

Astrology and astronomy are, in the average Novendian mind, much the same art. Only the true practitioners of these arts, and those with a broad base of arcane knowledge, appreciate their very real differences. The astrologer's goal is to discern the patterns in the heavens and reveal how they mirror events in the lives of men and nations, thereby gaining a glimpse into the future. The astronomer, on the other hand, is interested in celestial mechanics for their own sake, rather than for any benefits that can be gained. That said, the skills, techniques and general knowledge required of the two arts are very much the same. The following information is geared primarily towards astrology, but some true astronomy is also discussed.

ASTROLOGY & ASTRONOMY

Few Novendians have any real knowledge of astronomy; those who do are pilots, astrologers and mages, whose livelihood depends on their familiarity with the stars. But even the most casual skywatcher can't help but notice that the night sky changes with the seasons in an endlessly repeating pattern. Only the planets seem to wander randomly across the the heavens, but even the mystery of their courses yields to diligent study. The rotating stars frame the movements of the sun, the moons and the planets.

Millennia of observation has revealed that the sun and moons travel through narrow bands in the sky, and therefore through a select number of constellations which thereby gain particular distinction. These star groups eventually became the Zodiac, and the positions of the sun and moons on various dates became significant subjects of study. For those who sought order from the chaos of the world, it was irresistible that the great celestial ballet must influence the lives and fates of the mortal plane. The astologers task became one of discovering the connections.

The philosophical attachment of Umantari fortunes and attributes to the periodic motions of the heavens led to the practical study of the stars. Most star gazers study the heavens intent on discovering the patterns that can be related to the lives of men and kingdoms. Their appetite for astronomical knowledge is in direct proportion to the power it may give by prediction of the future. Court astrologers can be found in almost every kingdom and empire on Novendo, though their influence varies. Most tribal nations have shamans who interpret the movements of the heavens for their fellow tribesmen.

A few arcanists, however, do study true astronomy for it's own sake. They possess the few telescopes that exist, of varying capabilities, and through these have seen the moons and planets in much greater resolution than have others. The Telnori, who originally named the planets and moons, certainly possess the greatest astronomical knowledge in the Mortal Lands, which they rarely share with outsiders. Their knowledge of the solar system seems to exceed their capacity for optical observation, and may descend from the the Immortals.



Aranda and Osal

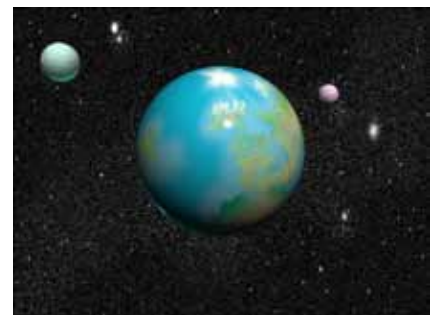
Novendo possesses two moons, Aranda and Osal.

Aranda, the larger of the moons, is 2,993 km in diameter, with a synodical period of 26 days, and appears slightly larger than Luna does from Earth. It orbits Novendo at a distance of 334,646 km.

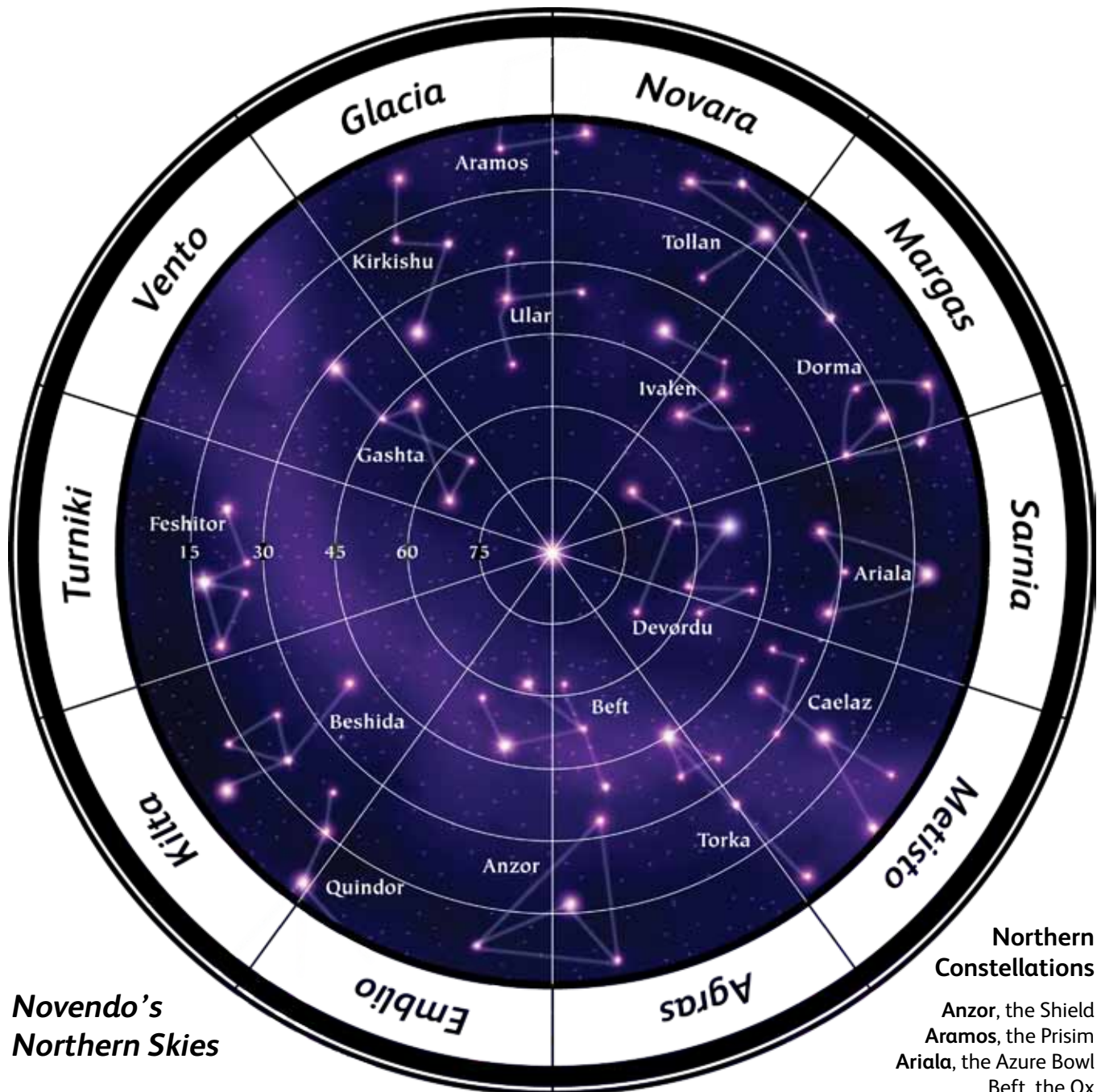
Osal is 138 km in diameter, has a synodical period of 12 days, and orbits the planet at a distance of 78,247 km. It appears to be about one-third the size of Luna.

Due to what is generally believed to be certain refractive properties of the moons' surfaces Aranda is usually a pale electric blue in colour, while Osal is a pale rose.

Rarely their colours will deepen, Aranda to a deep purple and Osal to a blood red. No pattern has been discovered to these changes, and they are seen as events of great astrological significance, portending great events in the affairs of men and gods.



ASTROLOGY 2



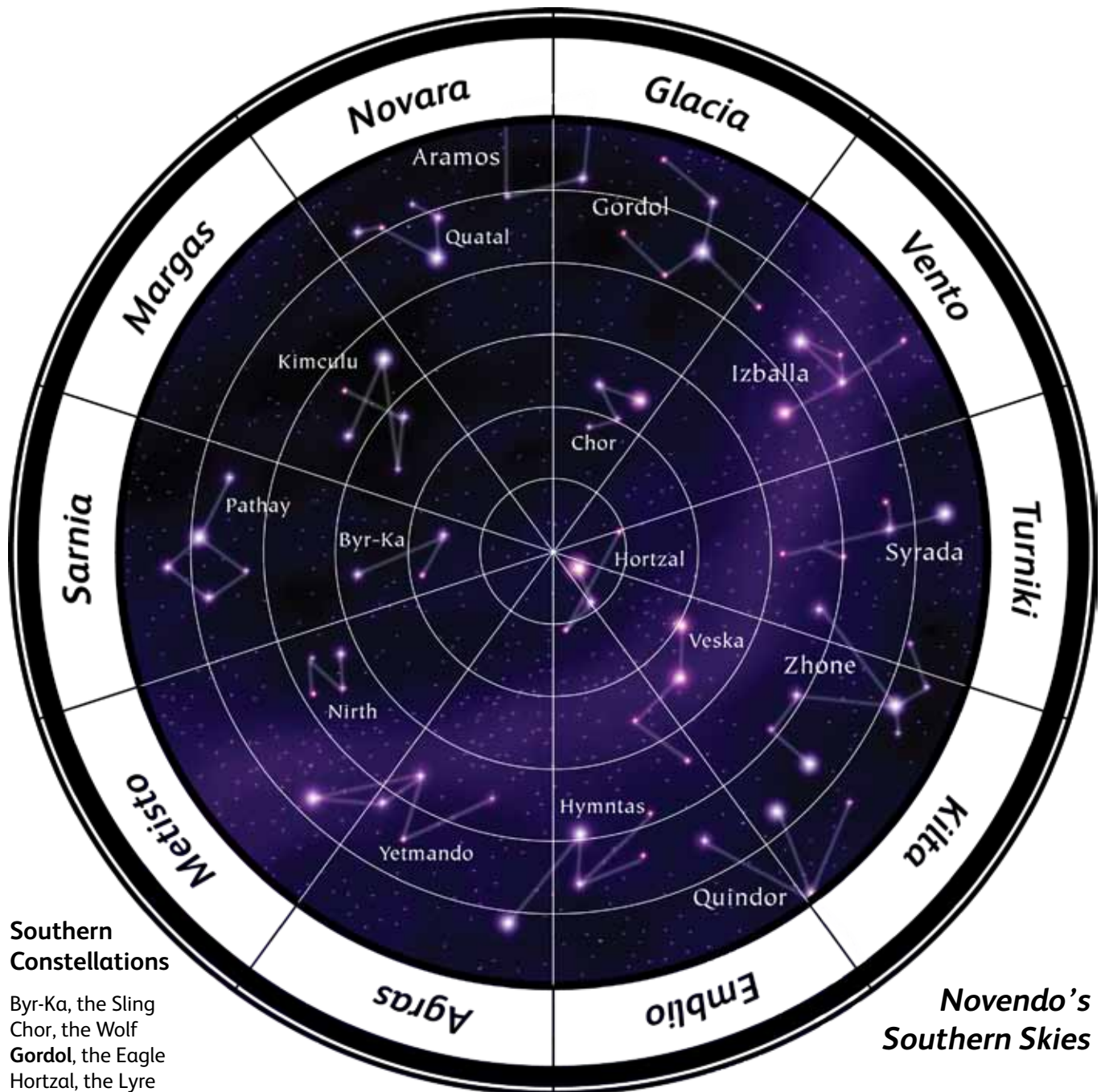
Novendo's Northern Skies

The diagrams on these two pages illustrate the nighttime skies in the northern and southern latitudes of Novendo. The stars charted may be seen with the naked eye. The brighter the star, the larger the symbol. The constellations shown are the 30 most important and widely know constellations. The names of these groupings, and their symbolic representation, are given below each chart. Zodiacal constellations are given in **bold face**

While the all stars and constellations have some impact on the affairs of men (and, perhaps, the gods), the twelve Zodiacal signs are of primary importance and greatly affect those born under them. The Zodiac consists

Northern Constellations

- Anzor, the Shield
- Aramos, the Prism
- Ariala, the Azure Bowl
- Beft, the Ox
- Beshida, the Scales
- Caelaz**, the Hunter
- Devordu, the Wrestlers
- Dorma**, the Pool
- Feshitor, the Plough
- Gashta, the Hourglass
- Ivalen, the Twisted God
- Kirkishu, the Runner
- Tollar**, the Ship
- Torka**, the Spear
- Ular, the Archer



Southern Constellations

Byr-Ka, the Sling
 Chor, the Wolf
Gordol, the Eagle
 Hortal, the Lyre
 Hymntas, the Flail
Izballa, the Midwife
 Kimculu, Camel
 Nirth, the Twins
 Pathay, the Throne
 Quatal, the Ogre
Quindor, the Phoenix
Syrada, the Flaming Staff
 Veska, the Devout
 Yetmando, the Smith
Zhone, the Dragon

*Novendo's
 Southern Skies*

of the twelve constellations that lie on the ecliptic, the plane of the planets' orbits around Zira, the sun. The meanings and influences of these signs are given in more detail beginning on **Astrology 5**.

The average person can identify many of the major constellations and can use the pole star to orient himself. Pilots, of course, are able to navigate by the stars with fair accuracy. The north pole star is named Balus, and the spear of the constellation Torka points directly to it. In the southern hemisphere there is no precise pole star, but Virata, the brightest star in the constellation Hortal, revolves very closely around the pole point

TOLLAN The Ship



DORMA The Pool



TOLLAN: 16 Novara - 10 Margas

Representative of fulfillment and completion, the Ship is a symbol of the soul on its journey through the great cycle of Life— from the shadowed shores of Eternity the ship voyages out across the turbulent seas of the World, to return again into Eternity. The sea, like the World, is dangerous, with great potential for destruction; but the Ship floats upon it. The manner of its survival is important: the Ship does not oppose the Sea, it yields to the storm, seeking to harmonize and unify, and in so doing triumphs. **A Water sign.**

Those born under this sign are masters of compromise and tend to be unusually tolerant of others. They seek to harmonize with their environment and have a firm grip on reality. Often courageous, they are able to accommodate life's ebbs and flows with equanimity. Even in apparent defeat, the TOLLANIAN may sink into one of life's troughs only to rise again on a new crest— they yield rather than be destroyed, and so survive to fight again. But they must also fight a tendency to let themselves drift on the seas of Fate, to let circumstance dictate their destiny, to be a pawn rather than a player.

DORMA: 11 Margas - 5 Sarnia

The primary symbol of water and mystery, Dorma is the sign of both love and pleasure. It also represents the cool darkness and mystery of the depths. It represents femaleness, security, emotion. The Pool is the opposite of the Spear, enfolding whereas the Spear penetrates. Dorma is symbolic of life, motherhood and fertility, but also of Death in its beneficent aspect. **A Water sign.**

Those born under this sign tend toward moodiness and may often be fickle. They are mercurial of temperament, one moment calm or happy, the next restless or wildly emotional. Tenacity is a strong trait of this sign - like moving water the Dormai will wear down obstacles over time. They also have a strong sense of what, in human terms, is really important, and are capable of a love so deep and strong that it can be shared endlessly. But they can also hold a grudge forever, and their cold hatred can be frightening in its intensity.

ARIALA: 6 Sarnia - 30 Sarnia

The bowl is symbolic of the ability of liquid to combine multiple elements into a new, harmonious whole. Ariel is a goddess of Air, her Bowl a symbol of Water; together they represent the transformation of diversity into harmony through knowledge and compassion. By knowing what to blend (and, often more importantly, what not to blend) in the waters of the Bowl, the future may be glimpsed, knowledge gained, a new reality given life. It is symbolic of transformation brought about by learning and love, joined in harmony. **A Metal sign.**

Those born under this sign tend to possess strong intellects; they are governed by emotion, but recognize this, and so tend to avoid the worst of emotional excesses. They have a great capacity to enjoy life and to make those around them enjoy it. They listen and empathize, often able to see solutions where others see only problems. The Aerialian is able to learn from whatever life hands them. They enjoy experimentation, although the results may not always be what they expected, and they often limit themselves in this area by their compassion. They tend to have strong family ties and to appreciate tradition.

CAELAZ: 1 Metisto - 25 Metisto

This is the sign of Spring, symbolizing the hidden life within, the potential of all things to nourish life, even in death. It is the symbol of Man in harmony with Nature. Man hunts, taking what he needs to survive from Nature, but on Nature's terms. In death the hunted provides new life for the hunter, and so the endless cycle continues. This is a symbol of transition and the universal cycles that touch us all. **An Earth sign.**

Those born under this sign are vital, energetic, with a joy of living unmatched by most. They also recognize that death is a vital part of life. They have an affinity with nature, feeling that they are a part of the whole. They are often family oriented, seeing in their children the next turning of the Eternal Wheel. They are reliable and possess a kind of wisdom that can lend strength in troubled times. The Caelazian is generally strong of body and will. Their pragmatism may sometimes be seen as a lack of compassion, but this is seldom true. A tendency towards fatalism must be guarded against, however.

ARIALA
The Azure Bowl**CAELAZ**
The Hunter

TORKA The Spear



TORKA: 26 Metisto - 20 Agras

Torka symbolizes the cyclic nature of natural processes, the growth and decay of all life. It is the sign of summer, of life at its peak, and of the male side of Nature. The Spear is depicted with leaves sprouting from its shaft, symbolic of the quiet tenacity of life, its ability to adapt and survive in many forms. It is a symbol of transition— from tender Sprout to living Tree to fashioned Artifact, only to sprout once again into new life. It is representative of the wisdom that recognizes the universal truth of Nature’s ultimate mastery over Man. The living wood has been shaped by Man, but overcomes his domination, reverting to its natural function, bringing forth new life. **An Earth sign.**

Those born under this sign tend to be strong and constant of spirit, in tune with Nature. Their lives may undergo great changes or upheavals, but they maintain a tenacious grasp on who they are and a sense of their place in the universe. They are solid, and reliable, often possessed of a quiet strength from which others draw comfort. They may be bent by the winds of change, but are seldom broken; their lives seem more strongly governed by the eternal cycles of birth, life and death than are the lives of others.

ANZOR The Shield



ANZOR: 21 Agras - 15 Emblio

The Shield is symbolic of Man’s ability to wrest what he will from Nature, to create for himself what Nature does not provide. It symbolizes both his power to manipulate Nature and his ability to protect himself from Her. This is the sign of forging and tempering, the ordeal that ultimately creates strength. It is a symbol of transformation, the potential of Man to dominate and transform Nature, turning Her raw materials into artifacts of Man, and of the promise of Spring coming to fruition in the heat of Summer. **A Metal sign.**

Those born under this sign tend to be manipulative, a trait that is useful as their lives tend to be turbulent and their path filled with obstacles. They seem to go from one ordeal to the next, but from each one they gain something; if they learn to cast aside their failures and move on they are ultimately the stronger. They make good craftsmen and artisans, and enjoy working with their hands. The world is never good enough “as-it-is” for the Anzorian— he must try to improve it. This can lead to bucking great odds, but his will is indomitable; he may be defeated, but he is seldom destroyed.

QUINDOR: 16 Emblio- 10 Kilta

Quindor is one of the most complex signs in the heavens, symbolizing action, dynamics, conflict, destruction and resurrection. The Phoenix, rising from the ashes on wings of flame, represents the physical and ethereal aspects of fire as well as the heat of conflict. Beak and talons of bronze, feathers of copper, the Warrior Bird symbolizes maleness, light, strife, the glory of triumph that rises from the ashes of defeat. Symbolic of the creative aspects of fire, of controlled energy and of righteous conflict. **A Fire sign.**

Those born under the influence of this sign tend to lead dynamic, action-oriented lives, constantly striving against something or someone, fighting for a cause or aiming for a goal. The quest is central to their lives, although the achievement may bring disappointment and restlessness. They often possess an amazing ability to rise from almost any defeat. They are direct, distaining subtlety, preferring force over guile. Many of the greatest rulers were born under the sign of the Phoenix.

ZHONE: 11 Kilta - 5 Turniki

Symbolizing the destructive power of fire, Zhone reminds us that all that is created within the World must eventually be destroyed. But, while he is always without mercy, Zhone does not always represent mindless, wanton destruction, although he is capable of it. His fire can purify, burning away the dross to reveal the gold, clearing away the old so that the new may be born. His fire represents the ordeal that cleanses the World, preparing it for renewal. **A Fire Sign.**

Those born under the sign of the Dragon are perfectionists, tending to be intolerant and impatient, with quick and often violent tempers. They are quick to criticize and frugal with their praise; they dislike the old or conservative, often finding fault with what is established or accepted. They are progressive, eager to experiment, risk takers; they are always ready to act, leaping in where even gods might fear to tread. They are often revolutionaries of one sort or another, preferring to purge rather than modify. Many of the greatest conquerors and military innovators were Zhoneans.

QUINDOR
The Phoenix**ZHONE**
The Dragon

SYRADA The Flaming Staff



SYRADA: 6 Turniki - 30 Turniki

Syrada symbolizes the mystic union of Air and Fire, the smoke that remains when fire has consumed. The Staff, generally the symbol of controlled, directed energy, is here burning, representing energy unfocused and uncontrolled, power wasted or lost. In another sense, however, it symbolizes escape from destruction through change, a reminder that nothing is ever really destroyed, that acceptance of change is the road to wisdom. **An Ethereal sign.**

Those born under this sign tend to be centers of confusion and tumult, both for themselves and for others. They are moody, often flighty, with wild imaginations and mercurial temperaments. They lead active lives but are often indecisive, unable to focus their energies effectively. This often results in a great deal of effort expended to little profit. On the other hand they are also very adaptable and resilient to change. They may blow with the winds, but they are survivors.

IZBALLA The Midwife



IZBALLA: 1 Vento - 25 Vento

Symbolic of the physical bringing the ethereal into realization, Izballa is the manifestation of the higher principles through the lower planes, of the female aspect of Nature. It is symbolic of the eternal renewal of life. It is mysterious and ephemeral, yet vastly potent; the essence of pure mind (or soul) seeking manifestation through physicality. It is the quest for truth through experience, guided by the hand of one who has gone before; the midwife guiding the newborn towards his first breath. **An Air sign.**

Those born under this sign possess an insatiable curiosity and a desire to experience all that life can offer. They tend to be intellectually inclined, regarding knowledge as the greatest gift, and they are not shy about sharing knowledge that they have gained with others; they make excellent teachers. Their intense interest in things unusual or esoteric, their pursuit of knowledge, may lead them to neglect important aspects of day to day life, and they may seem thoughtless of others. But in fact they are compassionate, with strong emotions often just under the surface. Though often knowledgeable, they may also be naive and trusting.

GORDOL: 26 Vento - 20 Glacia

Symbolic of the unrestrained freedom of the human spirit. The Eagle soars free in skies that others may not even be able to see. He cannot be constrained, and, like him, the soaring thought of the human spirit can see solutions to the greatest problems from on high and will swoop in for the kill. Symbolic of strength and majesty. This sign has much in common with Syrada. *An Air sign.*

Although they share common bonds with Syradians, those born under the sign of the Eagle tend to be more precise, their efforts less diffuse, with solutions following rapid flurries of intense activity, either physical or mental. The Gordolian flies high in the quest for knowledge and power, but he may also crash; failure can be particularly damaging to those of this sign. They may resent authority, especially if it tries to constrain their soaring flights, but they may not openly oppose it. If chaffed by restraint or confinement their thoughts are of escape rather than vengeance. Often intelligent, they can be detached and merciless, watching events as if from on high, and only when the moment best suits, swooping down to take action.

ARAMOS: 21 Glacia - 15 Novara

The prism symbolizes the most intangible qualities of Power. Often used to represent the pure aspects of magic, it also stands for the soul or mind, the ultimate intangibility. It may also represent the intangible power of wealth. The Prism takes in light and may either focus or diffuse it – the person who learns its secrets may command its power. It symbolizes the ability to achieve great results with seemingly slight action. It is also symbolic of confinement and bondage, of intangibilities held in check by the tangible, as the soul is contained in the body. It is the most ethereal and esoteric of signs. *An Ethereal sign*

Those born under this sign rarely approach problems directly, preferring to come at them from an oblique angle. They tend to think in gestalts, to perceive patterns and relationships in intuitive leaps. This often confuses more linear-minded thinkers and can make the Aramosian seem possessed of almost miraculous powers of the mind. They are constantly seeking knowledge, and appreciate the various forms of power that it can bring. They also tend to procrastinate and may take more time to reach a goal than is really necessary. Patience and perseverance are strong in those of this sign, which can make them dangerous enemies as well as great wizards, scholars or artists.

GORDOL
The Eagle**ARAMOS**
The Prism



Examples

Genericus was born on the 12th of Kilta. This makes him a Zhonian, but because he was born within two days of the beginning of the sign (on the “cusp”) he also shares the traits and destinies of a Quindoran. Thus he is a Zhone-Quindor sunsign. When modifying attributes or skill bases for sunsigns he may use whichever sign gives the greatest advantage.

His sister, Generica, was born on the 2nd of Glacia, making her an Izballan. Her general personality type will come solely from Izballa, although individual factors at the precise time and place of her birth might vary her actual personality by a considerable amount.

ASTROMANCY

Astromancy is the divination of specific events by means of the astrological arts. Pure astrologers take the position that, while their art can predict universal trends, it cannot properly determine the roles of individuals in these events. They can, metaphorically, predict that it will rain, but they cannot say who will get wet. Purists objectively examine the cosmos for clues but tend to avoid seeking direct answers to specific questions, since “directed research” tends to corrupt the findings. This is not to say that an objective astromancer can’t obtain useful results. If she avoids the temptation of “direct hit” forecasting, he may extract useful information for a querant with specific interests.

Astrologers are not fatalistic. Those who are well-versed in the arts perceive astrology as an attempt only to glance upon the future, not to rape it. While it can be argued that knowledge of the future gives some power to change it, purists try only to anticipate situations in order that individuals may bring their freewill to bear upon them. They believe the future is merely probability, not a course set in stone.

The twelve signs of the Novendian zodiac are grouped according to Thularina principles. The constellation (or House) in which the sun is located at the time of a person’s birth is called his sun- or birthsign, and he is attributed with traits characteristic of that sign and its re-

From	To	Sunsign	Symbol	Type
16 Novara	10 Margas	Tollan	The Ship	Water
11 Margas	5 Sarnia	Dorma	The Pool	Water
6 Sarnia	30 Sarnia	Ariala	The Azure Bowl	Metal
1 Metisto	25 Metisto	Caelaz	The Hunter	Earth
26 Metisto	20 Agras	Torka	The Spear	Earth
21 Agras	15 Eklovio	Anzor	The Shield	Metal
16 Eklovio	10 Kilta	Quindor	The Phoenix	Fire
11 Kilta	5 Turniki	Zhone	The Dragon	Fire
6 Turniki	30 Turniki	Syrada	The Flaming Staff	Soul
1 Vento	25 Vento	Gordol	The Eagle	Air
26 Vento	20 Glacia	Izballa	The Midwife	Air
21 Glacia	15 Novara	Aramos	The Prism	Soul

lated elements and symbols. This general sunsign reading of a person deals only with fun-dementals. A true horoscope, on the other hand, is a comprehensive picture of the entire heavens at the precise sidereal time of birth. It is a personal reading, far more complex, and different for each individual.

True horoscopes require data in the form of an ephemeris (tables of planetary motions), precise formulae for calculating various factors, the exact time and place of birth, ect. A great many Novendian families, even the poorest, take great care to note and preserve the exact time and place of a child’s birth, as it may be vital for later life

decisions. It is also possible to determine this information by arcane means, but this is usually not easy nor cheap.

The personality of a person born on the cusp of two signs (within two days of the beginning or end of a sign) is deemed to be a blend of the two signs. The actual birthsign is always listed first, and in cases of conflict will usually dominate.

The Ziran System

Zira is G1 type star .97 times the mass of Sol and 253,000 times the mass of Novendo. The star has a rotation rate of about 26 days at its poles and about 20 days at its equator. The Ziran system contains seven planets:

Body	Type	Period	Rotation	Axis	Mass
Tirus	P	0.31	Tidal Lock	9°	0.12
Skorym	T	0.56	6 days	13°	0.61
Novendo	T	1.00	25 hours	22°	1.00
Jara	T	1.95	19 hours	15°	0.78
Ketora	J	12.00	21 hours	6°	104
Pethos	J	68.00	14 hours	35°	345
Garus	T	121.00	30 hours	90°	2.3

Tirus

Tirus is the closest planet to Zira, with a mean distance of 81,000 km. It is a small, rocky planetoid, with no appreciable atmosphere and a solid rock core. The surface temperature ranges from +200° to -180° celsius. Tirus has no moons and is difficult to see from Novendo due to its proximity to the sun, although careful observation will reveal it as a faint morning/evening star at dawn or dusk at certain times of the year.

Skorym

Skorym is the second planet in the Ziran system, orbiting the star at a mean distance of 121,000 km. It is a terrestrial class planet, something more than half the size of Novendo, with a thin carbon dioxide/oxygen atmosphere and a mean surface temperature of 120° celsius. It possess a molten core beneath its lithosphere, and therefore a significant magnetic field (which helps the small world retain its atmosphere). The planet can be seen from Novendo as a very bright morning/evening star for much of the year. Skorym possesses one rocky moonlet, Jesif, 258 km in diameter, which orbits its parent in a fast, highly elliptical orbit 23° off the plane of the ecliptic.

Novendo

Novendo is the third planet out from the star Zira, with a mean distance of 178,762,042 km. Novendo is a terrestrial planet very much

The Demon's Fist

Novendians, particularly those in the northwest regions of the planet, are very much aware of what objects falling from the sky can do. Three thousand years have done little to remove the terror of the Demon's Fist from the collective unconscious.

Shooting stars are perceived by the common folk as warnings from the gods, lest mankind relax its vigilance against evil and allow the Demon King entry into the world once more. No one is likely to forget what the result of that was the last time it happened...

For a thousand years the Immortals toiled to make Novendo a garden for their Children who were to come. And when their work neared completion they woke the first of those children, the star-born Telnori, and set them the task of shepherding the life of the new world. Soon the deep-delvers, stone-born Khunduri were awakened to refine raw materials into the artifacts of civilization. And finally the Umantari were awakened to populate the world and tame it, to the glory of the Immortals.

For another thousand years all lived in harmony under the golden rule of the Immortals, and their vision was made real of a world of peace, beauty and joy. But not all was as it should be. In the boundaries of the world they had awakened something that had slumbered in the Void for eons before the coming of the Immortals, and that something was dark, and it hated these new intruders. Biding its time, the malevolence watched and learned the ways of material world, and when it was ready it took form, and with it came an army of darkness.

The attack was sudden and unexpected, but the Dark Ones were new to the material realm and the Light was the stronger. The Demon King and his minions were pushed back, defeated, but not destroyed. In time they rose again, stronger and more sure. Eventually a great battle was sought on the Plain of Summer, where all would finally be decided.

But treachery was in the nature of the Demon, and he reached deep into the heavens and snared a great stone, which he cast down towards the Shining City, heart of the Light, intending to destroy all in a single blow.

The Immortals perceived their danger at the last moment, and they strove, as one, to deflect the Demon's blow. Korön the Wise struggled face to face with the Demon, but looking into that Void he was driven mad.

For all their effort, it was too little, too late... though they shattered the Stone into pieces, still the greater part fell to Novendo in a fiery cloud of destruction, the Demon's Fist.

The Demon King's aim had been true, but his understanding of the material world was still lacking... he underestimated the terrible forces he had unleashed. Although the City of the Immortals was destroyed, so too was the land for leagues around, including the Plain of Summer. The Demon King and his great army were swallowed up along with his enemies as the earth split and the oceans rose and boiled. The molten heart of Novendo vomited forth from her terrible wound, and great clouds of burning ash darkened the skies around the world.

The Immortals survived the Demon's Fist, but it took all of their power, joined again as One, to keep the world from utter destruction. While whole lands sank beneath the waves and other rose steaming from the seas they strove to heal the rent in the planet, to calm her upheavals and restore balance. But while all their energies went to heal the earth, a great cloud covered the world, bringing winter and death. Life and civilization faded and flickered.

But it did not die.

In time the Immortals were able to turn their attention again to other matters and the dust was dispersed and the sun shone. Life slowly began to reassert itself, and those who had survived began to think again about life and not merely existence. But much had been lost, and it was many long centuries before the Umantari began to climb the ladder towards true civilization once more.

The Immortals withdrew to a new home beyond the Western Sea, deeming it unsafe for the reemerging civilizations to have close contact with them, lest disaster strike again. Many of the surviving Telnori went with them, but not all. And the Khunduri, for the most part, sought to rebuild in their own way and places.

like Earth, with an equatorial circumference of 40,056 km and a diameter of 12,749 km. The planet has a surface area of 313,583,510 km², of which approximately 23 % is land. It possesses 9 continental land masses, 12 major islands and countless smaller islands. The atmosphere is nitrogen (77 %), oxygen (22 %), and neon (1 %) with minute quantities of other gases. Mass, gravity and atmospheric pressure at sealevel are all just slightly less than Earth's. An axial tilt of 22° 43' gives the planet Earth-like weather patterns and seasons, although the shorter year (316.77 Earth days) makes for shorter seasons. Because Zira is slightly cooler than Sol, the planet has a smaller equatorial zone and correspondingly larger temperate and arctic zones than does Earth. Novendo has two moons, Aranda and Osal.

Jara

Jara is the fourth planet of the Ziran system, at a mean distance of 265,000,000 km. It is a terrestrial type planet, half again as large as Novendo with almost twice the mass. It possesses a rocky mantle and molten iron-nickel core, giving it a strong magnetic field, and a fairly dense atmosphere. This atmosphere helps keep the planet warmer than would otherwise be the case, given its distance from the sun; unfortunately, this atmosphere is a fluorine/ammonia mixture, instantly lethal to terrestrial life. Its heavy cloud cover prevents direct observation of its surface, so it is unknown if Jara possesses any native lifeforms. Three small, rocky moons orbit the planet.

Ketora

Ketora is the fifth planet of the Ziran system, with a mean distance from its primary of 513,000,000 km. It is the second largest planet in the system, a gas giant, with five known moons (none of which are visible to the naked eye). The planet is the second brightest object in the Novendian night sky, outshone only by Skorym.

Pethos

Pethos is the sixth planet out from Zira, at a mean distance of 1,687,000,000 km, and is the largest of the seven planets. Like Ketora, it is a gas giant, but 3.5 times larger its sister. Pethos has twelve known moons, none of which are visible to the naked eye (and only eight of them can be seen with the best Umantari telescopes; knowledge of the other four come from the Telnori).

Garus

Garus is the most distant planet from the sun, orbiting Zira at a mean distance of 2,435,000,000 km. Its orbit is highly eccentric, 19° off the plane of the ecliptic, and its axial tilt is 90°, putting its rotation perpendicular to the plane of the other planets and leaving its north pole continually facing the distant sun. It is a terrestrial planet and is believed to possess a small molten core, which accounts for the

extensive vulcanism that constantly rends and melts portions of the kilometers-thick ice sheet that covers its surface. The ice has a very high albedo, and it is this that makes it barely visible to the unaided eye on Novendo. Because it is so difficult to see from Novendo it is often called the Lost Sister.

Comets & Meteors

Dozens of comets pass through the Ziran system, orbiting the sun in periods from 10-800 years. With the exception of a few large comets (such as Gendor's Comet, named for the mage who established its 65 year cycle) most have not been accurately tracked by Umantari astronomers. They thus remain objects of awe and fear when they appear in the skies, believed to portend momentous events on Novendo. Astrologers are divided on the exact nature of comets' influence on events in the mortal plane, but most agree they do play some role.

Novendo is subject to periodic meteor showers, but only two occur with regularity. The Solstice Meteor Shower occurs each year between 17 Glacia and 5 Novara, and is the smaller of the two. The larger shower is the Demon's Rain, occurring between the 10th and 23rd of Kilta each year. For thirteen days Novendo passes through what is believed by many scholars to be the remains of the Demon Stone, creating a spectacular display of shooting stars.

Actual impacts are rare but not unheard of. The Khunduri in particular seek out such impacts to mine the iron, and possibly other metals, from these celestial visitors. The sword Faurang is said to be of such meteoric origin.

ASTROLOGY 14

Phases of Aranda & Osal – 3018 SR

	Talata	Sanita	Rakta	Garta	Launta	Kita	Seluta	Nyrata	Ionta	Unkta	
Novara	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
Margas	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
Sarnia	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
	11	12	13	14	15	Saridás					
	16	17	18	19	20						
Metisto	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
Agras	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30		
						Maita Lai					
Emblio	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
Kilta	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
Turniki	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
	11	12	13	14	15	Höl Kopia					
	16	17	18	19	20						
Glacia	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30		
						Kristala Va					