that they will help educate Senate on magical matters and Conclave, and to speak on these in Senate when relevant.	Yes

7.5.8 Winter 385YE

In the election for **Zenith**, the following dicta were agreed at the demos. The winning candidate was **Herminius of the House of the Wanderer**.

Winter 386YE Dictum	Agreed?
The Senator will make every effort to build the fort in Lustri and the Gardens of Pallas by securing funds from various sources	Yes
As they have no voice of their own, the Senator will agree to be a voice for the Urizeni residing in Spiral	Yes
Spire Starsong, and all of the other spires within the Arch of the Sky, have been through enough. The Senator for Zenith promises to NOT build the Southern Skyways, neither touching the sky nor a road in the sky. We refuse to have our homes reduced to rubble again.	No

7.5.9 Autumn 385YE

In the election for **Morrow**, the following dicta were agreed at the demos. The winning candidate was **Laelius Archsky**.

Autumn 385YE Dictum	Agreed?
The senator commits to aiding in a suitable recompense to the Urizeni for the ceding of Spiral to the League	Yes
Urizen will soon be at war with the Grendel. The senator commits that they will use one or more of their motions on measures that will support the nation in the war efforts.	No
The Senator will ensure information from Spiral including spy networks is disseminated around Urizen	Yes
The candidate will commit to opposing any notion of a lasting peace with the Druj nation.	Yes
The Senator agrees that the buying of votes is unacceptable behaviour.	Yes
The Senator agrees to take action towards acquiring a new territory for Urizen.	Yes
Food uneaten. Coin unspent. Magic uncast. Opportunity squandered. If my motion ever goes unused I will step down.	Yes
The Senator will pursue fully any available opportunity to see Spiral returned to Urizen.	Yes

7.5.10 Winter 384YE

In the election for **Zenith**, the following dicta were agreed at the demos. The winning candidate was **Cadeus**.

Winter 384YE Dictum	Agreed?
The senator for Zenith commits to the construction of the Crucible of Fate.	Yes
The candidate commits to reform the Demos process in conjunction with the Arbiters Council, to increase the engagement of the Demos with the senator candidates views.	Yes
The senator of Zenith agrees to commit to building the Eye of the Heavens, or, if this is unachievable, will at least consider rebuilding the observatory in the Arch of the Sky. They will consult the nation's astronomancers throughout the process and will aim to have either built within the year.	Yes
The senator commits to the construction of the Radix of Truth within the term of their tenure.	No

Winter 384YE Dictum	Agreed?
No matter who is elected today they must agree to not support Bohemond de Rondell?s bid for the throne. He has said, and I quote; ?If I become Throne Urizen?s ambitions will die on the senate floor "	No

7.6 Further Reading

Core Brief

- Introduction
- The people
- Culture and customs
- Look and feel
- Hearth magic

Additional Information

- History
- Leadership
- Economic interests
- Military concerns
- Religious beliefs
- Magical traditions
- Territories
- Children
- Music
- Archetypes
- Groups
- Egregore

8 Urizen economic interests

8.1 Overview

Ever since Urizen joined the Empire, the nation has benefitted from the import of food from the Marches and other necessities and luxuries that the Urizen no longer produce themselves. The mineral and magical wealth of the mountains allows the people of the spires to maintain a comfortable quality of life while losing as little precious study time to the tedious labour of farming or mining. In the lowlands, trade caravans of oxen and wagons are familiar lines seen across the Empire, but the rugged and difficult terrain of Urizen means that some of the more isolated spires rely on domestic llamas for transportation of trade goods to and from the more accessible trade centres.

Many Urizen take it for granted that their essential needs will be taken care of by their Spire and as a consequence it is common for them to take a somewhat disdainful approach to personal wealth. Money is useful, but nowhere near as valuable as crystal mana. Where the people of Urizen excel is in the creation of magical implements. The masters of these professions are figures of influence and prestige in Urizen. While they rarely master the realm lores, the prevalence of magicians in Urizen means there is a constant demand for wands, staves, rods and ritual accoutrements of all sorts. Further, trinkets, amulets and talismans are popular with all levels of society ? they represent tangible pieces of magical power that can mark status and wealth more effectively than any number of jewelled rings or necklaces.

During the reign of Empress Lisabetta, there was a marked increase in the amount of international trade passing through Urizen, especially through the trade-port of Cargo in Redoubt. There have been efforts to improve links with the Principalities of Jarm, the Sarcophan Delves, and Axos in particular. The successful use of economic pressure to convince the Axou to abandon their nation's reliance on slavery has been hailed by many Urizen as validation of the architects' economic philosophies.

8.2 The Mana Trade

As a nation where magic is considered the highest art, it should come as no surprise that the Urizen have a bottomless thirst for crystal mana. There are many places in Urizen that possess strong magical auras, and the Urizeni have become adept at focussing and directing the flows of mana to produce large amounts of the invaluable magical material. There is never enough though, and even today there are groups of explorers who scour the more out-of-the-way locations looking for new places to establish a mana site.

This demand for mana crystals contributed in part to the establishment of the Crystal Architect of the Spires Imperial title by the Senate in 379YE. The Crystal Architect is empowered to commission the creation of sinecures in Urizen that provide a bounty of crystal mana. Such sinecures require an investment of mithril that can make their construction expensive, especially in light of the fact that Urizen control of the Legacy ? the rich mithril mine in northern Spiral that has been hotly contested by the barbarian orcs in recent years.

Such investments are studied by the architects of Urizen, who view money as a useful and versatile tool for achieving their goals. Fascinated by the ability of money to influence the world, they view it as a practical application of the Net of the Heavens. They are among the few Urizen who make an effort to understand how trade and investment affect the world around them. Much of the Urizen economy is shaped by the architects, who are always looking both for opportunities to capitalise on new developments and to invest their wealth in new endeavours.

8.3 Ushabti

Menial labour in Urizen is mostly performed by arcane constructs called *ushabti*. These humanoid figures are crafted by artisans from wood and clay and animated by magical energies. They are unintelligent, unaware, and have no personalities, constructed to perform a handful of simple tasks repetitively. Field ushabti work the small farms, mine ushabti dig and extract ore, and builder ushabti perform construction work and general labour. A group of ushabti is usually overseen by a single person, who gives them their instructions and the small amount of mana they need to function. Ushabti left unsupervised have a tendency to get into trouble due to their virtual inability to react to unexpected situations. Their main value lies in allowing their supervisor to get a lot of menial work done with minimal effort, generally leaving the person free to read, study or practice while keeping one eye on the ushabti.

Ushabti are constructed without facial features. A few Urizen use servant ushabti, distinguished from the labouring ushabti by more delicate construction and usually "humanised" by giving them a clay or porcelain mask to wear. These servants are useful for simple tasks, but getting them to do anything more complex than serving wine or washing dishes tends to require so much supervision that it is rarely practical.

While Ushabti are about as strong as a fit human they are fragile ? a single solid blow is usually enough to disrupt the magic that animates them, regardless of attempts to armour their form. They are almost useless on a battlefield; although they are occasionally used to supplement defensive emplacements, they are rarely very effective except in large numbers. They function best in the mountains of Urizen, and are more effective the higher up the mountains they are. Outside the nation, Ushabti break down quickly, are even more unresponsive, and are considered fascinating curios rather

than a potential replacement for human industry.

In a country well governed, poverty is something to be ashamed of. In a country badly governed, wealth is something to be ashamed of.

Confucius (attributed)

8.4 Imperial Bourse

Historically, Urizen controlled a single national seat on the Bourse ? the Legacy. This valuable mithril mine was one of the only areas remaining in Imperial control following the Grendel conquest of Spiral in 331YE, until it was lost in 379YE. While it was ultimately recovered, ownership has changed hands several times since then. As of Winter 387YE, it is a national position of the League, appointed by open auction.

Now, Urizen has two national seats: the Brilliant Star, which produces mithril, in Redoubt; and the Arch of the Sky, which produces white granite, in Zenith.

8.4.1 Tally of the Votes

As with most other nations, national Bourse titles in Urizen are appointed through the Tally of the Votes. Every citizen of Urizen who owns a mana site in one of the Urizeni territories can participate in the vote. The more productive the mana site is, the more votes it provides.

8.5 Further Reading

Core Brief

- Introduction
- The people
- Culture and customs
- Look and feel

- Hearth magic

Additional Information

- History
- Leadership
- Economic interests
- Military concerns
- Religious beliefs
- Magical traditions
- Territories
- Children
- Music
- Archetypes
- Groups
- Egregore

9 Urizen military concerns

Urizen are not pure theoreticians; they apply their mastery to change the world.

9.1 Overview

The Urizen contribute only a single army to the Imperial military, but they have a history of critical arcane assistance in wars against the Empire's magically capable enemies. This history began even before they joined the Empire, with several notable Urizen magicians providing pivotal assistance to the Empire in the war against Alderei the Fair and the volodny sorcerers. This earned them the hatred and enmity of the volodny, but it created a precedent for future conflicts. When the Imperial armies march to war against a foe that uses magic, the Urizen magicians work to provide what support they can.

Swords, spears and glaives are the favourite weapons; axes, maces and flails are considered to be heavy and ungainly weapons by many. Urizen masters teach their students to see a weapon as a tool to control the space around them; they prefer longer weapons with which they can keep an enemy at a distance. The Urizen disdain wrestling and pugilism. This is partly a result of their desire to keep people outside their personal space, but fighting without a weapon is seen as ineffectual and barbaric ? a waste of effort and energy that is the very opposite of the Net of the Heavens and a higher mind. ?*Animals fight with their hands*? is a common rebuke for Urizen children caught fighting.

The prowess of warriors of Urizen makes them an important element of the Imperial armies

9.2 Citadels and Fortifications

In theory, each Urizen spire maintains its own defences, but it is common for spires to collaborate to construct a spire in such a way that it can protect all its neighbours. These military spires ? called citadels ? are built at strategically important points and are usually heavily fortified. Citadels are often constructed on Urizen's borders, where they can guard important passes, but there are dangers throughout the mountains of Urizen. Brigands and bands of indigenous orcs threaten civilisation and the many powerful regios that afflict the region create problems of their own. The heliopticon allows the transmission of messages between spires without the need to traverse the dangerous valleys and passes that lie between them, enabling citadels to respond quickly to incipient threats.

Citadels attract individuals of a martial bent from all over the nation, and most are led by a sentinel, a dedicated warrior whose skill has earned them the respect of their peers. Although most Urizen view skill with ritual magic as a sign of fitness to govern, ultimately it is excellence they respect. Arete is about skill, precision and effectiveness with one?s chosen art; a skilled warrior receives more acclaim than a careless mage. Sentinels combine study of strategy, tactics, and the mastery of weapons and armour with knowledge of history, magic, religion and philosophy. Most devote their life to the defence of Urizen and are dedicated supporters for any political decision that helps secure the nation's borders.

Securing the nation's borders is no easy task. Urizen only has the capacity to support one army, the Citadel Guard, and that force is in great demand in every conflict the Empire fights due to its unique magical attributes. The preferred solution to this problem is to create a fortification, a massive stone fortress such as the Court of the White Fountain or the Walls of Cargo. These bastions can help to defend the territory where they are constructed and slow the advance of invading troops. Temporary fortifications can be raised with powerful magic, such as Frozen Citadel of Cathan Canae, but they only last a season before the ritual must be renewed. Permanent fortifications built from white granite are expensive and time-consuming to build, but they are the best way that Urizen can reliably guarantee its own safety given the small size of its population.

9.3 Imperial Armies

Urizen fields one army: the Citadel Guard. The Urizen also have a great deal of interest in the position of Warmage, appointed by the Conclave by declaration of candidacy, to serve as a de facto general, albeit one without command of an army.

The General of the Citadel Guard is always a weighty voice in the Military Council

9.3.1 Citadel Guard

One of the oldest continuously active armies in the Empire, the Citadel Guard (unsurprisingly) incorporates a large number of magicians, battle-magicians and sentinels trained to fight alongside them. In addition to the skilled and well-equipped combat magicians, there are also diviners who use the magic of Day and Night to gather intelligence about the magical capabilities of their enemies; scouts and disciplined raiders who focus on denying those resources to the enemy; and potent ritualists who can channel the magic of the Empire to bring down curses and enchantments on the territory where the army campaigns. The army possesses the unique Highest discipline quality that allows the general to employ several unique magical techniques over the course of a year.

The first Urizen general leads the Citadel Guard, and is appointed (or re-appointed) at the Summer Solstice each year. There is a long tradition of choosing a respected sentinel for this position. Although not technically a legal requirement, the sentinels regard command of the army as crucial to the defence of Urizen, and most strive to ensure one of their own is chosen.

9.4 Supply

Urizen is neither a populous nation, nor one that is especially martial in nature. In recent years, following the Druj invasion of Zenith, Urizen has struggled to support the Citadel Guard, especially when the orcs of the Mallum pushed into Morrow. As of the start of the Spring Equinox 383YE, the army is stable once again, but any significant loss of prosperous land is likely to renew the risk of the army disbanding.

9.5 Additional Information

- Sentinel
- Citadel Guard

9.6 Further Reading

Core Brief

- Introduction

- The people
- Culture and customs
- Look and feel
- Hearth magic

Additional Information

- History
- Leadership
- Economic interests
- Military concerns
- Religious beliefs
- Magical traditions
- Territories
- Children
- Music
- Archetypes
- Groups
- Egregore

10 Urizen religious beliefs

Urizen priests seek ways to combine their understanding of the Net of the Heavens and arete with the Way of Virtue.
Faced with what is right, to leave it undone shows a lack of courage.

Confucious

10.1 Overview

With its emphasis on philosophy and an ordered and rational life, it is no surprise that virtue and religion are important in Urizen. Most Urizen try to live virtuous lives and many believe that virtue is essential for arete, that people can only be truly effective when they act in a virtuous manner, or that poise cannot be achieved while giving in to base urges. In particular, a philosophical understanding of the Way of Virtue is regarded by most Urizen as a matter of concern and interest to all, rather than the prerogative and business of priests.

The Way of Virtue promotes behaviours that allow civilisation to prosper. Individuals who are virtuous encourage others around them to be more virtuous, and discourage self-serving or slothful attitudes. Highguard priests argue that virtue and vice are ?contagious?, that virtuous individuals promote virtuous behaviour in those around them, and vice versa. The priests of the Urizen do not deny this idea, but from their understanding of the Net of the Heavens the priests of Urizen perceive a deeper truth.

10.2 Temples

While Urizen is most famous for its arcane spires, the nation is also home to numerous temples. These spires are dedicated to the study and debate of virtue, philosophy and the Way. In many ways a temple is the ultimate embodiment of the Urizen ideal, a school devoted to the mastery of the self. Each temple has its own distinct philosophy, a unique take on the Way that attracts adherents from across Urizen who welcome the opportunity to share and debate ideas with like-minded pilgrims.

While many temples enjoy a healthy exchange of ideas with rival schools of philosophy, most of them also engage with the communities around them, seeking to spread their ideas. Not content with mere contemplation and debate, temples not just to seek out higher spiritual truths, but to put that

learning to use. The temples guide the spiritual development of the people of Urizen, but each has their own vision of what that might mean and not all of them embrace the orthodoxy mandated by the Synod.

10.3 Orthodoxy

In many ways Urizen is a very orthodox nation. Many of its priests and scholars are deeply concerned with matters of doctrine and faith. This dedication to the Way is deeply reflected in the cultural practices of the nation. There is a widespread view that personal arete ? the sense of an individual striving for excellence ? is contingent on a person making virtuous choices. To be truly accomplished, an individual must excel in all ways. More that mere skill, they must exhibit admirable personal qualities ? virtue ? for all to see.

The more devout Urizen often see the ideal create a better world for everyone in terms of creating a more virtuous world. A perfect society would be one in which everyone is virtuous all the time. The Illuminates in particular pursue this goal - they believe that citizens who hold prominent Imperial titles are key nodes in the Net of the Heavens. Since virtue is contagious, the most effective way to spread virtue is ensure that such titles are held by virtuous people and not by those who lack virtue.

Some Urizen regard the Way of Virtue as a work in progress.

10.4 Hetrodoxy

Urizen priests display a tendency to deviate from those ideas approved by the Synod. The Urizeni like to question and evaluate ideas, and to explore different philosophical approaches, and matters of spirituality and faith are no exception. Questors exemplify this tendency; they view the doctrine of the Way as incomplete revelation. By questioning every aspect of perceived wisdom they search for new insights into moral philosophy, the mind of the creator, and the purpose of existence.

This has led to conflict with the Synod, and several Urizen philosophers have been denounced as heretics. Urizen has been the source of a number of Imperial heresies ? most notably the Lucidian heresy - which began in the Restless Spire in Redoubt. The Restless scholars believed that clarity of thought was essential for virtue, and that anything that interfered with this lucidity would cloud a person's moral judgement. Lucidians refuse to use liao to create auras, believing that any aura degrades a human's ability to think for themselves.

While some priests question the doctrine, others go further and question the purpose of the Way. The sword scholars openly challenge the authority of the Synod. These warrior-priests embrace the tenets of Wisdom and exhort their fellow Urizeni to test what they learn, to eschew hearsay, to despise folly, and to chastise the fools that spread it. They reject the idea of a higher authority, arguing that the only virtuous decisions are the ones each individual takes for themselves. As a result of a mandate by the Wisdom assembly in 382YE, their merciless philosophy of questioning the Synod has begun to spread across the Empire. Consequently, this has led to the situation where it is significantly more difficult for the Synod to directly influence Imperial citizens.

10.5 Soul Net

Urizeni pilgrims will often seek out a priest to help them create their personal Net of the Heavens. By spending time talking to a pilgrim, a priest can discover what goals they are striving to achieve and what obstacles stand in their path. Together they can determine what the key nodes are for that individual. This is essential ? applying the Net of the Heavens requires first identifying which individuals or events must be affected to produce the desired outcome. Not all Urizeni priests have the skill or the patience to be able to help an individual divine their own Net of the Heavens, and those who do are in much demand.

The most respected priests are able to give advice on what virtues should be embraced to achieve the desired outcome. It may be that an individual is lacking a single virtue which is holding them back from achieving their goals but more likely is that they will benefit from embracing the tenets of two or more virtues. Most priests will provide guidance and advice on which combination or which tenets might aid a pilgrim in dealing with each individual node.

It is common to capture this advice on a scroll or parchment, usually as a pictographic depiction of the arrangement of nodes facing an individual, with notes of which virtues and tenets might be best pursued to positively affect those notes. These scrolls are called soul nets, they are a spiritual map that guides a pilgrim towards their destination. A soul net is often a work of art; a brightly coloured series of nodes and lines marked with fine calligraphy. They are often laid out in a geometric pattern or created to mimic a constellation. Discreet artists who can turn a soul net into a beautiful symbolic piece of art are much sought after.

A soul net is an intensely personal item, and most Urizeni keep the scroll on their person. This allows them to ensure its safety, but it also means they can study or update it whenever they need to. Studying the spiderweb arrangement of nodes and virtues can remind a pilgrim of their real goals, allowing them to focus their arete and ignore distractions. A soul net might be shared with a close friend or ally, but it is considered a gross invasion of privacy to ask to see someone's soul net.

10.6 Further Reading

Core Brief

- Introduction
- The people
- Culture and customs
- Look and feel
- Hearth magic

Additional Information

- History
- Leadership
- Economic interests
- Military concerns
- Religious beliefs
- Magical traditions
- Territories
- Children
- Music
- Archetypes
- Groups
- Egregore

11 Urizen magical traditions

Costume by Costume Mercenary

11.1 Overview

When a citizen of the Empire thinks of the Urizen, it?s usually a magician they imagine. Whether a priest, a soldier or a merchant, it is quite common for an Urizeni to know an incantation or the fundamentals of a magical lore. The mountains of Urizen are rich in raw magical resources, but they are even more rich in lore and recorded knowledge. There are libraries here that have been collected and expanded over five hundred years, but the Urizeni don?t rest on their laurels; they quest constantly to improve and increase their understanding of magic.

Technically, individual Urizeni are no more powerful than the magicians of any other nation. However, the nation produces so many magicians that a significant number of the largest and most powerful covens in the Empire's history have been Urizeni. This is a source of pride to many Urizen who regard their towering magical accomplishments as evidence of their foremost status.

11.2 Esoteric Lore

Magic is viewed as the most potent tool an individual can wield to change the world. As such, a rigorous and disciplined approach to the study of magic

is practised throughout Urizen. Individual spires develop their own specialities and often their own competing theories and practices. Some spires jealously guard their secrets, but many publish books and treatises detailing their ideas and their research. Debates and arguments between scholars are common ? while the core ideas of magic are settled, Urizen magicians can still find much to argue about. Not just the nature of magic and reality, but the application of the arcane arts to the wider world.

Individual spires and even magicians also pursue their own research, looking to develop their own theories of magic. Many of the theories proposed by Urizen magicians are truly esoteric. Seventh realm theory (the belief in a seventh realm of magic, perhaps related to the spirit); mirrored realm theory (the theory that there are four 'spiritual and mental' magical realms that are counterparts to the 'physical' realms of Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter); internal realm theory (the theory that the realms somehow exist within the shared consciousness of mortals rather than as separate magical realms outside the mundane); human eternal theory (the theory that the mundane realm is just another realm, and that humans are in some way the eternals of this realm); splintered realm theory (the theory that there is only a single magical realm but the perception of mortal magicians is so limited they divide it up into a spectrum of six separate realms). Even within the more popular theories there are disagreements and sub-theories that see any gathering of Urizen magicians become potentially fractious and argumentative.

The Urizen are often seen engaging in considered debate.
Much of this esoteric lore and a fascination with it is peculiar to Urizen. The fact that the majority of it is pure conjecture tends to limit the interest of magicians from other nations are who more concerned with the practical consequences of magic. But the Urizen understand that only by pushing the boundaries of what is understood can new ideas be discovered. They strive to approach problems from a new angle aiming to avoid becoming hidebound or limited in their understanding. Even if Urizen magicians accept that the ideas are flawed, most enjoy the lively exchange of ideas, considering them the ideal way to train the mind to be able to better grasp the metaphysical.

The Urizen magicians that are most interested in pushing the boundaries of magic are usually called stargazers. These mages often have less interest in politics, preferring to devote their time to the study of magic; not just for the power it grants, but so that they can understand both it and the complex laws that govern it. They tend to be fascinated by esoteric lore and engage in research and experiments seeking to advance understanding and exceed the known limits of magic. They are particularly interested in resonance and its application to the most powerful rituals ever created.

11.3 Resonance

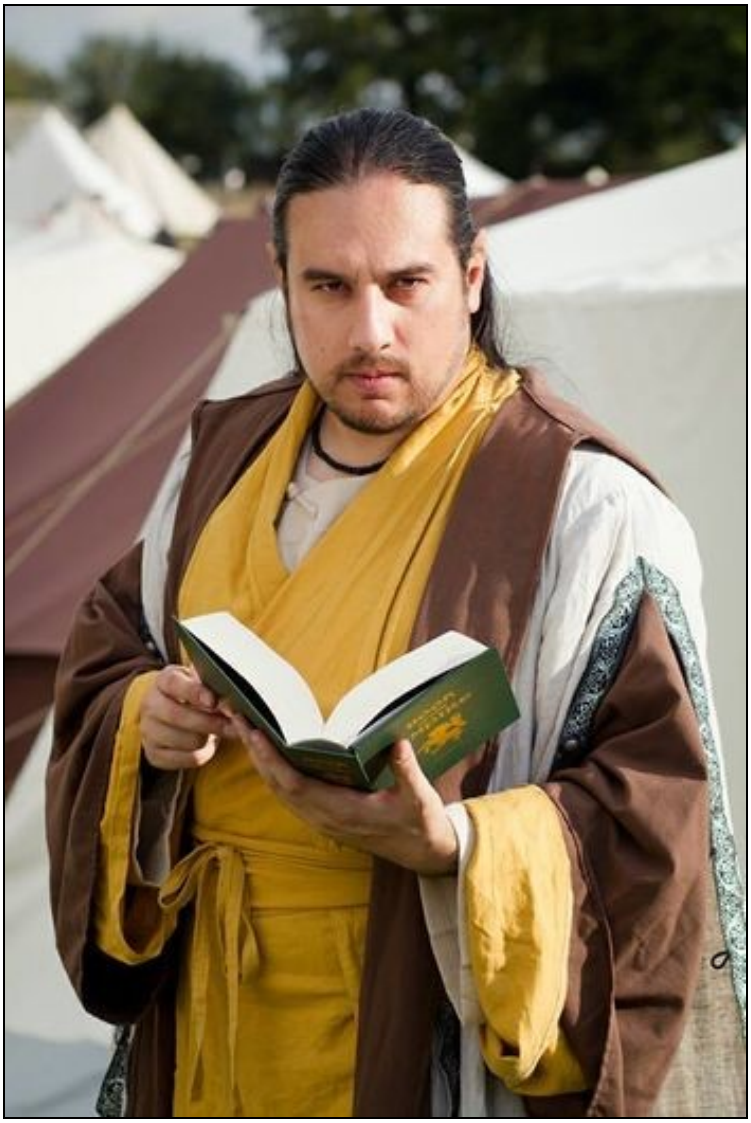
Each of the six magical realms has a set of known properties or ideals with which they resonate. A good understanding of the resonance and dissonance of each realm is essential for anyone who seeks to create new rituals. For example, Spring magic abounds with life and energy, so it is easy to use magic of that realm to enervate and heal. The mental and spiritual effects caused by rituals are fundamentally linked to this resonance ? the Spring ritual Fire in the Blood grants a magician enhanced mastery of Spring magic, but the resonance of the realm also makes it difficult for them to

control their temper.

Some Urizen magicians claim that this resonance occurs in the mortal realm as well as in the magical realms; that it is the physical mechanism that transmits the forces involved in the Net of the Heavens. When a person responds to some event, their actions may cause others around them to react in a similar manner. The stronger the resonance, the greater this associated response. In prosaic terms, a node in the Net of the Heavens is pivotal because of how keenly the nodes that are linked to it resonate in sympathy with it.

Those who accept this view argue that the Empire itself is the prime node in the Net of the Heavens, the one that fundamentally moves all others. Experience has shown that the most powerful rituals that target this key node cause everyone in the Empire to resonate with the magic of that realm. The direct effects of such a ritual might be predictable and well understood, but the consequences of causing so many people to be influenced by the magic of one realm as they resonate in sympathy with are too complex and chaotic to forecast. Those who are suspicious of the influence of the realms on the mortal world often question the wisdom of casting such rituals.

The stargazers maintain that the realms can be a positive influence on the world, but only so long as no one realm dominates the others. All six realms possess qualities that are valuable, especially in moderation. Many stargazers perform experiments designed to create balance between the influence of the realms, or to highlight positive elements rather than negative. The ultimate goal is to create a fabled state they variously call ?celestial harmony? or ?the omnihedron? that will help usher in a state of perfection on the mortal realm.



Knowledge is power, and power is to be wielded.

11.4 Politics

Most Urizen regard the Conclave as the most important political arena in the Empire, a reflection of the importance which the nation places on magic. The key Imperial positions, the archmage and the grandmaster both control access to vital magical resources. The grandmaster of each order has ready

access to crystal mana and wields crucial political powers within the Conclave. Each archmage has access to unique magical tools and the ability to treat with the eternals on an equal footing.

Many Urizen see politics and magic as similar in approach and inherently complimentary. They are similar in the sense that carefully chosen words and gestures, a strong will and a keen intellect allow one to achieve results far beyond what one could achieve using only one's body. They are complimentary in the way they work; magic is notoriously unreliable at influencing hearts and minds, but a charismatic speaker can achieve incredible results without using the tiniest bit of actual magic. By contrast, words of magic can achieve things persuasion alone can never accomplish, raising a storm, calling down an avalanche, or raising a devastating flood.

The magi, the political magicians of Urizen, warn that the only leverage the Urizen have to persuade other members of the Empire to support them is their magic. They point out that while the Urizeni are the most powerful magicians in the Empire ? magic is the only area in which the Urizeni are preeminent. They will never have large armies to rival the Imperial Orcs, Dawn, Wintermark or the Marches. They don't have economic wealth or rich resources to rival Varushka, the League, or the Coast. According to the magi, if the Urizeni don't use their magic to advance their political goals then they will suffer as other more politically active nations put their own agendas first in the Military Council, Senate and Synod.

11.5 Prognostication

While the magicians of Urizen pursue excellence in all six of the realms of magic, there is little doubt that they are best known for their consummate skill with Day magic. The resonances of the Day realm complement the Urizen fascination with mastery, philosophy, and the thirst for knowledge. There are many regios in Urizen, but scholars have noted that there are significantly more aligned with the Day realm than any other, especially in the high mountains. There's a long history of cordial relations between the eternals of the Day realm ? especially Phaleron, Kimus, and Leviathan ? and the magicians of Urizen.

Regardless of what realms they master, most magicians appreciate the value of divination ? using their magic to expand their understanding so that they can pick the ideal course of action. The seers are the best known proponents of the practice of prognostication ? the art of using magic to uncover information and then applying what has been learned. This approach has application at every level of society, whether using the Eyes of the Sun and Moon to determine the relative strengths of opposing armies, or consulting an augury such as Signs and Portents for warnings about potential threats before they become obvious.

The completion of the Grand Library of Canterspire is the lynchpin around which Urizen lore is built.

11.6 Urizen Lore

Urizen lore (named in the same manner as Imperial lore) is a special body of magical knowledge supported with the assistance of the eternal Phaleron. It functions in a very similar manner to Imperial lore, but only citizens of Urizen can master the rituals contained within it. Even if an individual Urizen magician has not mastered one of these rituals, they may still perform it, just as any other Imperial citizen can perform a ritual that is part of Imperial lore.

The lynchpin of Urizen lore is the Grand Library of Canterspire, a magical library in Morrow that is operated by the eternals of the Celestial Library in conjunction with the people of Urizen.

Adding a ritual to Urizen lore requires the ritual text to be the target of the Gift of Knowledge ritual. Rather than being returned to the caster, the ritual is added to the body of Urizen lore and becomes available to every Urizen magician following the summit where the ritual is added to lore.

It is not possible for the Conclave to use a declaration of dissemination or Imperial lore to affect a ritual that is part of Urizen lore, nor is it possible to either remove a ritual from Urizen lore, nor to recover the ritual text once it has been added to the body of knowledge.

A former Urizen citizen who leaves the nation loses access to rituals that are part of Urizen lore; they can be replaced using the normal process of changing mastery.

11.6.1 Rituals in Urizen Lore

Ritual	Explanation	Realm	Magnitude
Good Green Oak	Grants one rank of endurance for a season	Spring	6
Wellspring of the High Peak	Trades measures of ambergelt with an eternal to produce Spring vis	Spring	6
A Goblet of Stars	Enchants a physick with the ability to use any healing herb as if it were true vervain	Spring	8
Blood-dimmed Tide	With Siakha's aid, adds five ranks to a military unit that takes a raiding action during the next season.	Spring	10
Fountain's Bounty	Enchants a mana site to produce additional herbs, forest materials, and money	Spring	12
Woven Strands of Life	Transforms a mana site into a herb garden for a season that receives additional production	Spring	14
Rhythm of the Tempest	With Siakha's aid, grants a battle mage the ability to repeatedly repel their foes with a staff	Spring	16
Shark's Rampage	With Siakha's aid, fills the target with bloodthirsty prowess	Spring	24
Aspect of the Mountain	Grants a significant increase to the strength of a military unit when taking a guarding action.	Summer	20
Raise the Dragonsworn Cohort	Provides a powerful military unit for a season in return for a mine	Summer	20
Vital Strength of the Earth	Grants additional power to uses of the unstoppable and relentless skills while touching earth or stone	Summer	28
Crown of Phoenix Fire	Grants two ranks of endurance to a group for a season	Summer	32
Hook of the Hoarfrost Guardian	Grants four strikedowns a day with a pole-arm for a season	Summer	40
Pillars of Adamant	Reduces damage to bastions and other structures of white granite and mithril in the territory	Summer	50
Might of Vstaive	Strengthens a fortification	Summer	80
Swords in the Noonday Sun	Enchants a campaign army granting soldiers supernatural prowess	Summer	80
Stone's Unyielding Defiance	Enchants a fortification, repairing it and increasing the combat strength by 1,500 for a season	Summer	120
Ethereal Courier	Send a specially prepared package to a named individual in a known location	Autumn	10
Net of Gossamer Chains	Enchants a congregation to provide 3 Autumn vis	Autumn	14
Quick Study	Enchants a college of magic to speed codification of rituals	Autumn	42
Bells of Silver and Brass	Restores the garrison of a target fortification over the coming season	Autumn	60
Eyes of the Hills	Enchants a campaign army changing its quality and granting supernatural ability to defend a territory with hills	Autumn	80
Chalice of Callidius	Allows a magician to gain extra personal mana when consuming something that restores mana..	Winter	14
Chastise the Foolish	Curses a target making them unable to use religious skills for a year	Winter	20
Peregrine and Ichimos	Enchants a military unit to grant additional two additional ranks when taking a guarding action.	Day	10
Blades of Clear Sight	Enchants a character who has the Weapon master skill to call IMPALE three times per day	Day	14
Irresistible Stance of Force and Focus	Enchants a magician to allow them to cast REPEL four times a day	Day	14
Arete and the Fields of War	Enchants a warrior with various abilities dependent on weapons and armour	Day	16
A Perfect Moment	Enchants a character granting them the marksman skill for a season	Day	22
Guardian Gate	Enchants a fortification to gather information about a territory and impede spy networks	Day	80
The Certainty of Doubt	Curses a character so that any congregation they control provides half as much liao and votes for a year	Night	16
Hero's Journey	Enchants a character with the hero skill with two additional hero points and grants them a vision	Night	20
Mirror of Perfection	Upgrade a mana site with ilium	Night	30
Flame and the Flood	Upgrade a forest with ilium	Night	30
An Echo of Songs	Upgrade a mine with ilium	Night	30
The Stargazer's Astrolabe	Grants a magician the ability to repeatedly use detect magic	Night	8
Treacher's Quill	Sends a message to the eternal Agramant	Winter	2
Mark of Agramant	Places an enduring magical mark on a target that can only be detected with detect magic	Winter	4

Ritual	Explanation	Realm	Magnitude
The Crimson Feast	With Agramant's aid, target gains three ranks of endurance for a season.	Winter	15
Unleash the Beasts Within	With Agramants aid, grants an additional three ranks to a military unit that takes a campaigning action	Winter	16
Thirst of the Devourer	With Agramant's aid, grants a target the ability to heal themselves when they successfully deliver an IMPALE	Winter	24
Loosen the Shackles	Summons the power of Agramant to enchant a campaign army, granting murderous hunger.	Winter	120
Silence of the Bronze Bell	Grants a character with the dedicate skill the ability to remove auras with additional potency	Winter	12
A Light That Moves	Enchants a congregation for a season so that it provides additional votes and liao at the next summit	Day	18
Resolution of Falling Stars	Grants a magician the ability to overcome roleplaying effects by spending personal mana	Day	6

This table summarises the rituals that have been placed in Urizen lore.

11.7 Further Reading

Core Brief

- Introduction
- The people
- Culture and customs
- Look and feel
- Hearth magic

Additional Information

- History
- Leadership
- Economic interests
- Military concerns
- Religious beliefs
- Magical traditions
- Territories
- Children
- Music
- Archetypes
- Groups
- Egregore

12 Urizen territories

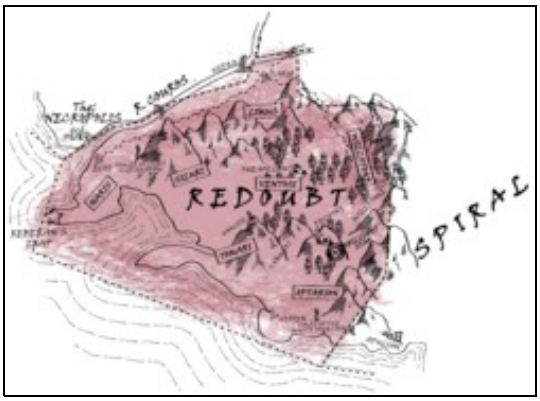
Human behaviour flows from three main sources: desire, emotion, and knowledge.

12.1 Overview

The lands of the Urizen are predominantly mountainous in nature, for they favour the heights and summits of hills and mountains as sites to construct their spires. The territories are sparsely populated, and those populations tend to be widely spaced out. A network of well maintained roads and bridges connect the spires, but the wilderness between them is largely given over to bandit orcs, brigands, and peculiar monsters.

12.2 Morrow

The spires of Morrow are amongst the oldest in Urizen, dating back to the nation's birth. The heart of the Heliopticon is here, making it a centre of communication for the nation. The miracle of the Heliopticon is administered from this territory, and most spires maintain a series of prisms, lenses and mirrors atop their tallest roof in order to pass on the flickering messages that keep the nation in constant communication. Many spires in Morrow inhabit some of the original buildings discovered on the mountaintops by the first Urizen to ascend the mountains. Large open buildings, with doorways and halls just larger than a human might need, they create a sense of open space that has set the pattern for all Urizen architecture. Despite its great age, Morrow moves inexorably forward, and many of its spires are undergoing constant reconstruction and improvement. It is said that ?no two days find the same Morrow? as the Urizen constantly strive to perfect their land even further. A project may take a decade or even more to come to fruition, but the Urizen pride themselves on vision and their desire to perfect their world.



12.3 Redoubt

Once the wildest of the Urizen territories, the spaces between the spires are haunted by bandit orcs and dangerous beasts. The mountains here are riddled with odd star-shaped tunnels that date back thousands of years, long before there were any reliable records of humans in this part of the world. There is a strong martial tradition, and many citadels, including the great Court of the Fountain that watches the eastern approaches against the barbarians who occupy Spiral. The territory has a long coastline, and while it is not easily passable for much of its length, there are several spires on the Bay of Catazar that look outwards to the wider world - both to their allies in the Empire, and to distant lands full of strange philosophies.

12.4 Sarangrave

Conquered in 387YE. Sarangrave is the newest territory of Urizen, having only been conquered by the Empire in recent years. The land teems with life; wide open and fecund. To the south lie the high peaks of the Mountains of the Moon and Axos. The territory is the wildest in Urizen and has the smallest Urizen population of the four territories. The vallornheart of Beantal Dol is in the centre of this territory, in Bendol. It remains to be seen what the future holds for Sarangrave and how Urizen deals with its many varied problems.

12.5 Zenith

Lost in 382YE to the Druj, liberated in 384YE. The mountains of Zenith are the tallest in the nation, and perhaps the Empire, and the air here is still and cold. The spires tend towards the contemplative, the night sky is rarely concealed by clouds making the territory perfect for stargazers. Many religious thinkers and philosophers also reside in Zenith, where they claim that the rarefied air helps them maintain a sense of detachment and clarity. Zenith is well known for its abundant magical auras and many spires have experimented with arrays of metal mirrors that focus the light of the sun into internal chambers to try to enhance the production of magical crystals. Zenith also has some of the most beautiful waterfalls in the nation, with apparently bottomless mountain lakes providing succulent fish to supplement the diet of the inhabitants.

12.6 Further Reading

Core Brief

- Introduction
- The people
- Culture and customs
- Look and feel
- Hearth magic

Additional Information

- History
- Leadership
- Economic interests
- Military concerns

- Religious beliefs
- Magical traditions
- Territories
- Children
- Music
- Archetypes
- Groups
- Egregore

13 Urizen children

Urizen children are expected to always be learning new things.
Don't limit your children by making their lives easy.

Children in Urizen are expected to learn. It is common practice during an evening meal to ask the children what they have learnt today, and question them not only about their studies but also about their more practical experiences, to tease lessons and understanding of social rules out of them.

A sun- or otherwise light-bathed courtyard will often be set aside for children within a spire; depending on the dominant practices of the spire it may also have puzzles or contemplative games set up there. Young children are often given puzzle toys and left to discover their working with minimal interference, except when their frustration rises and thus their capacity for fruitful exploration is exhausted for that time. Families with young children often share responsibility, for example each afternoon one family or another might take all the youngsters, generally on a schedule, and allow the other parents to pursue their own endeavours for a few hours.

Older children are taught to use the libraries and to conduct their own research, for example by studying an object, or asking questions of several adults on a given topic. They are also encouraged to put the knowledge they gain into action, for example by assisting a crafter, scholar or other person for a day. In spires with many children, a junior scholar may take on the role of disseminator, who arranges a regular program of theoretical and practical placements for older children with various respected individuals. These placements may lead on to apprenticeships, unless the child has shown promise in a discipline which would be better progressed by moving to study with a master in a neighbouring spire.

Although children are not taught magical principles until after they prove their maturity and come of age, they are often taught of the Realms and Eternals, often without the element of caution seen elsewhere in the Empire.

Ask questions, and think about the answers.

13.1 Things every Urizen child should know

- **Ask questions, and think about the answer.** If you don't understand something, ask more questions until you do.
- **Write down anything important that you learn.** Not just from your lessons, but anything you think might be useful for the future.
- **Practice doing things until you do them right.** This might mean drawing, counting or fighting, but you can get good at almost anything and anything worth doing is worth doing right.
- **Do not be afraid to disagree.** Reason and debate are the paths to knowledge and even adults can be wrong.
- **Once you have learned something, use it.** Knowledge never used may just as well never have been learned.

13.2 Further Reading

Core Brief

- Introduction
- The people
- Culture and customs
- Look and feel
- Hearth magic

Additional Information

- History
- Leadership
- Economic interests
- Military concerns
- Religious beliefs
- Magical traditions
- Territories
- Children
- Music
- Archetypes
- Groups
- Egregore

14 Urizen music

14.1 The Music of Urizen

14.1.1 Style summary

The Urizen musical tradition mirrors their tranquil, philosophical approach to life. More in meditation than performance, traditional Urizen musicians gather to improvise fluid, shifting melodies and harmonies around a series of repetitive themes, usually choosing a concept such as 'tranquillity', 'hope' or 'grief' around which to base their compositions. They favour picked strings, tuned percussion and light, breathy woodwind, though any instrument can be played as part of the soundscape.

Real world inspiration includes gamelan, minimalists such as Phillip Glass and Ludivico Ianoudi, Vangelis and Mike Oldfield, though with acoustic rather than electric instruments.

14.1.1.1 A musical tradition

Urizen does not have a popular concert tradition. However, many Stargazers who are also musicians use musical improvisation and composition to structure their ritual magics; one such major tradition is the Silutarian Method, which utilises the connection between musical modes and the realms of magic.

14.1.2 Further examples

14.1.2.1 Songs

Traditionally, Urizen has not had a significant song tradition of its own, although bards have happily purloined the songs of other nations to sing in bars and around campfires. See Music for songs known throughout the Empire.

Children still sing songs and nursery rhymes, such as the following: Hungry Goat

Very recently, however, there has been a developing vogue for musical settings of Urizen lyric poetry. The pieces are usually repetitive, cyclical and reflective, as befits the Urizen outlook.

- The Stargazer's Song
- Cold, Crisp Air
- From the Spires Tall

14.1.2.2 Instrumentation

Bells, glockenspiels, Hand pans, hammer dulcimer, soft pipes, long notes from bowed instruments or drone instruments such as singing bowls or wine glasses.

14.1.2.3 Other performance traditions

Performers in Urizen more commonly recite poetry than sing. There is more information about Urizen art here.

14.1.3 How to adapt your repertoire

- Take any tune and repeat a phrase over and over, allowing others to improvise around it.

14.1.4 Our sources

Any gamelan, Philip Glass and other minimalists but preferably played on tuned percussion, Michael Nyman, Solaris soundtrack.

Here is a youtube playlist of appropriate or inspiring music for Urizen.

14.2 Further Reading

Core Brief

- Introduction
- The people
- Culture and customs
- Look and feel
- Hearth magic

Additional Information

- History
- Leadership
- Economic interests
- Military concerns
- Religious beliefs
- Magical traditions
- Territories
- Children
- Music
- Archetypes
- Groups
- Egregore

15 Urizen people

An ambitious people with a desire for order in all things.

15.1 Overview

The Urizen live in the mountains in settlements called spires: clusters of buildings, halls, galleries, and balconies that are carved into a hilltop or the side of a mountain peak. Spires tend to specialise: a given spire might be known for its fine craftsmanship, the beauty and artistry of its musicians, its dedication to martial affairs, or its mastery of one or more spheres of magical power.

These majestic peaks have shaped Urizen society. They are defensible, but can only support a small population. As a result, Urizen is the smallest nation in terms of population, although its numbers have been slowly increasing since it joined the Empire. The small size gives every person a clear sense of their own importance and their place in the community. The Urizen philosophers claim that the high peaks allow them to maintain a sense of perspective on the world, giving them a physical distance from the turmoil of day-to-day life in the Empire that allows them to be able to consider problems dispassionately.

The Urizen prize rationality and learning above all other qualities. They favour an ordered approach to life and their culture is shaped by the philosophies and ideals they have embraced. They are an ambitious people with a desire for perfection in all things and most Urizen spend what time they can in study, contemplation, and practice. Scholars and philosophers are prominent, but magic is considered the highest discipline of all in Urizen and their most prominent citizens are usually powerful mages.

Urizen love to see practical applications of knowledge, lore, and philosophy. While learning for its own sake is laudable, the Urizen value much more highly knowledge that is used to create tangible benefit ? to change the world, even in a small way. They are credited with creating whole branches of natural philosophy and mathematics, formalising and codifying ideas such as algebra, geometry, and trigonometry. They are most proud of practical inventions such as the telescope, or the many magical rituals they have created. They apply their learning to make their lives more comfortable and fulfilling, and strive for the ideal of achieving something elegantly and with the least expenditure of effort.

All people by nature desire knowledge.

Aristotle

Urizen aspires to a sense of timeless tranquillity. They seek to cultivate serenity and calm in themselves and in their environment. Most Urizen live a structured life that provides a foundation for them to build their identities around. They are not moribund or calcified, but disruption of the personal daily

routine is a clear sign that there are problems that demand their attention.

Many Urizen spires embody the Urizeni search for arete aiming to serve as a centre for the pursuit of excellence in a specific specialism; to study a particular kind of magic, to embody an ideal, or to defend a region. It is common for Urizen citizens to move between spires if they wish to pursue a different path, to find a spire that best suits their temperament and interests, so most welcome new members who can contribute to the spire's arete. Some Brass Coast families take advantage of this welcoming attitude, seeking out a welcoming spire for a merrow child who might find the calm of Urizen more appealing than their raucous home. The Freeborn refer to this practice as the Gift.

A desire for order and perfection in all things is what drives most Urizen. They seek mastery of the self, often through philosophies such as arete and poise, and they employ the teachings of the Net of the Heavens to make the world around them flawless and sublime. Most strive to move the Empire towards a utopia. While different spires disagree on what constitutes the perfect society, they broadly agree it should involve the largest amount of happiness for the largest number of people.

The archetypal Urizen is an educated person who applies their learning and discipline to every part of their life. An individual Urizen might easily be an implacable blade-master, oratorical reformer, dedicated natural philosopher, wise theologian or powerful magician. Wherever possible, they seek to expand their understanding of the world and their role within it, and apply that understanding to achieve their goals.

15.2 Archetypes

The contemplation that leads to perfection.

Urizen Archetypes	
Arbiter	Sentinel
Architect	Stargazer
Illuminate	Sword Scholar
Mage	Torchbearer
Seer	Questor

There are magicians, priests, warriors, and traders of every stripe in every nation in the Empire. An archetype represents a specific attitude or approach to a given role that reflects cultural values and common ambitions of a nation. Choosing an archetype helps to define your character; it provides roleplaying hooks and ready-made character goals, but it also places demands on your character in terms of how you portray them. Selecting an archetype is optional, and it's better not to pick one if none of them appeal to you.

Urizen is a nation of magicians, and the average citizen aspires to master magic if they can. Among the most accomplished magicians there are several identifiable roles that citizens gravitate to. Stargazers are scholars of magical lore who possess a deep and powerful love of magic in all its forms. Even the most cerebral stargazer is excited by magic - exuberant in their desire not just to perform it, but to deepen their understanding of it. They push the boundaries of magic, seeking out new understanding, uncovering new secrets, and performing new rituals that have never been cast before.

In contrast, both seers and magi see magic as a tool with which to achieve a higher goal. Seers believe that perfect understanding is the key to unlocking the Net of the Heavens. Seers strive to direct the future by discovering everything they can about the world, especially through magical means, and sharing that information with those they believe can use it best. The mages (or magi) are the political magicians of Urizen. They see the

application of magic as fundamentally political in nature, something that can be used to change the world for the better, but only when used wisely. They use their magical abilities to help their allies to try to build webs of favour and influence.

Although Urizen is famed for its magicians, it is also a nation of philosophers. In Urizen priests who use their understanding of the Net of the Heavens to perfect the world are called illuminates. Unlike many other Imperial priests, their focus is on trying to enable virtuous citizens to gain power in the Empire, preferably at the expense of those whose actions demonstrate a lack of virtue. By contrast a questor is any Urizeni priest who wishes to perfect the Doctrines of the Faith. They pursue deep philosophical questions searching for new insights into moral philosophy, the mind of the creator and the telos or purpose of life. Rather than guide the actions of others, they prefer to use probing questions to encourage their congregations to seek their own conclusions.

Urizen is threatened by the Druj to the east and by the Grendel to the south. For defence it relies on the dedication of its sentinels, who embrace the arts of war with the same passion and commitment that their fellow Urizeni study magic. A respected sentinel is much more than just a skilled warrior - they are expected to study strategy, tactics, logistics, history, magic, and diplomacy. Anything that might influence the outcome of a battle falls within the domain of the sentinel. Their great rivals are the sword scholars, warrior priests with a passionate dedication to wisdom and reason. They exhort the virtuous to test what they learn, and oppose the Imperial Synod because they believe that obedience to a higher authority stifles virtue. They challenge anyone who presents claims of revelation, rejecting everything that is not founded in logic and evidence.

For leadership, Urizen looks to it's arbiters. Arbiters are civic-minded administrators chosen to lead the spires, citadels, and temples of Urizen by their fellows. They are focussed on ensuring the good of their spire, their territory, and their nation, usually in that order. Committed to the wellbeing of their community, arbiters are the backbone of Urizen, collectively striving to ensure the safety and prosperity of all. If you are part of a group then it is good idea to create your own spire and choose one among you to be your arbiter.

Few people in Urizen are motivated by money for its own sake but architects are interested in economics and fascinated by the way that money moves around and influences the world. Much more than mere traders, they see money as a powerful tool for influencing people and changing society for the better. Through investment and mercantile activity they seek to change the world around them.

One of the most famous Urizen archetype is the torchbearer. Magician, priest or warrior, anyone who has a commitment to the truth can be a torchbearer. They strive to keep their fellow citizens informed about current events, but they also delve into the past to make sure that the Empire is built on solid foundations. They dislike falsehood and secrets, especially political secrets, and regularly clash with those who value a palatable lie over a painful truth as well as those with something to hide.

15.3 Names

Urizen names are inspired by Roman and Byzantine names. They do not use the classical Roman three part name, and comic pidgin Latin should not be used, but the classical roots give a single name the right air of timelessness.

Formally, all Urizen append the name of their spire to their title. Spires are small enough that the occupants can avoid naming children with names used by other living residents of the spire, so the Urizen have no need of family names. If two Urizen with the same name do end up living in the same spire then one or both of them are usually given an appropriate epithet by the peers, e.g. "Portia the younger".

Philosophers and teachers who favour an ordered approach to life.
Spire names tend to be in English, and are usually descriptive. For example; Evenspire, White Marble Temple, Citadel of the Immaculates.

15.3.1 Sample names

Adula, Aeneas, Alba, Aquila, Belisari, Camilla, Cyrus, Drusus, Felix, Flavia, Florian, Hadrian, Julia, Livia, Majorian, Martina, Marcus, Megaris, Nicasia, Octavia, Octavius, Priscilla, Portia, Sabina, Seneca, Severus, Sophia, Tacitus, Tiberius, Tatiana, Vaanes, Valeria, Zeno.

N.B. Whilst some names are inspired by real world names which may be given to specific genders, Empire is a gender blind setting and people of any gender choose any name they like that is appropriate to their nation.

15.3.2 Naming resources

- Roman names
- Byzantine names

15.4 Further Reading

Core Brief

- Introduction
- The people
- Culture and customs
- Look and feel
- Hearth magic

Additional Information

- History
- Leadership
- Economic interests
- Military concerns
- Religious beliefs
- Magical traditions
- Territories
- Children
- Music
- Archetypes

- Groups
- Egregore

16 Urizen groups

16.1 Overview

There are many spires in Urizen, but only a comparative handful are involved in the affairs of the Empire (that is, attend the seasonal summits at Anvil). The influence of a spire can wax and wane, and involvement in Imperial affairs is not always a reflection of their influence within the nation itself. This page presents in-character information about the spires that attend, or have attended, Anvil ? the kind of thing that someone who asked about the spire might uncover from talking to their peers. In each case, the information is provided by the players and edited before being put on the wiki.

The majority of spires listed here represent player-character groups. You should not create a character who is part of a spire, or has personal history with one, without first clearing it with the appropriate players. You should also check before including other players' spires in your background. The background team are unlikely to approve a background that significantly impacts or involves another player character spire without their permission. There are also a handful of prominent NPC spires included for completeness, but they are not intended for use by player characters.

16.2 Spires of Morrow

The spires of Morrow are some of the oldest in Urizen.

16.2.1 Phoenix Reach

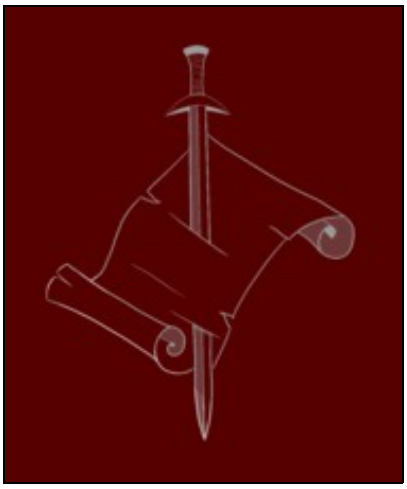
- **Purpose:** Citadel
- **Region:** Ravion
- **Master:** Ioseph

Phoenix Reach is an ancient citadel that was rediscovered and partially excavated a few years before Empress Britta's death. The first explorers found caves with scenes depicting astronomancy, bewildering blood-red mana crystals, and deep rich soils able to grow plentiful food and herbs.

The citadel benefitted from an influx of surrounding spires looking for new challenges. Positions of responsibility are reviewed each year allowing everyone within the new family to develop their leadership skills.

At Anvil, the citadel prides itself in welcoming new citizens to their large, well lit tent and offering counsel to help identify where they can be pivotal. Heroes from the Reach usually fall into two camps - those who take the field, and those that empower them to return victorious. There is a strong favouritism towards the Summer realm within the citadel.

16.2.2 Temple of the Red Scroll Bearers



Red Scroll Bearers

- **Purpose:** Sword Scholar?Temple
- **Region:** Peregro
- **Apothegm:** *Interrogate the world with your blade and with your mind.*
- **Master:** Aspar

The exact details regarding the founding of the temple have long since been lost, burnt away by centuries of persecution by the sentinels of Urizen, but the Temple and its adherents remain.

A sect of sword scholars often seen as decadent and libertine to those outside of the temple, the Red Scroll Bearers consider the experience of all sensations to be important in understanding the world - including those of pleasure and pain.

They believe that it is important to be knowledgeable about the myriad ways in which humanity can exist and how human experiences affect the nature of Wisdom. The Red Scroll Bearers walk this path of varied outlook, and through means of magic, anointing and alchemy they strive to gain a thorough understanding of the world through direct experience. Simply learning about something is not enough, you must test what you learn.

Above all, the Red Scroll Bearers revere Sulemaine and her teachings, and strive to hone their martial and mental arête through duels and debates. They despise untruths and conjecture and believe that all things must be questioned. This of course leads to heated discussions, varied outlooks and fierce rivalries within the temple itself.

16.2.3 Skylark Spire

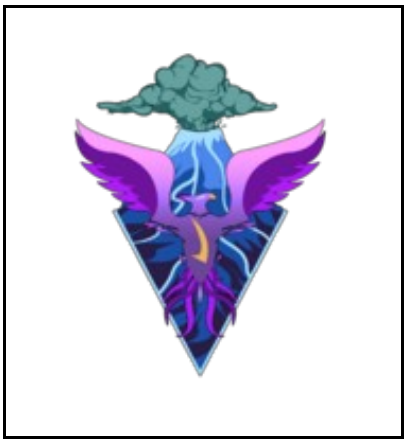
- **Purpose:** Arcane Spire
- **Region:** Operus
- **Apothegm:** *Knowledge speaks, but wisdom listens.*

A very old spire dating from the origins of the Urizen nation, Skylark is an arcane spire that was created to place great emphasis on day and night magic, thus creating a significant number of Seers, stargazers and Torchbearers throughout the ages. Due to the emphasis on divination magic, its martial prowess is seen a lacklustre, requiring aid from nearby citadels throughout the years. However, due to the constant cost of repairs of the ancient structure of the spire, there has been an increasing appearance of Architects among the populace in recent years to help raise funds for the community.

There has been a significant tradition of this Spire accepting Freeborn orphans with the merrow lineage throughout the years, believing that more minds will benefit the spire (and in turn Urizen as a whole) in the future.

This spire is known for the various eagles that inhabit the surrounding landscape and its beautiful waterfall that has been constructed to fall through the different levels of the spire out into a small lake that the Merrow inhabitants use to meditate.

16.2.4 Wise Citadel



Wise Citadel

- **Purpose:** Citadel
- **Region:** Peregro
- **Apothegm:** *Marked by scars of Wisdom, Urizen stands united and strong.*
- **Arbiter:** Octavus and Alios of the Wise Citadel

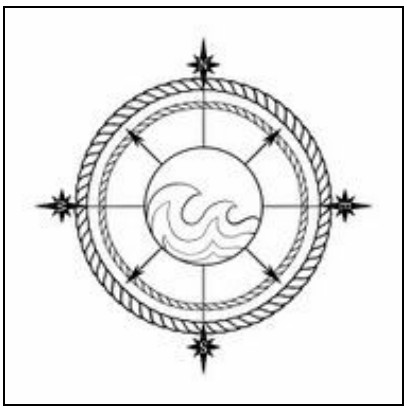
Formerly known as Smokeshield Spire, the Wise Citadel has a legacy that apparently spans back to the reign of Emperor Nicovar. Historically the spire served as a marshalling ground for sentinels who would go on to serve in the Citadel Guard. Much of the history of the citadel was lost during the Druj invasion of 382YE with what remained of the garrison choosing to fight against the orcs of the Mallum. They were joined by a sect of sword scholars who fled the attack on the Temple of the Four Winds. Once the territory was liberated and the time came to rebuild the two groups came together to reforge the spire in a new, shared vision.

The Wise Citadel today is a hotbed of different ideas and people, home to hopeful survivors of all walks of life and for now represented by two arbiters. The Wise Citadel has close ties to the "Fountain's Whisper" coven who grant the Wise Citadel magical assistance when deemed necessary.

16.3 Spires of Redoubt

Redoubt is still a little wild; the spires here have a strong martial tradition.

16.3.1 Celestial Cartographers



Celestial Cartographers

- **Purpose:** Arcane
- **Region:** Naris
- **Apothegm:** *From the seas to the stars, the path to your Ambition is to chart your course*
- **Arbiter:** Xenia

The Spire of the Celestial Cartographers is a new spire founded out of an old one, at a troubled moment for Redoubt.

The original spire (known as Ephemeris) was created in pre-Imperial days as an offshoot of the settlement of Elos. It lived up to its name by virtue of the instructional maps of the constellations picked out in light stones on the central tower. The scholars of Ephemeris had been known for developing navigational star charts used by Urizen fleet captains. Its small library was based on this, diversifying into political texts after Nicovar?s reign. In more recent times, the spire had become a haven for those interested in becoming magi, although fleet owners and those interested in trade have always been well represented.

The events of 387YE proved a turning point for the Spire. Migrations out of Zenith and Spiral had created changes in the population?s focus over time, and plans had been made to form a new spire with the completion of the Rhianos' Great Race and subsequent publication of the purported "map of the known world". This crystallised into tumultuous change with the invasion of Naris and the evacuation of Ephemeris. This left behind a band of fleet captains and their allies operating out of Cargo, calling themselves the Celestial Cartographers, with their sights firmly set on resettling the star-studded towers when the opportunity arises.

Current expertise within the spire includes fleet operations, trading, and historical research. Magical skills focus chiefly on Autumn with some expertise in Day lore.

16.3.2 The Citadel of Stillwaters

- **Purpose:** Citadel
- **Region:** Siluri
- **Apothegm:** *Stillwater leaves no ripples*
- **Arbiter:** Narses Stillwater

Originally coming from different spires all over Urizen, after the battle of Solen?s Doubt a group of veterans sought refuge in a small ruin near the towering mountains in the Siluri hills. The natural spring from the lake aiding their meditation, the herons that hunt there inspiring their training and the gardens a source of comfort from the horrors they had witnessed. And so in rebuilding their new home, they rebuilt themselves.

They began a program of cascade training in order to provide Urizen with constant supply of effective sentinels that embody all of the benefits of the old

and new, comprising modern fundamentals with a unified philosophy, using this they contributed to current Urizeni theatres that they themselves could not attend due to their convalescence.

Due to the nature of the formation of the citadel, it?s members are more aware than most of the threats to their home, this shows itself in a more easy going nature to which some Urizeni are not accustomed. This nature only comes from knowing intimately that each breath could be their last and that they should live it fully.

With the citadel?s original reason for returning to Anvil (reconquering Zenith) resulting in a swift victory, they have now set their gaze on further conquerable shores on which to test their ambition.

16.3.3 The Crystal Skies

The Crystal Skies

- **Purpose:** Former Arcane Spire - now a Citadel
- **Region:** Tomari
- **Apothegm:** *The ends do not justify the means.*
- **Arbiter:** Lanius of the Crystal Skies

The once arcane spire of Spiral, now military encampment in Redoubt, sits at the foot of the mountain that is the home to Netherwatch Spire. With most of the spire being sentinels, trained up from a young age, not by choice, but as a necessity, many of the sentinels that are experienced tend to be on the younger side. Even with all that has happened to their home in Spiral, they always believe and push for a way to win, without sacrifice. Whether this is due to naivete or courage, a nation built upon trying to be perfect, surely can find a way to win without compromise.

Even though most of the original spire still remains, most of its current members are refugees from other spires from Zenith and Spiral. As an encampment, the spire finds it easy to let people move in and stay till we can organise proper places for them in nearby spires. Many members of the group seen today are those that chose to stay in the encampment to help others that require it, and assist with the reclamation of fallen territory, whether it be Zenith, Spiral, or another nation's home.

16.3.4 Ember's Wake

Embers Wake

- **Purpose:** Arcane Spire
- **Region:** Optarion

- **Apothegm:** *Through travel, we gain Knowledge. Through knowledge, we gain Wisdom. Through Wisdom, we enlighten the World.*
- **Arbiter:** Marcellus of Ember?s Wake

Carved into the towering walls of a narrow-mouthed bay amidst the mighty cliffs of Optarion, the heavily fortified port spire of Ember?s Wake is a populous, outward looking one with a focus on trade and the gathering of knowledge on a large scale. There are several tales which tell of its founding, but the only certainty is that the core was built long before its current inhabitants arrived. Regular raids on the spire by the Grendel, and various other pirates, as well as the beasts that prowl the area, has meant that every member of the spire has some modicum of martial training, even if this is not their focus.

Ember?s Wake is notable for its eclectic mixture of aretes, its many torchbearers and a larger-than-average population of briars.

Though formally led by an arbiter, the running of the spire falls to the Spire Council, a body of seven individuals, which includes the arbiter, who oversee all aspects of the spire?s day-to-day operations.

In spite of its outward looking nature, members of the spire have only begun to attend Anvil since Winter 382YE, and live up to the spire?s reputation for an eclectic array of foci.

16.3.5 The Lighthouse at Nikephoros

Nikephoros Lighthouse

- **Purpose:** Arcane Spire
- **Region:** Naris
- **Apothegm:** *I will be better*
- **Arbiter:** Telemachus

The foundations of the Lighthouse at Nikephoros were laid before Urizen joined the Empire. It was founded as a citadel from which Urizen mariners patrolled the coasts, pirating barbarian shipping and repulsing orc raids on the shipyards at Elos.

After joining the Empire - and with its naval importance diminished following the creation of the first imperial navy - centuries of slow decline began. The discovery of a potent Winter regio in a deep tidal cave beneath the spire changed the focus of the Lighthouse, and over generations, it transitioned from a decaying citadel into a decaying spire. But within the stagnant heart of the spire, the influence of the Winter ritualists grew, and the Circle of the Drowned was formed.

At a recent coven symposium, the Circle of the Drowned enacted a political coup, seizing leadership from the passive old guard in favour of the new.

Now dedicated overwhelmingly to Ambition, the spire is ascendant. They embody the principles of the Wasteland strongly, holding close to their oaths and using any and all tools to achieve their ambitions. The Circle and the spire care more about magic as a tool to achieve their goals than as an end in itself, practising both astronomancy and blood magic. When they gather at Anvil, they do so with a singular purpose, pushing for the reunification of Urizen and the defeat of its myriad foes. The Lighthouse at Nikephoros was collapsed in 386YE during battle with the Grendel.

16.3.6 Netherwatch Spire

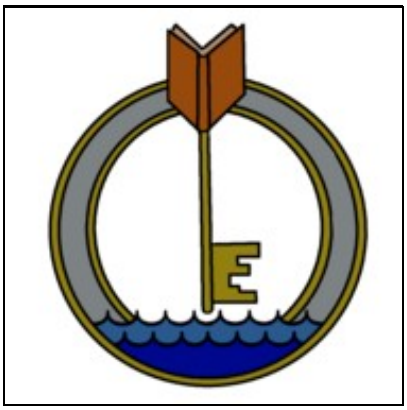
Netherwatch Spire

- **Purpose:** Spire
- **Region:** Delving
- **Apothegm:** *Where this is darkness, Let us bring light.*
- **Arbiters:** Thalia and Galene

Melded into the mountains of Redoubt it overlooks, Netherwatch Spire was originally an arcane spire involved with mining and craftsmanship; like their neighbours in Delving. Supposedly the spire was built with the aid of the eternal Adamant though the true history of has long since been forgotten and the covens focus moved to Day and Spring over Summer.

Now the spire boasts the twin pronged aretes of Wisdom and Prosperity with the co-arbiters Thalia, Convenor of the National Fund, and Galene, the Imperial Inquisitor and Convenor of the National Assembly. A large contingent of the Anvil Militia calls the spire their home, promoting their commitment to truth and Wisdom.

16.3.7 Spire of Quaykeep



Spire of Quaykeep

- **Purpose:** Spire
- **Region:** Tomari
- **Apothegm:** *Knowledge wielded wisely can strengthen the Empire, in the wrong hands bring it to its knees.*
- **Arbiters:** Marcellus Otho

Over the last 80 years, citizens from across Urizen have come together to build the Spire of Quaykeep. Created with the ambition of being the greatest repository for knowledge and wisdom in the Empire. A haven for anyone seeking to consult their archives for knowledge or lost wisdom.

The Grand Athenaeum at the spire is filled as merchants scour the various markets, including those at Anvil, for any written work that could be of use. Teams of scribes regularly seek to create new works to add to the library.

Citizens of Quaykeep hold the virtues of Wisdom & Vigilance above all others, false knowledge only serves to weaken the Empire.

16.3.8 Serpents Rest

Serpents Rest

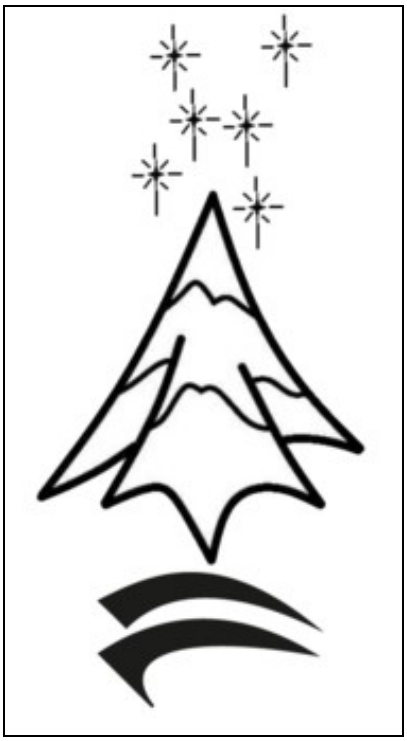
- **Purpose:** Spire
- **Region:** Limus
- **Apothegm:** *We bring the peaceful light, To the chaos of the dark ocean*
- **Arbiter:** Captain Marinus

The spire formed as a result of a dramatic rescue from sea for the lone survivor; Captain Neptune. When rescued he couldn?t tell anyone what had happened or how he survived, all he could say was that seen a ?Great Serpent?. He and other captains decided to set up the Serpents Rest, named after the mysterious creature he saw, as a sanctuary for those feeling lost or seeking safety. It wasn?t long before Serpents Rest became a spire dedicated to fleets and the sea. The spire itself was originally a docking area and warehouse in Cargo and in time some of the space was converted into private lodgings or expanded to accommodate guests.

Although the magically inclined members of Serpents Rest have no specific focus, they typically prefer the realms of Spring, Autumn, and Day due to the rituals in Imperial lore that can support fleets.

16.4 Spires of Sarangrave

Those spires that have moved to Sarangrave do so in a territory where almost every facet is anathema to Urizen.



Sarangrave Reforged

16.4.1 Sarangrave Reforged

- **Purpose:** Arcane Spire
- **Region:** Bloodwater Marsh
- **Apothgem:** The fires of the forge bring light to the darkness.
- **Arbiter:** Esteban Ezmara of Sarangrave Reforged

The spire formed in 387YE after Zenith Ascendant declared their oaths complete and moved to Sarangrave with a new purpose.

The spire is formed around a significant number of Autumn magicians, and although individuals follow their own virtues the spire as a whole is a Prosperity sect, with those who join swearing an oath to work hard and bring prosperity to the Sarangrave after the darkness of the Druj.

The spire values its architects highly; artifice and construction are held in as much esteem as magic by many members. Indeed, all the efforts of the spire focus on the enlightenment and improvement of Sarangrave. Urizen will be the crown of the Empire, and Sarangrave will be the jewel in that crown.

16.5 Spires of Spiral

Those spires that remain in Spiral do so in a territory assigned to the League and that has a malign force that squats at the centre of the territory

16.5.1 Academy of the Southern Shore

- **Purpose:** Arcane Spire
- **Region:** Apulus
- **Arbiter:** Letho Southshore

The Academy of the Southern Shore is a prominent teaching institution aimed towards young magicians of Urizen. Its students range in ages from the youngest children to young imperial citizens, who spend time at the Academy in order to refine their arete. The spire itself is built on the slopes overlooking Apulus. The spire has been known to take in refugees, sometimes those of other nations who arrive from the seas.

The Academy specialises in the magic of the Night realm, though all ritual arts are studied there. Teachers encourage students to pursue religious and martial skills if desired. The academy is well known for an unusual pedagogy which emphases the use of the ritual Cast Off the Chain of Memory. Through the use of this ritual the students and the teachers of the Academy seek to remove ?distracting? experiences that cause them to suffer a loss of poise or divert attention from their Arete.

The spire has also become well-known, particularly within Anvil for its unconventional approach to the tradition of astronomancy, notably calling on the constellation of The Oak as The Palm. For this reason a Palm Tree has become a more identifiable symbol of the Spire (especially in Anvil) than the official Sigil.

The Spire closed its public doors following the awakening of the and lost many of its students. In the wake of this tragedy members of the Spire first travelled to Anvil, since this fateful step the Academy has slowly been returning to strength.

The Great Library of Ankarien

16.5.2 The Great Library of Ankarien

- **Purpose:** Arcane spire
- **Region:** Ankra
- **Apothegm:** *The light of a single flame may illuminate a thousand steps along the way*
- **Arbiter:** Maximillian Ankarien

Ankarien is one of the largest and most venerable spires in Spiral, with the date of its founding lost in pre-Imperial history. It is traditionally organised around its Great Library, which was once one of the most significant centres of learning and education in Urizen. It has long been politically active, sending delegates to the Grand Conclaves for as long as they have existed and eventually giving rise to Emperor Nicovar Ankarien. Unfortunately, Ankarien was one of Nicovar?s most prominent targets and suffered terrible destruction at his hands, its collections of books decimated.

After Nicovar?s fall, the Library dedicated itself to rebuilding, restoring some of its former glory, but when the Grendel invasion of Spiral came, Ankarien found itself unprepared and the inhabitants fled with what volumes they could carry to Endsmeet while the sentinels bought time with their lives. Since then, Ankarien has been a prominent voice for the exiled spires of Spiral, pushing for the reclamation of the lost territory. After a brief spell leading the resettlement of the territory, they now find themselves in exile once again.

Ankarien is mostly focused on politics and learning, with a strong tradition of both magi and stargazers. It has a slightly unusual leadership structure, with the arbiter responsible for the internal affairs of the spire and a maester responsible for wider leadership. It sees itself as leading the reclamation of Spiral and this underpins its entire philosophy, along with a strong sense of its own history and tradition.

Temple of the Myraid Stream

16.5.3 Temple of the Myriad Stream

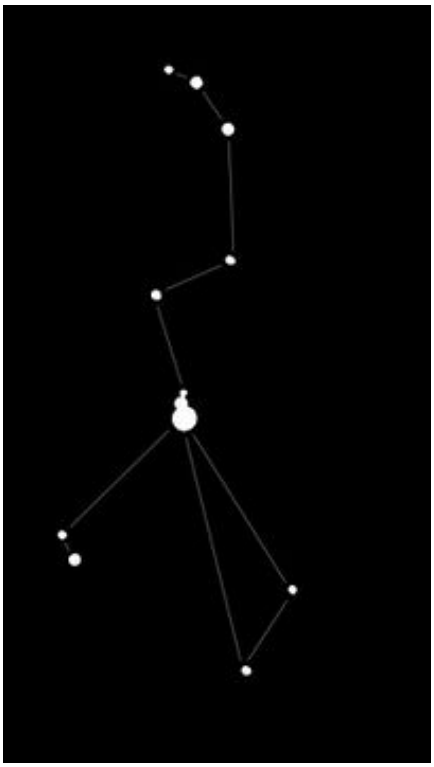
- **Purpose:** Temple
- **Region:** Apstrus
- **Apothegm:** *The Many in The One, The One in The Many*
- **Arbiter:** Halkyon

An ancient temple hidden among forested canyons on the remotest fringe of Apstrus, spire tradition holds that the temple was founded by a group of questors who departed Solen?s Doubt over a debate on the question of the One and the Many. Secluded as it was, the temple remained a hidden sanctuary during the Grendel occupation, its surface structures dismantled to avoid detection and its sentinels becoming adept scouts, skilled at moving unseen through the rugged landscape of Spiral.

The temple is centred on its ?Mirrorspire?, an inverted tower formed from a cavernous sinkhole. Its chambers and halls are carved from its walls, making skilful use of the geology and extending deep into the spectacular karst caverns that honeycomb the rock. These lead to the spiritual heart of the temple, a huge cavern named the ?Great Gallery?, filled with the natural music of several converging underground waterfalls.

The philosophy of the Myriad Stream emphasises dialogue, within the self, and between the self and creation, as a core practice towards cultivating poise, arête and virtue. Thus, they focus on contemplation of the Net of the Heavens to produce efficacious and flowing action. Now home to a mix of spiritual seekers, grizzled veterans of the long war for Spiral and refugees from fallen spires, the temple seeks to recover its legacy as a place of pilgrimage and spiritual education, to preserve the Urizen heritage of Spiral, and to fortify all of Spiral?s people against the influence of the

.



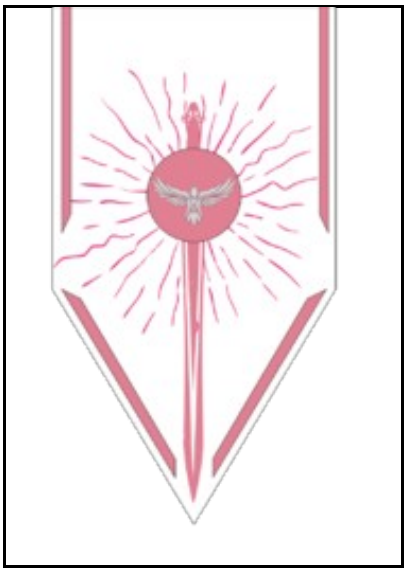
The Temple of the White Stork

16.5.4 Temple of the White Stork

- **Purpose:** Temple
- **Region:** Apulus
- **Apothegm:** *There is no greater teacher than experience, no greater experience than the duel.*
- **Arbiter:** Calgacus Apulian

Originally a school of swordplay, the White Stork is defined by its members' odd ideals, viewing single combat as the ultimate expression of, and metaphor for, every aspect of a soul's Way. To engage another in such a manner is to both see and show the essence of those involved without guile or shame. This clear lens held appeal for some, though the Temple's brutal regime, disdain for convention, and anything it considered frivolous - as well as socially manipulative methods - made many more Urizeni wary. A small and elitist group nestled in the mountains of Apulus, just north of the ruins of Apulian, they suffered over this past decade, losing their holdings and retreating over some years to Morrow. Constant battles in defence of refugee caravans in their slow retreat filled their numbers with a curious and grateful mix of souls from across the nation as their laity, and the few surviving scholars continue to pass to them their ideal of a purely logical, perfectly poised paragon of skill.

When this eclectic band of itinerants gathers at Anvil, they seem to focus on providing tuition and guidance to individuals from other nations, functioning as instructors, advisors and confidantes to many influential persons. Some say this allows them to influence others positively towards Urizen as well as identify those who threaten it. The Stork watches, and chooses when to strike.



Sunshaper Citadel

16.5.5 Sunshaper Citadel

- **Purpose:** Citadel
- **Region:** Ossuary
- **Apothegm:** *Excellence serves*
- **Arbiter:** Eridion Sunshaper

Summer blossoms, white stone arches. Sentries adorned in the graceful hues of fuchsia. Bright, vibrant gardens etching spires that reach to the stars nestled amongst the mountains. A testament of endurance against its land's black heart.

Sunshaper Citadel was founded by the first Urizeni settlers traversing the mountains from Morrow to watch over the Twilight Gate. Over the centuries, it has been damaged and rebuilt again and again, reconstituting much of its original foundations in every recasting. Historically and in the present day, the citadel has engaged with the emergent philosophies of its times, whilst retaining an enduring set of principles around service and excellence.

In the shadow of the , the Sentinels here understand that the reality of one's duty cannot be ignored. This philosophy bears forth a culture of sentinels that know well the realities of war, committed to excellence in its tactics, strategy and execution. Housed near a Summer regio, the arete of its people often bears a passionate devotion. The citadel draws its net of heavens wide in the application of military strategy, encouraging people from all walks of life to excel in their fields and direct their efforts towards Urizen's strategic objectives. They see themselves as the immovable protectors of Spiral and seek enlightened perspective, drawn from the deep roots of the earth and lived experiences to the furthest stars and mysteries.

16.6 Spires of Zenith

16.6.1 Hope's Cultivar

Hope's Cultivar

- **Purpose:** Arcane Spire

- **Region:** Proceris
- **Apothegm:** What we sow today shall be reaped tomorrow as a brighter future
- **Arbiter:** Valantinian Hope-Tender

The spire was founded in 384YE immediately after the expulsion of the Druj from Zenith. Hope's Cultivar is built from the ruins of a small citadel constructed right at the peak of a mountain in northern Proceris. Chosen for its high location and reservoir fed by fresh snow melt to try avoid the very worst of the region's poisons and curses.

The Spire attracts architects, herbalists and those whose arete lies in agriculture. Their goal is to play a part in the restoration of Zenith and apply the pillar of reason to the growing of plants. Five towers rise into the sky, each intended to try to maintain a different climate. Within the towers trials are run in an attempt to try to understand agriculture better.

16.6.2 Lapis Heights

Lapis Heights

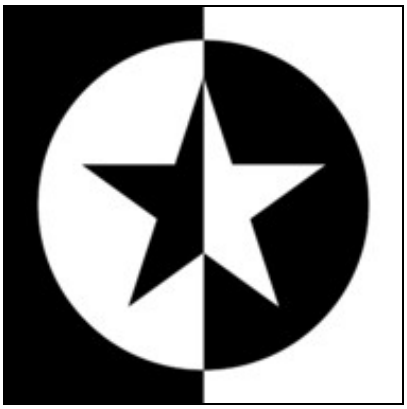
- **Purpose:** Arcane Spire
- **Region:** Occursion
- **Apothegm:** Question what is known completely, to stop searching is to never know what was missed
- **Arbiter:** Juno of Lapis Heights

Nestled among the hills of Occursion, the Lapis Heights spire guards a humble yet proud history. Originally named for the mana crystal deposits at its base that drew in settlers with their rich blue colouring, it later became known for its production of high quality parchment. The lotus trees that thrive in the area create a durable, delicate paper which is much sought after. The art of papermaking survives, and it is traditional for members of the spire to give gifts and letters in the form of folded paper flowers and animals.

Lapis Heights overlooks the lakes of Bountiful Autumn and benefits from its magic through its small collection of Autumn mages. This combined with its history of cultivating mana crystal and artisanship has steeped the spire in the business of production and trade. Despite this display of Prosperity, Lapis Heights does not lean heavily towards any one virtue, having been founded by philosophers of the Way among others.

During the Druj invasion Lapis Heights suffered devastating losses and was considered lost or disbanded for a time. A group of survivors have begun the effort to return to and rebuild the spire, and are taking the opportunity to reinvent its values. Calling back to their philosopher ancestors, the new Lapis Heights strives to discover new ways of experiencing Virtue and hearth magic, and support the exploration of experimental magics.

16.6.3 Pioneer's Peak



Pioneer's Peak

- **Purpose:** Arcane Spire
- **Region:** Proceris
- **Apothegm:** Together, we find everything we need.
- **Arbiter:** Isaac of Pioneer's Peak

Pioneer's Peak was founded during the Winter of 384YE, after the Imperial reclamation of Zenith from the Druj, in an effort to build on the legacy of the Arch of the Sky, after its loss.

This arcane spire is now home to those who pursue the understanding of magic and astronomancy as the highest form of arete. They endeavour to study and use magic - primarily, but not exclusively, Autumn magic - to accomplish ideals of mutual aid, aiming for magic to be used for the improvement of the lives of all.

Those who study at Pioneer's Peak are mostly stargazers - with some mages or seers - who hold a mutual belief in the power of the collective. A pioneer stands on the shoulders of giants - likewise, the path to improvement (be it arete, virtue, or truth) is never walked alone, with the magic they study reflecting this. They are less interested in individual power or singular great acts, than they are in small actions, amplified and replicated by scope and time.

16.6.4 Starsong

Starsong Spire

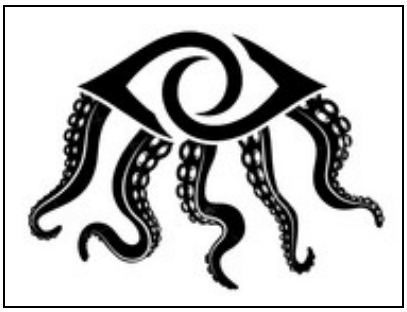
- **Purpose:** Arcane Spire
- **Region:** Proceris
- **Apothegm:** To the songs that guide us, and the stars that light the way
- **Arbiter:** Serenus Starsong

Starsong is known for its stargazers, bards and artists, all of whom share a passion for the constellations and astronomancy, using the essence of the stars to achieve their goals.

The spire was formed to focus arete in the creative arts and combine the knowledge of the stars as a muse for their creative works; whether that?s in a

painting, a song, a performance, a poem or even just thinking outside of the box.

Starsong had a small spire hidden away amongst the collection of spires in the Arch of the Sky until the Druj came and razed it to the ground. The few members that managed to survive are now active in Anvil, and work on rebuilding the spire to its former glory.



16.6.5 Temple of the Wanderer

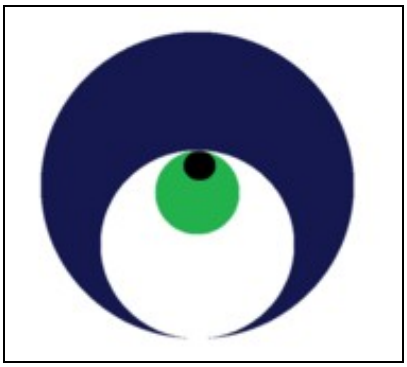
- **Purpose:** Sword Scholar?Temple
- **Region:** Occursion
- **Apothegm:** *Greater knowledge equals greater precision.?Find more locus points, gather more strings of influence and perfect?your net?of prediction.*
- **Arbiter:** Cato?Hypation

Once a?secretive?temple?dedicated to The Wanderer?and to?understanding the inexorable powers of?Fate. The few privileged enough to be invited tell tales of a central chamber that was home to a never-ending great tapestry which was carefully added to and edited daily. With the critical analysis of Sulemaine's legacy, and the sundering of the Sword Scholar movement, came more inner reflection.

?If you love a thing, be prepared to destroy it. Only then are you strong enough to protect it.?

Having played a part in sundering their movement their Abriter Nemo has declared; ?It is time to prove we are strong enough to protect true Virtue from false.? Shortly before the Winter Solstice 385YE the House of the Wanderer decamped from their temple in Morrow and set up a new temple in a haunted old ruin on the Zenith side of the Mislitel Pass. Whilst they still have a keen interest in Fate, for now they are focusing their attention on Tsark.

16.6.6 Tropaion Citadel



Tropaion Citadel

- **Purpose:** Citadel
- **Region:** Proceris
- **Apothegm:** Utopia, no matter the cost
- **Arbiter:** Plinius

Tropaion Citadel sits in Proceris, astride the Twilight Gate, peering into Spiral. Built at the earliest opportunity following the scourging of Druj from Zenith, its two imposing towers sit on each side of the pass. Connected by thin wooden bridges, the residents of each tower use these areas to practice against each other, resulting in a jocular internal rivalry.

At Anvil, the Tropaion mission is clear. To espouse and extol the arete of the sentinel in all of its forms. To advance the utopic mission of Urizen. To assist their magic using counterparts to the best of their ability. To eradicate weakness and vulnerability from their nation, lest it ever fall to barbarian hands again.

16.7 Contributing

Any Urizen arcane spire, citadel or temple can submit an entry for this page. The entry should come from the out-of-character group leader and be emailed to plot@profounddecisions.co.uk. It should contain the following information:

- Name of the spire
- The kind of spire (arcane spire, citadel, temple)
- Your spire's *apothegm* assuming it is public knowledge
- Territory and region where the spire is physically located. If you are a spire in exile that has fled Zenith or Spiral you can mention that here
- If the spire has a sigil a description of that sigil or an image if one is available
- The name of your arbiter if you have one

You should also include up to 250 words of description, detailing the kind of things that other characters might know about your spire. Have a look at the description for an arcane spire, citadel, or temple for ideas on the kind of information that is useful. For example, if you are from an arcane spire, then what kind of magic are you known for? You must also include a few sentences of history, especially around the reasons for the spire's formation.

Some other questions to consider include:

- Does your spire have an interesting geographical feature associated with it?
- Are there one or more particular archetypes it is associated with?
- Does your spire have a particular philosophy or goal which helps unify your members?

Things to avoid include:

- Too much worldbuilding detail ? this represents information other characters may know about your spire. It's not a place to define elements of the game world
- Lists of character names ? this isn't a place for getting your name on the wiki
- Too much emphasis on the past ? while it's useful to have a few lines of history, what matters in Empire is what your spire does on the field at events

It's possible to update the information on this page over time (for example if your arbiter changes) with an e-mail to plot@profounddecisions.co.uk.

17 Urizen Egregore

17.1 Menos

Menos, the Urizen Egregore, almost always appears to have lineage. It's often that of a golden skinned individual with a calm and polite demeanour. It plays the role of observer, commenting on the events around it and loving the interplay of conversation with intelligent and educated individuals from all walks of life.

The Urizen egregore has taken one host

17.1.1 Current Hosts

Agatha

17.1.1.1 Agatha

17.1.2 Previous Hosts

17.1.2.1 Kassiani

Kassiani
Kassiani was raised in Saliscloud Spire, a small library focused community in Redoubt that primarily collects memoirs and biographies. Her interests, however, lay more in practical pursuits, and she trained to become an artisan. When away from Anvil, she can often be found tending a small hive of bees that help to pollinate a small, but surprisingly successful, fruit garden on the slopes below Saliscloud, or practising practical crafts.

17.1.2.2 Philostrate

Philostrate is an aged Draughir sentinel who had his first taste of war when the Grendel invaded Spiral and Hadrian shattered the lighthouse at Apulian.

Philostrate

Spending his years in Spiral coordinating resistance against the Grendel, he maintains a keen interest in strategy and tactics, in politics as well as in war and particularly the interconnectedness of people and events in the Net of the Heavens.