

# Introduction and Motivation

In the last few months as of first starting this, I have noticed that there have been more and more folks asking about what has changed in the lore between Exalted Second and Third Editions. I have personally noticed a couple things. First, there isn't a really concise place to talk about this save a thread on the Sword of Creation fan forum and scattered about in Discord servers. The second is that there seems to be a lot of folks who treat 2e lore as the same as 1e. While there is a lot of overlap, there are enough changes that I think it is worth pointing out where needed.

Since there is currently no well-reputed wiki to work from, this document will mostly serve as something I will link to when I can and update as I can in order to help onboard folks. It will also be a place with some citations and such, so might take a while to compile.

Note that while I am one to prefer 3e, I will do what I can to not editorialize *too much*. Although if something is a change noted as being done for a particular reason, such as removing the transphobic elements of Eye and Seven Despairs or the creepy shit about Raksi and Mnemon's apparent ages, then that will be pointed out as well. Also, since Exalted is a big-ass setting with a lot to do, this will probably be a living document since stuff changes and I get a clarification or find something interesting.

This will also where I can mostly focus on setting, but there are some things on the broad mechanical scope that are hard to avoid with individual Exalted, such as the introduction of Supernal Ability for Solars, the effects of being Casteless for Lunars, or the major overhauls of Infernals.

That also being said, this is my own take on summarizing this, not something that should be seen as authoritative. If it appears my opinion got into something a bit, call me out. I want this to be as useful to folks as possible, in the context of how this is still in effect my own summaries, not some crowd-sourced wiki.

## A Note on Retcon versus Reboot

Something I want to highlight is that I don't consider changes to setting between editions as examples of retroactive continuity. Each edition of Exalted is in effect a soft reboot of the setting. This is important to discuss since I think it allows one to judge an edition on its own goals and merits. It also helps me be consistent on what I describe a change as, since things do sometimes shift within an edition or since the corebook in Third Edition's case. That Third Edition isn't doing something Second Edition did is not make its take of the setting wrong, or the new version right.

There are elements that are broadly shaped the same. It will always be Creation, a world anchored on the Five Elemental Poles in the ocean of Chaos. It will have the broad timeline of prehistory, gods warring on their creators, a First Age, an Usurpation, Shogunate, Contagion, Second Age, Time of Tumult. It will always be RY 768, five years after the disappearance of the Scarlet Empress and the return of the Solar Exalted. These don't change. However, the details in a lot of that will.

As an example of reboot and revision, Chejob Kejak is in all three editions of Exalted. In First Edition, he was close to death, but thought he had some centuries potentially. In Second Edition, he was born on the day the Primordial War ended, and the next year in the game's timeline would be his 5,000th birthday if one digs about. And in Third Edition, he knows he's coming to the end of his life, but also notably was born millennia after the Divine Revolution. These aren't retcons. He is the same character reinterpreted through the lens of soft reboot.

By contrast, the Five Elemental Dragons through much of Second Edition were presented as and called gods. It is not until the **Ink Monkeys** article "The Magnus Speaks II" that they become souls of Gaia. This was within the edition and thus would be more akin to an actual retcon. This also happened in 1e, where the Dragons are described as gods or amongst the gods in the core rulebook and **Games of Divinity**, only to be retconned into Gaia's souls in **Exalted: the Autochthonians**. But they are a more "Misc category of spirit" in 3e, which means that it is at this time more like how they were at the beginning of both 1e and 2e.

## Useful Resources

The following are some sites or documents that will help navigate this page or give additional information one might miss out on:

### Documents

- [The Exalted Storyteller's Vault Style Guide](#) is a pamphlet meant to help folks in creating fan material for sale for Exalted. Since the STV allows material for any edition, the style guide is a first party way to showcase what the developers think are the things shared between editions, and differences between them as well. This includes things on how different editions approach world-building, inspirational material suited to each edition, and so on. I think giving this a read is important before anything else.

### Web and Forums

- [This thread](#) on the Sword of Creation fan forum is more or less the goal of this document in more ad hoc form. In my writing a post on it I realized that this thread is getting hard to find information in and it might be a good idea to do a summary like this. Still is useful and recommended a read-through.
- Kind of related, [this thread on recycling 2e Lore for 3e](#) is pretty neat, and worth a go-over for folks who have things they'd like to preserve.

- [This thread by Kashi](#) has a nice compiled set of maps including all the locations in the various books shown in 3e maps in one place in the 1e style, as well as an alternative that also brings in things from 2e not brought-up in 3e.
- The [Exalted Eras](#) timeline is a good summary of the different eras listed in the artifact sections of various Third Edition books. It is a good showcase of how the time dimension differs from prior editions like Kashi's map does.

## Podcasts and Youtube

- [Systematic Understanding of Everything](#), while meant to be a broad on-border for folks new to Exalted, does spend time talking about differences of elements between editions. It does focus on 3e most, but this might also help old time fans figure out what to look out for.
- [The Wondrous Atlas of Creation's Destiny](#) podcast is inspired by the previous podcast, though focuses on more "in-depth" elements. It kind of goes more of a fine-toothed comb on some things highlighting and explaining differences in lore between all three editions. An especially neat thing in their Story Hooks is often how to syncretize different elements between editions.
- [Ekorren's Exalted Youtube videos](#) do a good job also summarizing things between editions and has some good on the history of the line itself.

## Citation Notes

Due to some of the overly verbose titles of books in Second Edition and at times Third Edition, some of the following will be used to save time typing. This doesn't mean I won't write the full title, it just helps save time.

- **Edition Terms:** I will in general use the written-out and short form interchangeably. I.e. 1e and First Edition.
- **First Edition**
  - **Exalted 1e** or **Exalted Third Edition:** The 1e core rulebook.
  - **Exalted: the [Splat]:** [Splat] 1e
- **Second Edition Books**
  - **Exalted 2e** or **Exalted Second Edition:** The 2e core rulebook.
  - **Compass of Celestial Direction** and **Compass of Terrestrial Direction:** Typically rendered as **Compass: [Location]**.
  - **Books of Sorcery:** I'll use the main title of the book. I.e. **The White and Black Treatise**.
  - **Dreams of the First Age:** Usually just as a whole or one of the specific books in the box set as-needed.
  - **Glories of the Most High:** Simply **Glories: [Deity]**.
  - **Manual of Exalted Power:** [Splat] 2e.
- **Third Edition**
  - **Exalted 3e** or **Exalted Third Edition:** The 3e core rulebook.
  - **Exalted Essence** or **Essence:** The Essence core rule book.

- **Exalt Books:** I'll typically refer to these by their subtitle (i.e. **Fangs at the Gate**, **Sworn to the Grave**) or simple **[Splat] 3e**.

## Setting as a Whole

The following are aspects that apply to the setting broadly, rather than specific locations, organizations, or residents of the setting.

## Terminology

Below is a list of some terms that are depreciated or changed in context of 3e. Some of them were actually still in use with the early supplements, but going forward there isn't intent on using them. In many cases it is with a want to be less appropriative when possible, especially when a perfectly serviceable English term exists already. If the term was also different from 1e to 2e, it is noted, but in general the definitions below assume the 3e context.

### General or Cosmological

- **beastmen:** Replaced with the more gender-neutral beastfolk.
- **Charm Name Elements:** Starting with **Fangs at the Gate**, some terms which have been found to be appropriating, Orientalist, or simply nonsensical besides sounding cool for exoticness. The following, non-exhaustive list includes:
  - atemi
  - kata
  - mudra
  - prana
- **Pure Chaos:** No longer in use.
- **deva:** Introduced in **Ink Monkeys** to describe non-Yozi Primordial souls. Simply called a titan's souls or offspring. Special terms for different titans are also depreciated.
- **enlightened mortal:** Introduced in 2e's **Scroll of the Monk**. 1e didn't really have such a term, and it's depreciated in 3e. In 3e more notably, there's no universal way to give or categorize a mortal access to universal powers. Mortals with supernatural powers tend to have notable limited bespoke effects.
- **Primordial:** Not entirely considered out, but there was an attempt in the Third Edition core rulebook to avoid the term due to the over-emphasis of the Primordials in late 2e. Alternative terms so far used have included enemies of the gods, titan, or ancients.
- **Primordial War:** The emphasis has been put more on the Exalted and the gods as the victors of the conflict. The more common terms have been Divine Revolution or more rarely War of the Gods.
- **raksha:** Now refers to Fair Folk nobles exclusively. Hobgoblins and hannya are entirely different sorts of example Wyld creatures.
- **season:** What were called seasons in prior editions are now known as elemental cycles on the Realm's calendar. Creation has the normal rotation of spring, summer, autumn, and winter.

- **Solar Deliberative:** Both the First and Second Deliberatives notably are presented as more organizations of the Exalted as a whole, rather than Solars specifically.
- **thaumaturgy:** In 1e was a term relating to various mutually exclusive forms of mortal magics. 2e expanded this to the general use of the Occult Ability. 3e uses the term for rare unique magics that can be shared between thaumaturges. In effect, a kind of misc. supernatural Merit.

## Dragon-Blooded and Realm Related

- **Dynast:** A member of a Great House, cadet house, or child of the Empress. Mortal Dynasts are still Dynasts. Mostly a clarification as books in 1e especially would at times confuse what a Dynast or patrician is.
- **Immaculacy:** Term introduced in **Exigents: Out of the Ashes** and used since. The broad name of the religion which includes the Immaculate Philosophy, Immaculate Faith, Pure Way, Intou Creed, and others.
- **Lost Egg:** Applied specifically to Dragon-Blooded outcastes who Exalt on the Blessed Isle. Foreign outcastes are simply outcastes.
- **matriarch:** The use of matriarch for the leader of a house is gender neutral, much like how prince has been for White Wolf games for years.
- **outcaste:** Any lowborn or foreign Dragon-Blooded according to the Realm.
- **patrician:** Specifically a member of the social group below Dynasts. Lost Eggs from lower classes become patricians. Exalted members of patrician households are also still patricians unless adopted into a Great House. Previous editions often conflated mortal Dynasts with patrician or Exalted patricians with Dynasts.
- **Sworn Brotherhood:** More gender-neutral Sworn Kinship is used instead. Hearthmate is used as the term for members of a kinship.

## Lunars Related

- **chimera:** Referred to a Wyld-tainted individual with blended spirit shapes as in 1e. Became Wyld-tainted Casteless Lunar as in 2e, with the potential to go full shuggoth. In 3e is used for any Lunar whose spirit shape is a blend of two different animals, without any requisite Wyld taint.
- **shahan-ya:** A term originally from First Edition that wasn't used much in Second Edition. A much more important mentor/leader of the Silver Pact position.
- **Silver Pact:** The support network of Lunars formed against the Terrestrial Shogunate and its successor states. The various Factions of 2e do not carry over in 3e.
- **Steward:** Unique to 2e. Not used in Third Edition as a sobriquet.
- **Thousand Streams River:** The specific nation-building project as described in 2e is not the goal of Lunars in 3e, and the term is depreciated.
- **true form:** No longer really a thing mechanically or conceptually.

## Sidereals and Heaven Related

- **destiny:** Now specifically refers to the Celestial Bureaucracy's plan for the future.

- **fate:** Specifically cause and effect. What materially is possible.
- **Loom of Fate:** Rather than dictating causality and a source of Sidereal magic, now is more used to forecast possible futures to plan destinies, and seems to be the medium pattern spiders use to make adjustments to the world to fulfill destinies.
- **quintessence:** It's all just ambrosia now.
- **Outside of Fate:** Depreciated term. Replaced with Enemies of Fate.
- **ronin:** Sidereals unassociated with the Bureau of Destiny are simply either prodigal stars (Sidereals who have not joined the Bureau of Destiny) or rogue agents (those who joined and quit).
- **samsara:** This was introduced as a "patch" in late 2e to explain functional prophecy. The need for "super fate" is not needed as much with how fate in 3e interacts with potent beings.
- **sifu:** Not presented as anything distinct from a mentor for martial arts.
- **sutra:** The mechanical benefit of such Sidereal Martial Arts Charms is now called Enlightenment. The various poems for each Sidereal Martial Art don't need to be sutras. The various Sidereal native Charmsets have always had scriptures, not sutras.
- **Vizier:** Unique to 2e. Not used in Third Edition as a sobriquet.

## Abyssals and Underworld Related

- **Arcanoi:** Ghost Charms are just Charms.
- **Black Exaltation:** Typically called the Bleak Exaltation in **Abyssals: Sworn to the Grave**.
- **Circles of Necromancy:** The names are now as follows:
  - Ivory Circle (formerly Shadowlands/Iron)
  - Shadow Circle (formerly Labyrinth/Onyx)
  - Void Circle (formerly alternatively Obsidian)
- **hekatonkheires:** Now are just Underworld behemoths.
- **hun** and **po:** The terms are used in the 3e core rulebook, but as of **Abyssals: Sworn to the Grave** the terms higher and lower soul are the ones used.
- **necrotech:** Term overall unique to 2e. Simply necromantic constructs.
- **Oblivion:** No longer capitalized. The concept of oblivion and a soul being annihilated is still there, but it is no longer a cosmic force in itself.
- **Princess Magnificent With Lips of Coral and Robes of Black Feathers:** Generally just called the Black Heron for brevity and different focus.
- **Resonance:** Abyssal Limit is now simply Limit. The term is used instead with regards to an Exalt's affinity with one of the magical materials.
- **rogue Abyssal:** The term deathknight errant is also used.

## Infernals and Hell Related

- **akuma:** Catch-all term for an infernalist who makes deals or gains power from the Yozis. Sometimes a political label more than anything else.
- **Devil-Tiger:** This is the common fan name for Infernals who used the Heretical Charms stemming from The Triumphant Howl of the Devil-Tiger and The Flame of the Rising

Phoenix. Having Infernals becoming unique mini-titans is no longer really a thing with them, although some of the Charms of this sequence are part of the general Infernal power set.

- **Infernal Castes:** Castes no longer affiliated with specific Yozis and have different names as follows:
  - Azimuth (formerly Slayers)
  - Ascendant (formerly Malefactors)
  - Horizon (formerly Defilers)
  - Nadir (formerly Scourges)
  - Penumbra (formerly Fiends)
- **Reclamation:** No longer in use.
- **shintai:** Infernal Charms of this sort are now called devil-bodies.
- **unwoven coadjutor:** More a goetic construct that allows the Infernal to commune with the Yozis directly instead of a specific demon merged with the Exalt.

## System and Setting

### Rules as Physics

Second Edition was at times written with a bit of “mechanics represent the physics of the setting”, which included assumptions of needing to be able to replicate events in the setting mechanically and an assumption of symmetry of mechanics between player and non-player characters.

Third Edition instead opts for a more emulation and narrative approach to the way system and setting interact. As per the Oricalchum and Storyteller’s Rules in the core rulebook, the system does not try nor is it assumed it can replicate all the setting’s events. Sometimes things do have to be winged since not everything is able to be reflected in the system. There is also no assumption in Third Edition, especially after the corebook, that things occurring in the world are represented exactly by some Charm or rule a PC would have. “Rules aren’t physics” is also the title of a textbox in **Across the 8 Directions**.

This also extends to things like character traits. Just because Essence can be a certain level for a character, doesn’t mean it is if it doesn’t suit them. Same with other stats. might acquire. There is also an introduction of the idea that non-player characters may have mechanics that simply reflect what’s needed for their narrative role. This extends to Exalts, who do not necessarily use all the same Charms a PC has unless needed.

There is some conflict on this in the core rulebook and later books on this matter. Exalted Quick Characters became more prominent as the line has evolved, for instance, which often means statlines that are not quite reflective of what a player character may have, but still fit the needs of the character in the narrative.

## Reality of Charms

First Edition was pretty clear that Charms existed as-named in the universe. Most of Second Edition ran with this as well most of the time, manifested most strongly with Alchemical and Infernal Charms.

Third Edition in general assumes that Charms are abstractions of the capabilities of a character. There is not Melee Excellency in-setting that is a singular object that everyone can point to. This is not held as clearly as it could be at times, especially in the writing of many of the Solar Charms in the core rulebook and **Miracles of the Solar Exalted**. Later books have held to this more clearly, making sure to word Charms often not as specific techniques but expressions of that Exalt type's power.

This is not also the case with all Charms. Martial Arts Charms are written as if they are the techniques of the style with magic enhancing them to supernatural levels. Most Sidereal Charms are diegetic, and Alchemical Charms likely will be as well. And some Charms for future splats do at times resemble techniques more often. In general, the reality of a Charm in Third Edition is assumed abstract by default, but enough exceptions exist to allow for such Charms to be real if needed.

## The World

The first thing of note is the map of Creation [is simply bigger](#). It's roughly about twice as wide and tall as in prior editions, while maintaining more or less the same size of the features present. The Western Archipelago is moved further Westward, the Northern coast of the White Sea, and Western portion of the Blessed Isle are more broken-up as well. And a few dots moved around, either due to the new topology (as in the case of the main Haslan cities) or due to just being put somewhere more useful (like the Nameless Lair or Larjyn). Also notable in Third Edition is that the intercardinal Directions (Northeast, Southeast, Southwest, Northwest) are treated as entire Directions in of themselves on par with the Scavenger Lands and Far East split.

The other notable changes of the map include:

- The breaking-up and expansion of the Northern White Sea.
- Fang Lakes and Mela's Fangs peninsulas in the Northeast
- The entire Dreaming Sea region of the Southeast
- The Caul and Cinder Isles of the Southwest.
- Various peninsulas and islands of the Northwest.
- The settlements of Wu-Jian and Gloam between the Blessed Isle and the West and East.
- The two Western islands of the Blessed Isle now are archipelagos.
- Much of what was Harborhead in previous editions is now covered in lakes.
- As of **Across the 8 Directions**, there are more bodies of water throughout the map not shown originally in the corebook, such as the Dying Sea.



Each Direction also has notably more locations in total. The North, for example, instead of having just Whitewall, the Haslanti League, and Gethemane also adds more on the Malice Bay area, Cheraak, Ascension, Fortitude, Medo, Pneuma, and more. The map is meant to feel “denser” than before, with many smaller polities rather than a few larger nation-states.

## Time

Third Edition returns to the 24-hour day of First Edition instead of the 25-hour day introduced in **Lunars 2e** and used throughout the rest of the edition. Though there is also a note that in the end most folks don't use hours unless they have equipment to do so.

What were called seasons in prior editions are known elemental cycles according to the Realm's calendar. They now go from Calibration to Air, Water, Wood, Fire, Earth. The four seasons are distributed amongst these, with Ascendant Air after Calibration being about the start of winter.

As of **Across the 8 Directions**, the time of day does change over the year as one moves further North.

## Calibration

Note that in all three editions, the sun does rise and set normally during Calibration. Anything about it being five days of night has always been fanon.

The only celestial body that is missing during Calibration is the moon. The stars besides the constellations and planets might move erratically and weather might be bizarre. Note that the stars also vanishing during Calibration was an advent of **Manual of Exalted Power: Lunars** reaffirmed in **Sidereals 2e**.

## Climate

The climate zones of the world have also shifted. The White Sea is ice free more or less, versus freezing-over entirely in prior editions. Gem is now about halfway to the edge of the map, and while hot, still has notable more arable land. The Blessed Isle is also notably changed in this regard, with the Southern region being swamps in previous editions and now badlands and deserts, while the North is notably cooler and wetter, and the Center more rugged. The goal was to make the Blessed Isle more a microcosm of Creation as a whole in this regard.

## Timeline

At the broadest sense, the timeline since First Edition was more or less:

- Prehistory
- Gods revolt against their creators
- First Age
- Usurpation (~1300 years ago)
- Shogunate (~1300-800 years ago)

- Contagion/Fair Folk Invasion (~800 years ago)
- Reign of the Scarlet Empress (RY 1-763/764)
- Five years after the disappearance of the Empress and return of the Solar Exalted (RY 768)

Second Edition had a more detailed timeline of a lot of history in **Dreams of the First Age**, which notes various Eras within the First Age, including the idea that the Deliberative towards the Age's end was the Second Solar Deliberative after a notable inter-Deliberative period. Additionally, the time since the end of the Primordial War was about 5,000 years ago.

Third Edition more or less retains the above shape of things, although the First Age was around 5,000 years on its own, expanding Creation's history to over six millennia. There are also multiple timelines throughout the books now, meaning that we know more of events in the Second Age, and some of the First Age ones are notably different as well.

## The Time Before

Little is known about the world before the Divine Revolution. The big things we do know is that the titans ruled the world, the gods were their slaves, and that there were various mortal races throughout Creation. In general, the legends of the titans and beings of the time from Second Edition shouldn't be assumed. This includes things like the origins of the Incarna, Malfeas having been the Empyrean Chaos, and so on.

## The Purpose of Humanity

The idea that humans are a form of prayer battery has not been brought-up in the context of Third Edition. There also has been no implications of humanity having a relationship with the Mountain Folk.

## The Prehistoric Dead

Various inhuman peoples have remains scattered throughout Creation and the Underworld. The Underworld itself predates the Divine Revolution in this edition. It used to simply be a featureless sea of shadows whose Old Laws processed souls into the afterlife. The death of the Neverborn crashed into this, formed the Labyrinth and gave rise to the various afterlives which ghosts came to dwell in..

## The Divine Revolution

So far presented the Divine Revolution was motivated by the gods wanting to throw-off the yoke of the Ancients ruling on them.

## The Origin of Exaltation

The Incarna are noted as having discovered Exaltation themselves. Autochthon in **Crucible of Legends** is said to have helped the gods in this endeavor. Note that Autochthon having invented Exaltation was a retcon in 1e, as he is first described in **Games of Divinity** of teaching

artifice and helping the gods use Exaltation. 2e also retconned this some, with the Sun (and by extension others) making the actual Exaltations himself, though with Autochthon's guidance.

### The Armies of the Gods

The armies of the Exalted included all of humanity, not just the Chosen. Dragon-Blooded were often officers and administration during the conflict.

### The Three Spheres Cataclysm

Note that the 90% concept destruction is only in **Lands of Creation**. It was not in **Games of Divinity**. It is not clear it will be returning in any form at this time in the 3e.

### The First Age

The First Age in Third Edition was around 5,000 years long. The First and Second Deliberations did exist, but so far are implied to have been more international bodies akin to the EU or UN than a singular global polity. Throughout the First Age all Exalts participated in some form of kingdom and empire building. This includes Dynasties of Dragon-Blooded with Celestial advisors and vassals or Sidereal Exalted ruling openly as sovereigns.

A big emphasis on the First Age is that different Eras are only shown in vignettes, often in the description of a location or artifact. Other than roughly Revolution to Eight Directions Embassy to First Deliberative to Interregnum to Second Deliberative to Usurpation the details are not assumed to be what is found in **Dreams of the First Age** at all.

### Solars and the Other Exalted

The Solar Exalted have a notably more First Amongst Equals theme in their First Age presentation. They were still vital to the global infrastructure with unique Solar magics of sorcery, artifice, and talents. They were not, however, assumed to be the sole rulers of the world. The Creation-Ruling Mandate applied to *all the Exalted*, not just Solars.

In this context three major changes also apply to Solars in relation to the other classic Exalted of Creation:

- There was a conflict between the Solars and Lunars early in the First Age to see who would be the more forefront Exalt. The resulting pacts and marriages later led to the formation of the Lunar Castes of the Era and the Solar Bond was a non-planned outgrowth of this.
- Dragon-Blooded were not obligated to serve Solars. There wasn't an assumption that each Solar got a gens to themselves.
- Throughout the First Age there were polities ruled by Dragon-Blooded dynasties, Lunars, and Sidereals, not just Solar Exalted.
- Due to the Creation-Ruling Mandate, Solar Exalted were not assumed to be heads of bureaus in Heaven. Solars working with Heaven did so with Eclipse diplomats or Sidereal contacts.

## The Usurpation/Solar Purge

As of **Sidereals: Charting Fate's Course**, there was no Great Prophecy. Instead, what would become the Bronze Faction simply was a conspiracy to overthrow the Solars and Lunars with their Dragon-Blooded allies, and establish a new world order that they saw as more stable. The view was that Solars had an outsized influence on the world and this was a threat to its stability as they saw it.

While many Solars did die at the Calibration Feast, the resulting war lasted nearly a decade, and included shots from all sides and infighting between all Exalts.

## The Shogunate

The Terrestrial Shogunate is given a more prominent role in the setting's history in Third Edition. It was the main focus of the Lunar Exalted and despite its instability, when unified it was quite capable of stamping-out Lunars and remaining Solar Exalted. Most Lunar and Sidereal elders come from this era, and many modern polities claim to be its successor.

## The Contagion

The Contagion targeted human and animal life in Third Edition. Later texts imply the 90% death rate may have only been humans. This has changed between and within editions, ranging from just humans in the 1e core rulebook to literally everything alive in parts of 2e.

So far the Fair Folk invasion has only been described in context of the Contagion and rolled into it as part of the event. Balor's Crusade hasn't been mentioned at this time.

How much land was lost is also not clear. In general the analogy has been more akin to a tsunami than outright deletion of all reclaimed land. The Wyld got deeper into the bigger map and left pockets scattered about more throughout the map, rather than just shrinking the edges.

## The Second Age and Time of Tumult

The main defining conflict of the Second Age is the Realm and everyone else. This is either its expansion or failure to expand in some regions due to local powers, Lunar insurrection, geographical constraints or issues at home. Multiple Shogunate successor states formed empires that could have rivaled the Realm, but circumstances prevented any of them save Lookshy from doing so.

Another major theme of Third Edition's Creation is more focus on "in the now". Many polities are the results of events in the last few centuries, rather than most named ones having some origin all the way back to the First Age. Empires rise and fall through the world, are threatened by the Realm, Exalts, their neighbors, or the natural boil of empire, succession, and war. Not everything ties to some ancient grudge, and there's a general thing of "The bread is made" with regards to the Exalted.

## The Might (and Fall) of the Realm

A notable shift in presentation with Third Edition is that the Realm is treated as the foremost axial global power, rather than a paper tiger. A lot of the Threshold is defined with whether it is or not part of the Realm's sphere of influence. The Realm's Threshold control seems to shift more dynamically than in prior editions, with portions of the East being lost or harder to control at different times, the West's exploitation something within the last few decades, the South notably locked down and other areas much more in flux.

This is shown with many more satrapies of the Realm on display in the Dragon-Blooded related books (**What Fire Has Wrought, The Realm**) and **Across the Eight Directions**. This is done to show that just because a place is a satrapy doesn't mean it is boring, and notably some places that were "special case" satrapies in prior editions are full blown ones in Third Edition such as with Paragon.

The notable thing though is the Realm is powerful, it is important, and the upcoming civil war for succession of the Throne will likely drag large portions of the world down with it. A unified Realm could be a major threat to most Anathema Circles, but the current political situation is enough for them to get footholds and stave-off future retaliation.

## Less Than a Thousand Dooms

First Edition notably had a few major global threats to the setting, mostly focused on Gem, the Abyssal Exalted, and whatever the hell the Ebon Dragon was doing. The line itself was somewhat variable on the severity of these. Something like Vodak was probably a threat to Gethemane but not globally. And some events were not even consistently presented, such as the Locust Crusade in **Time of Tumult** versus the same events in "The Locust War" chapter of **Exalted: the Autochthonians**.

Second Edition ramped this up in various fashions. The Ebon Dragon and Scarlet Empress metaplot was much more pronounced, and its consequences on Creation more potentially catastrophic. There is more urgency given to the Abyssal Exalted and the Deathlords, including things like Eye and Seven Despair's zombie plague, The Silver Prince's Black Fleet, the Dowager searching for a new way to destroy the world, and how much chaos letting any greater elemental dragon out might do. The line ended with fairly high end setting-destroying events that even if Creation is saved is probably shattered quite a bit. And some systems were so dysfunctional as to be on the brink of collapse or had something about to blow it up,, as in the case of the Realm Civil War, Heaven and the death of Chejob, Lookshy and the cursed warstrider, or again, Gem just kind of generally.

Third Edition in general has fewer, if any, global threats. There are things which are potential *regional* catastrophes that might wipe a country off the map, but in general these are things for players to fight and defeat, but won't if they fail end the setting. Many problems are often localized, or even when big, such as things like the Bronze Tide or the Second Contagion, can still be absorbed into Creation. The main exception to this is the threat of a looming Realm Civil

War, which is treated often as the main global crisis of the setting and source of upheaval. Creation is simply big, and can absorb some things that prior editions tried to stretch to global issues.

## Spirits

### Gods

Gods are very explicitly administrators who do their best to make sure objects, places, people, and things fulfill their roles in destinies planned by Heaven. Third Edition notably does not use the concept of least gods. Every object doesn't have a god, and not every object that can have a god necessarily does. Gods are also not required for the functioning of an object in their domain to work, but neglectful or missing gods can cause these to go off the rails for said plans. Their role did change between 1e and 2e as well, where in 1e they often were barely sapient and often asleep, while 2e introduced the idea that they used thaumaturgy to allow physics to happen.

Gods are sort of the second line of defense for destiny. What a pattern spider can't tweak or Heaven might not see, their job is to try to fix things. If things go too off the rails or the interference is something like Fair Folk or demons, that's where higher deities or Sidereals get involved.

Gods notably don't *do* physics like in 2e. Clay turns to a brick in a kiln because that's just how their material components act under those circumstances, without constant need of divine intervention. This also means a couple gods who were directly responsible for their domains no longer are critical to the domain's function. Notably for this is Taru-han just makes sure souls go where they need to, but doesn't involve herself in reincarnation at all. Lytek is now in charge of chronicling and monitoring Exaltation itself, and has nothing to do with interacting with Exaltations.

Spirit courts are more clearly defined as basically divine cliques or coalitions. Most terrestrial courts are ad hoc organizations formed in the break-down of the Celestial Bureaucracy after the contagion and describe a collection of spirits working in a purview in an area. Spirit courts in Heaven are more akin to major social circles.

### Elementals

The story of the Five Elemental Titans from 1e and 2e no longer applies. Elementals are various species of material spirit that have always existed in Creation. They are not inherently slaves to gods as introduced in **Savant & Sorcerer**.

Elementals who cultivate enough power can still become lesser elemental dragons. The term greater elemental dragon is defunct, as it is an unnecessary step between powerful elementals and the Five Elemental Dragons they are kind of striving towards in form.

The spell Summon Elemental in Third Edition creates a new elemental of up to Essence 3, rather than summoning an existing one. The elemental usually dissolves after its service ends but can remain if narratively appropriate.

Another notable change with elementals is that they don't necessarily have the ability to dematerialize. Only has shown-up on dragons to my memory.

## Ghosts

Ghosts more or less still are the remnants of a higher soul that linger on after a person's death. Notably in Third Edition it might not be entirely the higher soul, as the split on death is not always clean. In any case, a living person still has a higher soul and a lower soul that becomes severed when they breathe their last breath. The use of hun and po for these souls was a hold-over from Kindred of the East and no longer in use. This is a retcon from the 3e corebook which does use the terms.

Ghosts simply use Charms now. Arcanoi is a defunct term.

Ghosts who become attuned to the Neverborn still become specters of various sorts. There is also no assumption that ghosts cannot challenge gods or the Exalted. Though most ghosts don't have much to them, they can due to personality, nature, or luck become quite powerful.

## Demons

The term deva for an unbound titan is no longer in use. Nor are there special terms for different ones and their soul hierarchy.

At this time, there are still three Circles of demons summoned according to the sorcerer's power. The details of the soul hierarchy is not clear, but things like the existence of a fetich, or the need for each Third Circle Demon to have exactly seven sub-souls is currently under consideration.

Mortals sorcerers can summon and bind demons like the Exalted. This is a change from 1e's mortal inability to do sorcery at all, and 2e's prohibition against such bindings.

## Other Spirits

Some spirits which used to be classified as gods or deva in 2e now exist in their own unique categories. These include:

### Animal Avatars

These first appear in **Book of 3 Circles** as spirits uplifted by Gaia. They get passing mention, but the spell to summon them returns in **Many-Faced Strangers** as a Sapphire spell.

## The Five Elemental Dragons

First Edition early on described the Dragons as the Children of Gaia and amongst the gods. This is more or less how it remained until **Exalted: the Autochthonians**, which said they were her souls in the first chapter along with one of the scenarios. The beginning of Second Edition, however, they were once again gods until **Ink Monkeys**. Though, [according to this post by Stephen Lea Sheppard](#), the intent in the background was to have them be Gaia's souls. Though, the text of the actual Introduction and other books in the line still do call them gods.

As of Third Edition so far, they are simply Children of Gaia. What that means in relation to being gods, her souls, or something else entirely is at this time not known and not likely to come up in the foreseeable future.

Another note on the Dragons is that in 2e as of **Compass: Wyld** they shared names with the Immaculate Dragons. This implied the Immaculates were named after the Dragons. In 1e and it appears so far in 3e, they are simply the Dragon of Air, Dragon of Earth, and so on.

## Pattern Spiders

These are specifically not gods as of **Sidereals: Charting Fate's Course**. They are presented as having quite a bit of personality, and the constellations are called colleges in part because that's how they cluster. Sidereals can now take them as familiars.

Kind of a note, the idea that stunt dice were diegetically something about pattern spiders rewarding things they thought were neat was a bit of fanon.

## Souls of Autochthon and machine spirits

Currently the nature of the Divine Ministers is not known, though hints on the Discord have said that they are currently just three main ranks of spirit like in First Edition. Second Edition did change how these operated, with a blend of Second and First Circle spirits with their own ranks, and also apparently a need to design by committee. (Writer's note: I barely kind of understand it from memory now.)

There is also a notable amount of cynicism in the presentation of 2e versus 1e on this, with the infighting of the Ministers being something introduced in the latter edition. The Core's tone is also notably different, with the First Edition version being notably more emphasizing its grandeur while 2e presents it as crippled and mutilated.

Adding to the confusion are elementals, which appear to be individually spawned by the Ministers in 2e, rather than forming out of elemental processes like elementals do in Creation. So far on this front, Discord developer commentary is that these will be folded into a form of machine spirit, and that Autochthonia having its own suite of elements will be depreciated.



## Souls of Gaia and other Gaian spirits

At this time, what other souls of Gaia exist is unknown. Something of note is that **Lands of Creation** did note Gaia as having twenty hidden souls, though this hasn't been reaffirmed anywhere in 3e. There is at this time a known Gaian spirit, the Worm-Eaten Woman, found in **The Realm**, however.

## Enlightened Mortals

The concept of "enlightened mortals" who have broad access to all universal magics is more or less defunct in Third Edition. Mortals can access such magic, but usually only a subset and often it's their "thing", such as a daiklave made from their tears with Evocations, commune with a snake spirit to gain Snake Style, or access to sorcery. The kinds of mortals that various Exalt Charms might uplift often are given a bespoke set of unique Charms to use. In general, mortals with notable supernatural capabilities are much rarer and notable in the setting of 3e.

The main exception so far have been the yennin of Volivat, though they mostly are represented as unique QCs rather than something player-facing, and are notably not something that can be achieved in an individual's life but something as a result of a unique form of birth.

## The Exalted

This section pertains to things that deal with changes to the Exalted in specific and in general.

## The Nature of the Exalted

### Exalts are Chosen

In Third Edition, the Exaltation process is not entirely automated or outsourced. The patrons of the Exalts either actively choose or already chose who will be their Exalted.. Thus, the Unconquered Sun decides each time whether someone is worthy to be a Solar, the Maidens set someone as fated to Exalt in the future, and the Dragons appear to have empowered various lineages to bear the spark of their Exaltation. The nature of this can be bizarre for the likes of Alchemicals or Getimians, but there is likely something about their patrons that allow the Choosing somehow regardless.

Note that the reasoning that "The Primordials could have just told the gods to stop Exalting" is not a premise Third Edition assumes. It appears that the Great Geas is more akin to what 1e had and that the gods could not personally enact violence against their creators, but nothing about being compelled to do things beyond normal forms of coercion.

## Exaltation has a Price

The act of Exalting causes the deity to suffer a form of diminishment in some way. It is not clear how the Incarna and Dragons were diminished, but the Dragons being asleep seems to imply that's part of it. Notably the price is non-refundable. Oramus and Sachverell regretted creating the Getimians, but could only seal them away, not undo them.

## Exaltation is Cursed

The Great Curse is upon the process of Exaltation itself, rather than something that affects the Exalted specifically. This means that Exalts created since the Divine Revolution like Liminals still suffer it in some way. This to an extent also absorbs some of the "bad point" mechanics of splits from previous editions like Abyssal Resonance.

## All Exalted are Strong

A general theme in how Third Edition presents the different Exalted sorts is that while there are conflicts along Exalt type lines, the text tries to present opposing Exalted as worthy ones. The Lunars are fighting the Realm and their success is in spite of the Realm's efforts. The Dragon-Blooded do rule the world, despite not being individually as powerful as the Solars or Lunars.

## Arenas of Play

Broadly Third Edition assumes two arenas of play for different Exalts. Note that while an Exalt is suited for that arena of play, they are not necessarily the category the level of play is named for. More detail on this can be found in **Out of the Ashes**.

The more high end, world-shattering and changing power of the mightiest Exalted is considered Celestial play. This includes Abyssals, Alchemicals, Getimians, Infernals, Lunars, Sidereals, and Solars. Notably in this area is that while Solars and their derivatives are strongest, they are not meant to be without challenge and in a tier on their own. Celestial tier play is meant to facilitate more or less equal footing for its members.

Terrestrial play often deals with smaller scale issues, though characters are still often the most powerful in the setting, they are not assumed to have as broad personal impact. Dragon-Blooded, Liminals, and most Exigents fit in this category.

## High Essence and Elder Prowess

Attributes and Abilities don't go above 5 in 3e, even when a character has Essence 6+. A lot of the supergenius/skilled stuff is represented more in Charms themselves that PCs can have or get towards Essence 5. A lot of the power elders have is as much political and material resources that can collect over centuries instead of just raw stats.

The core rulebook had a few Charms that seemed to indicate more general mechanized Essence 6+ Charm effects. Since then there has been a presentation of Elder Prowess Charms, which usually are powerful but ultimately niche effects that help reinforce an elder Exalts' thematics. They are not meant to be in themselves boss fight Charms or overwhelm PCs, but instead show interesting aspects of a character.

There is also a notable scaling-down of average Essence, with currently no Dragon-Blooded above Essence 5, many a tad lower, and quite a few elders who are not nearly as high as they were in prior editions. Developers have also noted that Essence of spirits in future books might be a bit more toned-down from what was in the corebook.

## Kinds of Exalted

The five original Exalted from the First Edition core rulebook return: Solars, Dragon-Blooded, Lunars, Sidereals, and Abyssals. Third Edition also sees the return of the Alchemical and Infernal Exalted introduced in **Time of Tumult** and **Manual of Exalted Power: Infernals** respectively, although the latter is planned to be subject to notable revision. These last two get their prestige write-up like the corebook, including descriptions of their Castes, in **Crucible of Legend**.

In addition, Third Edition introduces three new sorts of Exalted. The core rulebook includes descriptions of Liminal Exalted, Chosen of the Dark Mother to mediate between the realms of living and dead, as well as the Exigents, Chosen of the lesser gods of Creation utilizing the Flame of Exigence in times of great need. There were also clues towards the Getimian Exalted, Exalted forged from discarded destinies. Getimians received a prestige spread in **Crucible of Legend** along with Alchemicals and Infernals.

At this time, Solars, Dragon-Blooded, Lunars, and Exigents have their main rulebooks fully released. Sidereals currently is in PDF backer previews with layout. Abyssals are currently available to backers of their crowdfunding campaign as raw text manuscripts. Alchemicals is currently being written and is the next planned crowdfunding project for Exalted. Infernals is currently being written and developed, and will also have a crowdfunding campaign. Liminals and Getimians are not planned to have crowdfunded standalone books, and have not appear to be in development at this time.

There were three other kinds of Exalted hinted at in the corebook via illustration and teased by the prior developers. These eventually became the apocryphal Exalted found in an appendix in **Exigents: Out of the Ashes**. The entities that created the Exaltations are considered canon in Third Edition, but it is up to a given table whether the Chosen themselves are. These included the illusion-wielding and solipsistic Dream-Souled, the ever-hungry soul-ensnaring Chosen of the dead Incarna Aurora known as Hearteaters, and the internally tormented Chosen of the traitor Incarna Nebiru known as the Umbral Exalted.

## Solar Exalted

In general the Solar Exalted serve the same narrative role as in prior editions. They are the Exalt found in the corebook and a lot of stuff is written with them in mind. The main changes are:

### Expanded Caste Roles

A mechanical element introduced for Solar Exalted is the idea of expanded Caste Abilities. Each Caste now has eight options for Caste Abilities, from which a character chooses five. Any not selected can still be selected as favored, but the Exalt's Supernal Ability must come from their Caste Abilities. This expands the roles of each Exalt sort to help reinforce their themes. Notably:

**Dawn Caste:** Awareness, Dodge, Resistance. More options to help solidify the ultimate warrior setup. Notably, the attack Abilities (Archery, Brawl, Melee, and Thrown) are only available as Caste, and therefore Supernal, Abilities for Dawns.

**Zenith Caste:** Athletics, Lore, War. More examples of "Peak person", ability to replicate events in the Book of Judges, and allowing especially charismatic generals or philosophers a place.

**Twilight Caste:** Bureaucracy, Integrity, Linguistics. More intellectual/orderly Abilities, as well as the ability to keep one's head and resist the dangers of the Occult.

**Night Caste:** Investigation, Ride, Socialize. Ability to suss-out information from causing a scene to reading into people's motives, or hiding one's motives. Also allows for tracking, and also grants the Caste general supremacy of personal movement.

**Eclipse Caste:** Larceny, Occult, Presence. Grants the Caste more tools for personal interaction, navigating the world of spirits, and the criminal world.

### Supernal Ability

A mechanic that is meant to showcase Solar power in the setting is that of Supernal Ability. Each Solar character has a Caste Ability for which they can ignore the Essence requirement to purchase or upgrade Charms (save sorcery and Sidereal Martial Arts). This means a newly Exalted Solar is often punching much higher above their weight class than would be expected with many effects and Charms, making them potentially a huge problem for those not prepared to deal with them in their area of expertise.

### First Amongst Equals

The Solar Exalted are the strongest Exalts still. This is even with their Charm set being considered the roughest in the edition. The gameline tries to be balanced in a way that Solars often will have an advantage, but not so overwhelming as to render other Exalts pointless. While this is not always reflected in mechanics due to the different design principles in the authorship of those Charms, it is shown as the line has gone along.

This is also shown in-setting with the First Age so far, where a lot of the greatest achievements were a result of cooperation between the Solars and other Exalted.

## Broad Foundational Competence

Solar Exalted are universally Resonant with all magical materials. They can learn all Martial Arts and gain the Mastery benefit from non-Sidereal ones. They are tied with Lunars on access to Necromancy, and their Excellencies are pretty straight-forward with a high total potential cap.

## Wild Card

A big thematic shift with Solars in Third Edition is a focus that since the Usurpation, Solars were treated as more or less extinct in the world. While they would pop up and have to be put down by Wyld Hunts, they were now rare enough to be notable when they showed up. Most major factions had moved on since the Usurpation to more pressing modern problems. Notably Lunars focused more on the Shogunate and the Realm as a theft of their political power as much as the Solar's loss, and the Gold Faction has been presented more as general reformers, with Solar recruitment being a very new and not universal element to them.

The return of the Solars isn't presented as so much a restoration of the past but a big wrench in the plans of everyone for the future, even compared to their derivatives who have a bit more predictable narrative lines due to their themes.

## Essence Edition

In **Exalted Essence**, all Exalted are generally brought to parity to facilitate mixed play more easily. In this context, Solar Exalted instead has as advantages high mote efficiency with Excellencies that cost no motes and always winning ties. They retain the broadest access to artifact Resonance, sorcery, and Martial Arts, plus many of their unique Charm Modes are the most straight-forward and broadly applicable. Solars as an Exalt in Essence are presented as having good, solid, clear baseline effects that allow a wide range of tactical options that other Exalted are not afforded.

## Dragon-Blooded

Note that Realm and Lookshy and such have their own sections, so this mostly focuses on big changes for Dragon-Blooded broadly.

## Ancient Terrestrial Exalted

The Second Edition origin story of the divine mandated orgy is no longer present. In addition, there wasn't an assumption that each Solar got their own gentes at the beginning of the First Age as their signing bonus. Unlike 1e and 2e, there is not an indication that Gaia commanded the Dragons to create the Terrestrial Exalted.

As a retcon from the Third Edition core rulebook, the Dragon-Blooded didn't serve as foot soldiers but instead were more the officers of the army of the gods, which included much of humanity. It implies they probably weren't as numerous in the First Age as 2e does.

A big thing of note is that the Dragon-Blooded are presented as having much greater autonomy and agency in the First Age. Dragon-Blooded-ruled polities and dynasties existed across Creation, and in some cases those polities had Celestials working for those states rather than ruling them. One such example is in **Many-Faced Strangers**, where the Lunar Elder UI of the Burning Eye had a Dragon-Blooded wife and spent much of the First Age serving the kingdom his family's dynasty ran.

The Usurpation was notably a conspiracy between the Bronze Faction and large elements of the Dragon-Blooded Host. It is presented more as a joint effort than someone being duped. There is also not a presentation of the Shogunate being a result of the Dragon-Blooded as unfit to rule. It's just...sometimes bad governments are bad.

## No Miscegenation Subplot

The idea introduced in 2e that the original Dragon-Blooded were in effect a race separate from humanity that over time became polluted with breeding with them is no longer present or hinted at. Nothing really implies the Dragon-Blooded as a dying or failing group of Exalts in Third Edition. This generally goes with the splats not talking down on itself also.

Of note as part of this is the elemental aspect of a house or gens is mostly emphasized for flavor. While a given house member is probably of its element, not a lot is discussed on a need to maintain as much as was in the Second Edition write-ups.

## Exaltation Inheritance

Rather than Breeding being something akin to Vampire Generation, one's pedigree is mechanized only with some social merits. Some families seem to have more kids Exalt on average than others but it's never guaranteed. This can be cultivated, but at best some lineages can get as much as four out of five kids Exalting, while less prestigious ones are more a coin-flip. The Empress herself even has living mortal children.

What also affects odds of Exaltation is the concept of Progenitive Essence. When an Exalt conceives a child, there is an expenditure of their cultivated Essence. This is the best chance their kid has to Exalt. Having a child soon after will diminish the chances they themselves Exalt, which encourages Dragon-Blooded to wait between children, usually about 10-20 years. This doesn't mean the kid won't Exalt if born too soon after a sibling, but the odds are low and the Realm has a stigma against such offspring as "leftover children".

This is done to avoid the Breeding Camp brainspiders, and also to lower some of the "objectively right eugenics" aspects of both prior editions.

## More Respect

In general there's a tone in Third Edition of being more respectful to the Dragon-Blooded. They are presented as serious threats to other Exalts in numbers, being in charge of major empires and states across the world, and not treated as less than Exalted when possible. The lowering of total Solar power and a bit of a raise of theirs is shown in that also. Dragon-Blooded are individually still the weakest Exalted, but text tries to do a lot emphasizing they're Exalted.

There isn't anything about gods inherently hating the Dragon-Blooded, nor much of the Usurpation impacting the views on them. Gods tend to have a more pragmatic relationship with the Terrestrial Exalted in terms of things like Immaculacy as well, and we even see a few more Immaculate deities.

## More Outcaste Groups

There's a lot more general support and discussion of Exalts out of the Realm and Lookshy. This can include individual wandering Dragon-Blooded heroes, but also nearly a dozen other Dragon-Blooded groups named and described in the line so far.

## Notable Dynasts

### The Scarlet Empress

The Empress remains a major cipher in this edition, having disappeared five years ago under mysterious circumstances. The major differences with her this edition could be summarized as follows:

- Her relationship with Chejob Kejak is less inherently antagonistic. He doesn't try to make her a puppet and she doesn't (purposefully) aggravate him. The role is much more allies across powerful organizations than they are enemies.
- As of yet no sign has been presented of her as being in some sort of plot with the Ebon Dragon. While this was a hinted plot in 1e and a more explicit one in 2e, the current edition is not interested in rereading that storyline.
- Hints of her being part of some Shogunate eugenics programme or the Loom of Fate being a big factor in her success are not the case this edition.
- She isn't presented as hyper-competent as in prior editions. While she is still an ideal Legalist who tries to make all authority of the state stem from her, it wasn't complete and wasn't always competent. She was prone to stints of promoting folks she liked over more competent individuals and drawing on her clique of peers. She didn't have a seat in Stygia's ruling council, nor ordered the execution of an entire session of the Deliberative.
- Like in 2e, there are earthquakes produced when she used the Realm Defense Grid. However, this is explained as just part of how the Imperial Manse works, rather than being something about her being a Dragon-Blooded.
- Developers have stated she is likely a Fire Aspect, rather than the Earth Aspect of 2e.
- It's generally assumed she may have been the only Dragon-Blooded alive at the time of her disappearance of an Essence greater than 6.

## Cathak Cainan

Cainan is mostly the same character as before with some emphasis on his being competent-but-old as a potential Empress. There is also some change to his relationship with Cathak themselves, who in 3e is a woman adopted by the Empress. She promoted him to matriarch as she was dying although I need to check what (if any) his relationship as to her besides grandmother potentially. He is presented as rather being the queen-maker than ruler himself. Note that with the title of matriarch being gender-neutral in Third Edition, he is considered the matriarch of House Cathak.

## Mnemon

Mnemon receives some recharacterization to make her a more well-rounded character. Some things of note include:

- Off the bat, she's described as looking barely over 30. This is more consistent with 1e's description of her. She's noted as "not even 30" in **Manual of Exalted Power: Dragon-Blooded**, but she is made to have never aged past 16 in **White Treatise**, which was her assumed depiction then-out in discussion of her by the fanbase.
- There's not been any implication of her casually murdering servant girls for auguries.
- She isn't shown as being conspiring with Deathlords either.
- She's noted as being a well-regarded architect and construction was one of the things she picked up running from Ragara's assassins. She builds a lot of temples for the Immaculate Order.
- Her faith in the Immaculate Philosophy is presented as genuine, though with her at the top and notably self-serving. House Mnemon is also responsible for a lot of construction projects relating to the Order.
- She's extremely loyal to her loved ones and close family. She adopted her younger sister Mnemon Rulinsei after she was maimed in a failed assassination attempt by Ragara. She is noted as taking a lot of time to find out about notable scions and give advice, recommendations, and even general comfort to them.
- She *also* holds her loved ones and close family to high standards and will note her disappointment when they fail. The term "tiger grandma" has been tossed about with her in the fandom.
- She despises Ragara with all her might. She is also stated as being his full sibling, their father being Rawar.
- She dislikes V'neef, but is not murderous about it. The issue is her reputation makes everyone think that she is.
- She is noted as sharing the Empress' sardonic sense of humor, but not quite her charm.

## Ragara

Ragara gets more screen time in general this edition. While the general story of his rise, his attempts to assassinate his siblings, and his being forced to raise Sesus remain, some dates are shuffled slightly to help make this line-up with other elements.



In prior editions it is stated he's retired in the North. In Third Edition he currently resides in the city of Pneuma specifically. We also get to see a bit more in his head on what he thinks about the Realm, the Throne, his mother, and Mnemon. While retired, he comes across as a lot more "In the know about and considering acting on things" than in 1e and 2e. He is also noted as being a full sibling of Mnemon, with both having Rawar of Arjuf as their father.

## Tepet Ejava

As of the start of Third Edition Ejava has a different place in the running for a Realm Civil War. Second Edition to an extent presented her and Mnemon as the only real contenders to the Throne. Ejava's characterization is more like her First Edition take: Leading the Vermilion league as it operates in the Southwest. If the civil war goes on for a long time her chances go up. But as of now she's considered more of a third-rank candidate. She is still a famous and very competent general, but House Tepet is not quite in the game in the same way that she would be the keystone of their claim to the Throne.

## V'neef

V'neef is not described as having the super-pure eugenics background thing as described in 2e. She is also not described as explicitly the Empress' youngest child, though is the youngest Great House founder and specifically Exalted offspring as of **Heirs to the Shogunate**.

V'neef is described as having the charisma and many of the social skills that Mnemon didn't get from their mom. She is also notably described as a survivor, having gone on a lot of adventures when younger, and notably dedicated to seeing her new House through the upcoming rough seas. She is also noted in thinking that if Mnemon becomes Empress, she's dead, and a lot of her actions have that self-preservation factor to it.

She, along with Mnemon and Sesus Raenyah paired with Oban, are presented as the most credible claimants to the Throne. Though unlike Raenyah and Oban, we do get more details on V'neef's personality and character. There is not much on her having a major daughter founding her own major family in 3e.

## Lunar Exalted

Lunars are one of the Exalts who change the most edition to edition. 3e Lunars to an extent draw on elements of both prior editions, but do a lot to define themselves beyond that.

## Forging the Castes

We straight-up don't know the Castes Lunars had, if any, during the Divine Revolution. At some point in the First Age their Castes became guardians, guides, world-walkers, judges, and mystics, while some remained Casteless, but no names for these Castes are given in 3e.

After the Usurpation, instead of the Castes dissolving due to Wyld taint, the Lunars purposefully dissolved their Castes and remade them into monsters, tricksters, and witches. As such, the Full

Moon and No Moon Castes are as much creations for the Second Age as the Changing Moon, rather than an amalgamation of other Castes.

## Casteless and Chimera

Being Casteless no longer has a risk of becoming a shoggoth in 3e. It is instead presented as an option of an effective fourth Caste, focusing more directly on shapeshifting specifically than the more specialized aspects of the other Castes.

Chimera in this context is simply a result of a Lunar who has taken a Charm to have a second animal for their spirit shape which results in a blend of elements from both in that and their hybrid form.

## Influence of the Wyld

The Wyld affinity of previous editions is no longer a major feature of Third Edition Lunars. The reforging of their Castes has nothing to do with the Wyld. There is no risk of chimerism as presented in 2e. It mostly comes with their magic which deals with terrain, and also the effects moonsilver artifacts often have.

## Relationship with the Solar Exalted

A bit of a retcon from the Third Edition core rulebook to **Fangs at the Gate** is that the Lunar Exalted are not presented as slaves to the Solars, but more the benefactors as a member of a coalition with them during the First Age.

The Solars and Lunars weren't paired by design like in 2e. The census of both return to their numbers more like in the **Exalted Storyteller's Companion** from 1e, where Solars numbers around 150, plus around 100 Abyssals and about 50 Infernals, and Lunars were between 300 and 400, meaning they simply didn't have numerical parity. Additionally, their First Age Castes came later in the Age, so their parity was not guaranteed there either.

Instead, early in the First Age the two Exalted went to a massive global conflict that went decades. When the war ended, one of the ways to seal the peace was various ceremonial marriages and oaths that bound individual Lunars and Solars. This over time emerged into the Bond. Not all Solars or Lunars have such a bond, and it is more or less kind of just a neat expansion of their power that wasn't intended or planned for by their patrons.

Notably too is that the Bond is symmetrical. Solars are able to be just as affected by their bond to their Lunar bondmate as the other way around. And the emotion created need not be positive either. Nemesis can be bonded as much as lovers.

## The Silver Pact

In Third Edition the Silver Pact is a lot less formalized than in 2e. It is mostly the program that wants to destroy the Shogunate and its successor states, often using Threshold societies as a

means to do so. It's in a long term conflict with mostly the Realm, Lookshy, and Prasad, working to undermine their abilities to be empires.

Rather than the five factions in 2e, Lunars often instead cluster around notable individuals called shahan-ya (a term repurposed from 1e). These are notables like Ma-Ha-Suchi, Raksi, and Leviathan plus quite a few other new ones. Each shahan-ya has their own view of how to approach the war against the Dragon-Blooded Hegemonies, with Lunars gravitating toward ones they find fitting philosophically. Not every Lunar has a shahan-ya, not every Lunar is on the warpath against the Realm, but there's always a place for those who want to do that to go there. Some conflict in the Pact is a bit on "What's the endgame here?" as well as methodology and feelings on ultimate goals.

## Lunar Dominions

The Lunar Exalted do nation-building in Third Edition, but notably not the Thousand Streams River. Rather than the goal of trying to make societies that don't need Exalted to function, Lunars instead set up societies that well, fit their goals or interests as nation-builders. In many cases, this is with a goal of undermining or countering the influence of empires like the Realm or Lookshy. So supporting steppe raiders, competing empires out of the Realm's reach, or just making sure their native people are better-off.

A few of the cultures in prior editions which gained Lunar patrons after their introduction no longer seem to have them. Chiaroscuro, Halta, and the Haslanti League more or less developed on their own, not as Lunar projects. Instead, most Lunar projects are things that always were theirs (Luthe, Mahalanka, etc.) or written with a new Lunar character in mind.

## Lunar Magic

### Shapeshifting

Third Edition Lunars no longer have the option to shapeshift into things like inanimate objects, plants, spirits, or magical creatures. There is also not so much shoggoth or stretch Reed Richards-style powers.

Instead, Lunars focus on being *a particular kind of shapeshifter* and take the forms of humans and natural animals, while emphasizing those for their magic. They notably can take the shape of humans without additional Charms. They also no longer suffer any form of form lock when their anima is too bright.

This is done with an emphasis on themes. Lunars perform sacred hunts and consume heart's blood. They are the kinds of shapeshifters that are often monsters, tricksters, or witches. And much of their magic touches on the themes and concepts of animals, which doesn't support the more exotic forms as well. This is also what allows them to steal forms in ways besides murdering a target, such as theft, a deal in a challenge, or harassing them in dreams. They also

have great control of their forms they have, with their Second Breath giving them their idealized form of self.

Additionally, this means other Exalts might be able to pick-up some of those themes. A fungal Exigent or an Infernal with a Devil-Body that's a battlefield in itself are probably better places for those effects than trying to fit them all in Lunars.

## Necromancy

Third Edition Lunars can initiate into the second Circle of necromancy as well as sorcery. This means that for a lot of history they were either peers of the Solars or the best necromancers in Creation until the rise of the Deathlords and Abyssal Exalted.

## Notable Lunars

### Leviathan

Firstly, Leviathan is a trans man in 3e. Like with most Lunars he gained his idealized self in his Second Breath.

The bit with Leviathan being Lancelot to Arkhadi's Arthur isn't described in his write-up. He did spend a lot of the time building up Luthe as a result, but has turned his attention to fighting the Realm recently, neglecting Luthe itself. He's also noted as being cautious about the return of the Solar Exalted.

He's also notably not on the "torture all Dragon-Blooded" binge in Third Edition. His focus of hate is the Realm and its navy, not really Dragon-Blooded as a whole.

### Lilith

Desus is no longer the name of her First Age Solar mate in Third Edition. Instead she had a relationship with a guy called Andamani, who they had a bit of a falling-out with. She's spent the last few centuries basically lost in the mind of being an owl. She also notably is Casteless this edition since she never bothered to seek a new Caste out and none one felt like convincing her to do it. Without chimerism as it was in prior editions this doesn't put her in danger. She is also less tied to Swan, I think in part to decouple major setting NPCs from the sample characters where needed.

Lilith in 1e was the first Lunar we saw, and a lot of her original story was tied more to Swan and being the First Age Lunar with conflicting feelings creating drama. Her husband even being Desus isn't in the original Lunars book that I can find, and I think Swan being him isn't until 2e. There is the story on her going fully bestial in 1e, the opening fiction of the Lunars book does in passing mention physical abuse, and the book does mention her having to be tattooed, but really not a lot on how she viewed

The 2e write-up kind of focuses on the abuse as her main defining trait. She kind of got subsumed as an asset to Desus' story, or more Desus took over her story. Desus is canonized as Swan's prior reincarnation, though I need to seek out to see if maybe I missed that in 1e or a fiction somewhere.

## Ma-Ha-Suchi

Pretty much a different character in Third Edition. He was a Lunar hero and champion of the Old Realm. After the Usurpation he believed the only legitimate claim to the world was by the Lunar Exalted with the Solars gone, and the Dragon-Blooded and Sidereals as usurpers. He wasn't the guy trying to fuck everyone, nor a Meatloaf refence. Also notably he is a goat totem by default with wolf added from being a chimera. And his Tell is the sound of silver bells rather than a Wyld taint.

He grew jaded about whether the Dragon-Blooded could even be beaten after the Realm rose out the Contagion. While he fought with the Pact, his last straw was the falling out he had with his friend Raksi and other Lunars over the idea of a Lunar Realm. The archetype I would describe him in Third Edition is that renowned hero/revolutionary/champion who is done with the system that takes something to get him back on board. He is also well aware he's that and fucking hates when his students try to push him that way.

The 2e characterization of him compared to 1e was notably violent and potentially mentally unstable. He was a chimera with a wolf totem originally and the silver bells voice was a Wyld mutation. He was described in the First Age as trying to bed all the other Celestial Exalted as a goal and generally presented more bishounen ironically. His Second Age self was more a dog needing to be put down.

First Edition presented him as a warlord on the brink of going to war on the Scavenger Lands. There is atually a fiction in **Lunars 1e** where he is thinking over his list of targets, and it is notably more coherent than he appeared in 2e.

## Raksi

Off the bat there's a few things from Second Edition which she explicitly is **not** anymore: a person who's severely mentally ill and disassociated with reality, a compulsively addicted cannibal, nor a thousand year old young girl with daddy issues.

Her presentation is more of a calculating genius who is also a self-interested asshole. She more or less likes having Mahalanka under her control and using her power over sorcerers and *The Book of Three Circles* to collect power, and knowledge. She's interested in the Realm's destruction but wants it replaced with Lunar Dominions across the world mostly working for themselves.

She notably also likes cultivating a reputation that makes folks afraid or uncomfortable around her with displays of power, violence, and cruelty. This includes cannibalism, gruesome public

acts of torture and violence, and so on, though less out of sadism and addiction like in Second Edition and more again, power plays. She doesn't have many friends in the Silver Pact.

### Unaccounted For

So far there's not been a mention of Tammuz, Rain Deathflyer, Silver Python, or Ingosh Silverclaws.

## Sidereal Exalted

Sidereals don't get quite as radical a shift on things as Terrestrial and Lunar Exalted, but there are some notable changes to be found in the book nonetheless. Most of it is mechanical, though there are also some changes to Heaven that are discussed elsewhere in the document to check-out as well.

### Sidereal Exaltation

Kind of weirdly, while assumed, **Manual of Exalted Power: Sidereals** never actually outright states that Sidereals are Chosen at birth like in 1e, and it isn't corrected until **Scroll of Heroes**. Second Edition also presents the "spirited away" option of Sidereals raised in heaven as a pretty common practice.

Sidereals in Third Edition are fated to Exalt when they're born. This means that the basic cause and effect of things will lead to their Second Breath. Sidereals can still forecast these Exaltations and often hang around being like Ben Kenobi to future Chosen. Kind of notably, the turn-around need not be a whole lifetime. One of the examples is a girl helping a dying guy with a mark on his forehead who Exalts as he died, kind of to his surprise too. There isn't a general age range of when people Exalt presented in the Third Edition take.

### First Age Sidereals

Sidereals in the First Age share some aspects of how other Exalts operate in the time. Exalts besides Solars had kingdoms and polities throughout Creation. This included Sidereals, who in some cases chose to rule on Earth than serve in Heaven.

## The Solar Purge

The Usurpation is both more simple and more messy than in Second Edition. First, there was no Great Prophecy. The future Bronze Faction more or less concluded the need to act against the Solars and Lunars because they believed their actions were unsustainable. The original intent was to set up a transitional Sidereal Regime, which would lead the world to future safety and stability with the Solars gone and Lunars banished to the edge of the world, in cooperation with a cohort of Dragon-Blooded conspirators.

The issues that came were: Unlike in prior editions, some Solars **did** figure the plot out, so they were prepared. Or some Sidereals opposed to the Purge warned them. Or they were just

generically paranoid anyways. And some Solars managed to win in the battles with their assassins.. Basically it was a clusterfuck. Instead of most Solars dying in the Calibration Feast, the Usurpation became a protracted conflict that took nearly a decade.

### The Jade Prison and Arcane Fate

An additional issue was as a result of where to put the Solar Exaltations. The Jade Prison itself was a once-in-history artifact crafted utilizing the tear shed by the Unconquered Sun when he turned his back on Creation. And instead of chucking it into the ocean, the Sidereals opted to hide it in the stars, specifically the constellation of the Mask.

The Mask could hold the Jade Prison but the strain of the act cracked the constellation. This resulted in the creation of the Sidereal Arcane Fate, and forced them to have to work behind the scenes with the Terrestrial Shogunate as their Plan B.

### The Bronze Faction

The Bronze Faction as presented in Third Edition is mainly the Status Quo Faction. The Bronze view is that Creation should be preserved at any costs, even in that world is not the most glorious, prosperous, or happy. During the Shogunate they tried to prioritize whichever daimyos they thought would result in the least total harm when they went to war. And in the Second Age they focused on the Realm as a singular, powerful tool to pursue their overall goals. Right now their priority is that if a civil war breaks out it's as minimally destructive as possible. It also works infiltrated in other cultures and organizations throughout the world to help with its global agendas. The Realm was just the most useful until now.

A way to think of it is that the Bronze isn't anti-Solar and Lunar due to some prophecy. They're anti them for being potential wrenches in everything, and a large part of the Bronze operations in 3e is as much trying to keep them out of the succession crisis. They don't need more actors.

### The Realm and Immaculate Order

This is discussed quite a bit in **The Realm** but the Bronze Sidereals are deeply embedded within the Immaculate Order itself. A notable shift in presentation of the Immaculate Philosophy is that elements of it existed from the First Age, and the original project was more collaborative between Sidereals and Dragon-Blooded. Chejob is noted as having had some Mouths of Peace see through his arcane fate. And he is apparently a friend with the current Mouth of Peace.

### The Gold Faction

The Gold Faction is characterized more as the opposition to the Bronze Faction than the pro-Solar Faction. It originally formed from those in opposition to the Purge itself or came to regret acting in it. Through the years it hasn't really had a unifying philosophy save Not Bronze, with folks having ethical, practical, or personal reasons to oppose them. This means it has waxed and waned in prominence over the centuries and is composed with a pretty diverse

coalition of views. The main thing it shares is willingness to work with one-another and some want to change things in ways the Bronze would reject.

This means that the Gold Faction isn't really always pro-Solar in its actions either. Some support different contenders for the Scarlet Throne, for instance, they think would make for a better Realm. Some are afraid of a second Shogunate Era with multiple polities going at each other's throats. And others work on pet project in the Threshold,

### The Cults of the Illuminated

Something of note with the Cult is that it started as a late Shogunate mystery cult. After the Contagion it scattered and has a lot of heterodoxy throughout the movement. Ayesha Ura currently uses it as a vehicle to help Solars, along with other Gold Sidereals. But it is more ad hoc than in prior editions, no training camps or anything but instead Solars being instructed through specific instances of the Cult through Creation. Additionally, it is mainly Ayesha and her ally's project, rather than the major priority of the Gold Faction or the only way Gold Sidereals might help Solars.

### Independent Sidereals

Basically Sidereals who don't side with a Faction all the time. This isn't in itself really neutral. Not wanting to argue over the future means the status quo stands, which helps the Bronze.

Something of note is there's no talk of "third color" options. This is in part because the Bronze and Gold Factions themselves aren't aligned to any particular Exalt, so having a Silver Faction or whatever is not congruent with things. Someone who wants to put a lot of effort in cultivating Lunar connections is usually either an independent or a Gold, although the fact that many Lunars don't really give a shit about the split means that there's a bit of "Interact at one's own risk".

### Rogue Sidereals

Rather than the term ronin, Sidereals are usually considered prodigal stars (Sidereals who choose not to join the Bureau) or rogue agents (Sidereals who did join but quit). The Bureau tries to keep in contact and tabs on these groups and not interfere with their agendas unless it interferes with destiny. Sidereals are not big on killing one-another still if they can and pissing off a Sidereal who could return as an asset is not considered a good idea.

### Essence Users and Destiny

Instead of Essence use granting greater free will *per se*, Heaven mostly avoids making destinies for supernatural beings because they present too many variables and can cause destinies to fail more often. So destinies are often written without depending on an Exalt to be a herded cat.

Enemies of Fate are outside of the predictions of the Loom of Fate. So they can screw up destinies by being third parties coming in and crashing plans.



## Enemies of Fate

Rather than some beings being outside of the bounds of the Loom of Fate, since well, that's not what it does, some beings are Enemies of Fate. This means that by their nature they disrupt the flow of fate, making it harder for Heaven to implement destinies. Notably, Enemies of Fate often give Sidereal magic *bonuses* rather than penalties like in prior editions.

Enemies of Fate include fae, demons, the dead, and Abyssal, Infernal, and Getimian Exalted. It includes Liminals without a thread of life. Alchemicals and Autochthonians are within fate in Third Edition.

## Sidereal Magic

### Charms

Sidereals Charms are more diegetic than other Exalts, more often representing real techniques in the world that are named. Their sets remain generally smaller and more limited than other Exalted, but they are not constrained to one Charm per line in the relevant Scriptures like in previous editions. This results in a lot more weird tricks for them than in prior editions.

### Astrology

What was the singular system of Sidereal Astrology in 1e and 2e has been broken-out into a few different ones. The 25 Colleges remain, although instead of dot ratings a Sidereal selects two signs that grant them bonuses when performing prophecies.

- Ascendant and Descendant Destinies, along with most of the Resplendency powers are now just part of the Charmset.
- Resplendent Destinies as identities are inherent power Sidereals have now, independent of astrology.
- The remaining elements of the astrology mechanics is found in the Prophecies systems, which allow Sidereals to do something akin to sorcerous workings to predict the future.

### Martial Arts

Sidereals favor Martial Arts regardless of Caste and get the Merit for free, which is a shift from prior editions that kind of gave Endings a free favored Ability.

Sidereals are uniquely the only Exalts that normally can create or teach Sidereal Martial Arts at all. There is a bit where fighting a Sidereal using Sidereal Martial Arts counts as being trained by the Sidereal, however. Violet Bier of Sorrows is no longer the main Sidereal native style, and styles for the other Divisions will be in the Sidereals Companion.

## Notable Sidereals

### Ayesha Ura

Ura is notably not the leader of the Gold Faction in 3e, but instead one of its more prominent members. While she was a prodigy of Chejob, any hints of romance are gone. She was an Immaculate adherent before Exalting, became disillusioned over time, and quit the Faction outright after the Contagion. She and her peers cultivated the Cult of the Illuminated before the Solars even showed back up. She is also notably an actual believer of the faith's tents.

### Chejob Kejak

An Easter Egg in **Lands of Creation's** timeline when put together indicates Chejob is exactly 4,999 years old as of RY 768. Which is not a very subtle way of noting he's about to die any moment.

The First Edition core rulebook notably has in the fiction Chejob's age is described as follows:

Kejak was ancient, one of the oldest living things in Creation, but few of his 5,000 years showed on his body. In a century or three, not even the Exaltation would be able to sustain Kejak's flesh. He would fade to dust and memories, as his own elders had faded in the years before the Contagion. ...

This indicates that at least in First Edition, he had at least some time to him, versus the very immediate death awaiting him.

Third Edition seems to go with more ambiguity. He is near death, but how near is never said at all, days or centuries. The main focus is on his worry about a need for a successor and what happens after he dies.

It's also worth noting that despite the fandom presentations of him, Chejob is usually presented in all three editions as a pretty no-nonsense workaholic. The main thing I would argue Third Edition presents is that he doesn't regret what he did at all to this point. Some of the 2e comics implicated him as having second thoughts/doubts over the Usurpation

### The Green Lady

So the first place the Green Lady showed up was as a servant of the Walker in Darkness in **Scavenger Sons**. I remember this specifically because I used her as a Midnight Caste antagonist back then. She didn't become a Sidereal until **Exalted: the Abyssals**, and notably the double-agent thing where she was mostly on Mask's side was a bit of the "Walker as punchline" train.

Her becoming a quintuple agent in Second Edition stems from the Bishop of the Chalcedony Thurible and the Silver Prince also having Sidereal servants. The Green Lady's disguises were meant to make it so three Sidereals weren't going about working for the Deathlords.

Third Edition retains the “deep cover” aspect of her, although expands it to be something she has done for missions throughout the world. She is also the chair of the Convention on the Dead. Rather than any particular Deathlord, she’s described as having done missions in Stygia, other Underworld power players, and shadowland stuff as well. She’s much more about protecting Creation from the dead than anything else.

### Unaccounted For

Most of the Inner Circle from **Cult of the Illuminated** have not made an appearance in 3e. Nor are most of the Convention leaders named in **Manual of Exalted Power: Sidereals**.

## Abyssal Exalted

### The Origins of Abyssal Exalted

The Deathlords straight-up didn’t know where the Jade Prison was until one found them. The process of breaking it was a collaborative effort between them, which included contacts in Hell. In general it’s presented as kind of this big project that had a lot of risk when it was done. Rather than a necromantic construct, there was a big working which aligned the Mask with the Underworld stars and caused the Jade Prison to fall. They still got about half the Solar Exaltations and gave the Yozis their part of the bargain.

### Exaltation

The term Bleak Exaltation is used instead of Black Exaltation. The general ways in which the Abyssals are Chosen is similar. Someone who had potential to become a Solar Exalt is on the brink of death, and the Deathlords hijack the process the Sun would have Chosen them to give them the choice of death or seeking to bring the end of the universe. The Abyssal abandons their name and becomes both a creature of darkness and an enemy of fate.

The Exaltations themselves are funneled through the Monstrance of Celestial Portion, which instead of cages that can fit a person are intended to look more like real world monstrances. They act as occult artifacts, and like with the 2e errata, destruction doesn't kill the Abyssal. What it does is left ambiguous.

The book does talk about Abyssal redemption as something pretty big deal if it were to happen. There’s less description of the process, and one change even includes that there isn’t necessarily a need to ask the Sun for forgiveness like in prior editions. Another notable bit is that Solar damnation is considered about as difficult, and as of the default setting, Solars becoming an Abyssal hasn’t ever happened. Another change from Second Edition is that Abyssal redemption isn’t said to cure the Great Curse, more like First Edition’s silence on the issue.

## Abyssal Nature

A lot of the issues for Abyssals is expressed in their Llimit, which works similar to 1e and 2e, though with a bit more emphasis on not so much punishing as being narratively interesting. Something Third Edition introduces is a concept called the Chivalry of Death, which is the ways in which the Neverborn seem to prefer their servants to pursue the long term goal of destroying everything. Things like taking out the strong before the weak, making folks want to die willingly, and so on. Wanton slaughter doesn't get the job done.

Abyssals no longer have to have a minimum Appearance rating based on their Essence. The trappings of death have a bit of a threshold that need to be visible to work. And there's not really anything in 3e about how Underworld entities have less Essence replenishment outside of the Underworld or vice-versa.

## Expanded Caste Roles

Abyssals share the additional Caste options feature of Solar Exalted, as well as the concept of Apocalyptic Ability, which functions like the Solar Supernal Ability. While each Caste has the same options as from prior editions, the additional choices differ from their Solar counterparts.

**Dusk Caste:** Athletics, Resistance, Ride. Less about the ability to maneuver in a fight personally and reflexes of a warrior, and more raw physical prowess. Also more the actual knight/cavalier theme.

**Midnight Caste:** Larceny, Linguistics, Lore. More emphasis on subversion, the use of language, and the ability to move amongst the people, living or dead.

**Daybreak Caste:** Awareness, Bureaucracy, Sail. Observation, understanding the laws of the dead, and navigating the oceans of the Sea of Shadows.

**Day Caste:** Investigation, Socialize, Survival. Ability to better investigate or perform spy activities, track down those they have chosen to kill, and read the motivations of others while hiding their own.

**Moonshadow Caste:** Integrity, Occult, Presence. Holding one's ideals and mind in the sort of environments a diplomat should operate in. Ability to be personally influential and understand the ways of the dead.

## Deathlords as Patrons

A notable thematic shift with Abyssals in Third Edition is that the Deathlords are presented more as potential patrons and mentors than overlords and slave-drivers. The relationship is more knight and lord or mentor and apprentice than master and slave. The Deathlords might not be the best bosses still, but there's a lot less presenting usurping them as the ultimate destiny of the Abyssal Exalted. In general Deathlords want Abyssals working for them.

There is also more room for being a deathknight errant. Things like a deathknight simply never being picked-up or signing on to the Deathlord who Exalted them, or deciding they have their own agenda. This could still result in them being an enemy, but isn't presented as an example of total suffering as it had been in prior editions, besides what the Bleak Exaltation itself does.

## Abyssal Magic

Abyssal Charms in general follow a pattern of being similar to Solar Charms early on and branching into more Abyssal-specific ones later. A lot of their more esoteric magic is often based on the themes of the nine canonical Deathlords, showcasing less that Abyssals use Deathlord Charms and more that the two draw on the same pool of themes. Abyssal Charms tend to be notably bleak, violent, tyrannical, necromantic, and expressing applied power.

There is notably less body horror and splatterpunk in the Abyssal Charm set compared to prior editions. This focuses Abyssals on being a particular kind of undead, the kind of "Overlord" sorts like liches, vampires, necromancers, and so on. More of the ghoulish or lesser undead stuff is something they control or inflict on others, while the more gorey or body horror elements, as well as the mediator ones, are more something Liminals are expected to work with.

This is also shown in the undead nature. Abyssals are undead whenever it suits them, and alive whenever it also suits them. So a ward versus undead creatures wouldn't count the Abyssal, while some curse which afflicts the living would pass them over. Again, there's a theme of being a *powerful* kind of undead being with Abyssals that is emphasized in a lot of their mechanics.

## Alchemical Exalted

### Adamant Castes

Adamants are now considered one of the six regular Alchemical Castes, rather than a hidden/apocryphal one. Rather than being hidden spies, their themes are more muse, exemplar, and support. Exalts who motivate, lead by example, and bring those around them to greater heights.

### Alchemicals in Creation

Unlike previous editions, Autochthon did make a few proof of concept Alchemicals at some point before leaving Creation. Playing one of these Alchemicals awakening in a later era is going to be an assumed way to play them.

## Infernal Exalted

While Infernal Exalted make a return to Third Edition, the Green Sun Princes are still quite notably overhauled from their Second Edition presentation.

First off: More or less assume everything from the first two chapters of Infernals is defunct. No more Phylactery Womb. No more obligatory other forms of sexual abuse. No more “Torture the Exalt” buttons like Torment.

## Origin and Recruitment

Currently it is known that Infernals still come from the Exaltations granted to the Yozis with the opening of the Jade Prison. Rather than a Reclamation as in previous editions, the Yozis seek out mortals that they can sympathize with as best they can in context of feeling slighted, wronged, betrayed, oppressed, or denied what is rightfully theirs. By empowering them with the powers of Hell, the hope for the Yozis is that such mortals will wreak havoc on the world of the gods and Chosen with their own tools. An analogy often given is “shaken soda can Exalt” in the sense they are meant to be smashers of the status quo and general problems for everyone else.

Notably, the Yozis are not going to get out of Hell in this and they are not expecting to. The goal is to have the Infernals give them revenge and catharsis, rather than actual escape. And the Yozis hope the one human emotion they seem to feel very strongly keyed to, a sense of being wronged, will mean they act in ways the Yozis think will do damage (because it’s what they’d do). Whether a PC does this or not is up to them, but they are still armed with very upheaval-themed hell powers.

## Relation with the Yozis and Demons

A notable emphasis in the write-ups on Infernals so far is that despite the Yozis having Chosen them, they are still massive, alien entities. The Unwoven Coadjutor is now more a goetic construct formed within the Exalt’s mind that acts as a mediator with the alien will of the Yozis.

There is intended to be a bigger emphasis on Third Circle Demons acting as potential mentors and peers of the Infernal Exalted. And an expectation to have the “Rock stars of Hell” element as a major upfront thing rather than something implied after the setting chapter. There is also generally a desire to present Infernals as not dupes.

## Changing the World, Not One’s Nature

A thematic change of Infernals in Third Edition is that there isn’t a notable theme so far of them becoming no longer Infernals, no longer human, or having a big thing becoming a new form of titan. Instead it is more about revolution, upheaval, and changing the world around you.

This isn’t to say their Charms might not have effects that render the character inhuman in thought, behavior, or ability. And they still have devil-bodies which they can manifest to take on inhuman forms. But there is less emphasis seen so far on Infernals being some evolution of Exaltation or the titans.

# Big Mechanical Changes

## Castes



Infernal Castes are no longer associated with specific Yozis. Their names are now associated with describing the way objects move in a spherical navigational system. Something that works in all alien realms. Also, their Castemarks are designed to be more like those of other Celestial Exalted as simple geometric shapes reflecting the Caste versus the more detailed ones of 2e. The Castes are in order:



**Azimuth Caste:** Dawn-equivalents. Warriors, berserkers, and champions. They're Chosen from those who have been victims of violence and war.



**Ascendant Caste:** Zenith-equivalents of priests, prophets, and messiahs. Chosen from those considered worthless, impure, or abominations.



**Horizon Caste:** Twilight-equivalents. Scholars, artisans, visionaries. Chosen from those denied education or intellectual opportunities due to societal, physical, or economic reasons.



**Nadir Caste:** Night-equivalents. Anarchists, iconoclasts, and criminals. Chosen from those who suffered some form of imprisonment be it actual capture and enslavement, or rigid social expectations.

**Penumbra Caste:** Eclipse-equivalents. Schemers, diplomats, and spies. Chosen from those of higher status who reject it in favor of reform, revolution, or siding with

those it is pitted against.

At this time we do not know what the Ability spread for each Caste will be. It is not assumed that the Infernal Castes will overlap with the Solar and Abyssal Castes in the same ways, however. It is also not known if there will be an equivalent to Supernal or Apocalyptic Ability at this time.

## Charms

Infernal Charms are no longer the exact same Charms used by the Yozis. They will be instead divided by Ability like with Solar and Abyssal Exalted. Their Charms will still express the themes of Hell and the Yozis, however, with Abilities drawing on different Yozis suiting its needs, such as Szoreny Larceny disguise effects, Malfeas-inspired brass armor, or Qaf-inspired dedication Charms.

Infernals will also have Charms that explore the themes of Hell generally. They will also have access to some of the "Realize one's own legend" effects with Charms like Spirit of the Living World and Path of a Thousand Whispers from prior editions likely being accessible earlier on.

## Devil-Bodies

Rather thanshintai emulating the Yozis, Infernal characters will have the option to create a unique devil-body based on their personal themes and menus of powers. This is again, similar to taking the Tiger-and-Phoenix stuff and making them more baseline Infernal capabilities.

## Artifacts, Sorcery, Martial-Arts, Longevity

Infernals are Resonant with oricalchum and neutral with other materials. It appears tarnished oricalchum is a major component of the Infernal aesthetic. Other exotic materials from Malfeas will probably also be things they are Resonant with.

Infernals are masters of sorcery and peers to the Solar Exalted in this regard. As per **Exalted Essence**, they can also initiate into the second Circle of Necromancy.

As a change from 2e, Infernals are equivalent in competency to Solars and Abyssals at Martial Arts. They can also initiate into Sidereal Martial Arts.

Infernal lifespans are equivalent to Solar Exalted. The whole “Burn hot to die young is a design feature” element from **Broken-Winged Crane** is defunct.

## New Exalted

Exalted Third Edition introduces three new sorts of Exalts in addition to those found in prior editions.

### Exigents

This is a catch-all term for Exalted of the little gods. A god under emergency circumstances can petition the Unconquered Sun for a portion of the Flame of Exigence. This acts as a catalyst to allow the god to temporarily boost themselves enough to create a Chosen. It always takes something from the god though, and many die in the process.

Exigents serve as an open-ended homebrew splat. They are there to facilitate something more elaborate for homebrewers than a Martial Art style or Evocation tree, but also still have room to fit an entire new Exalt into the setting without too much issue.

### Liminal Exalted

These were first introduced in the 2e book **Masters of Jade** in passing. They are the result of someone trying to resurrect someone in Creation. While resurrection is impossible, the attempt draws the attention of a being in the Underworld known as the Dark Mother, something which seems to have been involved with its maintenance since before the Divine Revolution. The corpse animates an Exalt who is a new individual with a new identity and only vague memories of the body's past self. They focus on stories of monster hunting, mediator and guide for the dead, or someone trying to make a place with the living. Their powers often draw on body horror, splatterpunk, ghost-hunting, and psychic median stuff.

### Getimian Exalted

Introduced in the 3e corebook kind of through hints, but more detailed in **Exalted Essence** and **Crucible of Legend**. They are Chosen of Discard Destinies. They originally were meant to be a



Sidereal foil, and serve as a contrast take on the concepts of destiny, reality-warping, and esoterica. They are the results of a destiny (a plan Heaven had for the future) being discarded in favor of something else. The Getimian comes into existence remembering a different Creation than the one that actually exists, with the big notable change usually being that they were never born. Think **It's a Wonderful Life** but the main character never gets to go back to his original timeline.

Their magic draws on bringing their memories of how the world should be into reality, as well as a mix fo Taoist internal alchemy aesthetics.

## Universal Magics

### Artifacts

Some of the more notable changes in how Third Edition presents the setting is how it presents artifacts in the world.

### Magitech

This is often cited as one of the bigger changes of Third Edition over Second Edition. In general, there is a de-emphasis that artifacts with a mechanical or sci-fi aesthetic is a unique category in itself "Higher" than regular artifice. Additionally, there isn't an assumption of engineering progress that results in convergence on magical machinery that looks like modern Earth tools.

In general, magical infrastructure is rarer and harder to produce in the setting of Third Edition. There isn't an assumed level of development that means countries start mass producing anything considered an artifact. Some locations *do* produce magical prodigies, though this is often a result of a local supernatural source or thaumaturgy.

This doesn't say there is no magitech in 3e. Warstirders, airships, large scale magical infrastructure, gunzousha armor, and Essence weapons still exist. Their reliance on such things is an aesthetic choice, however, and are still considered in the whole rare, valuable, and difficult to obtain without specialized artisans.

### First Age Artifice

Some artifacts due to their nature, if able to be easily produced compared to other artifacts, would likely warp the setting in ways that are undesirable by authors. Many artifacts in the category do have magitech aesthetics, but they are not synonymous. Being First Age Artifice is a narrative consideration, not an aesthetic one.

## Evocations

Third Edition introduces the idea of Evocations, Charms that stem from the connection a character has with their artifacts. These largely take the place of unique powers contained as default in previous editions, as well as some of the mechanics from more advanced artifacts trying to use Repair ratings to offset the Background limits.

The Evocations an artifact has are informed by their material and the history of the artifact. Dot rating, rather than facilitating higher equipment stats indicate instead the power of an artifact. Only artifacts with ratings of ••• or higher. All artifact weapons and armor fall in this category.

## Resonance and Dissonance

Rather than just stat bonuses, artifacts made from a material that is Resonant with a given Exalt sort allow them access to more powerful Evocations. Conversely, some Exalts are Dissonant with a particular material and so their Charms will have effects that lower their effectiveness when used by them.

As of writing these are the current affinities of each sort of Exalt:

- **Solar Exalted:** Resonant with all materials
- **Dragon-Blooded:** Resonant with all colors of jade, Dissonant with soulsteel, neutral with all others
- **Lunar Exalted:** Resonant with moonsilver, neutral with others
- **Sidereal and Getimian Exalted:** Resonant with starmetal, Dissonant with all others
- **Abyssal Exalted:** Resonant with soulsteel, neutral with all others
- **Alchemicals Exalted:** Resonant with Caste material, neutral with all others
- **Infernal Exalted:** Resonant with oricalchum, neutral with all others
- **Liminal Exalted:** Neutral with soulsteel, Dissonant with all others.
- **Exigents:** Terrestrial play Exigents are usually neutral with one or two materials and dissonant with all others. Celestial Exigents are normally Resonant with their material and neutral with all others.

**Essence** doesn't use Dissonance. All Exalts Dissonant in a material are simply neutral with that material in **Essence**, while Terrestrial arena Exalts which were only neutral with one material are Resonant in it instead. Liminals, for example, are Resonant with soulsteel and neutral with other materials in **Exalted Essence**.

## Sorcery and Necromancy

The Salinan Working being a change to reality to allow for sorcery is an advent of 2e. In **Savant & Sorcerer**, it was instead a large scale project to preserve spells in various features and people of Creaiton, so that they could always be re-found.

The Salinan Working as presented in 2e is no longer assumed to be how sorcery works in 3e. Instead, sorcerous learn various initiations that impact the ways they practice magic. These

include learning at the Heptagram, studying under Mara, having your soul broken by something in the Wyld, or having a near death experience via drowning. These give access to additional Merits that help make sorcerers notable weirdos.

Necromancy is introduced in **Abyssals: Sworn to the Grave**. In Third edition, it is more parallel and compatible with sorcery. Rituals work between the two to grant motes, and some spells even straight-up crossover. In general, necromancy gives up some of the utility that sorcery has to access unique spells sorcery can never have, as well as access to necromantic workings.

The First, Second, and Third Circles of Necromancy are now Ivory, Shadow, and Void respectively.

## Access

Sorcery is both more and less accessible to many starting Exalted characters. Terrestrial Circle Sorcery only requires Essence 1, but for most Exalts besides Solars and their derivatives, it also often requires knowledge of additional Occult or mystical Charms.

Mortal sorcerers are diegetically rare in the setting, but often facilitate some of the roles dedicated thaumaturges did in prior editions.

Each canonical Exalt has the following access to sorcery and necromancy by default:

- **Solar and Infernal Exalted:** Solar Circle Sorcery, Shadow Circle Necromancy
- **Lunar Exalted:** Celestial Circle Sorcery, Shadow Circle Necromancy
- **Alchemical, Getimian, and Sidereal Exalted:** Celestial Circle Sorcery, Ivory Circle Necromancy
- **Abyssal Exalted:** Celestial Circle Sorcery, Void Circle Necromancy
- **Dragon-Blooded, Liminals, and most Exigents:** Terrestrial Circle Sorcery OR Ivory Circle Necromancy.

## Signature Spells

Another addition to sorcery is the concept of signature spells. When a character learns a Circle of magic, they select a spell that counts as their signature. This conveys the character with an aesthetic or mechanical effect that helps showcase that magical affinity.

## Sorcerous Workings

Workings are an addition to sorcery in Third Edition which allows sorcerers to reshape the world in major narrative ways. This replicates some of the more customizable ritual spells in prior editions, as well as covers effects that can often be found in media that don't quite fit in the framework of a spell. Examples include creating major supernatural infrastructure, new life forms, forms of immortality, and so on.

Notably while workings are tied to Circles, Exalts can spend extra time and energy to try to achieve a working of a higher Circle than they are initiated in. This allows for some of the more complex or notable supernatural achievements of mortal and Dragon-Blooded sorcerers that can be seen at times in the setting.

## Countermagic

A notable change in 3e is there is no longer any form of simple counter magic spell. Spells can be disrupted, but never completely undone. Notably, workings cannot be deleted, only modified.

## Summoning

Unlike in prior editions, necromancy and sorcery do not cross-over in summoning whatsoever.

As noted before, demon summoning allows mortals to bind demons.

Summon Elemental creates an elemental of Essence 3 or less. It sticks around as narratively appropriate.

Summon Ghost also has a cap on the kind of being it can summon. Higher end undead require more potent spells.

## Thaumaturgy

Thaumaturgy has a notably reduced role in Third Edition. A lot of the things that were mechanized by it in 2e are now covered by the applications of Abilities through stunts, the use of sorcerous workings, or simply not something that exists as a system level interest. What remains is often the more esoteric or bizarre powers a thaumaturge might be able to perform.

Thaumaturgy is mostly represented by a Merit and related rituals of varying power. These represent supernatural Merits that grant miscellaneous supernatural powers. At this time there isn't too much more on the topic, but expansion on thaumaturgy and such is something that the developers wish to explore.

## Martial Arts

Martial Arts in 3e is a 26th Ability separate from the others. By default it requires a Merit in order to access, and is meant to supplement an Exalt's fighting style, each represented by a different Ability rating like Craft.

Third Edition does away with the concept of Terrestrial and Celestial Martial Arts. All such styles are simply Martial Arts. Individual Martial Arts Charms instead have either the Terrestrial or Mastery keyword. Charms with the Terrestrial keyword have additional riders that note how the Charm functions in a weaker state for Exalts subject to the keyword. Meanwhile, Mastery means that Exalts who qualify gain a bonus to the Charm's effect.

As of this writing, the following Exalts are affected by martial Arts as follows:

- Terrestrial: Dragon-Blooded, Liminals. Terrestrial play Exigents
- Neutral: Lunars, Celestial play Exigents
- Mastery: Solars, Abyssals, Infernals, Sidereals while in a style's Form or having completed the style. Presumably Getimians, but their method is unknown.

Additionally, mortals do practice these styles as well, though without magic it mostly is something of a descriptive device without some form of supernatural capability. One such example is Ashana Ikatu, Master of the Coiled Viper Dojo, who has through communion with a snake spirit learned Snake Style as a series of Merits.

## Sidereal Martial Arts

Sidereal styles now start at Essence 3 and go to Essence 5, typically. Only Sidereals can normally create them or teach them, and canonical only Solars, Abyssals, Infernals, and Getimian Exalted can also learn them.

Instead of the sutra discounts, Sidereal Martial Arts Charms will sometimes have the Enlightened keyword. Such Charms grant additional benefits exclusively to Sidereals or Getimians currently in the style's state. Exceptions can exist for specific styles, such as Albicant Sepulcher of Extinction Style being created and taught by the Bishop of the Chalcedony Thurible and Abyssals who have completed that style gaining its Enlightenment effects.

## Exalted Essence

In **Exalted Essence**, styles are even flatter. The main constraint on styles is access by Exalt type. Modes only increase power, so nothing like the Terrestrial keyword weakens Charms. And many styles have Modes tailored to thematically appropriate Exalts.

# Places, People, and Organizations

## The Realm

### History

Broadly the Realm's history is similar. The Empress came to power by use of the Imperial Manse to fend off the armies of the Fair Folk. She then fended-off the Seven Tigers, made an alliance with Chejob Kejak and the Immaculate Order to garner legitimacy, and the Imperial City grew around the camp that formed around the manse.

Notable changes include that it appears many of the legions were built on the remnants of Shogunate legions that came to work under her. She also was not the sole post-Shogunate

Terrestrial polity in Creation. She also doesn't seem to have, initially, conquered the Blessed Isle. Up until RY 266, there were gentes along with Great Houses at the same time. We also see instances like Arjuf having the ability to elect its own governor historically.

Something of note through the line is how the Realm waxes and wanes in some areas. The Realm held a lot of territory up the Silver River in the Northeast until a wave of plagues in the early 200s destroyed the Realm's presence there. Port Calin doesn't manage to escape its control until around RY 418. The Realm had a very weak presence in the West until RY 690 with the subjugation of Wu-Jian. The conquering of the Southwest took a few centuries. Meanwhile it doesn't really have much of a presence in the Southeast and Prasad could succeed at any time. And there is a bit of stretch and pull between the Empress and Houses through the centuries back home like the rise and fall of houses being more spread-out, notable rebellions, and heresies.

## Realm Culture

### Realm Gender Norms

First and Second Editions hinted at a favoring of women in positions of power and glass ceiling for men in parts. This never quite manifested due to authors often putting men in most leadership positions such as Great House leaders, the legions, and the navy.

In Third Edition, this is a bit more in force, and widely detailed. Most Great Houses were founded by women, with a couple with less of a biography to them having their gender stated outright or swapped to facilitate this. The leader of a household is the matriarch and this is gender-neutral in the Realm. Children inherit the social class of the mother, regardless of level of Exaltation. Etc.

There is also a different attempt to explain the nature of the misandry in the Realm from Second Edition. The Second Edition description of "no feminine men" and an emphasis on masculine women is not used. Instead, the Realm generally has many of the personality stereotypes for men and women found in 21st Century Anglophone countries. The key difference is that the values placed on them are different. For example, women seeking power in the modern world often are stereotyped as being ambitious and something scrutinized more, while in the Realm this is praised as positive. Men in the real world often are excused for violent, crude, or self-destructive behavior if it helps others. Men in the Realm have the same stereotyping, and it is why they are often not trusted with serious or important tasks.

The Realm legal system greatly favors wives over husbands. Children belong to a mother's household and take her name most of the time, even if she is mortal and her husband an Exalt. There is also a favoring of women in higher officer positions of the military and ministries. The Admiralty Board of the Imperial Navy is composed entirely of women.

The Realm is tolerant of people's self-identified gender identities in Third Edition's setting, although there's an expectation that one should act according to the roles expected of that gender as best they can.

Same-sex relationships are generally seen as fine in the Realm, so long as people still have legitimate children either with their spouse or other means. The Realm allows for same-sex marriage, with the older spouse legally being the wife for most purposes. Such pairings generally are like any marriage for love in the Realm: the households involved need to get something out of it. Raising children via adoption or use of sorcery for conceiving children is common practice with such marriages.

## The Blessed Isle

### Time Before

Something of note is that nothing in Third Edition so far has implied that the Blessed Isle was only populated by the gods during prehistory. There is also nothing on the alawn.

### Geography

A few of the features on the Blessed Isle remain from previous editions. The Isle itself is a bit different, with more, smaller islands and archipelagos to the West, more marshland in the Southwest, a harder Northern climate, and more in the mountains center.

Some features from **Compass: Blessed Isle** do appear on the Third Edition map, though often in a different form. Some highlights include:

- While Tongma Island is no longer a thing, the Northwestern archipelago is named the Tongma Archipelago.
- The Mhalin and Dhorash mountain ranges had their names swapped in the Third Edition map for some reason.
- The Dragonswrath Planes are now the Dragonswrath Desert.
- The Daoshin Peninsula has nothing about desertification. It's more swampy and wet.
- The Silk-and-Pearl Peninsula is described as more prosperous. It was resettled by Western refugees fleeing the Contagion.

In general, the Blessed Isle of Third Edition is more a microcosm of Creation. The Northern coast is wet and cool, the Northeast green steppe and mining regions, the East fertile with rivers and great farming, the Southeast is likewise warm and fertile, the South consisting of multiple deserts, the Southwest marshland, the West various archipelagos, and the Northwest a gateway to the rest of the world. The central Blessed Isle is notably mountainous beyond the Imperial Mountain which divides the continent.

There's a lot to emphasize the scale of the Isle in Third Edition and the distance locations might be from one-another. This is done in part by describing the Isle as densely populated with many

locations. In addition, the unsettled parts of the Isle are more its Center and South, rather than the West.

### The Imperial Mountain

The mountain is described in *Endless Prefecture*. Its ultimate size is not given, but it is noted as being vaguely visible on the coasts, implying it's big but not as many hundreds of miles as sometimes given by fans. Truth is no real height to my understanding has been given for the mountain, but it might be assumed its depiction on the map is not to scale.

The city of Meru still sits near the summit, though the elemental forces towards the peak prevent easy access to it. In general there's quite a bit black-boxed about the mountain itself.

### Weird Stuff

The Blessed Isle in Third Edition does have shadowlands, magical forests, and resident Fair Folk. There are fewer due to efforts by the Imperial government and the Immaculate Order, but it is worth noting that there are supernatural things on it.

This is shown in the geography of areas like the Tarpan Wastes as well, which is an area that was magically made more productive which has fallen into desertification during the course of the Realm.

### The Great Houses

House Iselsi is no longer considered officially a Great House in Third Edition, having been demoted in RY 740. The edition also has a clearer timeline of events on when Houses came and went, with them more spread out over the course of the Realm's history.

Each Great House also has a diversified portfolio of interests. For example, while Sesus is a military house, they also have a notable mercantile faction which mostly operates on war profiteering. Houses, in general, are rich, and are rich in ways that are a bit more what one would expect from a conglomerate holding multiple business monopolies.

The podcast **Wondrous Atlas of Creation's Destiny** has a series on each Great House noting changes between editions. This here is merely a quick summary of key highlights.

### Founding of the Great Houses

One of the bigger shifts is some of the major dates of the founding of various Great Houses, who they were founded by, and the birth of a few of the Empress' children. While **Exalted: the Dragon-Blooded** in 1e said all the Great Houses save V'neef were founded by RY 590, it is notable Nellens is that threshold in 3e. The main changes are as follows:

- Cathak was a woman adopted by the Empress. The house was elevated in RY 283.
- Cynis was a daughter of the Empress. Birth date is unknown. House Cynis was elevated in RY 501. The main thing we get is more biographical information.



- Ledaal was the granddaughter of the Empress and daughter of Jurul, rather than her own daughter. House Jurul was compromised by a Lunar and plotted to overthrow the Empress. She uncovered this and gained the House as a reward, and was given Imperial writ to pursue her Shadow Crusade.
- Mnemon still was born in RY 369. Rawar was both her and Ragara's father. He is noted as having been a trans man and the two were born via use of sorcery. Rawar's death is still RY 370, with a note he was assassinated.
- Nellens died in RY 399 rather than RY 261. House Nellens is elevated in RY 590 rather than 412. Nellens was still the father of Sesus and died the year she was born.
- Peleps was one of the first Great Houses established in RY 103. She was the Empress' second daughter and is currently deceased. The big change from prior editions is that there's anything about her at all.
- Ragara was born in RY 139. House Ragara was established in RY 168. He's noted as being the one who uncovered the Jerah plot with Eyem described in **Aspect Book: Air**.
- Sesus was a woman in Third Edition, rather than a man. She was born in RY 399 instead of RY 231. House Sesus was founded in RY 440, rather than some time in the 300s as described in the **Exalted: the Dragon-Blooded**. Like with Cynis and Peleps we get more biographical information on her.
- Tepet's siege on the Imperial City and taking as a consort occurs in RY 53, versus his being taken as consort in RY 362. House Tepet is one of the first Great Houses. Tepet is dead and has a tomb at the family estate versus missing as in 1e and 2e.
- V'neef is still 60 years old, born in RY 707. Her birthday is during the year, it looks like. The House itself was elevated in RY 754. No year is given in 1e or 2e that I could find for the House's elevation. She is notably not described as the Empress' youngest daughter, though is her youngest Exalted child.
- Iselsi was a notably skilled bureaucrat who the Empress adopted and had one of the first Great Houses in RY 103. The attempted invasion of the Scavenger Lands and subsequent coup attempt happened in RY 637 and RY 643 respectively, instead of RY 301 and RY 303. Rather than going underground immediately they are left to languish until being denoted to a patrician household in RY 740.

Third Edition also names and goes over a few of the fallen Great Houses:

- House Akiyo is a new name introduced in Third Edition. It is a House that simply fell out of favor after failing to cleanly put down a revolt.
- Houses Burano and Ophris were among the founding Great Houses. Their founders are not described. Their legions went rogue, conquering Prasad in RY 145-148. Over time the Blessed Isle houses fell out of favor while the Prasaki Dragon Clans became cadet houses.
- House Chanos was name-dropped in 1e. It was destroyed in the process of Sesus' founding.
- House Manosque more or less has the same history.

## Other Children of the Empress

Another notable shift in the relationship of the Empress and her children is that they were not guaranteed Great Houses. At this time we have the following named in Third Edition:

- Berit is described in **What Fire has Wrought**. She is a Water Aspected daughter of the Empress with a notable military career who was denied a house. She hid herself away to study sorcery, and has had overtures to her in the context of the upcoming Realm Civil War.
- Mnemon Rulinsei is Mnemon's sister. She was maimed by Ragara, and protected by and later adopted into Mnemon's household. Rulinsei is a notable family line within the House.
- Oban is the son of the Empress and husband of Sesus Raenyah, the matriarch of House Sesus. Not a lot is known besides the fact that he is a big proponent of her as a candidate for Empress and his marriage to her as a legitimizing element.
- Ivoret is a mortal son of the Empress named in **The Realm**. He currently resides in the Imperial Palace.

## House Aspect and Lineages

While houses do trend towards an element and there are the themes of each given house, the purity of aspect isn't really emphasized as much in Third Edition as it was in second. Additionally, not as much is gone-over with notable families as in previous editions.

## House Leadership

Every Great House has a singular matriarch. While they often have other governing bodies within the house, the matriarch is who legally signs everything off and is the face of the house legally. For quite a few houses, this is not necessarily who was in charge in prior editions. At this time, only Cathak and Ragara have men as their matriarchs.

Something of note is that Great Houses are not often run by married pairs as in prior editions, but mainly by the matriarch and her advisors.

The various house leadership is as follows:

- **Cathak**: Cathak Cainan as matriarch.
- **Cynis**: Cooperatively between Cynis Belar acting as matriarch, Cynis Felan as main financier, and Cynis Wisel as the main shady dealings person.
- **Ledaal**: Flashing Tempest Council. Ledaal Yasmets serving as matriarch.
- **Mnemon**: Mnemon as founder and matriarch.
- **Nellens**: The Most August Council, comprising three Exalted and four mortal members. Nellens Gazal serves as matriarch.
- **Peleps**: The Rightly Guided Admiralty Board. Admiral Peleps Lai serves as matriarch.
- **Ragara**: Ragara Banoba as matriarch, advised by his inner circle.
- **Sesus**: Sesus Raenyah as matriarch. Notably supported by Oban and the Masked Council. The familial council structure of prior editions is not present.

- **Tepet:** Tepet Corino (de facto) serving as matriarch. No indication of a council structure as in Second Edition.
- **Iselsi:** Public matriarch not named. Primary ran by an independently operating network of elder spymasters.

## Ancestral Homes

Each Great House now has a base of operations that they have as a de facto capital. This is a bit of a shift in prior editions which wasn't as clear on what the home base was for each House.

- Cathak: Myion, Myion Prefecture
- Cynis: Pangu, Pangu Prefecture
- Ledaal: Arjuf, Arjuf Dominion
- Mnemon: Mnemon-Darjilis, Dejis Prefecture
- Nellens: Juche, Juche Prefecture
- Peleps: Bittern, Voice-of-the-Tides Prefecture
- Ragara: Riven Quay, Corin Prefecture
- Sesus: Chanos, Chanos Prefecture
- Tepet: Lord's Crossing, Lord's Crossing Dominion
- V'neef: Eagle's Launch, Eagle Prefecture
- Iselsi: Sion, Incas Prefecture

## House Cathak

House Cathak to an extent is what it was before. Tactician house focusing on strong emphasis of discipline, moral-boosting from charismatic leadership, and general passion. They are slated as one of the the big queen-maker Houses, which is their preferred role in a new regime over putting their matriarch on the throne.

Cathak's house legions have been used for mercenary work, as well as helping protect tribute being transported overland, as well as aiding Imperial Legions in the suppression of foreign polities.

Their ancestral home, Myion, appears to be a new location introduced in Third Edition.

## House Cynis

Cynis is still the house with a monopoly on slaves and the slave trade, as well as having contacts with the Guild for drugs and narcotics. They're also the general illicit goods and big parties House in presentation. Their structure around the three sisters remains, though it is a bit clearer who manages what.

Notable additions to the house is their additional focus on food production, especially with the agricultural hub that is Pangu Prefecture as their home base. They also have a sizable number of doctors, apothecaries, and other medical experts. In addition, many of their big party stuff and social networking has allowed them to build-up a sizable blackmail and information-brokering network.

## House Ledaal

Ledaal is the scholarly and nationalistic house, although that knowledge is a bit more focused on the House's ideological Shadow Crusade. House Ledaal positions itself as the main bulwark of the Realm against the forces of the Anathema and other supernatural elements of Creation. Basically on top of the general scholarly elements of prior editions, there is a notable Van Helsing/Belmont/devil-hunter theme going on with them.

## House Mnemon

In prior editions, there wasn't much to the house save being about Mnemon and folks wanting to be like Mnemon. The house is still centralized around her, but rather than emphasizing its production of monks and sorcerers, the house's big economic focus is on construction. There are still a lot of sorcerers and monks, it's just that construction is the main source of revenue for the Great House.

Their ancestral home of Mnemon-Darjilis in Dejjs Prefecture is new to Third Edition.

## House Nellens

Nellens is still the house with a lot of mortals and founded when the Empress glued a bunch of patricians and outcastes into a house. It is still mostly funded by being an omnicorp with a high amount of diversification in its business interests.

The notable changes are its later founding, some of the names of who's on the council, and the amount of emphasis put on cultivating mortals specifically as allies. There is more emphasis on relations with the patriciate and the Imperial Bureaucracy as its support base, with less emphasis placed on the Exalted v. mortal dichotomy.

There's a couple more specific house relations noted in the Third Edition write-up. Namely their lack of Ragara debt makes Ragara hate them, Sesus hating their guts due to the name being that of Sesus' father, and making overtures to House Tepet.

They retain Juche as their main base of operations from prior editions.

## House Peleps

There are two notable shifts with House Peleps in Third Edition. The first is that the general vibe of skullduggery and competition in the house is still there, it is not the public image of the house. There is a lot more about romanticism and heroic sailor stuff. Additionally, the general cutthroat vibe is more in a sense of meritocratic competition, rather than ruthlessness.

The second is the house is going broke. While 1e was generally positive, and 2e described them as doing well, 3e emphasizes the devastation that the loss of the Merchant Fleet has reaped upon the house's economy. This results in a faction within the house wishing to use the Imperial Navy to establish a Western Empire, go Prasad, and cut ties with the Realm save nominally serving as a protectorate.

The ancestral holding of Bittern in Voice-of-the-Tides Prefecture is new to Third Edition.

### House Ragara

Ragara is mostly as before in the sense that Ragara Bonoba is in charge, Ragara himself is retired, and the house makes a lot of money off of mining, investment, and predatory banking practices. The two main shifts in presentation are that Ragara himself gets a bit more screen time this time around, with a bit more internal conflict on his part as to whether he's happily retired or not.

The second is the introduction of the idea that the house hoards power in general, items from the Realm Before in particular, and no real scruples to speak of where they have to go to get them. There's basically a big conspiracy to collect all the doomsday weapons and forbidden knowledge possible to help the house if need be in the future, with a policy of throwing under the bus anyone who gets caught.

The house's ancestral holding of Riven Quay in Corin Prefecture is a new location introduced in Third Edition.

### House Sesus

Sesus remains a military house in Third Edition. One of the things noted is that they have less well-trained forces and probably wouldn't win a fair fight with Cathak if they had to muster similar numbers. The main thing highlighted is Sesus doesn't fight fair.

There's a lot of emphasis on both the general roughness of the house, but also its underhandedness. Sesus operates with scouting, wetwork, sabotage, and terror tactics as highlights. The house also has the most sophisticated spy and espionage network of any Great House. The loud, brash, brutal aspects help bring cover to this. An analogy to consider is that there's smoke with fire.

Sesus' house legions are stated as being used for mercenary work, as well as conquest and subsequent mop-up. They also leverage their spy and wetwork operations to suborn foreign states or the Guild.

Sesus herself is noted as having been responsible for the destruction of House Chanos. Chanos itself is now the Sesus ancestral holding, which is in contrast with the location being more Ragara-centric in Second Edition.

### House Tepet

House Tepet was founded much earlier in Third Edition, amongst one of the first Great Houses to be elevated. A notable bit of final shift in Third Edition is we get a bit more on the actual culture of House Tepet besides "the failing house". Tepet in Third Edition is characterized as an ancient house that holds a lot of old Shogunate Era traditions. This includes the divine armigers

who specialize in Evocations and the yamabushi scouts who deal with spirits and other occult practices useful for military purposes.

The house is no longer ruled by the five children of Tepet, but instead currently the de facto matriarch Tepet Corino, due to loss of the matriarch during the wars with the Bull.

Of note, the number of Exalts lost in the campaign is a quarter of the house's due to deaths and desertions. This is in contrast with Second Edition which described the losses more akin to two-thirds. A notable element of Third Edition is that the campaign against the Bull was long, arduous, and bloody for both sides rather than a quick route. While the Battle of Futile Blood was the last stand, both sides were bleeding bad by then and it is considered a Pyrrhic victory for both sides. House Tepet lost its legions, but the Bull might lose his empire.

The Tepet legions are noted as not having been used as mercenaries. They instead assisted the Imperial legions, and were well-known for training auxiliaries and garrison forces.

Their ancestral homeland of Lord's Crossing was their main holding in prior editions as well.

### House V'neef

With the introduction of Progenitive Essence, V'neef notably won't have as many children as in prior editions. She is much more reliant on the various outcasts that were adopted officially into the house upon its creation. The Merchant Fleet is noted as having been a major revenue stream for them, but this is fading and it is starting to move towards more general naval uses.

V'neef's husband is now Tepet Igan, who is noted as being more or less still in mourning after the loss of the Tepet legions resulted in the loss of much of his family. V'neef Aliset is not mentioned in the write-up for the house.

Eagle's Launch in prior editions was primarily a Sesus holding. Its control by House V'neef is new to Third Edition.

### House Iselsi

The most notable shift in House Iselsi is the freshness of the attempted coup, and the recentness of the demotion of the house. There is notably still a patrician House Iselsi in Incas Prefecture, but much of the house has gone into deep cover. The Empress had a plan for them and was interested in wielding them in some way, but what that is is not known.

### Un-Exalted Dynast v. Patrician

The role of patrician throughout First and Second Editions was not very clear at times. The 1e core rulebook and **Exalted: the Dragon-Blooded** describes un-Exalted Dynasts as separate from the patriciate. The 1e **Exalted Storyteller's Companion**, the 2e core rulebook, and **Manual of Exalted Power: Dragon-Blooded** say un-Exalted Dynasts are patricians, though the

last of these seems inconsistent on the use. The 2e sourcebook on the Blessed Isle, meanwhile, describes mortal Dynasts as part of that social class entirely.

Third Edition goes a bit back to the 1e core rulebook and the 2e Blessed Isle book on this. A Dynast who fails to Exalt is still a Dynast. A patrician who Exalts often is adopted, but can remain a patrician. Notably, Lost Egg legion members who serve their tour are also legally patricians.

## Cadet Houses

While mentioned in past editions, mainly with House Ferem and Cherak, they get more coverage in general this edition, as well as clarification as to their legal status in the Scarlet Dynasty.

## Lost Eggs

Lost Eggs are exclusively lower class Dragon-Blooded born on the Blessed Isle. They take the coin or the razor as normal. Foreign outcastes, even those born in the satrapies, are not afforded this opportunity, though some go on to form cadet households.

## The Legions

There were a total of 40 Imperial Legions at the time of the Empress' disappearance in Third Edition instead of 37. They were loyal to the Empress herself, and much of their officer corps were outcaste graduates of Pasiap's Stair. This is closer to the First Edition description of the legions which noted that most officers were not Dynasts, versus Second Edition which described most officers as House of Bells graduates.

A notable change to things is house legions. In prior editions, it was implied the legions were still in some fashion maintained or mostly staffed by members of the Great Houses. Instead In Third Edition only some houses were given the right to raise and train fully independent legions separate from the Imperial Legions and which were where most military house officers went. Any other military capability of the other houses were smaller paramilitary forces for garrisons or small private navies. At the time of the Empress' disappearance Houses Cathak and Tepet had four house legions, and Sesus three. Notably these were also considered not as good as Imperial Legions due to less battle experience.

Otherwise, the Imperial Legions were still redistributed amongst the Great Houses like in prior editions, with Tepet getting the Vermilion as their sole legion having lost their house legions against the Bull of the North, while Cathak and Sesus got four additional legions each. The remainder have been distributed amongst the other seven Great Houses, disbanded, or gone rogue. Third Edition is more explicit on what military resources each house has in addition to their paramilitary forces.

## The Realm Civil War

Second Edition often boiled-down the upcoming civil war to a conflict between Mnemon and Tepet Ejava primarily. Third Edition to an extent downplays Ejava's importance as a frontrunner, while emphasizing other players in a similar position as Mnemon.

**Heirs to the Shogunate** provides an entire chapter on the Realm Civil War, how to construct it, and potential routes it may go. This is notably different from **Return of the Scarlet Empress**, which more or less only focused on the main Mnemon versus Ejava conflict, and in the context of the Ebon Dragon and a returned Empress, neither of which are focuses or concerns for the presentation of the conflict. It is also described with a bit more gravity as well, with such a conflict being probably the biggest thing looming on the setting at the time.

That book also breaks down into a few tiers of potential candidates besides those two. The main highlights are:

- **Frontrunners:** Mnemon, Sesus Raenyah and Oban, V'neef
- **Strong Secondary Cases:** Cathak Cainan, Cynis Petalin, Peleps Lai, Ragara Banoba, other matriarchs
- **Dark Horses:** Bal Keraz, Berit, Cevis Ghandarva, Ledaal Yasmet, the Mouth of Peace, Nellens Ikona, Ragara, Saloy HIn, Tepet Ejava

## Immaculacy

The religion of the Realm, the Immaculate Philosophy, is one of a larger family of faiths in the setting. In previous editions the main contrast was the Immaculate Philosophy of the Realm's Immaculate Order and the Immaculate Faith of Lookshy's Order of Chaplains. Third Edition expands on this by giving more credence to Immaculacy as both a genuine religion and more thought-out Sidereal tool. It also introduces other sects of the religion to the setting, most notably Prasad's Pure Way but also the Sisterhood of Pearls and the Intou Creed.

## Conspiracy v. Faith

Immaculacy in 1e and 2e had a lot of emphasis on how the Immaculate Philosophy was a fake religion. And while Third Edition doesn't deny it is in part an editorialized canon that was made to service a goal, this doesn't prevent folks from genuinely believing in its tenets or finding it useful. Chejob Kejak for example doesn't have a "scoffing" attitude to the situation that I would describe in some of his early 1e depictions, aw Ayesha Ura was a devout Immaculate for years after she Exalted.

## Defining Anathema

The term Anathema in Third Edition applies to anything that is a threat to the Perfected Hierarchy. This includes Solar and Lunar Exalted, but can be applied to aspects of the Hundred Gods Heresy, ancestor cults, and Immaculate heresies that are not taken care of. Even other



Dragon-Blooded can be declared Anathema if they're seen as a threat to the Perfected Hierarchy.

## The Wyld Hunt

Rather than being an institution, the Wyld Hunt is presented as having a lot more ad hoc structure. It predates the modern Immaculate Order and is something from the early Shogunate. It is considered more a Dragon-Blooded custom that predates the Contagion and is performed throughout the world in different fashions. Groups of shikari will form even amongst outcastes who at least have the cultural understanding of the Dragon-Blooded practice, and different Terrestrial polities will cooperate in them, such as the Realm and Lookshy. More permanent headquarters for continuous Hunts do exist, such as the one based in the city of Pneuma, but as a whole they are just more ad hoc and something practiced by major Terrestrial polities claiming a descent from the Shogunate, or individuals wishing to draw on it for legitimacy.

## Other Exalted

That Solars and Lunars are Exalted isn't treated as a total religion-undermining discovery in Third Edition. Instead, Solars and Lunars being demonic/not-Exalted is "good enough" for most folks in the laity.

Immaculacy acknowledges other Exalted besides the Dragon-Blooded exist. That said, as the Exaltation carried with birth and their association with the Five Elemental Dragons, the Terrestrial Exalted are still those with the highest authority. The thing is that Anathema does not by default all non-Terrestrial Exalted. Sidereals are able to cite passages that show them as servants of Heaven. Exigents are seen as on-watch but can serve the Perfected Hierarchy, with at least a couple examples of Exigents serving the Immaculate Order itself. And Liminal Exalted, while creatures of death, tend to interact with the dead in ways that align with Immaculate doctrine.

Solars and Lunars do remain Anathema by default. Again, most laity are taught they are not Exalted to begin with. However, more well-read or educated Immacualtes know that Solars and Lunars are in fact Exalted of the Sun and Moon respectively. Instead, being Exalted as a Solar or Lunar is considered in effect a kind of karma-poison. Solar Exaltation is too powerful for humans to wield without eventually succumbing to tyranny, madness, and self-destruction, leading others off their path along the way. Lunar Exaltation similarly drives people into skin-taking, monstrous, society-challenging, and witchy moon beasts, which is likewise not conducive to maintaining someone's place in the Perfected Hierarchy.

Abyssal and Infernal Exalted are kind of obviously Bad Times in relation to how Immaculacy views the dead and Hell alike. Getimians are something the Sidereals are trying to build-up a case against in the texts. And Alchemicals simply fall into a category of "What's an Alchemical?" for the vast majority of Creation.

## The Martial Arts

An interesting small change is that due to the “flattening” of Martial Arts mechanically, more styles are practiced by the Immaculate Order, as well as more sources existing for the Immaculate Martial Arts styles in for characters without it being seen as heretical in either direction.

## The Immaculate Order and Sidereals

While the religion is more independent, the Immaculate Order itself remains a notable ally of the Sidereal Exalted. Much of Third Edition does describe it as a sizable area of Sidereal power, but it is noted that the term “ally” is important. The Dragon-Blooded of the Order do have their own opinions on doctrine and policy, which they do try to work with Sidereals in editorializing the Immaculate texts. The Mouth of Peace is described more as someone who is making actual decisions with advice, rather than the mind-controlled puppet of prior editions. Chejob even considers the current one a friend.

Notably too is the Immaculate Order was the main area of direct control on the Realm the Bronze Faction seems to have. They don't have the ability to control the rest of the empire's institutions to that level, and the Empress treated Chejob notably as an ally rather than a boss. This in general fits the Third Edition trend of treating Exalts as a bit more respectful of one-another where possible.

## Other Religions

Something third Edition tries to present is generally more religions that people participate in genuinely. Some have similarly constructed or editorialized histories as the Immaculate Philosophy, but this doesn't prevent people from finding something in them that they feel is worth believing in such as the Bahari Creed of Fajad, or which have grown past the goals of the original creators such as the Cult of the Illuminated and the religion of Iscomy.

Immaculates do find these to ultimately be the wrong path and do try to oppose them where possible, but in general more texture is given to the ways faith is practiced in Creation in Third Edition.

## The Threshold

### The North

Gethemane, Whitewall, the Haslanti League, and Cherak return from previous editions. In general where the North becomes permanently frozen is further up.

The polities of Fella, Inari, and the Deshan Slave States have not made a reappearance in Third Edition. The Ratjul cannibals have not shown-up again either, and probably aren't the sort of

thing to come back this edition. Gethemane doesn't get much detail out of the core rulebook in this edition so far.

Something of note also in this edition is the importance of Bagrash Kol's Empire. Cherek and the Haslanti League in particular are much more defined by the empire and its impact on their histories.

## Whitewall

In its first appearance in **Scavenger Sons**, the origins of the city and the Syndics were not detailed. The Traveler's Road is still a First Age construct, with the pact being something the Syndics negotiated with a local shadowland and a local freehold. The Syndics being the gods of Luck, Health, and Peace was introduced towards the end of the line, as was the origins of the city as a temple to the Unconquered Sun.

Of note is the shadowland, Marama's Fell, gets detailed as well and is kind of enormous, at over 121,000 square miles. For perspective, this is a single shadowland the area of the US state of New Mexico. It is also notably further from Whitewall that the unnamed shadowland in the 1e corebook and **Scavenger Sons** claims, being nearly 200 miles South of the city rather than a few days away. Its origins somewhat contradict the **Scavenger Sonss** description as well, as it and the Wyld zone were described as having arisen after the Contagion and Whitewall Was settled.

Second Edition more or less keeps these details with not much change. There is a bit more mechanizing of things, but most of its information is lifted from **Bastions of the North**.

Third Edition has a few notable shifts in the presentation of Whitewall.

- That the land around it is notably poor, something people try to eke out a living from.
- There's the introduction of communities that live outside of the wall, mainly in mines or farms too far for folks to commute back.
- The Traveller's Road remains a First Age construct, but Whitewall now sits on the middle of the route rather than being its Northern terminus and it is no longer perfectly straight, instead running from Gethemane to Pneuma.
- Rather than a single big shadowland and Wyld zone, there are instead multiple different ones in the area of the city. Marama's Fell appears to no longer be about in this context.
- The protection of the Traveller's Road only extends fifty miles each way. Additionally, there is a 100 mile radius area around the city that protects individuals out during the day but in danger at night.
- The Pillars are not part of the original road. They're something erected by the Syndics for the pact and only go out 50 miles.
- The town of Wallport no longer appears to be a thing in Third Edition, as Pneuma now marks the end of the Traveler's Road. The road itself seems to be more something that the city was built on, rather than something built with it.
- While **Scavenger Sons** and later 1e and 2e books state the population of the city as 700,000 people, the **Across the 8 Directions** write-up describes it as over half a million.

The city was founded in the First Age, but more or less anything regarding its origins or First Age history is not detailed. The identity of the Syndics, likewise, is not revealed.

## The Haslanti League

The Haslanti League has some notable geography mixing-up, mostly for there being now a large body of water through where a lot of it is. Something of note is that it is not quite a nation-state like in prior editions and other polities exist between the main settlements. The League formed mainly as a way to help mediate conflicts between clans on ownership rights of scavenged goods, rather than a revolt against the Guild with Lunar support. Gerd Marrow-Eater still is there, but he appears more an ally/mentor for the culture, rather than its founder.

Another notable shift is the cultural origins of the Haslan people. They're described as those who managed to hide from Bagrosh Kols' Empire and a lot of their findings are remnants of that era. They still maintain airships, clockwork machinery, and so on, although don't quite administer their territory in the same fashion as a modern unified nation-state, instead being a literal league of dozens of settlements. The extended habitable zone of Third Edition's North means the pockets of farmable land are not as necessary.

## Cherak

Instead of barely scraping-by after the Contagion, Great Cherak was one of many early Shogunate successor states to have rivaled the Realm on par with Lookshy. This was cut-short due to the rise of Bagrash Kol's Empire, and after its fall, the Realm came in and mopped-up, eventually carving up the area of Greater Cherak into multiple smaller satrapies.

House Ferem exists as a cadet house that runs Cherak proper. Other neighboring satrapies with cadet houses include Tallow and Northern Ivory. Not all houses are lumped together as Ferem in the Third Edition description of the region.

## The Bull's Empire

The Bull's Empire, much like in **Compass: North, is centered** primarily around the Saltspire League, with Plenilune as its capital. Notable shifts in the Third Edition depiction include:

- The Bull himself is not doing great. He is currently dying from an ever-bleeding wound that means he is out of commission a lot of the time. There's a potential succession crisis if he were to die between at least three of his main followers, two Circlemates and the outcaste who served with him since the beginning.
- The Battle of Futile Blood is described much more as a Pyrrhic victory for the Bull and House Tepet. He lost a notable amount of forces and is currently cursed, Samea lost a hand, and two of his Circle of six died in the conflict. This includes Nalla the Bloodaxe.
- There isn't really anything on him dealing with Gethemane or the Halta or killing a bunch of Sidereals.

Additionally, there is some description of neighboring polities considering forming a coalition to work against the Bull's Empire. In general, there's a bit more price paid in the depiction of the war of the Bull with the Realm.

## The Northeast

Like the other intercardinal Directions, the Northeast is given its own write-up. The notable theme of the region is that it has had a later time recovering from the Contagion, as waves of lesser plagues collectively known as the Second Contagion destroyed many Shogunate successor states, held back Realm expansion, and often would cripple and destroy new arising powers over the centuries. Halta and the Linowan are now considered part of this region.

### Linowan

The main highlights on the Linowan is that they aren't treated as genetically predisposed to being violent. They still maintain a hegemonic culture along the Silver River. The Linowan still consider pine trees sacred, but also like using redwoods for their own uses. They find the Oracle Tree in Chanta religiously significant but don't have a lot to deal with the Fair Folk.

Of note with the Haltan conflict is there isn't really a mention of the two gods being the source of it. Additionally, there is no longer any indication of something like Hal fever.

### Halta'

Much of Halta's depiction between 1e and 2e is updates of the stuff found in **Kingdom of Halta**. This includes its vast area, giant cities, Lunar patrons, involvement with the Bull and so on.

Halta is much smaller in Third Edition, mostly consisting of the region between the two Southern tributaries of the Silver River. There isn't an implication of their cities being some of the largest in Creation anymore. It isn't presented as an empire nor a polity that has notable global foreign relations as in previous editions. They are also not treated quite as technologically advanced compared to the Linowans. No airboats or sail cutters expected throughout the kingdom. There is an interesting bit about how fire is kind of one of those things that has to be curated heavily.

Halta is not described as being a result of Lunar founding whatsoever in Third Edition. It was instead founded by people fleeing Bagrash Kol, the Realm's expansion Northeast, and the Second Great Contagion. Neither Silver Python nor Rain Deathflyer are mentioned in Third Edition at this time.

A major area of conflict for both Halta and the Linowan is the Oracle Tree, a large supernatural tree in Chanta that both cultures consider sacred.

## The Scavenger Lands

The notable expansion on the region is in the form of density and large polities. The Realm, former Intou Shogunate, and the expanding and contracting region of Vaneha are documented

throughout the chapter as having affected much of the region. Lookshy has a notably more hegemonic impact on the region as well.

The Nameless Lair of Ma-Ha-Suchi is further North than in 1e. It actually migrated to near Greyfalls in 2e. Mahalanka has also moved further North. Rathess is similarly further North and Eastward. Additionally, many of the cities labeled on maps in previous editions are not on the Third Edition one. Nechera is a Redoubt in 1e but is a city in itself in Third Edition.

The Arczeckhi Horde are not present or described in Third Edition, though Wyld-afflicted barbarians are described as having invaded around the same time as in the 1e and 2e timelines. This edition is currently avoiding presenting “Always chaotic evil barbarians” and so they likely will not return.

The Marukani have not been described in detail so far in Third Edition. Nor has the city of Sijan, which is currently planned to receive more detail in the future Liminals book.

## Port Calin

Port Calin receives a full write-up in this edition, having been barely described in Second Edition. In the current edition, it used to be an example of former Shogunate gens being granted land grants in the 3rd Century, and comprised various trading ports and conquered groups in the region. The ruling House Calin was the local cadet house, which felt it was ignored by the Deliberative and the Realm generally. They succeeded from the Realm during the trade war with the Guild in the 400s, with the feeling of mistreatment just one pretext.

Unlike in prior editions it is noted as having a sizable Dragon-Blooded population and is also mostly in decline. It is notably a fragile state, though much of the ideas of the Great Game still remain from prior editions. Something of note is that while First Edition said its borders extended all the way towards Nexus, it appears its Eastern border is the River of Tears in 3e.

## Lookshy

The city-state is notably not presented as the sole global rival of the Realm and opposite on every opportunity. At times a lot of 1e and 2e would present Lookshy with a bit of things to contrast the Realm. The Immaculate Order is proselytizing and authoritarian, the Immaculate Faith is personal and to itself. The Realm policed gods, Lookshy made deals. The Realm was zealous in destroying Anathema, Lookshy was pragmatic (or in 2e’s case, even allowing them in the city). The Realm had slaves, Lookshy’s helots were so well-off folks wanted to emigrate to Lookshy to be one, and so on.

Lookshy’s social class are a bit less egalitarian-presented in prior editions. Helots are noted as not being allowed land ownership, don’t get to vote on local councils, and are a large part of the military as well as labor force. There’s not a lot of the “happy slave” vibe in its presentation.

The Immaculate Faith does persecute overly rogue spirits, and a main reason they tolerate Great Forks is mostly due to distance. It is also notably as hostile as the Realm against

Anathema, itself being a major target of Lunars over the centuries. Internationally cooperating Wyld Hunts are common enough to be not especially surprising to see, and Lookshy will share intel or resources with Realm shikari.

The city-state is presented as much more hegemonic, but also less international than in previous editions. Its interests are protecting the River Province from the Realm, not the world. And it utilizes its mercenary contract system to extract economic and diplomatic concessions from polities in the Scavenger Lands, resulting in a different form of exploitation. It does create problems for other states, though, and the sohei and other Immaculate elements do cause problems for various pantheons and makes it a target of Lunar interference.

Of note is that a couple doomsday plots relating to Lookshy are no longer described. The city having some sort of long term downfall that is destined that the goddess of the city has to contend with is not stated. There is also not really a lot discussed on Sidereal influence or lack thereof, instead probably what is useful in context of a city-state with thousands of Ealts can be, and nothing really stops Sldereals from using it for their long term plans. There is similarly no mention of them having a soulsteel warstrider from the Lover which is a deathtrap.

#### Lookshyan Dragon-Blooded

Lookshy still has three-thousand Dragon-Blooded as a major part of its population and strength. Rather than the “breed for quantity over quality” in prior editions, Lookshy instead is very aggressive in adoption of foreign outcastes, creation of minor gentes, and generally trying to appeal to non-Lookshyans to become residents and gain power.

The Gentes Major each get a write-up on par with the Great Houses found in **Dragon-Blooded: What Fire Has Wrought**. This includes history, culture, major holdings, leadership and major holdings. A few Gentes Minor also get this coverage. Like with the Realm, emphasis on a gens’ elemental aspect is less emphasized in Third Edition.

#### Lookshy and Artifacts

A shift between editions is the amount of usable artifacts in Lookshy’s arsenals. First Edition presented this as notable, but on the decline and a lot of irreplaceable things were lost every year, where *Skywolf* was a major and one not replicable. There was a textbox on cranking up or down this amount.

Second Edition presented Lookshy as having a much more robust ability to produce artifacts. This included the ability to produce new warstriders annually, and what appears to be a notable ability to field entire units of artifact users such as ashigaru and gunzousha armored units.

Third Edition in general scales this back even past First Edition. Lookshy does have sizable arsenals of artifacts, including warstriders and gunzousha. Units like ashigaru appear to no longer be a standard, however, and artifact equipment is treated as notable but more limited. Lookshy doesn’t produce large-scale artifacts annually like in Second Edition, nor is it assumed vast swaths of its mortal troops have artifact equipment or gear that’s been sorcerously blessed.

The Sky Fleet exists but is of very limited use. In general there is a lot more emphasis put on the city's power deriving from its Dragon-Blooded, as presented in First Edition before **Exalted: the Outcaste**, than with it, although it does still have a notable magical infrastructure and arsenal advantage over much of the rest of the Scavenger Lands.

## Nexus

Nexus remains amongst the largest cities in Creation and also a major trade hub. It is officially the headquarters of the Guild, which I need to check is less overt in how it is presented in prior editions. In general it is not covered quite as much mostly due to not as much wordcount put to it, but it is pretty recognizable with the concepts of the city's districts, the Council of Entities, the Emissary, the Dogma, being an anarchist hellscape, and so on.

The main stand-outs are that the different First Age tombs, while still there, are not quite as detailed, with only the one in Nighthammer for sure still working as described.

Firewander District's Wyld influence is different between editions. In the First Edition core rulebook it is very much a Wyld zone, especially in the center. It isn't a Wyld zone whatsoever in **Scavenger Sons**, it being a middlemarch being an advent of 2e. Third Edition has it so that there's a bordermarch in the sewers underneath the neighborhood. Something also of note is its relation to Old Hollow. In the 1e corebook it is the original center while in **Scavenger Sons** it is hinted as being such. The 2e write-up says it was for sure. The 3e one describes it as a township that was separate entirely and was absorbed into the city.

The identity of the Council's members seems different and would take a bit of double-checking, but between all three editions the different members are just different people, often not even with the same names.

For example, in First Edition's **Scavenger Sons** lists Gen, Minister of Ways, as a dude who does a lot of creepy spirit stuff, including levitating his cane, talking to things not there and having a carriage that draws itself. The 2e write-up of him as the city god of Nexus is introduced in the Yu-Shan sourcebook, and reinforced in the adventure **Daughter of Nexus**. Third Edition has the post be occupied by a man named Ibebi instead, a sorcerer who negotiates with the local spirits much as 1e Gen, though with notably different presentation. This is the case with all of the Council through all three editions.

## Great Forks

The broad details of the city remain the same. Founded by the same three gods unifying their people after the Contagion, and chasing out the Black Heron early in its founding. It is still a city of temples, fueled by a lot of slavery. It, along with Nexus and Looskhy, serve as the main cultural centers of the Scavenger Lands. There is a notable amount more detail on its aesthetics, drawing on Southeast Asia and ancient Athens. There is also a more comprehensive write-up of the local religion and government of the city-state.



They still defeated the Black Heron, although the shadowland is now the Field of Weeping Raitons instead of Walker's Realm, due to changes to that Deathlord.

Something of note is that there's not any war between Nexus and Great Forks as described in **Castebook: Dawn** and repeated in **Compass: Scavenger Lands**.

As pointed out in the Wonderous Atlas of Creation podcast, what side of the river the city is on seems to be a bit different. In addition, the city's layout and which god is responsible for which part of government is not quite aligned either. There is also more discussion on how Great Forks is a regional hegemon, and discussion of some other polities it has major sway over.

### Greyfalls

Greyfalls is presented much more as a distant outpost than it had in prior editions. The main change in Third Edition is the introduction of a war manse in the city that's part of the Realm Defense Grid, making it a point of interest for the Realm and a reason that the Empress sought to secure it. More time is generally put into its logistics, how the Realm gets folks to and from it, and why the local polities let the Realm ships go through. It also in Third Edition acts as the Westernmost end of the Golden Road, a trade route that extends further Eastward and thus resulting in it being a wealthy city in itself.

Something of an interesting note is that while it is a Nellens satrapy in Second Edition, it is instead a Cynis one in Third Edition, and the general cast of characters between the two editions is quite different.

### Thorns

There is still a war between Thorns and the Southwestern Scavenger Lands in Third Edition as in prior editions, and it is still conquered by the Mask of Winters.

The notable changes are mostly with the details of conquest and its aftermath. The Mask of Winters has as a *casus belli* the restoration of the prior monarch who during the waning days of the war was ousted in a palace coup by his brother. This coup is in prior editions, but now the prior autocrat is a deathknight of the Mask of Winters and is the official ruler of the city. The Mask mostly used the invasion of Thorns to form a beachhead into Creation and it is an extension of his existing empire in the Underworld. He doesn't rule Thorns directly. A lot of the rest like Juggernaut, Abyssal Exalted, generally being an asshole, still remain.

Another detail is that Ledaal had Thorns as a satrapy before. The loss of the city to a new sort of Anathema is considered something the house made-up to excuse its losses.

### Mount Metagolopa

In 1e, the mountain is implied to have started flying due to the Fair Folk invasions. Not a lot else on its nature is described.

**Lands of Creation** named one of the Directional Titans Metagaos in part to hint that the mountain was one of them. The actual write-up in **Compass: East** specifically avoided this, leaving it ambiguous. This was undone, though, as of **Return of the Scarlet Empress**, which has it explicitly be a Directional Titan.

Mount Metagolopa is mentioned in Third Edition, but hasn't received a detailed write-up. Riding hawks are described though.

## The Far East

Most of the Direction past the Scavenger Lands is entirely new to Third Edition, being an additional area of the map beyond the prior edition's edges. The main thing here is that some locations have been shuffled, with the Noss Fenn and Mahalanka have shifted positions further to the North and East.

The Republic of Chaya, Farhold, and the Ten Tribes have not had significant detail in 3e. Mara's Kick is named in prior editions but gets a couple paragraphs to it in **Across the 8 Directions**.

## The Southeast

Like the Far East, much of this is new. The expanded map introduces a region called the Dreaming Sea where there's many new politics and key players around. Notably here is that the City of the Mad has not been described.

## The South

Notably more bodies of water have been added to the Direction, such as the various lakes that take-up much of what was Harborhead in prior editions. **Across the Eight Directions** introduces a few more, such as the Twelve Rivers Sea, the Dying Sea and its sources, and the River Elidad. The South continues further than before, with more than a thousand miles South of Gem added to the Direction. Like with the North, the rate by which the land turns into desert is a bit longer, although a lot of the region about 1,500 miles South of the coast being the Burning Sands.

Most locations described in prior editions get a detail in Third Edition in some form, although Harborhead and Paragon get a lighter touch compared to others.

## The Varang City States

Varang in all three editions is described with astrology, being a Realm subject, the division of the population via horoscopes, weird street layouts, and hostility to Anathema. In 1e and 2e, the Varang States are more an ally of the Realm, while in 3e, they are administered by the Realm as a single satrapy.

A notable shift from 1e to 2e is the validity of Varangian astrology. In the general reification of a lot of things into thaumaturgy, it went from ambiguous or likely that Varang castes were mostly

arbitrary, to for-sure there is a Varangian horoscope that can make predictions about what someone should do. 2e also introduced the idea that the Varang City-States were an area that was associated with Dragon Kings, and the founding by the states by a Dragon King in effect. There was also an introduction of a notably anti-Exalted bent to Varangian culture. There is also a notable emphasis of the use of Hindi terms, and much more detail on the castes than in 1e, as well as a description of the state worship of the main canon Maidens, Loom, constellations and Bureau of Destiny gods, with Immaculacy constraining things. Varang is also described as applying extensive use of firewands and crossbows.

3e establishes the City-States as a satrapy. The use of caste for the societal roles is redubbed spheres, to avoid appearing to be an exaggeration of South Asian varnas, and there are also showings of more Mesopotamian and Iranian elements in how its food, clothing, and names are described. There's no real note of Dragon King founding, and the states were conquered in a few waves by the Realm over four centuries or so. The state religion is the Immaculate Philosophy, and the star gods and such in their pantheon are constrained by the Order's rules. Castes are revised heavily, fitting along the general trends of the Maidens. Crossbows and firedust weaponry aren't mentioned, and warfare isn't described as outwardly hostile/conquering. Nothing really about Harborehad as a threat in its write-up in **Across the 8 Directions**.

Chiaroscuro

Gem

Paragon

**The Southwest**

An-Teng

The Lintha

**The West**

Wavecrest

The Neck

Coral

Skullstone

**The Northwest**

**Yu-Shan**

Layout

History

Exalts in Heaven

**The Celestial Bureaucracy**

The Bureau of Seasons

**The Most High**

The Unconquered Sun

Luna

The Five Maidens

The Five Elemental Dragons

Gaia

Other Spirits

Lytek

Taru-Han

**The Underworld**

Layout

Stygia

Shadowlands

The Deathlords

The Neverborn

**Autochthonia**

**Malfeas**

**The Wyld**