



BIBLIOGRAPHY

Inspiration for playing in Glorantha can come from many sources—while some quote Homer, Campbell, and Eliade, other examples come from TV, movies, and modern fiction. Here are a few sources we find particularly useful for Glorantha and *HeroQuest*. Send us your own inspirations!

Myths and Legends

The wealth of myth is too immense to even sample here, but it is one of the chief inspirations of Glorantha and *HeroQuest*.

Television

Buffy the Vampire Slayer (1997–2003), *Charmed* (2000–2003+): Series like these often take liberties with established myths, which is the kind of creativity that *HeroQuest* encourages.

Mahabharata (1989): Peter Brook's dramatization of the Sanskrit epic. "What is not found here is found nowhere."

Robin of Sherwood (1984–1986): This best screen version of Robin Hood restores the magic and folklore. The relationship between Herne the Hunter and Robin shows one way for heroes to interact with their own hunting gods or spirits.

Xena: Warrior Princess (1995–2001): Xena interacts with gods and mortals alike, and the show is full of Hong Kong-influenced fights and witty concatenations.

Movies

Alice in Wonderland: Several adaptations of Lewis Carroll's book have been made. This modern heroquest is good because it represents the Otherworld as a modified "real world" rather than a totally alien realm.

Atanarjuat The Fast Runner (2001): Inuit legend of love, betrayal, and shamanic magic told with stark mythic precision.

The Bride with White Hair (1993): In this beautiful operatic, romantic knight-errant movie, Brigitte Lin plays one of the most convincing superhumans ever on film.

Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon (2000): Contains evocative examples of how feats look and feel, and shows how some tragic conflicts have no resolution.

Dead Man (1995): This visionary, oneiric Western is a Humakti heroquest that also evokes animism. "This weapon will become your tongue."

Eric the Viking (1989): This comedy shows what can happen when you end up in the wrong Otherworld.

Gladiator (2000): Eternal clash between good and evil. Ritual preparations affect outcomes. Bleak early battle scene looks like Lunars vs. Heortlings.

The Lord of the Rings (2001–2003): The great modern fantasy epic brought to the big screen. This has everything: passion, relationships, heroic battles, and an epic quest into doom.

The Princess Bride (1987): Although too campy for some, it makes great use of personality traits, passions, and fun, critical elements of *HeroQuest*.

Princess Mononoke (1997): This wondrous, melancholy anime shows what an ancient, spirit-haunted forest is like.

Seven Samurai (1954): A tale of how to help a community help itself. And how to build a hero band! The 1960 remake named *The Magnificent Seven* shows how to adapt a story between contexts.

Star Wars Episodes I–VI (1977–2005): George Lucas sneaks the ancient hero's journey into this action series right under our modern noses. In addition to action and an epic quest, relationships are key to the story and its heroes.

The 13th Warrior (1999): A retelling of Beowulf that shows how heroes can reenact myths and bring them into reality. A great Underworld sequence.

The Three Musketeers and *The Four Musketeers* (1973, 1974): A hero band saves the kingdom. This screen translation of the classic Dumas book shows that comedy isn't just funny.

What Dreams May Come (1998): A brave try at visualizing the Other Side, showing how your belief system can determine what you perceive there, especially in Hell.

Willow (1988): A critical flop, but includes great fights and truly inspirational magic.

The Wizard of Oz (1939): The classic modern heroquest, even if most people never realize it. The transition from black and white to color makes it very obvious when Dorothy crosses into the Otherworld.

Yellow Submarine (1968): A strange, unmapped heroquest into a surreal realm, showing how the Otherworld can lack almost any relation to the "real world."

Zu, The Legend of Zu (1983, 2001): Visual, mythic cinema, with Taoist immortals vs. Underworld demons.

Epics and Sagas

Beowulf (trans. Seamus Heaney, 1999): A true hero faces two great challenges. Inspirational Heortling poetry!

The Epic of Gilgamesh: The earliest extant story. Gilgamesh and his sidekick Enkidu negotiate landscapes magical, social, and divine—the essence of *HeroQuest*.

Homer, the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, the *Aeneid*: The greatest heroes of an age clash in a brawl of epic proportions accompanied by a godly feud. One hero's long, doomed voyage.

Virgil, the *Aeneid*: Migrations, murder, and the birth of Rome. What's not to like?

Sir Thomas Mallory, *Le Morte d'Arthur*: Outlines the birth, challenges, achievements, and end of a once and future king and the members of his "clan ring." Provides one vision of Glorantha's chivalrous, monotheistic West.

Njal's Saga: For the politics and betrayals, and how good men are driven to do evil deeds by their cultural imperatives. Other Icelandic sagas are translated in *The Sagas of Icelanders* (Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, 2000).

The Táin (trans. Thomas Kinsella, 1969): Irish myths make good fodder for those cattle-raiding Heortling heroes.

Modern Fiction

- Poul Anderson, *The Broken Sword* (1954): Shows the tragic impact of a human and elf-troll changeling switched at birth. Action includes a trip to Irish fairyland and giantland.
- Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities* (1972): Visionary prose sketches of cities that are states of being. Each page has images, phrases, feelings fit to steal.
- Lindsey Davis, *The Silver Pigs* (1989), *The Iron Hand of Mars* (1992): Splendid series about a Roman “informant” [private detective] that evokes a sense of the gritty underside of civilization. The conflict between empire and occupied is useful for relating to Lunar Tarsh and occupied Sartar.
- Robert Holdstock, *Mythago Wood* (1984): Essential British “hard fantasy”—entering the wildwood finds daimones and metamorphoses, primeval consciousness and deep time. First of the “Ryhope Wood” sequence.
- Robert E. Howard, “Conan” and “King Kull” series: Conan is king of macho barbarian warriors, and Howard’s ancient world has a savage power missing from “refined” fiction.
- Barry Hughart, *Bridge of Birds* (1984), *The Story of the Stone* (1988), *Eight Skilled Gentlemen* (1991): A trickster sage investigates cosmic wrongness, outwits monsters, and quests into the depths of Hell for information.
- Jessica Salmonson, *Tomoe Gozen* (1981): First of a series about subtle magic, dealing with a world filled with myriad gods and demons, and the struggle between duty and honor.
- Harry Turtledove, “Fox of the North” books (1994–1997): The guttering flame of a receding civilization is kept alight by a clever man. Deities and spirits are real but not omnipotent.
- Gene Wolfe, *Soldier of the Mist* (1986) and *Soldier of Arete* (1989): Wolfe’s unconventional hero Latro quests through a world that vibrates with immanent history and meaning and possibility. The books also have examples of landscape beings.

Nonfiction

- Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949): Campbell’s classic work can be slow going, but is the best description of the heroquest and its structure.
- Joseph Campbell, “The Masks of God” series (1959–1968): Campbell’s major long work can illuminate and inspire many Gloranthan homelands and religions.

- Mircea Eliade, *The Myth of the Eternal Return* (1954), *The Sacred and the Profane* (1959): Dense but lucid essays on premodern consciousness, which values myth over history. A key to understanding theism and heroquesting.
- Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism, Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy* (1964): The classic text on shamanism, added to but never surpassed.
- Kathleen Ragan, *Fearless Girls, Wise Women, and Beloved Sisters* (1998): Quests for women don’t always fit the classic model, and this book is chock-full of delightful quests for heroines.
- J.R.R. Tolkien, “On Fairy-Stories” (in *Tree and Leaf*, 1964): A brilliant short exposition of mythopoeic storytelling and the use of secondary worlds.
- Robin D. Laws, *Robin’s Laws of Good Game Mastering* (Steve Jackson Games, 2002): A prime book for any roleplayer, not just the narrator. By one of the designers of *HeroQuest!*

Reference

- A big thesaurus: This can be a useful brainstorming tool when narrating, especially when creating a heroquest.
- J.E. Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols* (1962): One of several books that explain the meaning behind the many symbols found in art and mythology, taken from cultures all around the world.
- John Clute & John Grant (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy* (1997): Definitions expose many workings of fiction and mythology, gateway to the cauldron of story.
- Hazel Martell, *The Kingfisher Book of the Ancient World* (1995): There are many splendid, picture-rich books of ancient history covering a wide variety of cultures, but this is one of the best. Don’t just tell players what they see, show them!
- Men-at-Arms series (Osprey): This series provides brief guides to many ancient cultures and their armies, with clear descriptions and color plates that make them useful “show and tell” resources for your games.
- Natural Wonders of the World* (Readers Digest Association, 1980): Greg Stafford used this sourcebook to create “Postcards from Glorantha,” an art reference to many locations available at www.HeroQuest-rpg.com/support/postcards.html. Useful for narrators who wish to show their players what a given Gloranthan location looks like.
- Colin Wilson, *The Atlas of Holy Places and Sacred Sites* (1996): Full of ideas and images to populate Glorantha, from the Axum Stelae to the Ziggurat of Nanna.

HeroQuest Titles

Anaxial’s Roster: Creatures of the Hero Wars

This book contains statistics for over 150 creatures for narrators to use in *HeroQuest*. It includes descriptions of many creatures mentioned in this book, such as alynxes, altinae, certamus, dogs, dragonewt, dream dragons, hydra, luathan, ludoch, sable, tusk rider, and tusker. All entries include game stats and origin myths.

Glorantha: Introduction to the Hero Wars

This book contains background on the history, lands, peoples, and religions of Glorantha. It paints the world in broad strokes, occasionally highlighting an interesting feature or important person, such as Arkat, Chaos, Harrek the Berserk, JarEel the Razoress, the Kingdom of War, Mermen, and Theoblanc the Ecclesiarch.

Imperial Lunar Handbook (series)

This series of player’s books details the lands and peoples of the Lunar Empire. The first volume, *The Lunar Empire*, provides an overview of the major homelands, including a magic keyword for Kastok. The second volume, *Under the Red Moon*, details the Lunar religion that holds these many lands together, including magic keywords for dozens of deities, spirits, and saints.

Thunder Rebels: Player’s Book for Orlanthi Barbarians

This book details Heortling culture and religion, including the cults of Orlanth, Ernalda, and their subcults, such as Bevara, Desemborth, Drogarsi, Esra, Hedkoranth, and Orlanthcarl.

Storm Tribe: The Cults of Sartar

This book details the Storm Pantheon. It includes write-ups and magic keywords for many deities, including Babeester Gor, Barn-tar, Chalana Arroy, Donandar, Engizi, Humakt, Issaries, Kero Fin, Lhankor Mhy, Odayla, Pelaskos, and Vinga.

Dragon Pass: Land of Thunder

This gazetteer describes the pivotal land of Dragon Pass in detail. It provides many maps and myths to illustrate the land and its peoples, including a full-color, poster-size map.

Sartar Rising (series)

This series of adventures details the uprising of the Heortlings against the occupying Lunar Empire. *Barbarian Adventures* is an introduction to the land and conflict. *Orlanth is Dead!* allows heroes to bring Orlanth back at the Battle of Iceland.