

# The Islands of Yupang Gazetteer

## History

Yupang is an island of pirates and powerful warriors that shares with the Shattered Empire a history of conflicts and mutual invasion.

1000 years ago, a mighty half-dragon was given the secret of bronze weapons by a traveller from distant planes (apparently some shadow creature) and managed to subdue the other tribes on Yupang with his well-equipped army. After his victory over the fishermen and barbarian tribes, he granted his most loyal followers fiefs and set the foundation for the modern clan system.

Hitomi, the dragon man, ruled as Emperor for over 250 years before traders from the Golden Empire made contact with his people. Soon it came to disagreements between the mercantile newcomers and the warlike natives who held the greedy little merchants in contempt. Little did the early samurai know of the military power behind those intruders and soon their lands were a client state of the Golden Empire. While this occupational period is the root for the mutual hatred between the two cultures, it was also a period of great cultural advancements, due to the introduction of an alphabet, improved administration, and arcane magic.

It took the Yupangans 80 years to free themselves from the *gaijin* as they called them. However, no new Emperor was crowned and the clans lived in an uneasy alliance ever since.

With the fall of the Golden Empire, the different clans reacted differently. The Scorpion Clan took the opportunity to conquer the coastal area of the Shattered Empire with the help of their foul spirit master, the Wheel of Law. Other clans

see this increase in power with suspicion and while they hold no love for the Shattered Empire, they are likely to take action soon to keep the Scorpions from amassing too much ritual magic for them to handle.

## The Scorpion Clan

### Customs and Religion

The Scorpion Clan is ruled by the Red-Gloved Daimyo. Under her strict rule even the slightest infraction is punished. This has led to a society where there are rules for everything and interaction between people is highly formalised.

The clan's society is divided into three distinct castes - slaves, samurai, and clergy. Everybody who is not born into the samurai families or who is somehow marked by the Wheel of Law is considered a slave. Regardless of race or origin, the slaves live in tiny huts and either work the fields or help erect huge temples for the foul god.



### Scorpion Man

Some rumours claim that there are some samurai among the Scorpions, that have undergone strange rituals to become more like their totem animal. These warriors are said to have a poisonous tail just like a scorpion and a tough chitinous shell that protects them from harm. Nobody has yet seen these beings and lived to tell the tale.

**Attacks:** tail strike (1d4 + medium-size scorpion poison (DC:15, 1d4 strength damage))

**Reach:** 10 feet with tail

**SQ:** +4 on saves vs. poison

**Abilities:** +2 dexterity

**CR:** +1

**ECL:** +2

Samurai are the nobles and live in great luxury, even though excess is frowned upon. They consist of actual samurai warriors as well as spellcasters.

The priesthood is enigmatic and answers only to the Daimyo. They are rarely seen in public and seldom is that a good sign.

The official and only allowed cult in the Scorpion lands is the worship of the Wheel of Law, an entity from the Dimensions beyond, that embodies law and evil and their purest forms. The temples and monasteries of the Wheel are often guarded by giant scorpions, a creature this clan is very fond of.

### Dress

Slaves dress in whatever rags they can find. They are filthy and look unhealthy, as the ruling class has little concern for these people.

The samurai dress in elaborate armour, usually hiding their faces behind masks or *kempo* that are often enhanced with great magic. There are some special units of samurai such as the *death samurai* and the *wielders of fire* that are of unknown origin and serve the Daimyo.

Priests usually dress in red robes and wear veils, hiding their terrible mutations from the world.

## The Dragon Clan

### Customs & Religion

The Dragon clan was founded by Hitomi himself and many claim to be direct descendants of his. Today, the clan has lost much of its power as it traditionally provided the Emperor and had little in actual lands, living in well-fortified mountain cities.

The Dragon clan places great emphasis on personal improvement and impeccable behaviour.

Dragon society is divided into 4 castes. The ruling class are the dragon-blooded

samurai (i.e. those that are descendants of Hitomi and who might have a half-dragon template) and their almost-equals, the samurai of human blood. The remaining castes are the merchants and the peasants. Priests are usually members of the dragon-bloods.

Dragons worship the Twilight Snake, another entity from Beyond but one with little interest in the real world. The snake protects the clan from supernatural dangers in return for worship and the occasional mystic quest. Many young samurai are sent on some errand that does not make any sense to them but is the wish of the Snake, according to the prophecies of the toxic seers, the religious caste of the Dragons.

There are many customs this clan is famous for, at least on Yupang. First, they are almost obsessed with purity. They cannot stand mutations, tainted creatures, or handicapped people and while they are not harsh enough to kill them, they usually prefer to send those to a special coastal village, called the Town of the Damned.



### Dragon Blood Template

While the core family of the Hitomi consists of Half-Dragons, more distant relatives have less dragon blood. While most of those are humans in all respects, there are some who qualify for the Dragon Blood template.

Dragon Blood changes some minor features in the appearance of the base creatures, e.g. in the form of slit pupils, pointy tongue, or a greenish complexion. The following game effects occur.

**Type:** change to spirit subtype

**SQ:** Acid Resistance 5

**Abilities:** +2 Charisma, -2 Wisdom

**CR:** +0

**ECL:** +0

As a side effect, Dragons have a high regard for personal hygiene and are lovers of all kinds of baths, scented oils etc.

As most people from Yupang, Dragon nobles are extremely polite and have a strict warrior codex focusing on obedience to a master, self control, and discipline. Unlike many other Clans they tend to extend this attitude towards *gaijin* as well.

### Dress

Dragon clan samurai dress in greens and generally stick to a lizard scheme in their armour. When not in armour, they like simple green wool kimonos, sandals, and silk scarfs. Jewellery is frowned upon, but elaborate dragon tattoos are considered a sign of great taste.

### Food

While the lower castes love various rich fish dishes, the samurai have a very special diet. They usually eat very simple meals, prepared to strict and complex guidelines that avoid taint of various kinds.

### Organisations

- **Mirumoto Niten Dojo:** This dojo exclusively trains members of the Hitomi household in the special fighting technique developed by Hitomi Hojoshi. This dojo is the only way to achieve the *Mirumoto Niten Master* prestige class.
- **Kuro Bara School of Pain:** This dojo/medical school introduces its pupils to the theories of Itasuki-sensei. While some use it to improve their martial skills, others employ it for the art of healing. Kuro Bara samurai are known for their quick surgical strikes and detached personalities.
- **Karuwazashi Dojo:** The karuwazashi style of fencing is

known for its reliance on light armour and quick manoeuvres. This school is seen as upstart by many of the established samurai and has problems finding talented pupils.

## 輕業師

- **Kawana Trading House:** While the dragon blooded Hitomi officially rule this clan, the Kawana family of traders has managed to gain more and more influence over the time. Indeed, their many gifts have made the Dragons rely on them in many respects. Conservative elements are not happy with this development but many of the commoners admire the meteoric rise of these merchants who have excellent contacts around the known world and are very cosmopolitan by Yupang standards.



## The Spectral Wolf Clan

The Spectral Wolves are a powerful clan with ambitions for ruling the whole island of Yupang. Their samurai are dedicated and well trained but their real power comes from their shamans who are able to call upon a ghostly army of wolves that gives them a powerful advantage over the other clans. The Spectral Wolves serve the Unblinking Eye, the patron of true seeing, knowledge, and forbidden lore.

## The Crane Clan

The Cranes are a clan that values artists and beauty above all else. Their samurai are often seen as weak but during their current alliance with the Scorpions, they have proven their martial prowess during the invasion into the Shattered Empire. Their patron deity is the Mound of Pleasure, patron of lust, luxury, and twisted beauty.