

THE EMPIRE OF
KYR

DUNGEONWORLD



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OVERVIEW FAITH & RELIGION

KHEYESA, THE SUN

The most widespread faith in the empire of Kyr is the worship of Kheyesa. The origins of the faith began within the desert tribal nomads and spread fast across the lands. Quite simply, Kheyesa is the sun. According to those who practise the religion, the world was originally a dark and dismal place. Kheyesa, a primal force of nature, found this displeasing. He rose into the sky and lit the world with his radiance.

The worship of Kheyesa is a neutral one. While it supports law and structure to some extent, there is a definite taint of "the strong will rule the weak" throughout the religious writings. This sits well with the Kyrian way of life and probably explains the success of the faith in the empire. Berenian sages believe that Kheyesa is simply an aspect of one of their gods, Merl. Kheyesian priests who have studied the Book of Merl actually agree with this, although in their opinion it is Merl who is the aspect and Kheyesa the original.

THE THREE PROMISES

The worship of Kheyesa is strikingly simple. To be considered a devout Kheyesaini (a follower of Kheyesa), a Kyrian need only fulfil three requirements, called "The Three Promises."

First, they must promise to obey the word of Kheyesa, through his priests, above all other laws. In practice this usually means that when encountering a priest of Kheyesa they must give golden pieces in offering for the poor, give shelter and food, and listen to a sermon.

Second, they must pray twice daily, at sunrise and sunset. The Kheyesaini ritual of prayer is very strict. While in prayer the worshipper must be completely naked, "clean in the eye of the sun." Before prayer the worshipper must ablate themselves completely using sand and water. Prayer must take place underneath the open sky. There must be no members of the opposite sex present during the ritual. Temples are constructed for the purpose of prayer in large settlements, with separate areas for men and women and open roofs to pray as required. However, any quiet open place would serve as a suitable point of worship for a Kheyesaini in need of a place to pray.

Third, they must bring light to darkness. What this actually means is not completely agreed between Kheyesaini and this promise has been abused over the centuries.

It is commonly accepted that places where people live must never be dark, and Kheyesaini light lamps and candles all

over the places they live. Kyrian cities often glow in the night with the luminance of thousands of hanging lamps, while desert settlements can seem beautiful and strange in the night with the glow of hundreds of candles along their temporary boundaries.

The third promise is also generally accepted to mean that the laws of the ruler of a settlement should be obeyed, since priests explain that light is the same as order, and darkness as chaos.

This is carried on to a general belief that wealthy Kyrians who own much land, many horses or camels, or have a large harem, must give gold pieces to the poor to bring light to the darkness of their lives. This most commonly takes place through a Kheyesaini priest intermediary (since any wealthy Kyrian, proud of their cleanliness, would not wish to speak with or associate with the poor beyond their slaves and suchlike.)

The recent war with Bereny, orchestrated by the strange invaders known as the Jenna, was not opposed as strongly as it might have been due to a misuse of the Third Promise, which claims that the worship of other powers as equal to Kheyesa casts a shadow upon the land where it takes place. Many Kheyesaini approved of the Jenna's plans, seeing this as an opportunity to combat the darkness with their own light. The terrible effect upon the economy in the absence of trade with Bereny, and with the Lacusan Islands to the far East, caused by the war, has since made many capitulate.

CLEANLINESS

There is little that is more important to a Kheyesaini than cleanliness. Fire is seen as the ultimate purifier, and those who worship the sun must attempt to be clean in its eye. Kheyesaini do not mind becoming dirty in the practice of their business or their lives, but they do take elaborate precautions to make themselves clean again thereafter. Kheyesaini barbers, who open stalls and practice their trade in larger settlements, actually pour a flammable liquid called "Ayyari" on the hands and feet of their customers and light it, to clean those vital tools more thoroughly. (This liquid burns bright and fast, stinging but seldom actually harming the user.)

SUFI

Another common religious practice in Kyr is that of the Sufi. Dismissed as 'mysticism' by many, and therefore unclean, it is tolerated but not encouraged by worshippers of Kheyesa. Practicers of Sufi, called Fakirs, do not worship gods (although they do not deny their existence) but instead worship something called "meticalos", which

means "the power of the world." There are many schools, and some are dismissed by others as confused or incomplete. Sufi teachers say that trying to mix schools is foolish and dangerous. Fakirs can often be recognised by their patchwork robes and ascetic lifestyles. The main schools of Sufi are; Dervishes - who practice magics with weapons, Djan - who summon and control the mysterious Djinni, Zoroastrians - who study the power of fire and the lowly Tourdalan - who work with the animals.

THE DARK ONES

Kyrians believe that there are many evil powers, called the Dark Ones, who lurk in the shadows of the world and seek to cause harm or bring ill to good and honest men. In particular, they fear that demons will steal their horses, camels or perhaps their women, bring sickness to their children, harm their business, or cause their friends and associates to feel disdain or mistrust towards them.

The Kyrian people are extremely superstitious. Charms, wards and many types of talisman are sold to protect against different unseen threats and evil powers. The term "evil" is used differently in Kyr than it is in Bereny, however. Evil would simply be anything which wished to cause harm to or steal from the Kyrian, or to bring darkness where there is light. It is an extremely bad idea, in most Kyrian settlements, to enter somebodies home and snuff out a candle.



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OVERVIEW SOCIAL STRUCTURE

THE EMPEROR

The people of Kyr see little need for complicated government or legal systems. Life here is harsh and its people equally so. The ultimate power in Kyr is the Emperor. Usually this is a hereditary position, with the eldest son taking over on the fathers death.

Currently, since the death of her father and in the absence of son, Kyr is ruled by the Empress. She is a young woman but has inherited her fathers intelligence, guile and ruthlessness. This is just as well, since Kyr is a male-dominated society and although women have ruled before in similar circumstances, it is never an easy position to hold for them. Women seldom hold other positions of power other than in trade.

EMPEROR'S CIRCLE

The next tier of power is the Emperor's circle. This is a body of advisors chosen by the Emperor specifically because he values their advice (or wishes to maintain their loyalty.) The Emperors Circle consists of twelve people which can be literally anybody, although in practice it usually consists of a selection of powerful city governors, members of the emperor's family, and perhaps a holy man or sufi thrown in for effect.

There are popular tales told among the poor of slaves, foreigners and even harem girls who came to "wear the circle" following some great feat, or daring adventure. Charming as these stories are, no such lowly member of society have joined their ranks in recent times.

GOVERNORS

Below the Circle is the rule of the governors. Each city has three governors. The Ra'is, or chief, is the overall ruler of the city, responsible for civilian administration, answering directly to the Emperor. The Amir is the second governor, in control of the city's militia and the dispenser of justice and law. The third governor is the Muhtasib, also called the "light-keeper", responsible for the religious morality of the people in the worship of Kheyesa.

STATESMEN

A Kyrian Statesmen is an official of a Governer, the Circle, or the Emperor. They travel the land acting as a liaison between their employers and others of rank. Statesmen hold an important position and their rank is considered to be only slightly lower than the person on whose behalf they speak. Consequently, a statesman of the Empress would be given respect even by a city Governor.

KAMIR AND ABI-KAMIR

A Kamir is the chosen leader of a village or settlement. Their rank is directly affected by the size of the settlement for which they stand and by their favour with people of higher power. An Abi-Kamir, which means "war leader", is the chief of a nomadic tribe. In civilised society their rank is very low, but in diplomatic dealings with large tribes it can briefly attain a more respectable level.

THE ROLE OF WOMEN

Kyrian society is heavily male-dominated, but this should not be taken to mean that women have no influence in Kyr. It is extremely rare, but not impossible, to find women in any major positions of power. Most commonly women are wives and mothers for the course of their lives. Those women who do progress to higher position do so on force of personality, skill and extreme political awareness.

There are no woman in any positions of power in Kyr advocating "female equality". Such aberrant views would quickly have destroyed their position in the very early days. What they are working towards "behind the scenes" is, of course, another matter.

The majority of woman in Kyr are content with their lot, because it is what they are used to and have grown up knowing. They do not understand the Berenian ideals of equal rights, thinking them both bizarre and crude.

Given that the empire currently has a female as its ultimate ruler, there was some fear that the climate might begin to change. This has not happened, however. The Empress surrounds herself with men and seems to have little regard for other women in politics. This is just as well, since such sympathies would have quickly plunged the empire into civil war.

SLAVERY

Slavery is a way of life in Kyr. Slaves are kept by virtually every wealthy family and it is considered entirely normal to have slaves. One can become a slave in a variety of ways. Criminals (and indeed anybody who falls afoul of those in positions of power) are often bound as slaves and sold at the local market. Debtors who cannot pay often become slaves of the one to whom they owe. Children born of two slaves automatically become slaves themselves. Tribal nomads are often captured and sold into slavery. A secretive foreign slave trade regularly brings in folk from Bereny, although this is something which is not openly spoken of for obvious reasons.

SOCIETY RANKING

Kyrian civilised society is heavily based around each persons social ranking. Each person is careful to show respect to one who is of higher rank, and to remand respect from one who is lower. Where the exact ranking equivalence is uncertain, both parties would usually give respect in a perfunctory manner to avoid conflict and potential embarrassment. The table below shows how each rank relates to the others from highest to lowest.

RANKING LEVELS

- 1/ Emperor
- 2/ Circle
- 3/ Governor:- Ra'is, Militia General
- 4/ Governor:- Amir, Militia Captain
- 5/ Governor:- Muhtasib
- 6/ Statesman*, Kheyesan High Priest
- 7/ Wealthy Trader, Kheyesan Priest
- 8/ Kamir
- 9/ City Militia
- 10/ Craftsmen, Adventurers, Freemen.
- 11/ Unenslaved Workers or Servants, Abi-Kamir*, Militia
- 12/ Slave*, Tribal Nomad

The wives and daughters of a man are seldom involved in politics. For the purpose of interaction there are deemed to be two rankings lower than their spouse, although the rules of etiquette dictate that they are treated the same as the man in his presence or within his sphere of influence. The sons of a man are treated as one rank lower, with the same etiquette. There is no lower rank than Slave.

Slaves themselves, however, have an accrued ranking. Although technically they are the lowest rank there is, in practice they gain a rank three levels lower than their master in certain circumstances, to show great respect for the owner of the slave. A favoured slave of the empress, for instance, would be treated almost as an equal and certainly with respect by an Amir, and may actually be feared by Wealthy Trader.

Statesmen have the same rank as the person on whose behalf they speak, but only when they are deemed to be actually issuing the command of that person. In normal interaction, they have the standard Statesmen's rank.

Abi-Kamir increase in rank to Kamir if they are speaking with a higher ranked person by invitation on behalf of their tribe.



K Y R

OVERVIEW GEOGRAPHY

MAINLAND

Kyr is an enormous empire. It is reckoned by some to be nearly twice the size of Bereny. However, it is nowhere near as densely populated and features huge regions which are completely devoid of civilised life.

The majority of Kyr is dry and hot, with large areas of desert. There is some steppe, particularly in the North, and flat grasslands in the South-East. Most cities in Kyr are built on or near one of the major rivers. In the center of Kyr, the desert of Endless Peril and Misery (often known simply as Misery) is named thus to reflect its deadly nature.

MOUNTAINS

There are three huge mountain ranges; The Thousand and One Mountains which run along the Northern edge of the empire, Vulture Peaks which sit at the top of the Land of the Giants; and the Tainted Mountains in the far South-Western corner of the empire, which are said to be the home of evil Djinn and dark spirits.

WATER

The Karim-Asalah River is the longest and most powerful river in the empire. It originates somewhere high in the Thousand and one mountains and runs diagonally across Kyr, cutting across the top of the Misery and travelling to join the Great Lake of Pleasurable Dreams in the South-West. The other major waterway is the Vulture-Khorsin river which is an offshoot of the Karin-Asalah. Both rivers feed minor streams and brooks in many directions. The rivers of Kyr are bursting with life and source of much food. They are also heavily used for trade and travel.

WASTES

Wastes in Kyr are simply deserts without sand. Usually, a waste is mostly hard flat featureless land, cracked mud, thorny bushes and weeds. Most of the nomadic tribes of Kyr live in the Wastes, although a very few tribes do make a life in the forbidding terrain of Misery. The Western Wastes are actually in the North-East of the Kingdom, but their name was coined by the people of the city of Big Fish, to whom they were indeed in the West.

CITIES

There are two types of City in Kyr; Emperors Cities and Trade Cities. The first type are cities where the emperor actually owns a palace and are usually important centers of government. These are the largest cities because they are in particular favour with the emperor. Trade cities are simply cities with no palace

which have sprung up usually around some vital trade.

The Emperor's Cities in order of size and important from largest to smallest are;

City Of Splendours, capital city, the home of the emperor and his army and the largest city in Kyr.

Rasiaid (pronounced Rar-Say-Eed), the chief hub of commerce from Bereny; Asalah,

Asalah, the largest trade center in Kyr, where the majority of trade goods pass through.

Big Fish, an enormous sprawling city which serves as a hub for the fishing trade of most of the Eastern Coast and is also the home of all the major boat-building companies.

Mordash, the chief hub of commerce with the Islands across the Shimmering Ocean.

The Opal City, famous for its "free" spirit (or perhaps for its depravity, crime and rebellious nature.) Equalled only by Rasiaid for its diversity of races and professions.

The Trade cities and their principle trades are;-

Karim, Mining ; Khorsin, Fishing ; Luluk, River Trade ; Sunder, Farming & Mining ; Harkan-Adib, Farming ; Wondrous Majik, Sorcery ; Djar, River Trade ; Hopeless, Hunting ; Chain, Slave Trade

SETTLEMENTS

There are a great many small, isolated settlements scattered across Kyr. They are seldom mapped in any official journal with the exception of the infamous "Emperor's Book" which is produced magically by the djinn on behalf of the Empress each year, to allow the collection of taxes and other tributes. The outlook and manner of a settlement can vary greatly where strangers are concerned.

THE FORBIDDEN LANDS

In the far North lie the forbidden lands. None may pass, by decree of the first emperor. Death, and worse, is the penalty for any foolish enough to do so. This is the place of spirits, where the holy and the noble pass on their way to the Land of the Dead. A sacred place.

SHANDALLA JUNGLES

The lush Shandalla Jungles in the far South, where the climate begins to give way to vast areas of hot fetid swampland beyond the border, are a

place shrouded in mystery and folklore. Strange and wondrous animals make their home there. Little is known of this strange place, except perhaps by the people of Hopeless who hunt the lands for trade.

THE FETID SWAMP

The Fetid swamp is rumoured to be larger than the Empire of Kyr and the Kingdom of Bereny combined. Thousands of square miles of torturous, ghastly, endless swampland. This forms a safe Southern border for Kyr since the only people who travel this way are Slavers, who use secret routes to transport slaves from the far jungles of the Frontier to Kyr.

LAND OF THE GIANTS

The giants are folk who, for the most part, do not enjoy the company of the small people. Their immense size and power makes them formidable enemies and they would very much like to spread their domination over the whole of the empire and beyond. They do not fear the small people nor their armies, but they are greatly afraid of the powers of the Djinn, many of whom serve the empire. It is for this reason alone they remain in their dusty home and fight amongst their own kind.

THE BERENIAN TRADE PASS

The Kingdom Of Bereny, sometimes a foe, sometimes an ally, presently the latter it seems, lies some 150 miles to the North-West along a dangerous and difficult pass. Travel to Bereny is relatively easy with the aid of Djinn, but only the Empress or her servants (and sometimes armies) can afford such luxury. For normal folk, it may take many months to cross the route and much danger lies in their path. Few make such a journey, for the people of Bereny are pale and wan, their lives lacking the sun's hot touch and their ways foreign and strange. They bathe too much and dance too little, dress too heavy and marry too light. Their manner is cold and their lives are rigid. A strange land and a stranger people.

BERENIANS IN KYR

Since Kyr broke the shackles of the monstrous invaders known as the Jenna, and marched into Bereny to help them do the same (Berenians tell the story differently, uninformed as they are) the path was laid to allow trade to begin again between the two lands. Now, adventurers and traders from Bereny march regularly into Kyr and their people have become a slightly more common sight.



K Y R

PEASANTS

The vast majority of Kyrians are simple peasants living in small, dusty villages. Although the cities in Kyr are large and densely populated, they are spread widely apart and represent only a small minority of the folk of the empire. Peasants farm the land, hunt and fish the rivers for food.

Most peasants are devout Kheyesaini and even the smallest village will have an open-top hut for use as a place of prayer and worship. Kyrian peasants are mostly content with their lot and have a fearful respect for nobles and their agents. Their religious beliefs make them less fractious and less rebellious than the people of Bereny.

Each village will tend to have a lot of poor families and perhaps one or two richer families. Except in rare cases, these families remain the leading power in the village and almost always provide the Kamir, or village leader. In a village this family is influential and respected (and can be considered one social rank higher than they would normally be due to this in certain situations), but in the grand scheme they are still only peasants.

NOMADS

The nomads are the people of the land. These native Kyrians live in small tribes of about 100 people, in the arid Kyrian landscape on tough and unforgiving terrain. They are hard, independent folk, often warlike and aggressive. They have no fixed home, moving around their chosen area to follow the water. Nomads are not very religious, although a few tribes have chosen to become Kheyesaini. They fear magic and some even consider it evil, hence there are no sorcerers of any kind in a nomad tribe.

Some, but not all, nomads accept the rule of the Empire. Others are more like bandits. Some Kyrian nobles and politicians use nomads as mercenary warriors. Their loyalties tend to change suddenly and they are extremely unpredictable. Each tribe is led by an Abi-Kamir, or war-chief. Most tribes have slaves of their own and these are the lowest of the low. Even the slaves of peasant families look down on the slaves of a nomad tribe.

Individual tribes often have great hostility towards one another, holding grudges which go back hundreds of years. In this, perhaps the empire is lucky, for their numbers are estimated to be great indeed. Were they to form under one leader, they would be a powerful force to be reckoned with.

FOOD & DRINK

Peasants and poor families tend to live on rice bread, fish and dates, with some vegetables. Meat is only usually eaten on special occasions and festivals, due to its expense, and then it is usually goat. City folk, adventurers and richer people have a more mixed diet including such things as; Chicken, Mutton, Wheat Bread, Fattened Sheep, Peaches and even expensive imported Berenian beef.

There are very few things as important in Kyrian life than the entertaining of guests. How well a guest eats and drinks is seen as a direct reflection of the social standing of the host. This is true from the poorest household to the richest, although the standards in each obviously vary quite dramatically. Most Kyrians love to entertain in their homes, giving them a chance to show how important and wealthy they are. It is considered extremely rude to rush a dinner party and they often continue for several hours.

There are three great loves in Kyrian life; Coffee, pipes and desserts. Most Kyrians carry coffee with them and a small selection of implements for making it wherever they go including tiny silver cups, a small coalpot to heat the brew, and fresh ingredients. The beans are mixed directly with spices and occasionally alcohol, then heated to produce an aromatic potent brew. Kyrians are fiercely competitive about their recipes for Coffee, no two of which are the same, and great respect is given to anyone who makes a particularly impressive cup.

Kyrians smoke a plant called the Ixus Leaf in long ornate pipes. The herb relaxes the smoker and encourages good humour, but only in a very mild sense. The effect is not strong enough to cause foolishness, or Kyrians would be loathe to use it. Smoking normally takes place after dinner, or after last prayer, and is sometimes accompanied by discussion of a philosophical nature. Not all Kyrian men smoke the Ixus Pipe, but many do. It is considered offensive for a woman to smoke a pipe.

Desserts are the pride and joy of a Kyrian host. These lavish concoctions consist of shaped and coloured sugar, cream, fruit, nuts and dark strong chocolate. In very rich households they may even include magically frozen cream and fruit. Although Kyrians would not usually eat desserts on the road, no restaurant meal or dinner party is complete without one.

Alcohol, with the exception of date wine, is frowned upon by Kyrians for the most part. The attitude is more flexible in cities, where a few taverns can be found catering to adventurers and merchants. Peasants make a strong alcoholic drink called "Metous" from rice which is a

powerful stimulant often drunk by people who work late hours. "Raki" is made from grapes, figs and plums and fermented sugar. "Arak" is an aniseed-flavoured grape spirit. Some folk drink an alcoholic cold coffee which is called "Beqia", but this is extremely expensive.

HEALTH

Kyr has a reputation as being a hotbed of disease in Bereny, but this is actually not true. There are a variety of sicknesses, of course, but really only three which form a major threat and count for a large proportion of mortality in the empire. These are Malaria, Wet Leprosy (called "the waste" by Kyrians) and Typhoid. Malaria tends to strike foreigners harder and more often, whereas typhoid regularly wipes out whole villages. Leper colonies are common in mountainous areas of Kyr. Lepers are considered unclean, are driven from the villages in which they live and are shunned and feared.

Medicine in Kyr is of the holistic variety and is philosophical in nature, unlike the rougher "cut it off or leech it" Berenian style of cure. For those who can afford it, a physician can be hired to tend the sick. While few actual cures are known, the general idea of keeping the sickly clean, comfortable and at peace does result in a reasonable rate of recovery. For those who cannot afford it, the families do the best they can with what little knowledge their elders have gained.

ANIMALS

By far the most common animals owned in Kyr are Goats and Camels. Goats are kept for milk and meat, while camels are used for riding and carrying goods. Donkeys are sometimes used by merchants and traders who stay to the roads. Horses are less common, used mainly by the military and by the rich. Some nomad tribes have wonderful herds of horses, which they guard jealously. Kyrians do not like household pets. Cats and dogs are considered vermin, in the same class as rats. Indeed, Dogs are a serious problem for many villages, roaming in starving fierce packs just out of the village borders. Rich folk often keep hawks and falcons for hunting and sport.

MONSTERS

There are a large variety of monsters in and around Kyr, as you might expect. They are a constant threat, haunting the wild areas, lurking in underground lairs and suchlike. Most villages train their young men to defend them against an attack, since it is unlikely the military would deign to assist them unless they happened to be there collecting taxes. Travel can be very dangerous indeed.



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OVERVIEW CHARACTER TYPES

BERENY CLASSES

All the adventuring classes found in Bereny can be found in Kyr as foreigners who have travelled into the region from Bereny, for whatever reason, with the exception of Crusaders of any kind other than Merl (and even those, rarely.)

Despite the fact that most Berenian classes exist in Kyr, there are some classes that really do not enjoy living in Kyr's geographical (and social) climate. You should think carefully before signing up some types of Berenian Adventurer, deciding just "why" they would want to be in Kyr. Glacier Barbarians, for instance, would find the heat stifling and awful. Elven Warrior Maidens would struggle to deal with the way most women are treated in Kyr. Druids would find little of the terrain they are familiar with. Priests of the Berenian kind who were not the invited guests of a noble would have a very hard time in Kyr, due to the religious fervour of many of the people.

Berenian female adventurers are tolerated in Kyr. Although Kyrian women, with a few exceptions, would seldom do such things, the females of Bereny look so foreign that they are accepted, albeit grudgingly. Even so, free women who are not married and tending to the home tend to be treated with disdain, condescension and even hostility by many of the people of Kyr. Enchanters of the Berenian type are far less powerful in Kyr, since their magic often functions differently in the region, or in some cases not at all.

KYRIAN CLASSES

There are many adventuring classes found only in Kyr, a product of the environment and world in which they live. These are listed below, including a brief description:-

Half-Ogre Fighter (male only)
Ogres are common in Kyr. They are valuable slaves, used mainly for labouring and protection. Kyrian Ogres are brutish and stupid, even more so than their Berenian Cousins, but immensely strong. The situation where an Ogre and a Human would mate is very seldom one of choice, usually the result of an out-of-control ogre and an unfortunate slave girl. Half-Ogre's look like immense, disproportionate humans. They are seldom clever and even more seldom attractive to look at, but they do not always inherit their father's evil nature.

Kyrian Warrior (male only)
A Kyrian warrior is a lesser son of a noble or trader who has chosen to join the mercenary profession since his brothers have already taken the reins of the company business. They are usually tied to a rich family, but with limited status

(unless all their brothers suddenly die...) As such, any Kyrian warrior begins with a random selection of four sub-characters. These are all free to play, but replacements if they die or additions later cost the usual sub-character fee.) The sub-characters they can choose from are; concubine, camel, goat and slave. You do not make these choices when setting up a warrior, as you are given the option to do so on your first actual turn, using orders.

Eunuch Warrior (male only)
A Eunuch is a male warrior who has been emasculated, usually as a slave in order to guard a harem, or more rarely as punishment for some serious crime. Eunuch's are strange and cold, lacking in many of the emotions that once made them men. A Eunuch is a good support character for a Kyrian Warrior, perhaps as their slave. Free eunuchs are not unheard of, having earned the key to their chains through long or loyal service.

Escaped Native Slaves (male and female)
These are tribal natives from the far land of Frontier, brought back to Kyr as prized slaves, who have since escaped. Kyrians are surprisingly easy-going about this. As long as the slave gets far enough that nobody knows who he is, they can often go on with their lives, hiring out as an adventurer or mercenary. They try to avoid slaver gangs though, or they may quickly find themselves back in service. Female slaves have a much harder time of things than their male counterparts.

Dervish (Male Assassin Mercenary)
A Dervish is a highly-trained specialist swordsman and assassin. They are also schooled in etiquette and charm to allow them to get close to potential targets. There are rumours that they have strange powers and abilities that make them more than men, powers of the Sufi, or "Hidden World", but many discount this, assuming that they are only well-trained combatants.

Bloodmaiden (Female Assassin Mercenary)
One of the few Kyrian female adventurer types, Bloodmaidens take the same training as that of the Dervish. However, they are also trained in the art of love. When working as assassins they often infiltrate a harem, to enable them easy access to their hapless targets.

Minotaur (male only)
The powerful bull-headed men are slightly smaller, but much more intelligent than their common Berenian kin. Small tribes of Minotaurs live in the desert (and under it) and some of these travel to become adventurers in the empire.

Aslani Warrior (male only)
The lion-men have been in Kyr for as long as time is recorded. Sages dispute

whether Kyr, or the Frontier, is their true native land, but they are certainly plentiful here. Aslani are ferocious, savage fighters, masters of a special blade known as the Mikita. They are well-respected in Kyr and often rise high in political and social status.

Aslani Monk (male only)
The Aslani have a propensity for the martial arts and many travel to the Thousands and One Mountains to visit remote temples and learn the art from a very young age. Aslani Monks are very skilled hand-to-hand fighters, but are far more balanced and controlled due to their zen-like training.

Dark Aslani Warrior (male only)
Dark Aslani are a rogue offshoot of the race, but have multiplied in recent years so that their numbers now rival their good-natured brothers. They have black or brown manes and tend to be scarred and marked by the harsh years of their tribal upbringing. In general, Dark Aslani are evil, where the normal Aslani are good, although there are exceptions of course.

Mesmeriser
A Mesmeriser is a master of Smoke and Mirrors. They study the art of illusion, mastering "tricks" which can be used to their advantage in certain situations. All Mesmerisers start with four tricks, the instructions for which are inscribed on small stone tablets and jealously guarded, but can learn many more in their adventuring career.

Beguiller
A Beguiller is simply a woman who practises the same art as the Mesmeriser. However, there are some tricks that only woman can do, and some purely for men, which sets them very slightly apart.

Fakir
A Fakir is a religious mystic. They are a practitioner of Sufi, the hidden world. They worship "meticalos", the power of the world. They are considered "unclean" and only barely-tolerated by the Kheyesa-worshipping people of Kyr. In some towns, a Fakir might run into serious hostility. Fakirs can often be recognised by their patchwork robes and ascetic lifestyles. The main schools of Sufi are;- Djan - who summon and control the mysterious Djinni by using the inherent power of gemstones, Zoroastrians - who study the power of fire and the lowly Tourdalan - who work with the animals.