

# Hero Wars



# **GLORANTHA**

## ***Introduction to the Hero Wars***

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# GTA



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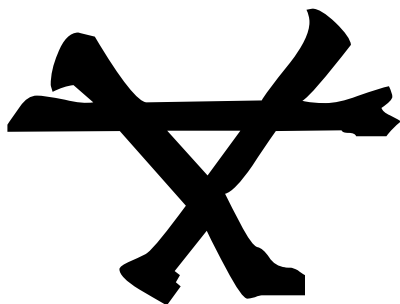
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# Preface

## By Greg Stafford

Glorantha was discovered by me and shared with the world. Glorantha is my personal mythology, spawned as an adolescent desire, rising to fruition and falling again, now coming here to new fruition upon the great groaning wheel of publishing life.

Myth has a secret power that is almost too simple to believe. Basically, a good story can make you feel good. We could talk here about memes and pheromones, or vibrations or sociobiological theory. Whatever the reason might be, though, there is the truth: a good story can make you feel better. That is the power of myth.

The story of Glorantha has, for the most part been a good story, and that is because it is a cooperative effort. The co-creation has had many significant players besides myself. I wouldn't have done this in the same way without other people. I want to acknowledge now, at the rebirth of Glorantha among us, the parts played by some of the major characters. It has been shaped by many people and I'd like to give thanks here to them. This story goes way back, and I will forget important people. I apologize.

⊕ First, to the thousands of people have enjoyed the world through game or reading, you are the tribe. † To my friends and girl friends who listened to this stuff way back in college without laughing except at the stupid parts. ⊕ To the three publishers that rejected my first game and made me found Chaosium, ⊕ To Chaosium, and Chaosium Inc. for the work and support of making the first and best Gloranthan publications. ⊕ To my first wife for the patience she had while I worked at Chaosium, and for giving it to me as my half of the settlement. ⊕ To my children, Noah, Alisha and Jason who lost hours of attention while I was pouring out Glorantha advice and game stats in the far corners. ⊕ The creative folk during the dark AH years, especially Ken Rolston and Michael O'Brien. ⊕ To Unknown in Japan who keeps fanning that hot flame there. ⊕ To Andrew Dallman, for Conjunction '90 that lit my fire once again. ⊕ To people who keep those great convention tradition going: Ingo Tschinkel, the German Chaos society, Kevin Jacklin, and Convulsion, Inc. and still call me tribes to gather. ⊕ To the people who sponsored the Glorantha Conventions at their own risk: David Cheng, Eric Rowe, Andrew Joelson, Neil Robinson, Andrew Bean. ⊕ To the people who kept the earliest email groups together: Andrew Bell, Henk Langeveld, Loren Miller and Shannon Appel. ⊕ For creative contributions: Sandy Petersen is first in my book of people who know Glorantha and have contributed significantly to its reality. ⊕ Other big chunks were provided by Steve Perrin, Nick Brooke and others in TotRM. ♣ To Dave Dunham, a man of action and determination, and my favorite computer game designer, who has helped in extraordinary and unique ways; ⊕ Lynn Willis for teaching; ⊕ Charlie Krank for always being there to help prop me up, and his kids, Brian and Meghan who help him; ○ ○ To David Hall, whose perseverance and strength in publishing Tales has earned him the Elmal award for me; ⊕ to Rick Meints for his publications and friendly support; ⊕ To Mark Leymaster for the loyal and friendly support, especially in GTA moments. ⊕ Steve Martin deserves special attention—he has spent more time than anyone doing critical voluntary work for Issaries, as well as publishing Drastic Resolution and sharing endless hours of discussion, all-important fact checking, and many pleasant lunches. ▣ Finally, to my current wife Suzanne, for her support and for being herself, the greatest woman I've ever met, and the reason I go home at all. ⊕

This is the purpose of Hero Wars: to focus that excitement, interest and thought in a communal setting, to co-create a good story, that will make us feel good. Thank you to all who have helped in this. Here is the latest. I hope you enjoy it.



# CHAPTER ONE

## Introduction

### What is Glorantha? ✖

**G**lorantha conforms to the mysterious and malleable laws of myth rather than the reliable, repeatable laws of science. Glorantha is not a globe. It is a huge cube of earth floating on an infinite sea, with one surface delicately exposed above water. In its center is a gigantic whirlpool that sucks all the waters of the world into it. The sky above is a dome housing the sun, moon, and stars. Beyond this firmament live the sky gods. Beneath the world other, darker gods dwell. Around the edges of the world, where the endless seas wash upon mortal lands, and where the curved sky touches the underworld, other gods and their many demigod children live. In the center of Glorantha is the human world, called by them the Inner World.

The area inhabited by mortal beings is only a small part of the Inner World, being the area within a more-or-less 5000 mile radius from the Great Whirlpool. Two large continents and a number of archipelagos are the main stage upon which the Hero Wars of Glorantha are played out.

Genertela is the northern and more populous continent. It occupies a land mass about the size of the continental United States. Its climate is mostly temperate, although its extremes range from arctic tundra in the farthest northwest through seasonal regions of woods and forest, broken by a blasted unnatural desert wasteland, and ending with a tropical jungle in the southeast. Genertela is also the location of Dragon Pass, a large break in the Rockwood Mountains. Dragon Pass is where the first great events of the Hero Wars will erupt.

The southern continent of Pamaltela is about as big as Genertela. Its climate is tropical in the north and east and desert in the south and southwest, with vast rolling plains between. The Eastern continent of Vithela is now a vast archipelago, shattered by other gods' wars many thousands of years ago. Now it is innumerable islands ranging in size from sandbars that barely rise above the tide to islands hundreds of miles in area. In the west are wide waters and only the scattered island remains of Danmalastan, the western continent that was destroyed by sorcerous wars at the end of the Ice Age.

### The People of Glorantha

The Inner World is the home to many mortal beings. Humans are the most populous now and are divided into many cultures. Most are everyday people: farmers, herders, craftspeople, soldiers, fishers. These everyday lives encompass a wide range of beliefs, practices, and cultures which are often in conflict or competition against each other. This antagonism and distrust among the species is unusual compared to the Elder Races, and may be the reason that the Elder Races still exist at all.