

REVIEW

THE SOBAYID ATLAS

The Sobayid Atlas is that latest product from Chessex Publishing for the Skyrealms of Jorune roleplaying game. This sourcebook focuses on the southern province of Burdoth, one of the major countries on Jorune. As an atlas it covers all of the geographic regions within the province of Sobayid, detailing villages, cities, and major features of the land.

First appearances are misleading when it comes to The Sobayid Atlas. The cover is bland and does not attract attention. Once I got over the fact that there was a scantily clad woman on the cover I realized that the pose is very obviously a pose, and not the natural movement of someone who does not know that they are being observed. It appears to be a badly executed attempt to attract adolescent, male customers through the use of sex. The back cover is used to present a map of the Sobayid province that is not included anywhere inside the book even though a full page reproduction of this map would be very useful.

The interior art is of high quality and captures the look and feel of Jorune. The scenes depicted seem natural and



spontaneous, unlike the cover. Many maps of the cities and villages of the Sobayid are included in the sourcebook. Each one is clear and sharp, easy to read. The streets are wide enough for the Sholari to label them, and the buildings are large enough for the Sholari to be able to number them for his own campaign.

The introduction to The Sobayid Atlas clearly states the purpose of the book and why it was conceived. It contains a good overview of the contents of the book and emphasizes the potential for adventure inherent in the province. The introduction serves as a gentle reminder

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of the detailing that has earned Skyrealms of Jorune a

loyal following. The Sarceen symbol is introduced as a sign that the text on the sides of the page should only be read by the Sholari.

Much of the information contained in The Sobayid Atlas is common knowledge and should be available to the players. The Sarceen warns players off from reading information that might spoil their enjoyment of the campaign. Unfortunately this convenient arrangement is not always adhered to. In the section on Muadra in the Sobayid some information which should be common knowledge is under the Sarceen and details of a secret Muadra sect are included with details of other more well known sects. Leaving the well meaning player with information that they may not have wanted to know. The section on Seytra weave tricks should have been marked for the Sholari's eyes only since the entire section details information that players should not know un-

til their characters discover it.

The index at the back of the book aids in tracking down entries because not all information on a given subject is grouped together. For instance there are several sentences on dharmee growth and temperament under the section detailing the city of Coise. So, even though it is annoying to have to flip to several different pages to get the whole scoop on a subject, the process is made less painful with the use of the index.

Although slight grammatical and continuity mistakes are annoying, they are not insurmountable and hardly detract from the pleasure of reading this product. The Sobayid Atlas is a clear, concise sourcebook for running a campaign based in Burdoth's southern province. There is plenty of imaginative information for a Sholari who wishes to run a detailed Skyrealms of Jorune game. If you are a fan of Jorune, this sourcebook is an invaluable tool. Just be warned that the suggested retail price is \$16.00, so be ready to fork over the cash, and nobody will get hurt.

Richard Eide

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**THE
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