

A Step Away from Classic Fantasy.

IN THE ZEITGEIST CAMPAIGN, YOUR CHARACTERS serve in the Royal Homeland Constabulary of the nation of Risur, protecting the country and its citizens from foreign threats lurking within its borders. During missions of espionage and assassination, your duty will be to root out hostile spies and pursue international conspiracies. As you learn more of your homeland's own secrets, however, your loyalties may be tested, may even be turned, and you may find that it is you whose hand controls the gears of the turning age.

It is not necessary to read the entire *Player's Guide* in order to play. Anything that matters to your game will be introduced in the course of the adventures. We do suggest all players give this primer a quick read to get the gist of the setting. Then those players who want to sink their teeth into the world can read the full guide to see how ZEITGEIST stands apart from the "points of light" assumed world of traditional DUNGEONS & DRAGONS. If you're interested in learning more, download the complete *Player's Guide* at www.enworld.org.

Humans and the Great Nations.

Humans rule three of the five great nations of the region. Their ascendance in the past two thousand years toppled a mighty eladrin empire and has provoked belief in doomsday millennialism among many dwarves. The campaign begins in Risur, and every PC should have a strong loyalty to the nation, even if the character does not hail from there.

Eladrin, Devas, and the Great Malice.

Five hundred years ago the death of the eladrin goddess Srasama caused nearly every eladrin woman to perish. Those few who survived were often claimed as trophies by human conquerors, though a handful of free matriarchs head their own family lines in the ruins of the old empire. Players interested in the eladrin should read the section on Elfaivar.

Mortals present at the death of the eladrin goddess have continually reincarnated in the following centuries as devas, as if a sliver of Srasama's divine spark has granted them a semblance of immortality. Players interested in devas should read the section on Crisillyir.

Tieflings, Technology, and Dead Magic.

When the eladrin goddess died, an entire other nation became a dead magic zone, and some in that land were marked by a curse, turning them into tieflings. In the centuries since, however, the tieflings have come to rule that nation, and in the last few decades they have begun a revolution of industry and mighty science almost as powerful as the magic they lack. Players interested in tieflings should read the section on Danor.

Players interested in their characters utilizing some of the new revolution's technology, particularly firearms, should see the section entitled "Equipment."

Dwarves, Doomsday, and Nihilism.

The major dwarven nation is bleakly resigned to an imminent doomsday, when ancient horrors will claw free from glaciers and engulf the world in a frigid death. Adherence to duty is so ingrained in their culture, however, that the dwarves continue to toil in their forges even as they prepare for the world's end. Players interested in dwarves should read the section on Drakr.

Savages, Primitives, and Peace.

Freed from the yoke of toppled dragon tyrants, the youngest of the great nations formed from an alliance of monstrous races which now live in an uneasy peace as their rulers seek to force the disparate peoples into the modern age. Players interested in dragonborn, goliaths, half-orcs, minotaurs, or shifters should read the section on Ber.

Piety and the Planes.

The heavens possess an undeniable hold on the world's religions, its people, and its very structure. In Risur, skyseers believe that the movements of the night stars foretell the future and direct the fate of the world. More enlightened scholars study distant planes of

AN EXCEPTIONALLY BRIEF TIMELINE.

-1200 B.O.V. (Before Our Victory): King Kelland defeats the fey titans and founds Risur, the first mortal nation on the continent of Lanjyr. In the following centuries, other nations rise up throughout Lanjyr.

-500 B.O.V.: Triegenes the fisherman founds the Clergy in what is modern-day Danor, overthrows the demonocracy in the east, then dies and ascends to godhood.

-50 B.O.V.: The First Victory, a holy war between humans and eladrin, ends with the eladrin losing much territory.

1 A.O.V. (After Our Victory): The Second Victory begins as an eladrin effort to reclaim lost lands, but ends in their decisive defeat when the eladrin goddess Srasama manifests physically, and is slain. Danor collapses into

chaos as the nation becomes a dead magic zone. The seat of the Clergy moves to Crisillyr, which begins to colonize the devastated lands of Elfaivar. Dwarves seize control of their own nation in Drakr.

300 A.O.V.: King Boyle of Risur slays the last dragon tyrant of Ber. The nation of Danor, resurgent with industry and technology, begins to contest Risur for control of the lush Yerasol Archipelago.

460 A.O.V.: King Aodhan is crowned in Risur. He encourages his people to pursue industry so they can fight back against Danor. Meanwhile in Ber, Bruse Le Roye unites tribes of monstrous races into a new nation.

493 A.O.V.: The Fourth Yerasol War ends; Risur loses many islands.

500 A.O.V.: Present day.

elemental and temporal power to understand how the flow of their energies affects the fundamental nature of reality. The eladrin people have begun to withdraw into the Feywild, and the bishops of the high church of the Clergy invoke condemned spirits from the Shadowfell to frighten sinners into worship.

The Astral Sea, Elemental Chaos, and Far Realm exist only as postulations, and there are countless other theories on the nature of reality. No one in this world has ever traveled to these planes, and the few beings that are summoned through the veil are only visitors, returning as soon as the spell that called them ends.

The ZEITGEIST setting's metaphysics are explored in the section entitled "The World."

Heroic Themes.

Recent products introduced the concept of character themes. The ZEITGEIST campaign setting presents themes that reinforce the heroic archetypes of the world, such as dockers, gunsmiths, and technologists.

Each player should choose one Theme for his or her character, preferably one unique to the world of ZEITGEIST.

