

## GLOSSARY

### *THE PALANTIR – BOOK 1 OF THE MAQLÛ*

Real places, people, and history in the book.

**“Truth is stranger than fiction, but it is because Fiction is obliged to stick to possibilities; Truth isn’t.”**

Mark Twain, in *Following the Equator: A Journey Around the World*

I never planned for this book to become so tied with reality and history, but in my research for book 2 – The Pair Dadeni, I realized that some historical pirates’ history was more interesting than what I could imagine. So, I started incorporating that thought process throughout my stories which eventually led to my second big ‘aha’ moment. On a college graduation trip with my youngest daughter to Belize, I heard the story about chewing gum, just the way it’s written in the book. I had initially written a fictionalized hidden Mayan city, but Lamanai’s history was more fascinating than anything I could come up with. That’s when I realized it was easier and much more fun to include real events and places in my writing. Some of it is so bizarre, though, that I thought the reader might wonder what is fantasy and what is fact in this book. Below are some of the more interesting facts and history I’ve incorporated. Enjoy.

**Afterlife** - my book’s afterlife is loosely based on ancient Greek mythology’s afterlife, which had four levels:

- The first ‘level’ is the Entrance to the Underworld. In Greek mythology, a soul must cross either the river Acheron or the more well-known Styx by paying the ferryman Charon with a gold coin. Once they cross the river, they are judged and sent to one of three places:
- Tartarus was the lowest and darkest where those who had been evil, cruel, or offended the gods went.
- The Plains of Asphodel were for those who had been ordinary people. It wasn’t as nice as living, but neither was it as bad as Tartarus.
- The Plains of Elysium were for heroes and those who had pleased the gods.

**Ankh** is the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic character for life. Its first known use was about 5,000 years ago. The Egyptians believed that living was only part of life and that the ankh symbolized our mortal existence and the afterlife.

**Belize** is located on the eastern coast of Central America and is the only country in Central America whose official language is English. Belize is a popular tourist destination known for its numerous Mayan ruins and because it has the second-longest barrier reef in the world.

**The Bermuda Triangle** is generally considered the area between Miami, San Juan, Puerto Rico, and Bermuda. A number of aircraft and ships have disappeared under mysterious circumstances. The U.S. Government does not believe it exists, but popular culture has attributed many of the disappearances to paranormal or extraterrestrial being activity.

- **Flight 19** (Wikipedia) – 27 aviators died the night of December 5<sup>th</sup>, 1945 – 14 in the original flight group, plus 13 in the search party. The events described in this book are a combination of fact and fiction. Ensign Joseph T. Bossi was one of the victims.

**Old Burying Point Cemetery** (also known as the Charter Street Cemetery) is in the heart of downtown Salem and is the second oldest cemetery in America (established in 1637). It has been closed to burials for well over a century. The Salem Witch Memorial is located next to it.

**Cassandra** was a woman in Greek mythology who was cursed to utter prophecies that were true but that no one could understand. Two of her most famous predictions were to warn the Trojans about the Greeks and Agamemnon about his wife's betrayal.

**Cenotes** are sinkholes common throughout the Yucatán Peninsula and were essential to Mayan Life.

**Chicle sap** is a gum in Sapodilla trees used to make chewing gum. William Wrigley introduced Juicy Fruit gum at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair. It became an instant hit and caused a mad rush to search throughout the Yucatan Peninsula for this sap.

- **Chicleros** were the men who searched Central American jungles for the Sapodilla trees. Some of the early Chicleros made fortunes but endured tremendous hardships. As the popularity of the gum grew, businesses were forced to look for less costly ingredients and gradually moved away from chicle sap.

**Chimney Rocks National Monument** is in southwestern Colorado and is the highest elevation of all the Chaco Canyon sites. It was active about a thousand years ago and housed about two thousand people. It's unique because the two chimney rocks perfectly frame a major lunar event that happens once every 18.6 years.

**Delphi** is located on Mt. Parnassus and was an ancient religious sanctuary dedicated to the Greek god Apollo. It was home to the Oracle of Delphi and the priestess Pythia, who was famed throughout the ancient world for divining the future and was consulted before all major undertakings. The ancient Greeks considered Delphi to be the center of the world and marked by the stone monument known as the omphalos (navel). It's now a UNESCO site.

**Druids** Very little is known about the ancient Druids, but they are believed to have been the educated professional class (religious and judicial leaders) among the Celtic peoples during the Iron Age (roughly 1200 BCE to 1 BCE). Unlike most cultures, female Druids held prominent roles in Celtic society. Unfortunately, the Romans wiped out their culture. Some of the key terms associated with the Druids in this book are:

- **Alban Hefin** is the Druid name for the Summer Solstice festival.
- **Bandruí** is an Irish word for Female Druids.

- **Gaia** Many pagans (modern and ancient) worship Gaia as the spiritual embodiment of the Earth.
- **Groves** are how Druids organize themselves (just like Wiccans organize by covens). Since the ancient Druids were closely linked to nature, many of their meetings took place in groves of trees.
- **Scrying** is a method of divination that can take many forms (crystal balls and silver dishes being the most common. In my books, it's a secure communication method for the Druids, similar to Skype.
- **The Five Elements** were believed to be the most fundamental parts on which everything is based but varied by belief and tradition. Four are common among most traditions (Earth, wind/air, fire, and water). The fifth element varies (e.g., aether, wood, metal, spirit).
- **The Tree of Life** is believed to connect all forms of life and is part of many of the world's religions and mythologies. To the ancient Druids, it symbolized rebirth and harmony and connected the upper and lower worlds.

**Engenderment Sabbatical** is a leave intended to help women (or men) get pregnant.

**Gambanteinn** is Odin's runic staff in Norse Mythology.

**Gilgamesh** was a king of Uruk, Mesopotamia, who lived between 2800 and 2500 BCE. The *Epic of Gilgamesh* is considered the first great piece of literature. It was carved onto stone tablets long before the Old Testament but had some of the same stories and themes (e.g., the great flood garden of Eden).

**Cup of Jamshid** in Persian mythology is a divination (scrying) cup that also contains an elixir of immortality. Many Persian authors have credited the cup with the Persian Empire's successes.

**Thorfinn Karlsefni** (980 – after 1007 CE) was an early Viking explorer. He led an expedition of over 120 people to colonize Vinland (somewhere between Labrador and New England) several years after Leif Erickson made the same trip. His son Snorri Thorfinnson was the first European born in North America.

**Kiva** is a room used by Pueblo Indians for religious rituals and political meetings.

**Lamanai** (translated from Mayan means Submerged Crocodile) is located in Belize and was one of the longest inhabited cities in the Western World (1500 BCE to 1600 CE). It's different than many other Mayan cities in that it lies on a river, its temple designs and city layout are somewhat different than other Mayan cities, and it didn't collapse like many others at the end of the Classic era.

**Lubaantun** is a Mayan city in Belize that was deserted around 900 CE. It's famous for being the site where Anna Mitchell-Hedges said she found the Crystal Skull.

- **Crystal Skulls** didn't start appearing until the late 19th century when they became one of the most forged artifacts of pre-Columbian Mesoamerican art. Believers claim that crystal skulls can produce a variety of miracles, but most have been proven to be man-made in the last century. The most famous skull is the one that Anna Mitchel-Hedges claimed she found on her father's dig in Lubaantun, Belize when she was 16. It has also been called the Skull of Doom.

**Luddites** were early 19th-century English textile artisans who protested (often violently) against newly developed labor-replacing machinery introduced during the Industrial Revolution. Nowadays, Luddite means one who is opposed to or slow to adopt new technologies into their lifestyle.

**Magic** can be anything from extraordinary supernatural powers to illusion, certain religious practices, and even advanced technology. The word magic comes from the Persian word maguš (magician). In many ancient Mesopotamian societies, magic was an everyday event used for a wide array of purposes, from understanding omens to protecting oneself against spells cast by some witch. It was not only accepted; it was embraced. The concept of magic started taking on negative connotations in Greece, where it was thought to be used mostly by frauds. It wasn't until the Christian churches began preaching that magic was the work of demons and such that witchcraft became a hazardous occupation.

**Black Mambas** are one of the fastest and deadliest snakes in the world. They live in sub-Saharan Africa.

**Maqlû** is an Akkadian incantation text intended to drive evil magic away. Magic in Mesopotamia was an accepted practice, unlike Europe in the Middle Ages.

**Ancient Mayan Civilization** covered the area of southeastern Mexico and most of Central America. It is distinct from the civilizations in Mexico (e.g., Olmec, Aztec, Toltec) and Peru (Incans). It is generally divided into three principal periods:

- **The preclassic period** (2000 BCE to 250 CE) encompassed the formation of Mayan cities and the development of their writing.
- **The classic period** (250 CE to 950 CE) encompassed the large-scale building of temples and dating events using the Mayan Long Count Calendar.
- **The postclassic period** (950 CE to 1697 CE) was marked by the relatively quick collapse (within a couple of generations) of the Mayan civilization. The reason for such a decline is not clear. Lamanai was one of the few Mayan cities that continued to thrive during the post-classic period.

**Mayan calendars:**

- **Long Count** is the most famous of the Mayan calendars but is essentially a count of Mayan history. Its Mayan name and length are unknown, but it's estimated to be over 5000 years long and ended December 21, 2012 C.E.
- **Haab** was primarily used for tracking the seasons so they knew when to plant and harvest. It is tied to the Earth's solar year of 365 days but did not account for leap years.
- **Tzolk'in** is the oldest calendar cycle known in Mesoamerica. It was a 260-day calendar used by the Mayans to determine the time of religious and ceremonial events and divination.

### **Miscellaneous Mayan Information:**

- **The Mesoamerican Ball Game** is a cross between racquetball and soccer. The Mayans did not have a name for it, but the Aztecs called it Ōllamaliztli. The object was to get a rubber ball through a hoop high above the players' heads without touching it with their hands or letting it hit the ground. It appears to have been played as early as 1250 BC.
- **Bluish tint** was used on some Mayan sacrificial victims (e.g., Ixchel in this book). Sacrificial altars were also painted blue.
- **Ceiba Trees** are native to the tropical forests of Central and South America and West Africa. Its most notable attribute are the tall, slender buttress roots at the base of the tree that can grow up to 30 feet tall because much of the area is made up of karst and has relatively little soil. The Mayans thought of it as a sacred tree.
- **Chak Tok Ich'aak** (died 378 CE) was one of Tikal's (located about 150 miles west of Lamanai in Guatemala) most famous kings. I used him because I wanted to give a flavor to the sound of the language. The only ruler's name I found for Lamanai was named Smoking Shell. He was king in 625 CE.
- **Dart frogs** are tiny, poisonous, and brightly colored frogs native to Central and South America. They're named dart frogs because natives sometime use the frog's toxic secretions to coat their blow darts that they use in hunting.
- **Epiphyte** is a plant that grows upon another plant (such as a tree) and derives its moisture and nutrients from the air, rain, and sometimes from debris accumulating around it.
- **Howler monkeys** are among the largest New World monkeys and one of only a few nest-building monkeys. They are famous for their loud howls, which can travel three miles through dense forest. To me, they sounded like big cats versus primates.
- **Numbers** the Mayans had the most sophisticated numbering system in the Americas and were using the concept of zero over a millennia before Europe adopted the number.

**Mayan mythology** much of what was written about the Mayans was destroyed at the order of a Catholic priest, Bishop Diego de Landa, in 1562. It's believed that the Mayans had over 250 gods that were involved in all aspects of their life. The Mayans believed that the underworld (Xibalba) was a dark and horrid place beneath the physical world and ruled by the lords of death and could be reached through holes in the Earth. Some of the gods mentioned in this book are:

- **Ah Puch** was the Mayan god of death.
- **Hunab Ku** was considered the Supreme god of the Mayans and was depicted as a great sky serpent or a toothless old man with a hooked nose.
- **Popol Vuh** was one of the six houses in the afterworld where the lords of Xibalba tested the dead. Popol Vuh was a house filled with fires intended to torture and humiliate visitors.
- **Vucub-Came** (Seven-Death) was a Mayan god of the afterworld

**Mayan pyramids** had varied purposes. One type was used in religious festivals to please the gods. They were also used as burial places, landmarks, training centers, and astronomical observations. There was also a sacred type that no one was allowed to climb or touch.

**Mesopotamian writing** Sumer was an early empire (4500 – 1900 BCE) in southern Mesopotamia that developed one of the earliest writing systems – Sumerian Cuneiform. The Akkadians, their neighbors to the north, improved on Sumerian writing, making it much simpler and more functional.

**Sylvanus Griswold Morley** (1883-1948) was an American Archeologist and Mayan scholar who wrote about the Mesoamerican culture and directed extensive excavations at the Chichen Itza Mexico Mayan site. He was also a spy for the U.S. during WWI. Some believe that Sylvanus Morley was the archeologist, after which the movie character Indiana Jones was patterned.

**Nabu** is the ancient Mesopotamian god of literacy, the arts, and wisdom. I named Chrys' uncle after this god because I wanted to use a Mesopotamian theme in this book because of the impact that area had on the rest of humanity.

**New River** is the longest river in the country, draining much of northern Belize in its northeasterly course. The river forms the New River Lagoon, the largest body of fresh water in Belize, just east of the Mayan temples of Lamanai. The boat ride up the New River to Lamanai is a blast but is over way too fast.

**The Pythia** was also known as the Oracle of Delphi (the most prestigious and authoritative oracle among the Greeks). The Pythia was always a woman and had to give up their family life, if they had one, to become the Pythia.

Supplicants had to pay for the opportunity to ask the Oracle a question. The Oracle would then answer, often in a frenzied state, possibly due to the vapors rising into the temple or perhaps because the priestess used a poppy leaf (opium) on the fire to help induce a dazed state for both

the priestess and the supplicants. They were also believed to use a network of spies to gather information on the supplicants, making their predictions seem more real.

**The Legend of Sleepy Hollow** is a short story about Ichabod Crane written by Washington Irving and published in 1820.

**Battle of Svolder** was a naval battle fought (approximately 1000 CE) between Norwegian King Olaf Tryggvason's forces and an alliance of forces led by King Forkbeard of Denmark.

**Shaman** is a religious practitioner who interacts with the spirit world to help direct spirits or spiritual energies into the physical world for the purpose of healing, divination, or aiding people.

**Salem Witch trials** occurred between February and October 1692. One hundred forty people were accused. In a perverse twist on justice, none who admitted guilt were executed – only those who professed innocence (19 were hung, and one man was crushed to death by rocks). An unknown number of people died in prison.

I included only a sampling of the victims and persecutors in these books, namely

- **Bridget Bishop** (1632 to June 10, 1692) was the first person to be executed in the Salem Witch Trials. She was believed to have been married three times, owned a tavern, dressed provocatively for the time (she often wore a red bodice), and was outspoken. During the trial, she denied knowing any of her accusers and could have been mistaken for another woman.
- **Sarah Good** (1653 to July 19, 1692) was one of the first women to be accused. Although she came from a prosperous farm family, she eventually sank into poverty due to inheritance laws and her husband's debts. At the time of her arrest, she was considered ill-tempered, filthy, and a beggar.
- **Rebecca Nurse** (1621 – July 19, 1692) was 71 years old when she was accused, even though she was considered a pious person. Some of the most prominent members of the community spoke on her behalf. She was initially found not guilty by the jury, but judges John Hathorne and Jonathan Corwin asked the jury to reconsider. She was hard of hearing, and when asked a question, she misunderstood and answered in a way that the jury changed their minds and convicted her.
- **George Corwin** (1666 - 1696) was the sheriff in Salem during the Witch Trials. He signed the arrest warrants and execution orders and, in return, received much of the accused witches' property. Feelings ran so strongly against him that upon his death, he was initially buried in the cellar of his home rather than a cemetery to prevent desecration of his grave.
- **William Stoughton** (1631 – 1701) was a magistrate and administrator in the Province of Massachusetts Bay and oversaw much of the Salem Witch Trials. He accepted the use of

spectral evidence (demonic visions) and, unlike the other magistrates, never admitted that he was wrong.

**Mary Seacole** (1805-1881) was a British-Jamaican woman who, after being turned down by the British War Office, left for Crimea using her own money. Florence Nightingale also turned down her offers to assist the soldiers, which drove her to set up her own 'hotel' to help wounded soldiers recover, using hygienic practices and herbal remedies long before others. In 2004 she was voted as Greatest Black Briton.

**Misandry** means a hatred of men.

**Sibylline Books** were a collection of oracular utterances that, according to tradition, were purchased from a sibyl by the last king of Rome, Tarquinius Superbus. The Romans consulted them during momentous crises throughout the history of the Republic and the Empire. Unfortunately, only fragments have survived, the rest being lost or deliberately destroyed. The Sibylline Books should not be confused with the Sibylline Oracles, which are twelve books of prophecies of Judeo-Christian origin.

**Sigrid Storrada** is a Scandinavian Queen in many of the Viking sagas, although there is some question as to whether she existed. Legend has it that she was to marry Olaf Tryggvason, the King of Norway, but refused when he demanded she convert to Christianity. The king slapped her whereupon she told him that could result in his death. Sigrid eventually decided to marry the King of Denmark and together they formed a military alliance that defeated, and killed Tryggvason in the Battle of Svolder.

**Battle of Svolder** was a large naval battle around 1000 CE in the Baltic Sea between Norway and an alliance of Denmark and Sweden, Norway's enemies. It was an attempt to stop Norway's growth and the spread of Christianity. Legend has it that it was also in response to Tryggvason's treatment of Sigrid Storrada.

**Talisman** is an object charged with religious or magical powers intended to protect or heal the individuals for whom they are made.

**Tilley Hat** is a versatile and durable hat made in Canada. They enjoy a cult-like following among some people.

**Tonsure** is the practice of cutting or shaving some or all of the hair on the scalp as a sign of religious devotion or humility. It is most often associated with certain Roman Catholic monastic orders.

**Olaf Tryggvason** (960s ~ 1000 CE) was a Viking king of Norway from 995 CE to his death during the Battle of Svolder. He's known chiefly for forcefully converting his fellow countrymen to Christianity using such techniques as threats, torture, bribery, and executions.

**†Vlfberh† sword** (also called a Damascus sword) was the finest sword made during the Viking era. They are believed to have been made in Iran and Syria (where the finest technology and



craftsmen were). The †Vlfberh†t sword was stronger and more flexible than other swords. The reason for the unique spelling is that's what's inscribed on the swords.

**UNESCO** (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) is an agency of the United Nations aimed at promoting world peace and security through international cooperation in education, arts, sciences and culture. World Heritage Sites are those sites considered to be of outstanding value to humanity.

**Ute Indians** are an American Indian tribe that historically lived in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado and Utah but hunted over a much broader area. They currently have three reservations in southwestern Colorado and northeastern Utah.

**Valhalla** in Norse mythology is a majestic, enormous hall located in Asgard and ruled over by the god Odin.

**Valkyries** in Norse mythology are females who choose who dies and who lives in battle. The Valkyries then bring their chosen to Valhalla. They are often portrayed as riding horses that can fly.

**Vomit Comet** is the nickname for a NASA plane that introduces astronauts to the feeling of zero-gravity spaceflight. Its nickname comes from the fact that a high percentage of the occupants feel very ill during the 2–3-hour flight, with dozens of chances to feel weightless.

**Xenophobia** means prejudice of people from other countries.