

Myst V: End of Ages

An unofficial guide

by Matthew Harper

v.1.0

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Introduction

This e-book is based on my website (which you can visit at <http://myst-v.blogspot.com/>) for *Myst V: End Of Ages*, the last game in the fabled *Myst* saga. That doesn't mean that the other *Myst* games are ignored, however; all of the them - except *Uru: Ages beyond Myst*, which I've never played because I don't use Windows - receive a fair amount of treatment as well.

- **My *Myst V* Walkthrough**, which is designed as a 'golden path'-type walkthrough, explaining everything there is to be seen in the game. It is long - some 20,000 words - and contains over 230 original screen shots. If you're looking for a less extended walkthrough, try the one at [Gamesover](#); and if anyone has any constructive ideas about how it could be improved, please feel free to contact me.
- **My *Myst V* Review**, which is some 9,500 words long, most of which was written in one sitting on 24 September 2005, just two days after the game was released on the 22nd.
- **D'ni Calculator Widget** - a stand-alone mini-application for Mac OS X 10.4; an update of Simon Riedl's 1999 calculator;
- **Noloben Glyphs and D'ni Numerals** - a (fairly) detailed look at the glyphs found on Noloben, and how they relate to D'ni numerals;
- **Prison Books or Prison Ages?** - a brief look at how the concept of prison books has developed across the *Myst* games;
- **Slate Guides** - containing all the glyphs that appear during *Myst V: End of Ages*;
- **Wikipedia Links** - a comprehensive list of links to *Myst*-related pages and anchors on Wikipedia, the open source encyclopaedia;
- **Yeesha's Journals** - the complete text of every journal in *Myst V: End of Ages*, arranged as they would be found if you follow the walkthrough.

I hope you find something of interest!

Myst V Walkthrough

Foreword

This walkthrough is an attempt at writing a 'golden path'-type guide, partly since such a path is not to be found in the official *Myst V* guide by Prima, which is told from a first person perspective. I for one found this disconcerting. It will not include 'soft hints' - hints to puzzles which aim to push the player in the correct direction. In any case, such hints can be accessed from within the game, by selecting the Exit button, choosing Main Menu, and then Hints. Neither is it the kind of walkthrough which simply instructs the player, in the minimum possible space, what needs to be done to complete the task (if you want that, the walkthrough by [Gamesover](#) is highly recommended). Instead, it will patiently guide the you through the game, showing you how to complete the task in the best way, explaining what is happening, and highlighting interesting things to look out for. My aim is not merely to provide the solutions to puzzles, but to help the you feel that you've understood them. *Myst* games are often solved by realising what is expected of you, what kind of things to look for, and how to look at the world in which you find yourself.

Hence, it is rather long, at nearly 20,000 words (!)

Many of the more than 230 original snapshots included here are inspired by those in the official guide, although I have often supplemented these when I considered it necessary, or when I thought they could be improved. They are all original and were taken using [FreeSnap](#) on Mac OS X 10.4. Naturally, I do not own the copyright to these images.

One final note: if anyone is coming to this walkthrough having first read the *Myst V* Review, they can rest assured that the personal opinions expressed there at no point infiltrate the walkthrough: I have, as is only proper, adopted a neutral, informative tone throughout.

K'veer

After listening to Atrus's opening voiceover, you will appear in K'veer, which we have seen in several *Myst* games before, but never in so much detail.

The first thing you will see are several odd-looking creatures who scatter on your appearance, and simply vanish - as if linking away. These are the Bahro, and you will be seeing a lot more of them.

The first thing I would advise doing before proceeding is selecting the controls - click on the tools menu in the top right corner (to freeze the screen and move the mouse freely, try right-clicking) and set the preferences according to your system. I would advise turning Subtitles on (under Audio) and also using the second control option - Classic Plus. But it is up to you, and you can easily switch between these control modes using 1, 2 or 3 on the keyboard. Try them out now.



Now explore the room and you will find a locked copy of a linking book to *Myst Island* - maybe you can somehow find a way to open it? But not yet.

Only one of the doors from this room has a handle on it; from the position of the screenshot above, it is the first door on the left. Turn the door-handle and exit the room, then continue along the corridors and

halls until you find a small turning to the left, and a camera and journal on the floor. Pick these up.

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The camera is not as sophisticated as the one in *Myst IV: Revelation*: it is really a saving device. Clicking the ball which appears in the top right corner of the screen will save the game at the current location; you can select these locations using the journal. But don't try taking a photograph to capture important information - instead of using a piece of paper - because you can't enlarge the image in the journal, and you will only end up frustrated.

Walk along the corridor and you enter the great hall. The large glowing sphere is known as the Keep, and, as Esher will later tell you, is in several worlds at once. Notice the way in which the colours keep shifting, showing you the images of several different Ages. In the screenshot below, you can also see (if you squint!) a couple of the Bahro perched high up in the rafters. Again, they scatter as you approach.



When you enter the keep, you can see an blue ethereal tablet supported by four pedestals; yet when you move your hand over it (don't click it just yet) it seems to look solid.

When you touch the tablet it becomes solid. Actually being able to remove the tablet is the principle aim of the game. Turn around and exit the Keep now. You will be met by

Yeesha, who seems somewhat troubled. She will send you on the quest to collect the four slates, one for each pedestal, which will ultimately release the tablet.

She will also tell you not to give her the tablet when you have it. If you missed anything she said, the blue book in the top right corner of the screen keeps a record of everything that anyone says to during the course of the game, so that you can check back later. At the end of the speech, Yeesha will (somehow) link you to the start of the game proper: the Cleft, and the entrance to the Great Shaft which leads to D'ni.



The Great Shaft, part 1

The first thing you will see in the Cleft is Esher, who will approach you, offer his assistance, and also warn you not to give the tablet to Yeesha. One thing worth noticing about Esher is the glyph on his left shoulder - you will come across it again later. He will instruct you to look for the hole in the ground, and he will find you there.



Before looking for the hole, however, it is worth taking a look at the area in which you are currently in. Players of *Riven: The Sequel To Myst* will immediately recognise the oversized Moiety dagger: the official *Myst V* guide suggests that this is actually one of the daggers from *Riven*, displaced after the Age was destroyed. The engravings on the stones which surround the area are

also worth examining: apparently drawn by the Bahro, they depict significant events in their history, some of which will be familiar to players of the previous *Myst* games, others from Atrus's opening speech.

Behind one of the largest stones you will find the hole mentioned by Esher and a rope ladder. You should climb down into the cavern below.





To the right is a chest with another camera and D'ni journal, if you missed them in K'veer, and propped up against the chest is the prologue to Yeesha's journals, all of which you should collect on your way through the Great Shaft. There are 12, including the prologue.



Not far ahead, next to a small lamp, is the first real journal. The sharp-eyed will also notice the same drawings on the covers of the journals as were engraved on the stones in the Cleft area above: this one depicts the arrival of Atrus and Catherine on Myst Island, before the events of *Myst*, and this is also described in the text. On the last page of the journal is a sketch of the island.

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Once you have listened to Yeesha's reading of the journal, proceed along the corridor and enter the room on the left (Rest Area A), where you will startle yet another Bahro. On the bench immediately in front of you there is the second of Yeesha's journals, the cover depicting Atrus and Catherine settling on Myst Island with their sons Sirrus and Achenar, while the text continues the story of *Myst*.



On the final page of this journal you will find a glyph which can be written on one of the slates. Precisely what the function of this glyph is, I am not sure, but the word preceding it in the text is 'Friendship'. It seems to cause the Bahro to bow, and possibly symbolises respect.

Lying in the alcove behind the bench you will find a sheet of paper. It isn't possible to read the words on the page, but the diagrams describe the elevator mechanism for travelling to the next level of the Great Shaft. It has a D'ni Restoration Council stamp in the lower left corner.



By the entrance to the room you will find an imaging device not dissimilar to those used by Saavedro in *Myst III: Exile*. Press the blue button to start playing the message.

Since this message is neither recorded in your (blue) journal, nor reprinted in the official *Myst V* guide, I have (hopefully correctly) transcribed it here:



'Oh! How could this be? On their backs this fallen empire was built! What hypocrisy! Such abuse of power! I think they even deluded themselves into believing their own lies! It pains me to the point of being ill! It makes me pleased that they are dead... What I hate is in me...

This is clearly a side of Yeesha which we haven't seen before, and is much darker than her journals to date.

The final remaining object of interest in the room is a linking book which will take us to the first island of Direbo. You should now click on the moving panel - the Gateway Image - to be taken the Age; we will continue exploring the Great Shaft later.

Note: it is also possible explore the entirety of the Great Shaft now. There are four levels, each with its own linking book to a different island of Direbo, which in turn leads to one of the main Ages of the quest. It is not necessary to visit any other Ages in order to progress through the Great Shaft. However, the first major Age, Tahgira - which is accessed through the linking book before you now - has an introductory character, whilst the Laki'ahn - accessed from the deepest level of the Great Shaft - is best left to last.



The Map

For an overview of the way to D'ni, of which the Great Shaft is the first part, take a look at the map above, which was originally published in *The Book of Tiana*. It depicts the journey from D'ni to the surface; on the bottom right you can see a graphic representation of the shaft which you will have to descend. Although you will, over the course of the game, reach the bottom of the shaft, there would still be a long way to go before reaching D'ni itself! For more information and translations, try visiting <http://www.digital-starlight.com/%7Eyohshee/DniTranslations/index.htm>.

Direbo

On linking into Direbo for the first time, you will once again be greeted by Esher, who explains that the first Age - Tahgira - can be reached by using the pedestal inside a sphere not unlike the one we encountered in K'veer.

However, before you do that, you should explore Direbo a little. It consists of four small islands, each accessed by bridges, each containing a linking book, and each containing an ethereal sphere - you can see the three others in the distance. Each of the bridges has two gates, one at either end, but at the moment you can only open the gates on the island on which you are stood. You will have to open the other gates later.



To open a gate, press the blue button on the left-hand side. Make sure you open both gates!

As there is nothing else on the island, you should enter the sphere. Notice that, unlike the Keep, there is only one pedestal - not four - and that the images on the 'walls' seem to be stable. This is because the Keep is a link to several worlds, and this sphere to only one - Tahgira.

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Press the illuminated glyph on the left-hand side of the pedestal to be taken to the first major Age.

Note: since the Age of Direbo is effectively a bridge between the rest areas of the Great Shaft and the major ages of Tahgira, Todelmer, Noloben, and Laki'ahn, this walkthrough will subsume future visits to Direbo under sections on the Great Shaft.



Tahgira

First Pedestal

When you arrive in Tahgira, the first thing that you will notice is that the walls of the sphere seem to have changed, and that they now seem to show Direbo. The glyph on the left of the pedestal is no longer illuminated - and is therefore inactive - while the one in the centre is. If you press this glyph, you will be returned to Direbo.



Leave the slate on the pedestal where it is for the moment. Turn around and through the walls of the sphere you will see Esher waiting for you. When you approach him, he will begin to speak. He will explain that Tahgira is one of the D'ni Prison Ages, as well as introducing you to the basics of the slates, and also advise you to "use the slate to free yourself." (An interesting technical

note is that the middle section of this speech would occur in whichever Age you visited first.) Before linking away, he says that the slate is heavy, but that this can be used to your advantage. As with many of Esher's speeches, this is a hint about how to proceed.

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If you walk away from the sphere and up the slope you will find that the way is blocked - you will have to find another way out of this icy cavern. About half-way up the slope (on the left, if you are facing the blocked exit) you will find, carved into the ice, the shape of a slate - the same slate as in the sphere. It isn't very clear in the snapshot below - look carefully.



If you stand on this patch of ice you will hear a cracking sound - you will need something heavy to break through the ice. This is what Esher was referring to earlier. Return to the sphere and pick up the slate (by hovering your hand over it and clicking). We'll examine the slate more carefully later. For now, if you take it and stand on the carving, the sound of cracking will increase, but still the ice will not break. Place the slate on the ground (by hovering your hand over the the edge of the slate and clicking)



and back away. Notice that the slate becomes an insubstantial blue when out of your touch. The ice will crack a little more - as if the slate were heavier without you - and then a Bahro will appear, place its hand on the slate, and both will disappear (glyphs such as those for Sing, Snake and Friendship may also be written on the slate, causing a Bahro to appear, then disappear without taking the slate with it).

In the meantime, the ice will have cracked a little more under the weight of the Bahro. Turning around to face the sphere you will see the Bahro reappear and place the slate back on the pedestal - the Bahro will do this whenever you leave slate unmarked and unattended. The ice, if you test it, will still not break under you weight. Return to the sphere, pick up the

slate, and go back to the crack. Finally, the ice cracks and sends you tumbling - unhurt - into a smaller cavern, from which it is easy to exit. Before you do leave, however, note that it is now impossible to return to the cavern with the sphere.

As you leave this second cavern, you will see trees in the distance - odd, in a frozen land such as this - and a ladder against a sheer wall of ice, leading to another pedestal. There is also a glyph etched on the wall next to the pedestal. If you approach the ladder and try to climb it, you will find that it is impossible to do so while carrying the slate - it is too heavy! This is a common problem throughout the game. With



no other choice, you will have to leave the slate on the ground; as before, when you back away from it, a Bahro will appear, touch the slate, and both will disappear - and you will hear the slate being replaced on the first pedestal. But now you are free to climb the ladder.

Second Pedestal

At the top of the ladder you should approach the pedestal - we'll deal with the glyph engraved on the wall later. Notice the glyph on the face of the pedestal, and that it only has one glyph which can be pressed. Note down the main glyph, and then press the other. You will be returned to the sphere in the first cavern.



Now you have some idea of how the pedestals work. In each Age there is a main pedestal, and several minor pedestals, which can be used to link back to the main one. The main pedestal has four sections: the one on the

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left contains the glyph for the main pedestal, and is usually dimmed unless you are in Direbo; the middle section has space for the glyphs of the minor pedestals; the one on the right will contain the glyph of the final pedestal (in the Keep), your goal in each Age; and the one at the top contains the glyph for Direbo. Notice, however, that although you have already used the second pedestal in this Age to link back to the sphere, its glyph has not yet appeared on the main pedestal. There is another step first.



Pick up the slate from the pedestal again, and write the glyph of the second pedestal onto it:



Then simply drop it on the ground somewhere, and back away from it. A Bahro will appear and take the slate to the second pedestal:

This is the basic way of transporting a slate to pedestal to another: write the the glyph of the pedestal on the slate, and let the Bahro carry the slate there. The Bahro are usually quite tolerant of our unfamiliarity in writing their language, and if they can guess what glyph you were trying to draw, they will follow your instructions. If they can't make it out, on the other hand, they will simply scratch their heads and link away.



If you go (or link) back to the main pedestal, you will now find that the glyph of the second pedestal is visible, and you can link back and forth with ease. If you look at the slate, you will also find that the glyph for the second pedestal now appears in the lower left corner - if you press this now the glyph will be drawn on the slate. And now it is time to turn to the glyph inscribed on the wall.

This is the Age's environmental manipulation glyph. There is one per Age, and they are essential for the completion of at least one puzzle. The best thing to do is to test the glyph by writing it on the slate and leaving it for the Bahro to find - then you can discover what effect it has.



The first thing that happens is that there is a blinding flash of lightning, and then steam erupts from various apertures in the ground. If you try to cross the bridge which leads away from the area with the second pedestal, you will find that all the snow which previously lay upon it has melted, and that your passage to

the other side is now blocked by an impassable wall of steam.

However, the steam will only last for 90 seconds or so - enough time to admire the view. Also note that, having followed the instructions on the

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slate, the Bahro will link away, returning some 15 second later to return it to the main pedestal. In the interim you can, of course, pick the slate up instead. This is particularly useful when trying to complete a task which involves the environmental manipulation glyph, which may take several attempts before you are able to complete the puzzle. But notice that all the glyphs that you write on the slate will fade after a while, meaning that you will have to redraw them every time that you want to use them - and that there are shortcuts on the bottom of the slate.

When the steam subsides, snow will begin to settle on the bridge, and you are free to cross to the other side. From there you should approach the village (it is not actually necessary to take the slate with you now that you know how to move it from pedestal to pedestal. It is easy enough to retrieve from wherever you left it; if in doubt, try the main pedestal).

Third Pedestal

Judging from the areas of ground without snow, it should be clear that many of the structures in this age are built over the same kind of apertures you encountered earlier, possibly even storing the energy generated from steam. As you come closer to the central, and tallest, structure, you will find another pedestal; for sake of simplicity, you should now instruct the Bahro to bring the tablet to this pedestal, following the same procedure as before.

If you didn't bring the slate with you, you'll have to collect it from wherever you left it first! (Please also note that from now on I will not be including an snapshot of every glyph both in original context and written on the slate - however, both types of snapshot can be found in the Slate Guide.)





Once you've brought the slate to the third pedestal, you should walk up the stone steps towards the central building. There is a smaller building in front of it, with what looks like a lever of some kind, but before you can examine it Esher will link in. He will talk about the great ingenuity of the D'ni, being able to find ways to build and survive in even the most inhospitable environments, and about how justice is at hand.

Ignoring the smaller building for a moment, go inside the large central building and up to the map on the back wall - you should have been able to see it from where you were standing while Esher was talking. Make a note of it, taking care to note down the colours at each junction; it will be important soon. Then head back to the smaller building.



The smaller building does indeed have a lever of some kind. You won't be able to touch the lever if you are carrying the slate, in which case you should place it upon the nearest pedestal. When your hands are free, you'll find that it has only two settings: left and right, but there is no way of telling what it does. You found it in the 'left' position, so try setting it to the 'right'. Why? Because, as *Myst*

hacks will know, it's a rare puzzle if everything isn't set to 'off' by default.

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There are several similar buildings in the village: six in all. You should keep exploring first to find out what switching that lever achieved - if the others are all set to 'off', and this one to 'on', the change should register somewhere. Walk away from the building, up to the pedestal and then head to the right of the pedestal, behind the central building. The first thing you should reach is some kind of junction of the pipes running from the small buildings.

There are three levers, each with three settings - so you can't use the 'off by default' trick here. You can't even touch the levers at the moment, with or without the slate. But notice that each of the levers has a small circle next to the right and left positions of the lever, and that these circles are split in half, with one side blue and the other side white. Turn around 180°, and you'll find a similar junction of pipes, this time with red and white circles. If you recall, the map in the central building had red and blue junctions too; each of these levers corresponds to one of the junctions on the map.



From the 'red' set of levers, turn right and head further away from the central building, along the large pipe. You soon reach a small lake which it is currently impossible to cross; on the other side, in the distance, lies another sphere, the Keep. And beneath the surface of the lake is a network of smaller pipes, corresponding to the map in the central building.

It's now time to activate the steam again - if you don't have the slate with you, collect it now and return to the area just above the lake. Using the short-cut in the bottom-right corner, write the glyph for Steam on the slate - then put it on the ground and back away. As before, a Bahro will appear and the steam will begin to rise. Pick up the slate again and look around. Four things are now noticeable. Firstly, when you stand next to the 'red' set of levers, a rushing noise is audible; the 'blue' set is still silent. Secondly, fire and smoke are now rising from the top of the central building, and thirdly, steam is now rising from the smaller building beside it - the one where you turned the lever to the right. None of the other buildings have steam rising from them. And finally, a wall of steam seems to have arisen in front of the distant sphere.



So clearly, moving the levers on the smaller buildings - the thermal engines, as they're called in the official *Myst V* Guide - to the right switches them on, and channels energy to both the central building and the sets of levers. You should now leave the slate at the pedestal and visit the other buildings, switching the lever to right in every case. As you reach one of the buildings (I think the third one that you visit) Esher will appear again, and cryptically inform you that there is life in the water which seeks heat.

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Finish setting all the switches to the 'right' position, then pick up the slate from the pedestal and return to the lakeside. Write the Steam glyph again, remembering to pick up the slate again once the Bahro has departed. This time, when you look at the sets of levers, they are elevated and can be turned to different positions.



When the levers are in the default position, nothing seems to happen, so we can surmise that this is the 'off' position. Try switching the first lever of the red set - the one on the left - to a different position. Returning to the lake, you will see that a kind of crust seems to have formed above one of the pipes.

Remembering that your aim is to be able to cross the lake - rather than creating a circuit, which is impossible with this set of pipes - and referring back to the map in the central room, it should be possible to work out which positions the levers have to be switched to. Stood facing each set, the correct positions are: red set - left, right, left; blue set - right, left, left. You will probably need to activate the steam more than once to set the levers correctly, as some are a little 'sticky' (changing to realtime motion - press 3 on the keyboard - helps here because you can align yourself directly in front the levers, making them easier to turn).

Fourth Pedestal

It is now possible to walk over the encrusted surface of the water. Last time he spoke to you, Esher said that there were organisms in the water which were attracted to heat - so much so, in fact, that they crowd together so densely that they form a solid material. According to the official *Myst V* Guide, the prisoners here learned to use this material to create objects and as a source of food.



Once you reach the other side of the lake, Esher will appear once more. He will offer a clue about how to proceed: 'Make them bring you to the keep, for it will run from you.'

What he means will become clear as you walk towards the sphere - the ice floe on which it is situated breaks away from the mainland at your approach. Leaving that for a moment return to the fourth pedestal and note down its glyph.



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As far as the Keep is concerned, nothing seems to bring it any closer, so you will have to try and make out the glyph on the pedestal as best you can. That will probably entail a little experimentation, but eventually the Bahro will carry the slate into the Keep. Notice that the glyph reflects the structure of the graves on this side of the lake.

Keep Pedestal

You should now return to the first pedestal. You will see that the right-hand section now contains a glyph, that of the final pedestal. Touch it, and you will be linked to the ice floe.



When you arrive, Esher will again appear and congratulate you on completing the task. You should touch the slate to make it corporeal, then return to the first pedestal, and link back to Direbo in order to continue to the next Age.

The Great Shaft, part 2

The first thing to notice on your return to Direbo is that all the glyphs on the pedestal are now illuminated - touching one of the glyphs will link you directly to the appropriate pedestal in Tahgira, should you wish to return for any reason.

Exit the sphere and go to the linking book in the middle of the island, then touch the Gateway Image of the book in order to return to the first rest area of the Great Shaft.



Once there, leave the room and head along the corridor, past the entrance - which is now on your left, and towards the large opening on your right. Just before you reach it, you will see some glyphs engraved on the wall. The upper glyphs are from the D'ni alphabet, while the lower glyphs are D'ni numerals. These were used extensively in *Riven: The Sequel To Myst* and *Myst IV: Revelation*.

Read from left to right, the letters are "pb" and "tehb" (or "teb" according to the New Transliteration Standard) , while the numerals are "20" and "15". These letters also occur on the overview map of the way to D'ni.. They seem to mark the entrance to the Great Shaft, although their precise meaning is still unclear.



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Walk past the engraving and enter the large room on the right. Esher will appear and tell you that he had failed on the same quest you are now taking (as did Yeesha), and that your way ahead lies through large door to the left of the entrance (seen as entering the room). Try the lever next to the door, turning it to the right, and the door will open.



The other door is locked; but before leaving the room, you should examine the alcove, in which another of Yeesha's journals is to be found. The image on the cover depicts Catherine's home-world of Riven being destroyed by it's internal instability; and the journal describes the events surrounding the game of the same name.

Leave the alcove and go through the door which Esher indicated. When you reach the end of the short corridor you will find yourself at the top of a wide shaft heading deep into the earth. Walk to the right and Esher will appear once more. This time he tells you that this shaft allowed Yeesha's great-grandmother, Ti'ana, to find his civilisation, and thus bring about the Fall of D'ni. He also says that he will meet you in Direbo - this is not strictly true, since he has already done so on your first visit, and he will not meet you there again.





You should now take the elevator down to the next level of the Great Shaft - the footpath down is too hazardous to allow passage. Continue walking along the outer rim until you reach the raised platform with a lever. Pull the lever towards you to summon the elevator.

When the elevator arrives, board it and pull the overhead handle. When you arrive at the next level of the shaft, walk clockwise around the shaft until you reach another rest area on your left. It looks almost identical to the one on the level above, except less cluttered, perhaps, and there is no imaging device. However, the next of Yeesha's journals is lying on the bed in small alcove opposite the entrance.

The image on the front depicts the Fall of D'ni which Esher referred to a short while before, while the text introduces the concept of 'the Grower': the prophesied person who will begin to revive the civilisation of D'ni. Yeesha believes that she is this person, and that burden is compounded by her failure with the tablet. There is nothing else in the room, and so you should proceed to the linking book and link to Direbo.



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Once there, you should open the gates on the bridges; the bridge to your left (as you exit the sphere) leads to the first island and the pedestal which links you to Tahgira.

As you approach the sphere, you will be able to see what looks like planetary systems on its walls; this is the Age of Todelmer. Enter the sphere and link there by touching the illuminated glyph on the pedestal.

Todelmer

First Pedestal

On leaving the sphere you will be greeted by a fabulous vista: a large ringed planet seems to fill the sky, while the landscape around you is dotted with columns of rock which tower high above the clouds. To your left are some precarious-looking steps leading up the side of the column on which you find yourself; while on your right you can see, atop a column in the near distance, a strange mechanism, connected to your column via pulleys and thick cables.



Note: from now on I shall assume that you have left the slate on the pedestal until it is required. Hence I will not point out if it is not possible to adjust levers or climb ladders when carrying the slate. In general, you cannot climb or move heavy objects when you have the slate with you; leaving it on the pedestal and picking it up when you need it is much less annoying and time consuming than having to return it to the pedestal every time you find that you are unable to do something.



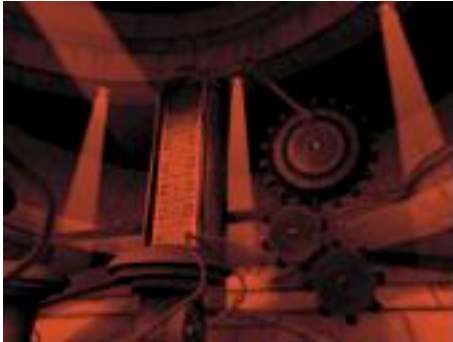
Turn and walk up the steps. As you reach the first top of the first flight, you will see a complex network of pulley, cables, and mechanisms spread before you, but also a larger column with buildings and lights.

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Continue to the second set of steps, which lead downwards, until you reach a large doorway on your left. As you approach, Esher will appear, and tell you that Todelmer was intended to be an observatory, but was never finished: the disaster which destroyed the civilisation of the D'ni intervened. He also says that such a powerful artefact as the tablet cannot be given to dreamers like Yeesha.



When Esher leaves, you should explore the room. On the raised platform in the centre there is what seems to be some kind of measuring instrument. It displays ten pairs of D'ni numerals; perhaps it is a clock of some sort? It is impossible to tell.



Below the measuring instrument are four large devices with control panels, their functions similarly difficult to fathom. You had better find

some way of restoring electricity to the observatory, for at the moment the devices are lifeless.

Leave the platform, and explore the room further. At the back of the room you will find another device, with a large lens in the centre and two levers. Playing with the levers will make the lens brighter or darker, depending on their position. Move the left-hand lever to the middle position and the right-hand lever



as far right as it will go, and the device will whirr into life, and the room will become a lot brighter. The electricity is back on.



Return to the raised platform and look at the devices once more. It is clear that each device relays the images from a telescope, as if you press the three buttons in the top right corner of the device, the image will zoom in and out - the first button (at the top) has the lowest magnification, and the bottom button has the highest. On the left-hand side of each device is a smaller screen with a grid. The levers above

and to the left move the imager around the quarter of the screen which is not red; as you move the levers, the D'ni numerals beneath the screen will scroll, and the button in the centre of the device will flash green. Press this, and you will hear a heavy grinding sound, and the image in the right-hand screen will move. Presumably, then, each device controls a telescope which is trained in on one quarter of the sky.

However, the second device on the right - which shows the top left quadrant of the sky - appears to be broken, as all you can see in the main screen is static.

Since there seems to be nothing more to do inside the room at the moment, head outside and up the steps to the left, noticing, as you do, that the large constructions on the columns - the telescopes, you can guess - now display pulsing red lights: turning on the electricity has activated them, too.

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However, as you continue your ascent, you will find that one of the telescopes is still lifeless, and that the cables which should have lead to it are now broken and blocking your path. That is why one of the devices shows nothing but static.

Return to the control room now and to the second device on the right. You'll have to adjust the levers to move the pulleys until the cable no

longer blocks your path. The left-hand lever is the important one here, since it moves the telescope on the vertical axis; the topmost lever moves the telescope on the horizontal axis, rotating it. Push the left-hand lever to the top, and then press the flashing button. You'll hear the pulleys moving; outside, the cable will now no longer be blocking your path, allowing you to continue your ascent. (True, I could have mentioned this earlier, but then you wouldn't have known why you were doing it ;-))



On reaching the top of the column you will see a smaller telescope on you right. Look through the lens of the telescope and you will see the larger column with buildings and lights directly in view. The telescope has three controls: the left-hand lever moves it up and down; the lower-right lever rotates it horizontally; and the upper-left lever offers a zoom function. Zoom in on the column; as you do so you will notice what looks like a cable car, and below that three illuminated glyphs. Note them down: the first should remind you of the control panels of the devices in the observation room below, while the second two are D'ni numerals (13 and 24 respectively). I have included two snapshots here, as it is not possible to to get a single clean view of the glyphs.



Zoom back out a little until you can see the top of the column in its entirety; on the far left is a pedestal which, if you zoom in on it, is unfortunately facing the wrong direction for you to be able to see what its glyph is. Notice that it is facing to the left, so that to be able to read the glyph, you will need to be somewhere even further to the left.

If you now leave the telescope and explore a little, you will see that there is indeed another rock column with lights on it off to the left of the one you were just looking at. It is too far away to make out what is on top of it, and, if you return to the telescope, you will find that a large spool on prevents you from getting a clear view.



However, that spool seems to be connected to the cable car; perhaps, if you could find a way of moving the cable car a little, the spool would rotate just enough to get a clear view of the column. If you zoom back in on the cable car, you'll notice that it is in dock. Perhaps if you moved it a little way out of the dock?

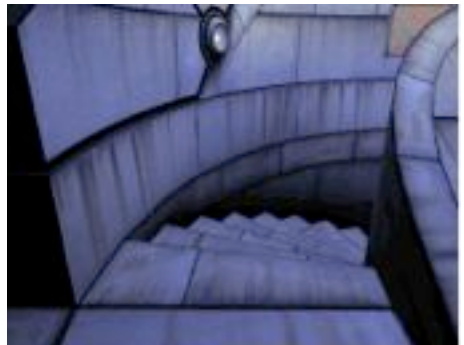


Leave the telescope again and head for the building at the rear of the area. Once inside, you will see a diagram on the back wall; it should be easy enough to interpret from what you have seen so far. The blue circles represent the major columns with lights and buildings; the red circles, which also contain three-quadrant images, correspond to the main telescopes, and the green line

represents the cable car line. The red circle directly underneath the topmost blue circle contains the same glyph you recently saw through the telescope.

There seems to be nothing else of interest in the building, but as you turn to leave you will notice what looks like a white button on the wall behind the door. Press the (similar) button in the middle of the door, which will then close; then press the button on the wall. You'll hear a noise behind you: turn around and you will find the floor leaving to the diagram has collapsed to form a hidden staircase.

Descending the staircase, you will enter a large room which seems to be directly above the observatory room, judging from cables stretching to the roof and the red light below. Ignore the button at the bottom of the staircase; all it does is raise the steps again, blocking your exit. Follow the metal staircase to the other side of the room (going right or left makes no difference) and you will reach what is clearly the dock for the cable car on this column. On the right you'll see a winch.





Leave the top lever facing right - logically enough, this lever controls the direction that the cable car will travel. You want to move the car a little way out of the dock of the other column in order to move that spool upstairs. So pull the front lever down just once, then return to the top of the building. You'll have open the door again get outside, but the staircase will remain where it is.

Then return to the telescope and zoom in on the rock column - you can now see that there is a pedestal top of it and the glyph is clearly in view.

Head back down the steps towards the main pedestal. On the way, you could stop off in the observatory and enter numerals you saw through the telescope into the relevant device -



the first on the right. As you move the levers on the left and at the top, the numerals will scroll. You need to move the levers just enough so that the correct two numerals - those you saw through the telescope - appear in the two screens at the bottom. The level of magnification is unimportant.

Second Pedestal

When you have finished, leave the room and continue to the main pedestal to retrieve the slate. Draw the glyph of the second pedestal which you saw through the telescope onto it (see the Slate Guide for more information), then leave it on the ground and back away. As usual, a Bahro will appear and take the slate to the second pedestal, and you will be able to link there by touching the newly-illuminated glyph on the main pedestal in the sphere.



Once you have linked to the second pedestal, you will see another small telescope, which you should look through. As you saw on the map, there are two large telescopes between this rock column and the one with the pedestal which was facing the wrong direction; the first of those telescopes, which you just moved using the control panel in the observatory, seems to be directly at right angles to you now; but the view of the other rock column is still blocked by the second large telescope. If you rotate the the small telescope to the right, however, you should be able to make out three glyphs on the main rock column from which you have just linked. Once again, these are situated below the dock for the cable car.

Referring back to the map, you will notice that first glyph represents precisely the telescope which is obstructing your view of the other column. The D'ni numerals stand for 6 and 1 respectively.





Return to the pedestal, leaving the slate where it is, and link back to the main column. Then go back to the observatory and enter these numerals into the appropriate device - the first on the left. Once again, the level of magnification is unimportant.

Leave the observatory again. walk back to the main pedestal and link to the second column. On the small telescope, move the left-hand lever

until it is exactly in the middle; then rotate the telescope using the lower-right lever. As you do so, it will become clear that the top of the final rock column is mostly visible; indeed, through the eye of one of the nearest telescope's brackets, it is possible to make out the third pedestal and its glyph.

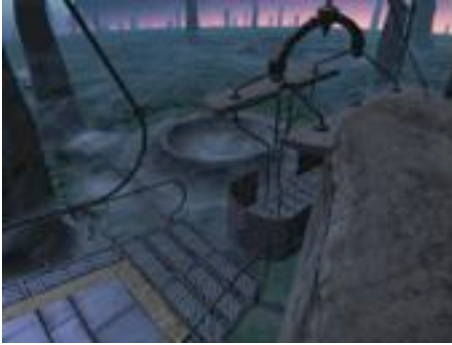
Third Pedestal

As usual, collect the slate from the pedestal, and write the glyph on it so that a Bahro will take it to the third pedestal. Link back to the main pedestal, and then on to the third. When you arrive, head toward the large building; Esher will appear briefly and inform you cryptically that 'your destiny does not lie here, but above'. Apparently, you will also have to find a way to make the Bahro align the planets.



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The door to the building is locked, and so you should descend the steps next to the pedestal. At the bottom you'll find another small telescope,



which reveals nothing of interest when you look through it. You are unable to get to the dock from here, since you are too high up. The cable-car, which you moved away from this dock earlier, has ladders on the side of it that would have allowed you to climb down, if it had been properly in dock itself; but as it is, you have no choice but to return to the main rock column and return the cable car to its original position.

Go back to the pedestal and link to the main rock column. From there you'll have to make the long hall back to the top of the column. Then enter the building and descend to the docking area. Flip the top lever to the left and push the front lever down as many times as you did before. Give it one more push for luck: if the cable car has entered the dock on the other side, the pulleys will no longer spin. Then return once again to the main pedestal and link back to the third.

When you return to the landing with the telescope, you will find that you can now walk onto the upper deck of the cable car, climb down the ladder, and enter the dock. The lever inside the car doesn't seem to work.





Once you enter the building, you'll find a device like the one in the observatory which you used to switch on the electricity there. The operation of the device is the same, but the settings are different. This time you need to move the right-hand lever to the middle position, and the left-hand lever about two-thirds of the way up.

Climb the staircase now - left or right makes no difference. At the top there is another hidden staircase, which you can lower by pressing the button on the right. As you ascend, you'll notice the same map on the wall as in the building on the top of the main column. At the top, to the right on the door, there is a glyph inscribed on the wall - this Age's environmental manipulation glyph. What it does, we'll find out soon.

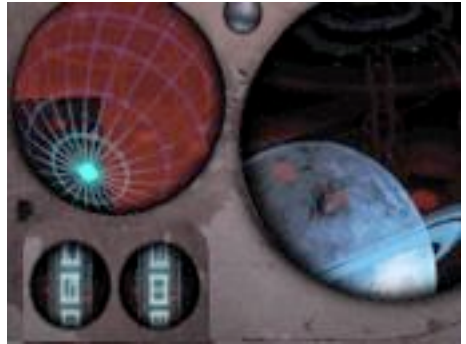


You can now open the door - obviously, it needed electricity to become operational. Perhaps the same was true of the cable car? Head back to the car and try the lever again. It works! The doors of the car swing shut, and you find yourself being carried high above the surface of the planet on a disturbingly-thin cable. About half-way across the cable halts at a column. Turn left (if you are facing the way the car is travelling) and you'll see four glyphs engraved onto the central support.



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A quick look at the map will confirm that these are the coordinates for the final working telescope. The D'ni numerals stand for 4 and 5 respectively; and while the upper glyph clearly represents to the ringed planet which dominates the sky, its significance is as yet unclear. Once you have noted the glyphs down, pull the lever in the car once more to finish the crossing. Then return to the observatory and set the final control panel - the rear-left one - using the new numerals. On the lowest magnification, the screen now shows part of the ringed planet.



That must be why the glyph for the ringed planet appeared along with the coordinates for this control panel.

However, increasing the magnification will reveal that the telescope is not centred in on the planet - and you should also notice that the rings of the planet are at a different angle on the screen to on the engraving. That is what Esher meant earlier when he spoke of aligning the planets. Merely adjusting the telescope will not do the trick: it is the planets themselves which need to be brought into line with the telescopes!



Head back outside and collect the slate from whichever pedestal you left it at - the third, if you've been following this walkthrough, and assuming you didn't bring it with you. Then come back to the sphere and write the Age's environmental manipulation glyph on it. You have a good view of the ringed planet from here, so it's a good place watch what happens.

The glyph instructs the Bahro to speed up time, as you can see from the motion of the clouds below you and the starry heavens above. And the

rings of the planet also gradually rotate, but during the 90 seconds which the effect lasts, they don't move far enough. You'll have to write the glyph a second time to make the rings of the planet match the angle you saw in the engraving.

Keep Pedestal

When the second 90 seconds are up, return to the observatory, and to the final control panel. As you increase the magnification from the lowest to the highest setting, you'll find that you centre in on the rings of the planet; and at the highest magnification you can clearly see a pedestal and the glyph written on it! Logically enough, the glyph seems to be an abstraction of the planet and its rings. Remember Esher's remark about your destiny not being here, but above? Now you know!



The only thing left to do is to write this glyph on the slate for the Bahro to transport to the final pedestal; if you draw the glyph on the slate in the observatory, then return to the control panel, you can even watch a Bahro placing the slate onto the pedestal. Once that is done, link yourself there from the main pedestal.



When you arrive, Esher will appear and once again warn you not to give the tablet to Yeesha when you have it - indeed, doing so would destroy the D'ni completely, because of her greed for power.

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If you want to explore the space station on which you now find yourself, there are two ladders ahead of you on the left and right. Climb those, and you will be able to observe the planets, asteroids and stars circling around you.

Behind you, on the other hand, is a ladder leading down to the Keep. Enter the sphere and touch the slate, changing it from its insubstantial blue to its corporeal form; then link back to the main pedestal, and on to Direbo.



The Great Shaft, part 3

Having returned to Direbo, use the linking book to link to the Great Shaft. When you get there, leave the resting area and go left to the next elevator platform. As before, you will have to summon it first by pulling the lever on the left of the platform. There is another of Yeesha's journals beside the lever. The cover depicts the birth of Yeesha, shortly before the events of *Myst III: Exile*. The text refers to those events; and

Yeesha also ponders the 'nature or nurture' question: is she the Grower because she was trained to be, or because she always was from the start?



Take the elevator down to the next level of the Great Shaft. When you arrive, step off the elevator and go down the staircase - in the other direction there is nothing but a broken pathway. As you reach the bottom, Esher will appear and inform you that you are now three miles below the surface of the earth. However, proceed any further, you will need to bring fresh air to the lower part of the shaft - Esher says that you will need to raise the floor and start the fans.



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Go right to the end of the red carpet and look down; you'll see the floor that Esher was talking about. The glyphs on the walls should be recognisable as D'ni letters if you look closely. They form the D'ni word "tihwah" (or "tiwa" in the New Transliteration Standard), which means "shaft".



Continue walking around the edge of the shaft until you reach a staircase on you left. When you reach the landing you can turn right and continue down the stairs. Eventually you will reach some kind of a device with a blue button on top of it, and one of Yeesha's journals nearby. The cover depicts Sirrus and Achenar's escape from their Prison Ages in *Myst IV: Revelation*.

On the last page is a slate glyph; from the context, it may be apparent that this one means "sing".

Press the blue button now. The lever switches to the opposite side, and then begins to return to its original position. It's a timer! Quickly follow the stairs down another level, and you will find that you have reached the floor of the shaft. Walk (or run!) right across the floor to the opposite side, where you will find a staircase leading upwards. Follow this until you come to a device identical to the last but with a yellow button. Press that,



at the timer will begin here too. Return to the main floor once more, where you will see that a small pillar that you passed on your way across has elevated, the shaft glyph illuminated red. Touch the glyph, and with a rumble the floor will begin to rise, taking you back to the level where you last spoke with Esher.



There are four exits from the floor now; one leads back to the staircase you descended after arriving on the elevator. Take the exit opposite, and you will be able to enter a small room which, judging from the large machine on the right and the pipes running across the ceiling, must contain the fans Esher mentioned.

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In front of the machine is the next journal by Yeesha. The cover of this one depicts the adult Yeesha leaving her parents in order to begin a journey of self-discovery, and the text describes emotions she felt at that time.

Throw the switch and the machine will whirr into action. Now turn left, where you will see a small doorway into the next resting area. This room is furnished similarly to the other two you have already visited; and, like the topmost resting area, there is an imager with a message from Yeesha. Start the message playing by pressing the blue button; as before, I have transcribed it here.



"What will I become? I will make something more of me. I will rebuild what I am. Is there anyone who is master over me? Have I not become the Grower? The Grower... yet all I grow is anger, watching them call, watching them fail, waiting, watching. I am the Grower! How can I wait much longer on such fools?"

When you have finished listening to the message, go to the linking book and link to Direbo. When you arrive you should open the two bridge gates, granting you access to all but one of the islands; then enter the sphere and touch the illuminated glyph on the pedestal. You will then link to the next Age, Noloben.

Noloben

First Pedestal

Leave the sphere and turn left. You'll see Esher kneeling on the sand in the distance. Walk towards him and he will speak, telling you that he fled to this Age after D'ni fell. However, it was also the home-world of the Bahro, and it is clear that the new neighbours did not get along very well.



Continue walking along the beach until you come the corner of the cliff-face, where you will find a dais under a canopy. The canopy doesn't look like it would be very successful at keeping off the rain, as it has four large holes in it. On the dais itself are what seem to be bowls of some kind, with grooves carved behind each at something like 315° angles, or

pointing towards 10:30 on a clock face. In the centre is a large egg-shaped dome; and behind the dais, engraved on the wall, are a variety of glyphs, none of which you recognise.

However, at the foot of the dais is a sight that should by now be familiar: an illuminated glyph of the kind which you write on slates. It's a fair bet that this is the Ages' environmental manipulation glyph. It



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consists of three lines with circles at the ends, but notice the shape and position of the piece of stone the glyph is engraved on: if that represents the slate, then from where you are standing, the glyph is upside down. The circles need to be drawn at the bottom if the slate, not the top!

Go back to the sphere to collect the slate, then return to the dais. Then draw the glyph on the slate (if you want to make sure you're drawing it correctly, check the Slate Guide), leave it on the sand for the Bahro, and wait to see what happens. After the blinding flash of light, it will start to rain, and as you approach the dais again, you'll see rainwater streaming through the holes in the canopy, and into the bowls. As the rain stops, and the water in the bowls settles, you will see that the water in each bowl reflects four of the glyphs from the wall; note these down, as well as their positions relative to each other.



After about a minute, the water will drain away.

Continue walking up the beach, away from the sphere, and you will see a tunnel entrance on your left, which you should enter; on the way, you may encounter a snake or two, but they seem harmless, ignoring you and disappearing down a small hole in the ground. Eventually you will come to another beach.

As you walk along the shore, look at the largest of the islands: you'll find that you can actually walk out to this island via a sand-bank.

When you get there, you will find that there seems to be a cave entrance, but that it is blocked by a large boulder. Notice the inscription on the boulder: it should remind you of a sketch in Yeesha's fifth journal, in which she talked about being The Grower for the first time.

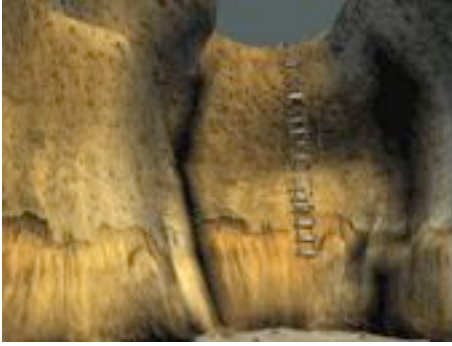


Turn around and head back to the beach; as you do so, you will see a dome above the cliffs - perhaps you can find some way of climbing the cliffs? Walking along the rest of this beach will reveal nothing of interest, so you should return to the first beach. You haven't yet explored on the other side of the sphere so go there now. The cliffs take a sharp right turn, and if you follow this you will come to another tunnel entrance.



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A short way inside you will find your way blocked by a large, and clearly man-made, column.



Outside, as you walk further along the cliffs, you will come to a series of snake-holes, and a handle on a cord; looking up, you can see that it is attached to a rope ladder. Pull the handle, and the ladder will unfurl, allowing you to climb to the plateau above (you can't do this if you're carrying the slate).

When you reach the top, you should explore the plateau; aside from the large dome, there are four smaller stone pillars. These pillars have rotating tops with glyphs engraved on them, and the same glyphs are to be found covering the dome. Unfortunately, none of these match the glyphs which were reflected in the bowls on the dais below when you used the slate to summon rain.



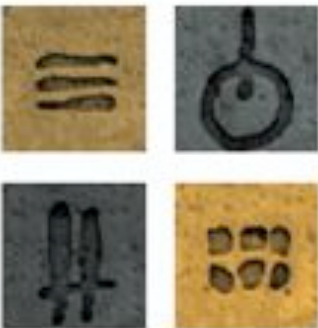
It is fair to assume that these glyphs are Bahro writing.



The large dome itself has fifteen small windows; inside there seems to be a laboratory of some kind, presumably Esher's. As you peer through each window, you can see that above each window on the opposite wall there is glyph, and that these are distinctly similar to those in reflected in the bowls.

Clearly, every glyph on the outside is paired with one on the inside. By now you should be able to piece together the task in hand. First of all you will need to pair the two sets of glyphs, by walking around the dome, noting the glyph on outside of the window, and then looking through the window to notice the which glyphs are on the opposite wall. By using a couple of open windows as reference points, you should then be able to pair off the two sets of glyphs. Then cross-reference the glyphs reflected in the bowls, and you will have the correct Bahro glyph for each of the pillars. For more information about the glyphs here, read the Noloben Glyphs and D'ni Numerals pages.

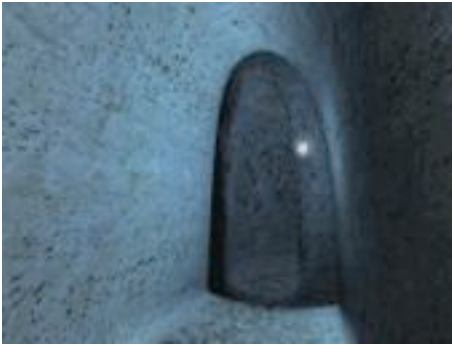
By recalling the angle of the grooves behind each of the bowls, and comparing that with the angle of the shadow cast by each pillar, it should be possible to determine which pillar corresponds to which bowl. When you have done that, rotate the top of each pillar so that the correct glyph lines up with the vertical groove on the front of each pillar. For the first pillar to the right of the rope ladder, it should look the image above.



The correct solution for all the pillars is given on the left; from the pillar pictured on the right, proceed anti-clockwise through the rest of the pillars and glyphs.

But what does all this achieve? As you turn the top of each pillar, you'll hear a deep grinding sound which lasts much longer than the act of turning the pillar itself. The top of each pillar turns something in the earth beneath it.

I
Ladder



Climb down the rope-ladder, and collect the slate from the sphere; then return to the tunnel which was previously blocked by a man-made column. You now have free passage along the tunnel, and you will go through three more of the same kind of columns. Each column corresponds to a pillar; when you rotated the top of the pillar, you rotated the column beneath.

Second Pedestal

After you have passed through the fourth of these columns, the ground will become a little steeper, and after a few more steps you will find yourself at the bottom of the laboratory you glimpsed through the windows in the dome. Nolo-ben's second pedestal is just over to your left. Yet, oddly, if you draw the glyph on the slate and leave it on the floor, however, no Bahro will appear. You'll have to place it on the pedestal yourself, and test whether you drew it correctly by linking back to the first pedestal and checking whether the glyph is illuminated.



There seems to be nothing else of interest on the ground floor, so you should proceed up the winding stairs in the middle of the room. Esher will be waiting for you about half way up. Listen carefully to what he has to say: it is possibly his most important speech. First of all, he will congratulate you on gaining access

to his laboratory, which he refers to as a "refuge". Apparently, the Bahro will not enter it, which would explain what happened with the last pedestal. He also says that he takes "no pleasure in what they have endured here," but that he had to "learn", which sounds more than a little ominous. Esher goes on to tell you that the tablet restrains the power of the Bahro, who are terrifying if not restrained. He also mentions - twice - that they are afraid of the symbol of the snake, which he draws in the air. Finally, he tells you to proceed to the top of the laboratory and to seal it - and then to climb.

Continue up the steps until you reach the wooden platform. Walk all way around it until you come to a ladder going upwards. Climb the ladder (you'll have to be on the correct side of it to do this) and you will reach a second platform. This houses what seems to be a cage, which has rather unpleasant-looking implements fixed to each corner.

Above the cage (you can climb on top if you want) is a ladder which is, at the moment, retracted, so that you can't climb to the top of the dome yet.



Return to the first platform. Directly behind you as you descend there is a board on which Esher has posted notes from his various experiments on the Bahro. Amidst the illustrations of Bahro muscle, bone and skull structure, you'll find three things of particular interest.



The first clearly contains a slate glyph; if you were watching the gestures made by Esher closely, you'll recognise it as the glyph for "snake".



The second depicts what Esher meant by sealing the "refuge", and the results of doing so. You will have to close the entrance to the laboratory by rotating at least one of the columns. When you do that, the ladder to the top of the dome will fall.

And the final one is more enigmatic (I haven't fathomed it yet, but it's worth looking at). It looks like a water-colour, rather than one of Esher's usual anatomical diagrams; the creature seems to have a tail, unlike the Bahro; at the bottom are the glyphs from the outside of the dome, shown in the correct

order; and in the top right corner is the same symbol as Esher wears on his left shoulder (seen as he is facing you). If you look closely, the symbol also occurs inside the chest of the creature. A very curious piece of paper.

Head back to the second pedestal at the bottom of the observatory, and then link to the first pedestal. From there you can easily go back to the plateau and turn one of the pillars, closing the tunnel. Then link back inside the laboratory, and return to the second platform.

(Or, if you feel like seeing a rather strange anomaly - make sure you save first - you could move the first pillar anti-clockwise until it is set to the following glyph:





bizarre nonetheless.)

Third Pedestal

Once you get to the second platform, you'll find that the ladder has lowered and that you can climb to the top of the dome. And there before you is the third pedestal.

Let's deal with that problem first: note down the glyph, link back to the first pedestal and collect the slate (you make have to link to the second



Then link back inside the laboratory and walk along the tunnel to the first column. The wall ahead is black; in realtime mode - press 3 on the keyboard - walk into the blackness. You'll end up falling beneath Noloben, witnessing a strange mirrored display, until, a few seconds later, you are deposited back at the second pedestal. On the left is a snapshot I took of the experience. Not exactly an Easter Egg, but



pedestal if you left it there). While you're here you should probably take the opportunity to try out the 'snake' glyph you found among Esher's notes. The snake gylph, Esher said, will frighten the Bahro; and what he meant will become clear the moment you drop it on the ground and back away. A Bahro will appear, and struggle to make out the glyph; as it recognises the glyph , it will let out a

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shriek and recoil in horror; then it disappears. About 90 seconds later, a Bahro will appear and pick up the slate as if nothing had happened; the glyph has faded in the interim.

Now you know how the snake gylph works, you should return your attention to the glyph of the third pedestal. The write it on the slate and back away. As usual, a Bahro will appear and transport the slate to the third pedestal. It seems that, while they will not enter the laboratory, the roof of the dome is acceptable to them. Then return to the third pedestal yourself.

Opposite the pedestal you will see a large glass lens of some kind, with a smaller lens in front of it. On the ground is the same symbol of a tree that you saw on the boulder blocking the entrance to the cave on the small island you visited earlier. As you stand on the symbol in order to look through the lens, it lights up; and through the smaller lens you can see the smaller island. What you thought was a boulder seems to fall to the ground like sand; and inside the cave, you can clearly see the Keep.



However, as you step away from the lens, the symbol beneath you fades and the cave entrance is sealed once again. This is a pressure-pad type of puzzle, and you have already encounter one of these before: in the first cave of Tahgira, when you used the slate to make a Bahro stand on the ice so that it would crack. The solution to this puzzle is in principle the same: you need to get one of the Bahro to stand on the tree symbol long enough for you to link back to the first pedestal, run along the beach, through the tunnel, and over the sand bank to the small island. That will take quite a bit of time; the difference from the puzzle in Tahgira is that you need a Bahro to remain stood on the pressure pad for 30 seconds or so - or to stand on it 30 seconds after you drop the slate, during which time you can reach the small island.

The only glyph which will do the trick is 'snake'. Some glyphs, such as the one for 'rain' you used earlier, cause the Bahro to leave the slate where it is, giving you time to pick it up again. But the Bahro will still return for it if you don't pick it up, and the interval is not long enough for what you need here. The snake glyph actually frightens the Bahro away; they take a lot longer to come back for the slate. And the 90 seconds or so it takes are enough for you to make it to the small island comfortably.



Write the snake glyph on the slate and drop the slate onto the tree symbol. As you move away, the symbol will once again fade but don't worry about that. Go to the third pedestal and link to the first, then head left along the beach until you find the tunnel on the left, and walk to the other beach. Once there, wade out to the island. A short while later, the 'boulder' will turn to sand and fall to the ground, leaving just

the now-illuminated tree symbol. Presumably, both symbols light up when someone stands on the one above the dome.

Keep Pedestal

A moment after you enter the cave, the 'boulder' will reconstitute itself behind you, blocking your exit; but the final pedestal is in front of you. Note down the glyph, then link to the first pedestal.

Follow the usual procedure, writing the glyph on the slate and waiting for the Bahro to take it to the Keep.



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Then link to the Keep again. Esher will be waiting for you; he seems quite agitated to begin with, accusing you of succumbing to doubts placed in your mind by Yeesha. Then he calms down a little, and suggests that there might be another way in the end. If you take the tablet to Myst Island, it will be safe from Yeesha. 'Be alert,' he says, 'a choice awaits.'

After Esher has left, you should touch the slate on the pedestal to turn it corporeal; then return to the first pedestal, and back to Direbo, in order to continue to the next level of the Great Shaft.

The Great Shaft, part 3

After returning to Direbo, use the linking book to link to the Great Shaft. When you arrive in the resting area, you'll hear the sound of the fans coming from the next room; so, remembering what Esher said last time you were here, you should be able to progress to the next level.

Last time you were here you had to raise the floor from the bottom of the shaft, and that allowed you to cross to the other side on this level. If you return to the bottom now, you should be able to see what was underneath the floor. However, when you walk down the staircase to the bottom level, you'll find that the way is now blocked.



You'll need to find another way to access the bottom level of the shaft. Go back to the third level and to the pillar in the centre of the raised floor; press the glyph again, and the floor will lower. Once it reaches the bottom, press the glyph again, but instead of staying on the floor and travelling up with it, walk to the very edge of the shaft; the floor doesn't raise there, and you'll be left on this

level. If you do this too slowly, you may have to jump off the edge of the floor as it starts to rise.

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Looking around, you'll see that the floor is raised by a series of counterweights, some of which block the entrance to the staircases from the level above. In the area underneath where the floor used to be - which you can access by any of three ladders - there seems to be another pillar like the one for raising the floor, and one of Yeesha's journals lying next to it. There is also a tunnel which passes directly underneath a locked door.



Climb down one of the ladders and pick up Yeesha's journal. This one describes the abject solitude of her quest for self-knowledge, and then her befriending of Calam, a D'ni scholar. He taught Yeesha the Art of Writing, while she, with no sense of D'ni cultural taboos, pushed him to ask forbidden questions about the Art. Together they learned of the

slavery of the Bahro to the tablet; and then he was murdered. The cover illustration depicts their meeting.

On the last page of the journal a (badly written) D'ni word is to be found. After some discussion on websites, it seems to spell "kehpihk" or "kepik", but its meaning is unclear.



Pressing the glyph will lower the floor again, but there is no need to do so. Instead, head along the tunnel: at the end you will find a series of pipes, and a lever in the middle. Flip the lever the left, and a fan will start up overhead (according to the official *Myst V Guide*, this is an exhaust fan).

Behind you in the tunnel, a ladder will fall from one of the holes in the ceiling. Go back and climb up it; at the top, turn left and walk towards the closed door. Nearby you will find a lever which opens the door when you move it to the right, allowing access to the main shaft; and on the floor, another of Yeesha's journals. The cover image depicts, and the text describes, how, after avenging herself upon Calam's murderer, Yeesha became the champion of the Bahro's cause, seeking their freedom, but ultimately failed through her pride.



On the final page is a sketch of a slate with two glyphs, one which you should now recognise as "snake". What is odd is that it appears alongside another glyph - are these separate instructions for the Bahro, or do the two of them for a single, new glyph? From the context, we might refer to the slate as 'pain'.

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Now head back along the corridor to the open door at the other end, and you will find yourself in a large room above the exhaust fan. Go right towards the closed door; next to it is a broken lever (the handle lies in front of the door) and still another of Yeesha's journals. Both cover and text are concerned with people returning to D'ni and starting to rebuild - the D'ni Restoration Council - and some of them choosing to follow Yeesha.



Through the final remaining door you will find another rest area; it seems that the way to D'ni must lie behind the door with the broken lever. To your left as you enter the room is a linking book, then an imager, and in the second alcove, the last of Yeesha's journals. The cover shows Yeesha and Esher, symbolising the choice you will soon have to make. The text describes her frustration at having failed; and says that she

cannot simply say what must be done, since that would possibly taint the act. Instead, she describes a dream; read it carefully, for it may provide you with a clue about how to succeed.

Now turn to the imager, and activate it by pressing the blue button. As before, I have transcribed the message below:

"What am I left with? Why did he leave this weight on me? Did I ask for this? Did I ask to lose my brothers? Did I ask to cause the death of Calam? Did I ask to watch my mother die? Did I ask to be my father's tool? Did I ask for so much power? Did I ask to be so alone?... Father, I wish you could hold me..."



Having listened to the Yeesha's final message, you should go to the linking book and link to Direbo. Open the gates on the island, giving you access to all of Direbo; then enter the sphere and press the glyph on the pedestal. You will be taken to the final Age, Laki'ahn.

Laki'ahn

First Pedestal

When you arrive in Laki'ahn you will find yourself on another island, this one more tropical than Noloben. Esher is waiting for you in front of the house to your right. When you approach he says that he wishes that you could have seen the Age in all its glory. This was a place of courage and strength, he says, where battles were fought. He also tells you that the door to this building is locked, but that there is a back door which can be opened.

Looking through the second window to the left of the door (as you face it), you will see a piece of paper on a table with five geometric shapes on it; to judge from the triangle in the middle, you are looking at the piece of paper upside down.



Walk back towards the sphere, this time taking the slate with you - it will be useful very soon - then towards the ocean on your right. To your left is a stretch of sand, while off to your right you can see a wattle fence. Head towards the fence and walk the length of it; at the end pass between the two boulders. Turning right, you'll see an area full of the skeletal

frames of large sea creatures, and some sort of crane.

To your left as you enter the area you will see a small animal of some kind that hisses as you approach (it doesn't bite, despite those large teeth), and next to it, a glyph inscribed on the rock face, presumably this Ages' environmental manipulation glyph.

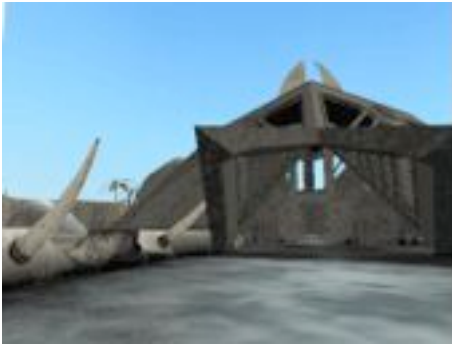


Writing it on a slate and dropping it for the Bahro to pick up confirms this to be the case; a savage wind will spring up and rage for 90 seconds, the sandstorm reducing visibility to a minimum.

As you face the crane mechanism, you will see an exit to your left, opposite the one you entered by. This will lead you to a stream, on the other side of which lies a large, triangular gateway. Walk across the stream and through the gateway.



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The canal you are now wading up is lined on either side by walls and the tusks of some animal; notice that towards the end, on the left, the wall is broken and that you can climb out of the canal and onto dry land. Ignore that for the moment, instead continuing into what seems to be a giant cage.

The cage, however, seems to be but the first of several. We'll call this Cage A; the cage to the left, Cage B; the cage straight ahead, Cage C; and the cage to the right, Cage D. At the centre of the complex, at the far end of the cage in which you stand, there is a cylindrical cage. It looks as if it should be possible to access the other cages from the one in the centre if you could figure out how to rotate it, as there are no bars separating it from the left-hand cage of the complex, Cage B. And if you look closely at the filthy water flowing through the cylindrical cage, it looks as if there is something submerged in the water, but you are unable to tell what.



Go back to the broken wall and climb out onto the dry land, and walk around the circumference of the cages. As you turn the first corner, you will see an odd construction to your right with some kind of windmill at its apex. The snapshot was taken during one of the frequent eclipses that happen in Laki'ahn.



Continue walking around the circumference of the cages before you go and examine the windmill construction. As you turn the final second corner, you will see that a canal, again lined with walls and tusks, leads away from the third corner. This would be from the cage to the right of the one you entered earlier, so Cage D; and the corner gate is closed.



Go back to the windmill construction now; walk to the back of it, and then up one of the ramps. This will bring you to a control panel of three levers and two buttons.

This puzzle is arguably the most complex in the whole of *Myst V: End of Ages*, mainly because of the number of factors which need to be borne in mind to complete it.

However, in the final analysis, it isn't really too difficult. I've summarised the factors for consideration below:

1. You know the central cage in the middle of the cage complex has no bars on one side; this side currently faces into Cage B (To your right as you look out from the control panel);
2. The canal to the from Cage D (to your current left) seems to be the only way out of this area;
3. The gate leading from the Cage D is closed; you will have to open it in order to get to the canal;

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4. There seems to be something submerged in the water under the central cage;
5. The panel in the windmill construction controls these the central cage and the gate, but you need to activate the wind first, using the wind glyph;
6. The small animal in front of the windmill construction keeps barking and hissing, which is enough to drive anyone to distraction (or at least it did when I did this puzzle first);
7. On top of which, you have to figure out what the levers and buttons actually do.

And to figure that out, trigger the wind using the wind glyph - don't forget to pick the slate up afterwards, because it's a long walk back to the first pedestal - then return to the control panel. Going from left to right, pull or press everything once - no more, no less - giving yourself time to observe the results as best you can through the sandstorm. This is what you should see:

1. The first lever activates the windmill, allowing the other controls to function;
2. The second lever raises the central cage: if you squint, you might just make out the shape of a pedestal which had previously been submerged;
3. The first button rotated the central cage 90° clockwise: squinting again, you should see that the opening is now to Cage C (topmost cage from the bottom canal, and the one nearest to you now) - but that the pedestal now faces Cage A (the bottom cage, and the first one you entered);
4. The second button had no discernible effect (it must have opened the gate to Cage A, but it's broken);

5. The final lever opened the gate at the corner of Cage D, leading to the second canal.

The solution to the rest of the puzzle should hopefully be fairly clear:

1. Go back to Cage A, via the the broken wall, and note down the glyph on the pedestal;
2. Activate the wind again by writing the wind glyph on the the slate and leaving it for the Bahro (remember to pick the slate up afterwards);
3. Return to the control panel and pull the first lever to start the windmill, then pull final lever (the one on the right) once to rotate the central cage to the 90° clockwise once more, so that the opening leads into Cage D;
4. Then draw the glyph of the second pedestal on the slate for the Bahro to transport it there;
5. Return to the first pedestal and link to the second.



Don't try linking to the pedestal before you've rotated the centre cage once more: you'll end up being able to get into Cage C, which goes absolutely nowhere, and then having to link back to the first pedestal all over again.

Second Pedestal

When you do reach the second pedestal, pick up the slate and take it with you again, and head into Cage D, then out of the open gate, up the canal and along the tunnel, at the end of which you will find yourself in an arena.

To your right is another open gate; the canal it leads to takes you between the wattle fences and to the crane you saw earlier: obviously, the crane was used for hauling the sea creatures into the canal, so that they could be ushered into the arena.



Head back along the canal and into the arena again. As you near the podium in the centre of the amphitheatre, you will be able to see the next pedestal on top of it. Climb up one of the ramps and you will see that there is a bridge connecting the podium to the next level of the amphitheatre; however, as yet you have seen no other way to access that level.



Aligning the wall are a series of devices. On the far left is an alcove which seems to function as some form of weighing device. At the base of the alcove is a scale, while two

thirds of the way up the wall are four pairs of holes. To the right of each pair of holes is a set of concentric circles - next to the top pair, four circles; to the next pair down, three circles; and so on. When you stand on the scale with the slate, two red indicators appear in the third row of holes - next to the symbol with three circles - and one indicator appears in the lowest pair.

Further along the wall are four contraptions that look almost like faces, consisting of two 'eyes' and a button - notice that each button has between one and four concentric circles, corresponding to those next to the pairs of holes. And in the centre of the wall is a button which will lower and raise the podium.



There are three settings for the 'eyes', which can be changed by pressing the button beneath them:

- Both closed (covered by the yellow caps);
- Left open (that is, the left cap is open, revealing the red 'eye' beneath);
- Both open (two red 'eyes').



First of all, try closing all the 'eyes' on the devices. Once you have done that, press the button in the centre of the wall; the podium will lower, and you will be able to draw it on the slate and leave it for the Bahro to collect.

Clearly, your task now to use the podium to get up to the second level of the amphitheatre, presumably by linking to the pedestal when the podium is at the second level as well. Try opening one 'eye' on each of the devices and pressing the central button. You'll find that the podium will rise to the second level. Now walk back to the second pedestal, link to the first, and then to the third.

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As you arrive at the third pedestal, however, the podium will begin to lower before you have time to step onto the bridge; and when you step off at the bottom level, it will return to its position on the second level. It is too finely balanced for you to simply link to the pedestal, and you will have to balance it to take account of your own weight.

So how much do you weigh? Judging from the sets of circles, it should be apparent that each 'eye' on the far left device has a weight value of four, since there are four circles on the button; that 'eyes' on the second device from the left have a weight value of three, since it has three circles on the button; and so on. Hence, with one eye open on each device, the weight value must be 10: $4+3+2+1$. What happens if you set the device with one circle on the button to have two 'eyes' open, giving a total of 11 ($4+3+2+2$)? Open the second 'eye' by pressing the button beneath once, and then press the central button; the podium will rise even higher! And what if you close both 'eyes' on the device with one circle, giving a total of 9 ($4+3+2+0$)? The podium will lower to the bottom level. From this information it should be clear that the podium, when the slate is placed on the pedestal, needs to be balanced to a weight of 10 in order to stay at the second - middle - level where the bridge is. Now you need to know how much you weigh. Stand on the scale again now - without the slate - and you will find that two red indicators show on the row with three concentric circles. You weigh '6'!



So you need to set the devices to a total of 16 - that way, when you link to the pedestal and add your weight to the podium, it should balance at the second level, allowing you to cross the bridge. Open the two 'eyes' on the device with four circles (total 8); then open both 'eyes' on the three-circle device (total 14: $8+6$); and then either one 'eye' on the two-circle device, or both on the one-circle device, bringing the total to 16 ($8+6+2+0$, or $8+6+0+2$). Then go back to the second pedestal, link to the first, and then to the third.

Third Pedestal

As you arrive, the podium will lower to the second level. Pick up the slate and take it with you: even if you need to drop it later, the Bahro will only return it to the first pedestal, which is a lot more convenient than the third pedestal on top of its podium! Then turn around and step onto the bridge; the podium will rise to the third level again. Finish crossing the bridge and head right. Just around the corner you will find a short tunnel cut into the amphitheatre; as you approach it Esher will appear. He seems to hardly register your presence as he reminisces about the "great sport" which took place in the arena, and the great jewels "freed from the Laki" - the sea creatures, no doubt - "painted with their blood." With that, he will link away.

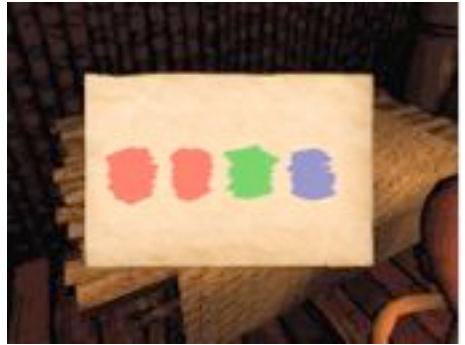


Walk into the tunnel. Ahead of you is a double door, resembling the one to the building next to the sphere. You should recognise the geometric shapes from the piece of paper you saw through the window earlier. Remembering that it was upside down, press the switches to the left of each shape in the following order: circle, square, hexagon, triangle, diamond. Then the doors will unlock and swing open, allowing you to enter the building.



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Once inside, cross the room to the double doors opposite; as you open them you will see the sphere ahead of you. Then turn and go into the room on the left; on the table with the jewel you will find a piece of paper with four colours on it. The sequence is red, red, green blue; note this down.



Exploring the rooms further will reveal a series of paintings; from left to right, these (presumably) depict the hunt for the great sea creatures; then the warriors of the local people (the Kresh as Esher will tell you later) fighting the Laki in the arena; and then the jewels of the Laki (their hearts?) being presented to the watching D'ni.



Head back outside to the amphitheatre; as you leave the short tunnel look downwards. At the end of the aisle the wall is broken, allowing you to climb down into the arena. Don't go down just yet, but instead turn left and walk to the end of the balcony. There is a column with a red button on top of it; when you press the button, a small gate opposite will open in the arena.



At the other end of the balcony - above the gate which just opened - is another button, which opens a second gate; but you only need to open one of the gates. Go back to where you saw the broken wall and climb down into the arena; then walk over to the gate you just opened, and into the corridor which lies beyond. After a sharp turn immediately after you enter, the corridor will arch right for some time

and then you will reach a junction to the left. Take the turning and follow the corridor as it now curves left. After a while you will find what looks like another podium in front of you; a short way from that, a red drum with handles; and further still, at the end of the corridor, a metal plate on the ground.

When you stand on the plate, nothing seems to happen, although there is a noise as you step on it and then off it. The drum can be lifted, and remains in place after you let go of it; but to do so you will have to put the slate on the ground. If you now go back and stand on the metal plate, the drum will fall, but the podium will rise, taking some 10 seconds to reach its full extent; when you step off the plate, the podium will fall. Lift the drum

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and stand on the plate again, but this time step off the plate before podium has risen fully; it will immediately start to fall.

Clearly another pressure pad problem, and again the solution lies with leaving the tablet on the plate and summoning the Bahro. Unlike Tahgira, however, mere weight will not do the trick; and unlike Noloben, you need pressure to be applied to the pad continuously for at least 10 seconds. If you don't have the slate with you, you'll have to collect the slate first.



The only glyph which will work - which will get a Bahro to stand still for long enough - is the glyph for "sing". Draw it on the slate, then stand on the metal plate, facing the podium, and drop the slate on the ground. Doing so will drop the slate in front of the metal plate, so that when a Bahro appears, it will be standing on the metal plate. If you drop the slate while facing the wall at the end of the corridor, it will be the

slate that is on top of the metal plate, not the Bahro. Then go to the drum and lift it - no Bahro will appear until you have stepped away from the drum and onto the podium (this is easiest to do in realtime mode - 3 on the keyboard - as it is too easy to be catapulted to the junction at the end of the corridor otherwise). When one does, you will find yourself lifted to the next level while it sings; step off the podium quickly when you reach the top, as it will fall again shortly after.

Looking around will quickly reveal that you now find yourself in a maze, with four corridors leading off the central area, and each forking after a short distance. However, at each junction there is a different coloured light. Remembering the piece of paper you found on the table not long before, the correct path must be red, red, green, blue. From this central area there are two red lights visible, one down a long corridor, the other down a short one. If you follow the short one you will find that although a second red light is visible at the first junction, upon reaching it you will be given a

choice between yellow and blue, so head back to the centre and take the longer corridor. Press the red light when you reach it. Then turn to the second red light and press it; then right again to the green light and press it; then left to the blue light. When you press the blue light, the wall will swing outwards, allowing you to step onto a beach. You must step out immediately, or the door will close, and you will have to return to the first red button and enter the sequence again.

Fourth Pedestal

Once outside, to your right you will see the fourth pedestal; note the glyph down - which clearly symbolises the maze you have just passed through - then link back to the first pedestal (where the Bahro took the slate after singing) and mark the glyph on the slate. Then return to the fourth pedestal using the newly-illuminated glyph.



Now walk out to the beach. To the left you will be able to see a short pier, a wrecked boat, and a beacon of some kind (perhaps a totem pole?), which should be familiar from one of the paintings you saw earlier. As you walk towards the pier, Esher will appear. Somewhat more calm than he has recently been, he will congratulate you once more, and tell you came via 'the way of the

Kresh... the natives who travelled here to subdue the creatures for us.' He wonders if, since the Fall of D'ni, they have returned to their barbaric ways. Then he becomes a more shrill, pouring scorn on the idea that the outsiders who destroyed D'ni can rebuild it.

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There is nothing else at the pier, so head right along the beach. Shortly you will come to a wooden hut, presumably made by the Kresh. To the right of the hut there is some kind of balancing mechanism, composed of rocks of different sizes.

Walk past the hut and on to the beach, then around the furthest of the large rocks. At the back of the largest rock, clearly attached to the balancing mechanism, is a wooden door, weighted down by three boulders, two medium sized, and one small. Returning to the hut, you'll be able to see that the door at the other end is similarly weighted.



The boulders attached to the mechanism are in three sizes: at either end is a large boulder, followed by a small boulder, and in the middle are three medium sized boulders. It would be difficult to create a 50-50 balance with that setup, but luckily you don't have to: the doors are suspended different lengths from the scale arm, and so you will need slightly more weight on the left - the door with the shorter distance - than on the right. All that you can do now is experiment a little.

Pulling the handle next to each boulder will lift it; the best place to start would be to lift one large boulder, one medium boulder, and one small boulder, leaving one large, two medium and one small on the ground. The right hand door will also stay on the ground. Notice that it doesn't actually matter which of the large boulders you lift from the ground, since the mechanism is set to register how many boulders are elevated, and how many not, rather than on which side they are.



So having lifted three boulders of different sizes, experiment with the remaining ones. If you lift one of the other medium boulders, the door on the right will rise, but the one on the left will fall; if you go back behind the rocks you will find the tunnel that was previously hidden by the door, but the other end is now blocked!

Return to the boulders and lower one of the medium sized ones; the right door falls back to the ground. If you now lift the second small boulder, the right door will lift again, but not as far, meaning that the left door also does not fall as far, and will not block the exit of the tunnel. To summarise, the correct solution is to raise one large boulder, one medium boulder, and two small ones; it doesn't matter which.



When you climb the tunnel you will find yourself on a wooden platform; to your right you will see a window which looks out to sea. You should recognise the shape of the window: it is the same as the glyph for the slate of this Age. The only thing you can see through the window is a flag pole and a small island in the distance; you can just about make out some kind of a symbol on the flag, but it isn't clear enough.



That's easy to solve: just go back to the pedestal and write the wind glyph again, leaving the slate for the Bahro. The return to the window, remembering to pick up the slate on the way; now that the wind has been summoned, you are able to see what is written on the flag, although the sand which has been whipped up still makes it difficult to see. Notice that the glyph seems to represent a Laki, and that there are two 'fins' or

'flippers' on the right of the glyph. Check in the Slate Guide if you're not sure whether you've drawn it correctly.

Keep Pedestal

Go back down to the beach and write the glyph on the pedestal, linking back to the first pedestal, and from there on to the Keep. Esher will be waiting for you. He tells you that very soon you will hold great power in your hands. He also reminds you to not to give the tablet to Yeesha, even though she may beckon for it, but instead to take it to Myst Island, where Yeesha will not follow; he will wait for you there.



When he leaves, you should enter the sphere and touch the final slate; as before, it will become corporeal, and you will immediately link back to K'veer.

Endgame 1: K'veer / Myst Island

You will find that you have linked directly into K'veer, outside the sphere; you have now reached the endgame; and should save now if you wish to see all the possible endings. There are, in essence, four endings:

1. Give the tablet to Yeesha
2. Go to Myst Island without the tablet
3. Go to Myst Island with the tablet
4. Do something else (I'm not saying what just yet! - see if you can figure it out before we get there!)

Actually, 1 and 2 double up - you can do 1 and then 2, or just 2 on its own. We will look at them in the order above.

Option 1: Give the tablet to Yeesha

Turn around and enter the sphere, then pick up the tablet. As you turn to leave, you will see that Yeesha has appeared and is waiting for you. She will neither say nor do anything until you approach; even then she will simply make a gesture with her hands.





If you now give her the tablet, she will sag visibly, and walk away from you silently, turning back only to shake her head; then she will link away. The tablet will back in its original place in the pedestal, having returned to its former ethereal slate; it no longer responds to your touch. The other slates have disappeared, as have the glyphs on the pedestals which allowed you to link to the Ages.

You now have only two choices: use the linking book to go to Myst Island without the tablet, and face Esher's understandable disappointment; or to shun the island and remain trapped in K'veer, alone.

Option 2: Go to Myst Island without the tablet

There are logically two ways of going to Myst Island without the tablet: either you gave the tablet to Yeesha, and then used the linking book; or you didn't pick the tablet up in the first place, and go to the island anyway, presumably to confront Esher. That is, I suppose, one way of giving the tablet to neither.

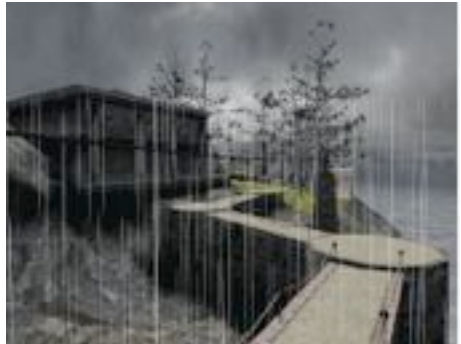


The book, you may remember, lay on a table in the room you found yourself in when you first appeared in K'veer. Go back there and open the book; you will immediately see from the Gateway Image that the ship in the dock has capsized, and that it is pouring with rain. A far from welcoming sight.



When you arrive, you will find that the rest of the island is in no better shape than the capsized ship; the grass is overgrown, columns stand askew, the buildings seem run down. As you explore, you will find Esher in front of the library; as expected, he doesn't seem pleased.

Why didn't you trust me? he asks you. Yes, the tablet has slipped through Yeesha's hands, but now it is wasted. And you are doomed to remain on Myst Island, since there is no way to leave. And with that, he links away, leaving you standing alone in the rain.



Nothing works on the island; the library has been destroyed, the linking books gone. Esher was right: there is no way out. You are here to stay. Your game is over.

Option 3: Go to Myst Island with the tablet

As in 2 (above) go to the linking book in the first room, but this time take the tablet with you. Yeesha will not try to stop you; indeed, she will not even register your presence unless you approach her directly. The same dreary scene of rain and dilapidation will greet you as you link to the island, but Esher will not be waiting for you in front of the library; he is nowhere to be found on the



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island. Inside the library, however, is a metal pedestal, obviously designed to hold the tablet now in your hands.



As you place the tablet on the pedestal, Esher will appear. He seems at first to not believe that the tablet is real: that it might slip out of his grasp as it did before. Well done, he says to you. And then his tone changes. Your feeble mind to not comprehend the full power of the tablet, so it is only right that it should come to a true master: he himself. As a reward for your help in bringing him the tablet, Esher magnanimously

gives you Myst Island, run down and barren as it is. As he shrieks with laughter at your folly and his success, he links away, leaving you alone on the island.

The tablet is still there, but you cannot touch it; there is only the rain outside, beating down on the roof, and your solitude. Your game is over.

Option 4: Do something else

So you can't give the tablet you Yeesha, and you can't give the tablet to Esher. So what else can you do? If you're still not sure, consider these questions:

1. Who else could you give it to?
2. Who have you been giving things to for the whole game?
3. And how have you given these things?

When you think you know the answer - if you didn't know it already - turn to the next page to proceed to the successful solution of the game.

Endgame 2: K'veer / Releeshahn

The correct solution is, of course, to give the tablet to the Bahro by dropping it on the floor and letting them pick it up.

Go into the sphere and collect the tablet, then exit, and drop the tablet on the floor in exactly the same way that you would a slate (note that you must be in K'veer to do this: if you decided to check out Myst Island first, you'll have no choice but to give



the tablet to Esher, or leave it lying around in the undergrowth). Then step away from it; something large and dark will cover your vision, and moments later you will be stood before Yeesha. She will sag and fall to her knees.

She has been set free, she says. The slavery of the Bahro is over, and the burden of her family lifted.

Something dark will cover your eyes again, and when it is removed you will find yourself in a large courtyard, Atrus stood before you. Then Yeesha will appear, and run to embrace her father.



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Then Atrus will approach you and thank you for all you have done, mistaking you for his 'old friend' - the Stranger - who helped so many times before.

As Yeesha and Atrus turn to leave, a couple of Bahro will appear, holding Esher between them.



When he sees you spits, calling you a lump of filth. He insists that he is the Grower, and that you are a fool for releasing the slaves as masters, instead of giving him the power he needed. Yeesha silences him, and tells the Bahro to do with him as they see fit: treat him as one of the Least should be treated - as former slaves, they should treat him as they would wish slaves to be treated. We never find out what happens, but the official Myst V Guide suggests that it is probably forgiving; for Esher, I'm sure, forgiveness would be a torment beyond description.



Then Yeesha approaches you and offers her thanks, saying that the restoration of D'ni will not be built on oppression; that kingdoms are only as strong as the hearts of their people, and that your heart has earned you a place in this kingdom.

As she turns to leave, the remaining Bahro sprouts wings and flies up to into the sky.

You are gently lifted up in its claws, and see Releeshahn spread before you.

Esher's vain attempt to recreate the past in his own image has failed; you have freed both Yeehsa and the Bahro, and found a new home. The game is over, and the credits roll.

* * *



I hope you enjoyed this walkthrough and found it helpful. If you have any suggestions about how it could be improved, or if you found any of the passages unclear, please let me know. And if this was your first *Myst* game, I hope it has whetted your appetite for more!

Myst V Review

Introduction

Myst V: End of Ages is the third part of the five-part saga to be produced entirely by Cyan, following *Myst* and *Riven: The Sequel To Myst*. Both *Myst III: Exile* and *Myst IV: Revelation* were produced by outsiders, Presto Studios and Ubisoft respectively. And then there is *realMyst*, also produced by Cyan: a realtime implementation of *Myst*, and in many ways the true precursor of *Myst V: End of Ages*. Cyan also released the spinoff *Uru: Ages beyond Myst*, but unfortunately I haven't been able to play that yet, as it's only available for Windows.

Both *Myst* and *Riven: The Sequel To Myst* use simple slideshow point-and-click environments and have basically distinct plots: although the plot of *Riven: The Sequel To Myst* follows on from where *Myst* left off, it barely touches upon that of the first game - namely, the betrayal of Atrus's sons, Sirrus and Achenar. In contrast, both *Myst III: Exile* and *Myst IV: Revelation* use the betrayal as the centre of their own stories. In *Myst III: Exile* we have to confront its effects, embodied in the figure of Saavedro; and in *Myst IV: Revelation* we return (somewhat inconsistently with the first two games), to the Prison Ages in which the brothers were trapped at the end of *Myst*: we have to judge whether they have reformed or not, as well as learn more of the back story of the first game, and what was originally planned by the brothers, had they not been entrapped. All four games feature (increasingly) photorealistic point-and-click environments, the first two as slideshows and the second two as (almost) 360° locations.

realMyst and *Myst V: End of Ages* both reject photorealism in favour of realtime environments in which the player has access to every nook and cranny, and can indeed, should he or she choose, actually run through the entire game. *Myst V: End of Ages* in fact offers three options: a classic slideshow, something resembling the 360° locations of *Myst III: Exile* and *Myst IV: Revelation*, and true realtime.

Myst V: End of Ages also makes almost no reference to the story of the errant brothers, and Atrus takes no part in the game except for the voiceover of the introduction and a brief appearance during the (successful) conclusion of the game. All game interaction with people is fully animated rather than blue-screen film, except, I think, for the imager speeches of Yeesha we find in the Great Shaft. Thus the feel of the game is much closer to *realMyst* than to, say, *Myst IV: Revelation*. Indeed, at the end of the game, you may end up visiting a decaying Myst Island which looks like it was based on the *realMyst* rendition, strengthening the connection between the two games even more.

Exploration

The fifth instalment of the *Myst* saga feels in many ways like an attempt to get back to roots, and I think this is part of the problem. It includes no less than nine Ages (five fully expanded, three minor, and one epilogue) - in comparison, *Myst IV: Revelation* had only four. The original game had six (five fully expanded), and *realMyst* added another 'bonus' level. Nine levels; that's a lot to explore, but unfortunately, exploration has come at the expense of the individual character of the Ages, and of the puzzles.

The shift of focus from puzzle to exploration is one which Rand Miller consciously wanted, as anyone who has read the interview in the official *Myst V* guide will know. In general, I would be what he calls an 'achiever' - someone interested in the puzzles, rather than simply exploring a Age - although I'm not exclusively interested in the puzzles, as I hope this review will show. The aim behind *Myst V: End of Ages* was to make it appeal to a wider audience than simply the 'achievers', and, given the complexity of, say, Sirrus's Age of Spire in *Myst IV: Revelation*, it's easy to sympathise. However, the end result is sometimes one of quantity, not quality.

And this is never more clear than in the case of the Age of Direbo.

Direbo

In *Myst V: End of Ages* we visit the most pointless Age to be found in any *Myst* game: Direbo. To reach Direbo, the player has to descend the shaft to D'ni (the Great Shaft); at each of four 'resting places' there is a linking book to Direbo. Direbo itself is a pleasant-looking evening Age consisting of four islands. On each island is a linking book (to the relevant 'resting place' of the shaft; a pedestal which can be used to access one of the four main Ages; and two bridges to other islands. These bridges have gates at both ends which can only be opened from the island they lead to.

The sole function of Direbo is to make the distance between the pedestals shorter. To begin with, the player has to climb down the shaft to access each island of Direbo; once the bridge gates have been opened, there is no need to return to the shaft, and it is easy to leave one Age and to enter another simply by returning to Direbo and crossing a bridge.

But this is eye-candy for explorers, nothing more, and the ease with which Direbo could have been left out of *Myst V: End of Ages* makes this clear. Instead of linking books at each 'resting place', we could have a pedestal; or, alternatively, the linking book at each level takes us to one of the Ages, where we find the pedestal close by. No more need for Direbo. Its function is not similar to that of J'nanin, the lesson Age of *Myst III: Exile*, which presents us with puzzles to be completed before the other Ages can be accessed - the Great Shaft fulfils that role. It simply makes moving between the Ages a little easier, as if taking a lift up to the previous 'resting place' wasn't easy enough. And if you approach each Age separately, completing one before progressing to the next, it is utterly superfluous. Goes Nowhere, Does Nothing.

Even the very idea of Direbo is ultimately incoherent. Here is a passage from the official *Myst V* guide which explains the purpose of Direbo:

An Age for Resting: Direbo was a world meant to serve as a rest Age for the D'ni during their journey to the surface. Rather than hole up in carved niches along the way, the D'ni could link to this lush, green, peaceful Age and find rest and relaxation.

But Direbo completely negates the need for that journey to the surface. Just link there from somewhere - anywhere - and go to the first island, and can use the linking book to get to the top of the Great Shaft. If the gates on the bridges are locked, you need only get your feet wet. Why would anyone spend months building the the Great Shaft shaft when a few well-placed linking books to Direbo would do the trick?

None of which is to say that it it doesn't look nice: it does. But the virtue of the *Myst* games has always been to immerse the player in the environment; and the feeling that the particular environment you are in is pointless, simply an extra click between where you came from and where you want to go, really does nothing to immerse the player.

Direbo is the least impressive - in the sense of creating an impression - Age in the entire *Myst* saga. It's not the worst - that honour goes to *Myst IV: Revelation*'s Serenia, with it's do-gooding new-age women and utterly preposterous spirit world. But whereas I wish I could forget Serenia (it totally ruined my appreciation of *Myst IV: Revelation*), Direbo is simply the most forgettable Age anywhere in the series.

Nooks and Crannies

Another of the best aspects of the series has been the attention to seemingly trivial detail - things which don't necessarily aid the task in hand, but perhaps help to provide the player with a view of the bigger picture, background details, or simply a believable environment. Go to bedrooms on Stoneship and you can riffle through the drawers of the cupboards; you can scan the paintings in Atrus's study in Tomahna and look at the bottles on his shelves; or you can examine Gehn's laboratory on Boiler Island in Riven. In *Myst IV: Revelation*, we are even able to tap on things and hear what they sound like - ear-candy (? - sounds icky) maybe, but all contributing to a more immersive world. The most significant innovation in *Myst IV: Revelation* - Yeesha's crystal, which allowed us to catch snatches of speech or glimpses of events associated with a particular place - often provided information which had nothing to do with the story as such, but certainly helped to bring the world alive.

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In *Myst V: End of Ages*, all that is gone. It's not that I miss the finger-tapping of *Myst IV: Revelation*, but almost everything is reduced to function. Let me give an example. When you arrive in Laki'ahn, you are greeted by a large building in front to you; move towards it, and Esher appears, informing you that the door is locked, but there is a backdoor which can be opened. 'Ah-ha,' you think, 'the main task here must be to get inside this building.' And indeed it takes some time to get inside, with several decent puzzles in the way. However, actually gaining entry to the building is something of an anticlimax - you only need to enter the building at all for a single piece of paper which provides you with the solution to the next-but-one puzzle, and that's it. There are three rooms inside the building: chairs, tables, benches, beds, paintings and jewels; and the only thing to find anywhere is a that one piece of paper lying on one of the tables. There is nothing to press, nothing to look through, no diary to be read with the solution tucked in at the end, nothing. You don't stumble across the important piece of paper, because it's the only thing in the entire building. Again, compare this with the bedrooms or the throne rooms in *Myst* (*realMyst* really, as the closest precursor of *Myst V: End of Ages*). In the bedrooms there is so much to examine, so much that may or may not be a clue, and so much that gives you an insight into the mind of the person who slept there. In the building in Laki'ahn, you go in, pick up the piece of paper, possibly cast a cursory glance at a couple of paintings, and leave - because there is nothing else to do.

Compare, for example, Esher's laboratory on Noloben with either of Gehn's in *Riven: The Sequel To Myst* - you climb the stairs, reach the raised platform, and climb on top of the cage. That's it. There is the occasional device, but there is nothing to touch (a couple of pieces of paper, it's true), nothing to absorb. Even those glyphs on the wall which (probably) helped you gain access to the lab are not actually there to be understood (compare that with the system of numerals in *Riven: The Sequel To Myst* - and see also my Noloben Glyphs and D'ni Numerals page).

With *Myst V: End of Ages* there is a kind of paradox - there is this realtime environment which enables the player to go everywhere and investigate all the nooks and crannies he or she can find; but at the same time, there is

less to find, less to do, and less to see. And that is true of every Age in the game. None of the Ages feel like they were at any time inhabited, even though all of them were supposed to have been. The Prison Age of Tahgira has generators and a single room, big enough to seat perhaps four people. Esher tells us of the triumph and ingenuity of the D'ni, making even the most inhospitable Age inhabitable; but all we see of is some standing room in a hut and a couple of graves. The blandness of Direbo is obviously no exception.

Puzzle Quality

It took me less than 18 hours to play through *Myst V: End of Ages*, with only a couple of glances at the official *Myst V* guide. I'll explain when:

- When I was pretty certain that what I was drawing on a slate was right - but couldn't understand what I was doing wrong. Usually the guide confirmed that I was indeed drawing it correctly, so I drew it again and it worked (!)
- When I was truly confused - like having to draw the 'sing' glyph on the slate in Laki'ahn - no duh!
- And with the windmill puzzle on Laki'ahn, the difficulty of which was exacerbated by the jumpiness of the realtime engine, meaning I could barely see what I was doing, and it took 20 seconds to actually be able to hover the cursor over a button to click on it (and my computer - a 1.2 GHz iBook with 1.25 GB of RAM - is above the minimum requirements) - so I said 'Stuff this' and cheated.

18 hours is really short for any of the *Myst* games. I know that we checked the in-game hints in *Myst IV: Revelation* a couple of times (in Spire, for example) and it still took about twice as long.

One of the reasons for that is the lack of real nooks and crannies, as I've already explained. With less to do, and less to absorb, you do it quicker,

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even though there are more Ages. But the Ages themselves were too simple.

Actually, that's not quite fair: Laki'ahn and Todelmer are proper D'ni Ages, with plenty of puzzles of varying difficulty. But the Great Shaft, which connects the main Ages, is a bit short on puzzles to say the least, and both Tahgira and Noloben are basically one-puzzle Ages.

Take Noloben. If you played the demo, you'll know that it ends when you enter Esher's laboratory. Well, there isn't much more. You climb up the steps, meet a monologging Esher, and continue climbing. Two more tasks confront you:

- How do you get the ladder down?
- How can you keep the pressure point activated?

Neither is particularly difficult; the first because there is a simple diagram in the lab, the second, because there are so few options, and because the same basic device is used in various ways in three of the ages anyway.. So basically, the most difficult thing in Noloben is gaining access to the lab - which is possible without using the rain manipulation glyph getting the bowls under the canopied area to fill up with water and reflect the correct glyphs, but by a simple process of elimination and a lot of walking. Noloben has to count as the simplest Age ever: it took me about two hours all told - for an entire Age! That's got to be too small: if the aim is to immerse the player, then Noloben shares in Direbo's difficulties - that if there is no need to spend time there, no-one is going to end up immersing themselves in that Age, because the time spent there is too fleeting.

(Actually, I've discovered the best way to spend your time in Noloben: its beaches are the ideal place for reading Yeesha's journals.)

Tahgira's problems, however, deserve their own section.

Tahgira

Tahgira is even worse than Noloben, even though it took me a bit longer to complete. There is only one real puzzle there, and maybe a couple of subsidiaries which are barely worth mentioning. Even Noloben is more complex. It has to count as the weakest Age in the *Myst* saga (Direbo is the most forgettable, and Serenia is the worst, but even Serenia had some decent puzzles).

You arrive and can't get out of the cavern. But on the ice you see the design of a slate. So you drop the slate, and a Bahro appears to collect it, and the ice begins to crack. You pick up the slate, which the Bahro had returned to the pedestal, stand on the crack, and the ice gives way completely. This doesn't really count as a puzzle as far as I'm concerned, because, frankly, it's too obvious. I heard the ice cracking under me and thought 'Ah-ha - I need something heavy!' - then I look down and there's the shape of a slate etched onto the ice at exactly the right place. Way too obvious.

Then you proceed outside, have to drop the slate to climb up the ladder, and you come to the main - indeed only - task. Etched on a wall is a glyph which instructs the Bahro to make steam when drawn on a slate. Then you have to turn on the six generators (right=on / left=off, so again not exactly difficult) and adjust the six levers (left / off / right) so that the energy pumps through the pipes in the lake in the right way. Not overly complex; what took me the most time was realising that I could walk over the pipes when they were hot. The official *Myst V* guide explained that this was possible because the micro-organisms in this Age are attracted to heat and come so close together that you can walk over them, and indeed, even eat them! Me, I found out by accident that I could walk over them, and would have really liked some decent clue somewhere in the Age itself that this is the case, rather than reading about it after the fact in the guide. Anyway, so much for the main task.

On the other side of the lake, you find that the final pedestal - in the Keep, as it's known - breaks away from the ice when you approach, to prevent you entering. You'll have to get the Bahro to take the slate there and then link to the Keep from the first pedestal. And how do you find out what the

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glyph is? No, no puzzle - you squint at the screen, maybe even increase the resolution of your monitor, and try to make out what glyph is written on the pedestal. And again I'm sorry, but that's lame. I spent a while wandering around the area trying to find a clue, because that's what you do in *Myst* games. If you can't make it out clearly - and you couldn't in this case - it's because you have to do something else to make it clear. Not because you have to squint and experiment until you happen to get it right. For example, the flag at the end of Laki'ahn - you can't see the glyph clearly until the wind is blowing. But in Tahgira, this squinting is the approved method, according to the official *Myst V* guide. Not good.

I appreciate that Tahgira is meant to be the first Age that a player will visit - being accessed from the top-most 'resting place' of the Great Shaft - and so is perhaps a little more introductory - but even that goes against the grain of *Myst* games. There has never really been an introductory Age before - introductory tasks, yes, but Ages, no. There have always been 'hub' Ages, which may introduce you to the ideas found in the other Ages (see Structural Problems in *Myst V*), but there has never been an Age specifically designed to 'get the player into their stride'. So why start including them with the fifth game in the series? Apart from anything else, the whole thing is a little too linear: while Tahgira is introductory, anyone who decides to explore Laki'ahn first will see a side of Esher that shouldn't be revealed until much later in the game.

And yes, there have been one-puzzle Ages before: Selenetic from *Myst*, for example. But look more closely and Selenetic doesn't really qualify. It actually involves four tasks:

1. Turn on the electricity on *Myst* island, which powers up the spaceship;
2. Inside the spaceship, complete the music puzzle;
3. On Selenetic, complete the sound-based puzzle;
4. To leave, navigate the maze by listening carefully to the the noises at each location.

Also note that the maze in stage 4. is a real maze, unlike the one is Laki'ahn; there is no way that a process of elimination could take you through this one, and it's almost impossible to map (I've never seen one on the net). The maze is littered with the bodies of people who failed to find the exit (okay, maybe not ;-). But still, although Selenetic has only one task, it is hard to get to and mind-bogglingly difficult to leave. Tahgira is neither; and the only difficult thing is working out that heating the pipes allows you to walk over water, and that yes, you do have to squint. And how counter-intuitive is that? In a series of games which have always prided themselves on the requirement that the player should 'just imagine he or she there', Tahgira falls well below the mark.

Homogeneity

Another difficulty I have is that the Ages are not varied enough. To begin with, they are too similar to each other, or to Ages which went before. So Tahgira resembles Rime (the 'bonus' Age of *realMyst*), and Todelmer has a certain resemblance to Spire. But that may be subjective: more problematic is my impression that too often the puzzles in each Age are simply not integrated into the environment overly well, and so do not help to lend the Age a distinctive character. Again, in the *Myst* saga we are used to the puzzles having a specific relation to the Age - *Myst III: Exile* being the obvious example, with each Age embodying different principles of the Art of Writing linking books - nature, mechanical systems, and balance. But the other games are generally no different, if perhaps less schematised. I've already mentioned Selenetic, which is based on sound, from the first game; Spire is based on electricity and magnetism; and Haven is based around a natural environment to which Achenar has had to adapt, and the puzzles reflect that. The major exception is *Riven: The Sequel To Myst*, which is (basically) a single Age of separate islands; but even there, the puzzles related to the rebel Moiety are designed in such a way that it is plausible that Gehn would not be able to solve them, because he would not even be able to see the clues. They are there right before his eyes, but his way of looking at the world would prevent him from seeing them.

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But in *Myst V: End of Ages*, the link between the puzzle and the Age is all too often a casual one. The clearest examples of this are Noloben and Tahgira, mainly because of the limited number of puzzles in each Age. Turning on the heating (Tahgira) was something we have had to do many times before, and with more intuitive results (Rime, for example, where the heating defrosts the ice which has frozen the door shut). And blocked tunnels are something that could occur anywhere.

In the case of Todelmer, the situation is more complex, and it is in the puzzles themselves that it most resembles *Myst IV: Revelation's* Spire. In both Ages, the electricity has to be turned on; in both, a crucial objective is to react a similar tower/column in the distance; in both, having reached that tower, looking back at the first tower will show you something that about it that was right under your nose, but that you couldn't see before.

Maybe it's just me, but I sometimes felt as if I'd been here before, and that none of the Ages in *Myst V: End of Ages* were unique enough. Nevertheless, I enjoyed Todelmer, and Laki'ahn had a decent go at Age/puzzle integration with the holding pens, the arena, and so on.

However, the main problem, as far as homogeneity is concerned, is the slates.

Slates

The slates are the much-trumpeted innovation in *Myst V: End of Ages* which allow players to have a hand in the Art of Writing - by drawing glyphs on them which instruct the Bahro to manipulate the environment in some way. And they're quite fun - until it comes to the puzzles.

For a start, there is only one glyph in each Age which will instruct the Bahro to manipulate the environment - rain in Noloben, steam in Tahgira, wind in Laki'ahn, and time in Todelmer. The relevant glyphs are not difficult to find - they are usually etched on a prominent rock face or something similar. And every Age has a task in which the glyph has to be used for a puzzle to be completed - Laki'ahn even has two. And that is one of the

problems. All of the four main Ages are based upon the same game dynamics, namely writing the Age's manipulation glyph on the slate to complete a task (and remember, as I've already pointed out, Tahgira and Noloben only really have one task). In Tahgira and Laki'ahn, you actually have to do this several times, because you have to complete the puzzle in question while this environmental manipulation is active - it lasts for 90 seconds, and if you don't finish the puzzle in that time you have to start the steam rising or the wind blowing all over again. This becomes more than a little tedious after a while. I can understand the aim of transporting each slate to the Keep in order to free the final tablet - but when every Age basically requires you to manipulate the slates in the same way, it strips individuality from the Ages and their puzzles. You're just waiting for the puzzle which I have to use the glyph for - and that level of predictability is also uncommon to the Myst saga.

This level of predictability might have reduced if early on in the game you were given a list of glyphs which could be used on the slates - and in each Age you have to figure out which is the most appropriate for the task in hand. Remember, for example, Saavedro's bedroom-cum-study in J'nanim, which sets the player up with crucial information for the Ages which he or she will visit. That would remove the 'here's the glyph, when do I use it?' predictability, but the overall problem of puzzles having to be solved by glyphs on slates would still remain - although perhaps that would be alleviated if you didn't have the feeling that everything was being handed to you on a plate.

Furthermore, in each of the four main Ages there are four or five pedestals, and the aim is to move the slate from A to B to C to D (to E) in every Age. Once more, this tends to make the mechanics of each Age a little too similar. Of course, in the previous games, you were principally looking for the linking book out of each Age (though not in *Myst IV: Revelation*, interestingly), so the ultimate goal was frequently the same; but in *Myst V: End of Ages* the actual steps of the journey too often similar. Again and again the task is, 'how do I find out the glyph on that pedestal?' Most tasks lead to that same goal, and after over a dozen pedestals, they all start to look the same.

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I've also read, on several discussion groups, of people accidentally drawing the correct glyph required to complete an Age well before it was discovered in game play - and even of someone reaching the Keep in Todelmer by drawing a smile on the slate. The number of times I've read of someone drawing a random pattern and being transported to a illegitimate pedestal, and then reverting to a saved game so they get to the pedestal legitimately, is simply untrue. Any game which has such a flawed and imprecise mechanism built into can't be on the right track.

The Pedestal-To-Pedestal mechanic, coupled with the Task Which Uses The Manipulation Glyph mechanic, definitely weakens the puzzles and tasks of *Myst V: End of Ages*. And on top of which, in both Nolothen and Laki'ahn we are confronted a pressure-pad puzzle: how can I exert pressure over there when I need to stand over here? The solution entails leaving the slate on the pad for the Bahro to pick up - the only difference is that you need to draw a different glyph on the pedestal each time - 'snake' and 'sing' respectively. And come to think of it, the opening puzzle in Tahgira - with the cracking ice - also rests on the same 'pressure' principle. But the point is: the same type of puzzle occurs in three of the four main Ages. To summarise:

- In every Age we have to transport the slate from one pedestal to the next, and to the next;
- In every Age there is at least one task which uses the Age's environmental manipulation glyph;
- In every age the goal is to get the slate to the Keep;
- In three out of four Ages there is a pressure pad puzzle.

And that is far too much repetition for my taste.

The Expendable Plot

Maybe I'm being a little uncharitable when I accuse *Myst V: End of Ages* of having an expendable plot. After all, the stated aim is to bring the saga to a conclusion; life has to move on, and the past should be left behind. This sentiment is nicely captured by the return to Myst island: you only actually do this if you fail in the story, and you find the island a desolate, broken place. It is time to move on. Needless to say, that isn't my problem with the plot.

The problem is the basic dynamic of 'who do you trust?' That same idea has been used in all of the Myst saga except for *Riven: The Sequel To Myst*: in that game, we know who the good guys are (Atrus, Catherine and the Moiey) and who the bad guys are (Gehn and his servants), but what we don't know is how to bring the bad guys to justice and the good guys to victory. All of the other games have been more ambiguous, and *Myst V: End of Ages* is no exception. The problem is that it doesn't work very well. Let's look at the other games one by one in order to put this criticism into perspective.

- In *Myst* and *realMyst*, we are introduced to the brothers Sirrus and Achenar for the first time, locked in their Prison Ages, and visible only through a great deal of static. They both spin us a story about being wrongfully imprisoned, about the other murdering their father, and so on. Although Sirrus is cold, and Achenar manic, their stories are essentially the same. The question is: 'who do you trust?' and by the end of the game, the answer should be: neither of them. There must be a third way. And there is: their father Atrus is still alive, and he knows what to do.
- In *Myst III: Exile*, the good guy / bad guy distinction is very clear at the start, but becomes less clear over the course of the game. Saavedro, who steals Atrus's new book for the D'ni, Releeshahn, has been gravely wronged by the two brothers, as well as by Atrus's negligence, and by the end of the game comes across as a much more sympathetic, if disturbed, figure. In contrast, the more we learn about Atrus, the dimmer our view of him becomes. He is (or was) full of bombast, pride, and naivety. So the answer to the question 'who do you trust?', though clear at the start, become much less clear as the game progresses, and the

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best solution to the game is to find a way to retrieve the stolen book, without persecuting Saavedro still more.

- In *Myst IV: Revelation*, we are again confronted with the two brothers, and so start off by not trusting either. Yeesha, their sister, has been kidnapped, and the question is, which of the brothers is responsible - or are they both? As we explore their Prison Ages and learn about how they spent their time when imprisoned, we should reach the conclusion that Sirrus has become consumed by the desire for revenge, while Achenar has learned to adapt to his environment and live in harmony with it, even taking on the role of a game-keeper to minimise the effects of his earlier destructive interference (and his diaries are, quite frankly, the only bearable reading in the whole saga, because, as my girlfriend pointed out, he has interesting observations). At the beginning, you trust neither, and by the end, you should trust Achenar.
- Finally, to *Myst V: End of Ages*. Here we are presented with a choice between an older and scared Yeesha, and Esher, a D'ni scholar. The structure is much the same as the original game: we start from (almost) nothing - an encounter with a strange and condescending Yeesha, and then an ironically cynical Esher, who both agree upon one thing: do not give the Bahro tablet to Yeesha. Esher's aim is to make you unsure of Yeesha's motives - that she has succumbed to the same kind of pride as her brothers - while convincing you of his own. At the end you are seemingly presented with a dilemma: who you give the tablet to? Yeesha or Esher? Who do you trust?

Like the original game, there has to be a third way - don't give the tablet to either. I tried to drop it off a balcony to destroy it, but ended up just putting it on the floor, and bringing about the correct solution. But the problem is that although Esher is an interestingly complex character, and I found his appearances throughout the game to be highlights, we were never going to trust him in the end. Will we trust Yeesha, who we rescued from the clutches of Sirrus and who is the main family character in *Uru: Ages beyond Myst* (I believe: no Windows), or some newcomer who becomes increasingly weird as the game progresses? Yeesha, obviously. But she doesn't want the tablet - so what do I do with it? And that is the point at

which the story fails. It was always inevitable, according to the rules of conventional narrative, that you would not trust Esher - and given the rather blatant (for my taste) hints in Laki'ahn, only a fool would do so at the end - but both Esher and Yeesha agree that you cannot give the tablet to Yeesha. You are pushed in the direction of finding another solution from very early on in the game, because it is clear which way it is going. Compare that with the indecision of *Myst*: A or B, A or B, A or B, I don't know, what did A say again, no, that's not enough evidence, A or B, no wait: could there be a C?

I mean to say that both *Myst* and *Myst V: End of Ages* follow the same dynamic of 'trust neither: find another way', but with *Myst* that realisation must come late in the game, whereas in *Myst V: End of Ages* it is almost presupposed from the outset. I remember the press release, talking about having to choose between Yeesha and the previously unknown Esher, and how someone would have to die: well, no-one dies in the game, and the moment I read the press-release, I had a fair idea of who I would be choosing. Now if Esher had been right, and Yeesha had indeed become as power-crazed as her brothers, that would have been interesting conclusion to the saga!

And it has to be said that I didn't have enough invested in either Yeesha, Esher or the Bahro. Yeesha we only meet at the start, and through twelve diaries scattered throughout the Great Shaft - which, though not as bad as Atrus's normal rambles (I was quite pleased to read Rand Miller say that, basically, Atrus was meant to be that way), were hardly stirring. Esher is quite fun, and increasingly unstable, but as I said, we were never going to sympathise with him very much. And as for the Bahro: well, I'm not convinced. They look kind of clumsy, not up to the standards of the animation of Yeesha, Esher or Atrus (who appears briefly in the finale), and at the end one of them sprouts wings; as I say, I'm not convinced.

By the way, speaking of Atrus, when he appears at the end he says something like 'thank you, old friend' - the same terms he has been using since, oh, *Myst III: Exile* at least. This is odd, as Yeesha had no idea who you were, and if you were the same 'old friend' - the Stranger - who rescued her when she was ten in *Myst IV: Revelation* - and who she knew

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well at that point - she would surely remember you in *Myst V: End of Ages*. This seeming inconsistency is explained away in the official *Myst V* guide with the observation that, well, poor Atrus, he's getting old. Whatever. But I'd like that in the game, thank you very much, not in the guide which I may or may not have bought. But I digress ;-)

As I said earlier, I'm perhaps being a little unfair when I talk of 'The Expendable Plot' - but it seemed like a good title! My point is rather that, of the five games in the saga, the story is perhaps the least effective of them all, because of the dynamics of the mystery to be solved, and is by far the most predictable of the series. At the end of *Myst IV: Revelation*, in contrast, my hand wavered for just a moment too long, because I still wasn't quite sure, and I lost the game through my indecision.

Summing Up

I don't mean to say that *Myst V: End of Ages* is a bad game; it isn't. There are many worthwhile aspects about it. The 3D graphics are good, and just like *realMyst*, I think it's a game that has been designed with the future in mind - on your average computer today, you won't see everything that the game is capable of, but in, say, three years, your average computer will be able to handle the demands, and those of us without high-end computers now will be better able to appreciate the work that went into the graphics on the game. It will, for the next couple of years, grow with computers, rather than being left behind by them, which is a good thing.

The CG character animation is also very good, if a bit jumpy at times, and when it works it is deeply impressive, particularly the work on the eyes. Again, I'm looking forward to re-playing the game again in a few years' time.

It is also very sensible of the demands of players, allowing simple slideshow play, 360° location play, and full realtime, and it is easy to switch between these via keyboard shortcuts (1,2, and 3 respectively), thus allowing you to adjust your style of movement according to what you are

trying to achieve at any given time. I've never seen such flexibility in a 3D game.

And of course, it allows all of us *Myst*-fans the opportunity to revisit our favourite alternative realities one more time, something never to be sneezed at.

But overall, I still feel underwhelmed. Not frustrated, as I felt at the end of *Myst IV: Revelation*, having been riled by the horribly twee women of Serenia, and, after apparently having completed the game, being forced to return to the intensely annoying spirit world (which even Peter Gabriel's usually immaculate tones could not make palatable) in order to complete one more bloody stupid task - no, on the completion of *Myst V: End of Ages*, I didn't feel that kind of frustration. But I do feel disappointed that it wasn't as good as it could have been; that Cyan's first foray, since *Riven: The Sequel To Myst*, into the franchise proper comes nowhere close to being as good as its other two offerings, nor even the two interim games by other companies, but made with Cyan's blessing.

The innovations it brings to the series are a mixed bag: slates, ultimately detrimental to gameplay; character animation and interaction, good; realtime 3D, not really an innovation, given its use in *realMyst*.

As I said way back at the start, my advice to buyers would be to try and get hold of one of the other games first. Though graphically impressive, *Myst V: End of Ages* isn't as breathtaking as *Myst IV: Revelation*; and if it's realtime 3D you want, *realMyst* is a far better game, as well as being true to the story, plot and idea of the absolute classic which is *Myst*.

Overall impressions of the Ages:

- K'veer - nice to finally explore a little, but nothing to interact with
- the Great Shaft - not difficult enough, with access to the other Ages too streamlined
- Direbo - the Most Forgettable Age ever
- Tahgira - the Lamest (and Most Counterintuitive) Age ever
- Todelmer - my favourite Age in the game
- Noloben - the Simplest Age ever
- Laki'ahn - good Age/puzzle integration, but too blatant in its message
- Myst Island - interesting to revisit in its woeful dilapidation
- Releeshahn - nice epilogue sequence

Review Supplement: Structural Problems in Myst V

Foreword: This essay developed as a supplement to my Myst V Review, and was written about a week later (on 29 September 2005). If I'd written it at the same time as the main text, it would undoubtedly have come out differently, as it would have needed to be integrated into the overall structure. Anyway, I decided to post it as a separate essay - an after-word of sorts - rather than attempting to integrate it into the original review, threatening the integrity of a piece of writing that I'm currently quite happy with. It's over 2,000 words long, bringing the total length of the review to around 9,500 words.

As I have already mentioned in *Myst V Review: Tahgira, Myst V: End of Ages* includes what seems to be an introductory Age - Tahgira, and also an Age which ought to be played last - Laki'ahn. This is not such an obvious a problem until we consider the place of these Ages in the overall structure of exploration and narrative in the game, and the anomalies that it creates.

It should first of all be pointed out that *Myst* games often share the same basic structure. There is a 'starting' Age: this may simply be somewhere that you learn of your the quest, such as in *Riven: The Sequel To Myst*, or it may also form the 'hub' Age, as in *Myst IV: Revelation*. In the list below, I haven't given *Myst* a 'start' Age, as you have no idea what you're doing there when you arrive! Then there is the 'hub' Age, which must be explored, and its puzzles solved, in order to to access the next set of Ages. The important thing is that it is only from this 'hub' Age that you are able to visit the other Ages. After that there are the 'free exploration' Ages: having solved the relevant puzzles in the 'hub' age, these Ages can be explored in any order; and the only exit from these Ages is back to the 'hub' Age (getting back is indeed often the short-term goal). Finally come the 'conditional exploration' Ages: Ages which can only be explored on the condition that many (often all) of the 'free exploration' ages have been explored. Serenia is an interesting example of this: you can first visit the Age when either Haven or Spire have been completed, but it is impossible to complete the Age until both have been completed. Bearing these terms

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in mind, here is a simple breakdown of the structure of the five *Myst* games to date.

I. *Myst / realMyst*

- A. Hub: Myst Island
- B. Free Exploration: Channelwood, Mechanical Age, Selenetic, Stoneship
- C. Conditional Exploration: K'veer (kind of), Rime (*realMyst*)

II. *Riven: The Sequel To Myst*

- A. Start: K'veer (in the Age of D'ni)
- B. Free Exploration: The Islands of Riven
- C. Conditional Exploration: Age 233, Tay; Catherine's Prison Island

III. *Myst III: Exile*

- A. Start: Tomahna
- B. Hub: J'nanin
- C. Free Exploration: Amateria, Edanna, Voltaic
- D. Conditional Exploration: Narayan

IV. *Myst IV: Revelation*

- A. Start: Tomahna
- B. Hub: Tomahna
- C. Free Exploration: Haven, Spire

D. Conditional Exploration: Serenia

V. *Myst V: End of Ages*

A. Start: K'veer (in the Age of D'ni)

B. Hub: the Great Shaft, Direbo

C. Free Exploration: Laki'ahn, Noloben, Tahgira, Todelmer

D. Conditional Exploration: Myst Island, Releeshahn (kind of)

In relation to my criticism of Direbo in *Myst V Review*:. Direbo, its problems mostly stem from it being little more than an auxiliary 'hub' age: it offers nothing that the Great Shaft does not also offer, and indeed can only be reached when the various puzzles at each stage of the Great Shaft have been solved. Hence, the Age, in its superfluity, contributes to the overall structural problems of *Myst V: End of Ages*.

Anyway, back to Tahgira. The principal difficulty with it being an introductory Age is that it is one of the 'free exploration' Ages. It is more than possible that a player will attempt to complete the whole of the 'hub' Age, - the Great Shaft, in this case - before choosing which Age to visit next. Certainly, I have proceeded in this manner in all of the games which have 'hub' Ages except *Myst*. Reaching the bottom of the Great Shaft is not even overly difficult. And once you have reached the bottom, returning to the very top is tedious (which is what Direbo is for, I suppose). So it is even likely that the first 'free exploration' Age a player will visit will not actually be Tahgira. An introductory Age should be one that you are obliged to visit first - by the stage in the game where you have the option of visiting an Age, or visiting another - or another, or another - then an introductory Age risks being visited too late and feeling out of place. And that is the case with Tahgira.

Laki'ahn suffers from a similar problem. The Age allows Esher to express - somewhat too blatantly for my taste - the darkest side which we see of him in the game before having to decide whether to give him the tablet. It actually serves, in terms of narrative, to confirm the doubts we may have

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acquired in Noloben. The problem is that seeing him like this, if Laki'ahn is the first Age (or second) visited, will destroy any consistent sense of development which his character has. Also, when we subsequently visit Ages in which he is calmer - Tahgira or Todelmer - his calmness will now appear more than a little odd after his decidedly unhinged state in Laki'ahn.

Indeed, Esher's development over the course of the game - becoming steadily more unstable as you progress through the Great Shaft (and the Ages accessible at each level) - is actually at odds with the whole idea of 'free exploration'. In *Myst V: End of Ages* the player is supposed to follow the structure I have used in my *Myst V Walkthrough*:

- start at the top of the Great Shaft;
- complete Tahgira;
- return to the Great Shaft;
- complete Todelmer;
- return to the Great Shaft;
- complete Noloben;
- return to the Great Shaft;
- complete Laki'ahn.

Any deviation from this will result in narrative anomalies, such as Esher berating us for not trusting him at the end of Noloben, even if it is the first Age we have visited.

To be sure, Cyan have attempted to limit the discrepancies in the narrative by splitting Esher's opening and closing speeches into two or three parts, at least one of which is Age-independant. This means that if Tahgira is the third Age you visit, for example, at the end of it you will hear Esher's speech for Tahgira as well as the speech he is due to give when you

complete your third Age - whichever that is. This is definitely a nice touch, and a credit to the animation that it works fluidly. However, not even this can adequately balance the narrative inconsistencies produced by visiting the Ages in the wrong order.

Further support for the argument that we are supposed to proceed through *Myst V: End of Ages* in a specific manner comes from Yeesha's journals and imagers. All of them occur within the Great Shaft; following the anticipated structure of the game would mean that we encounter these journals when travelling between the four main Ages, at an average rate of three journals per every level of the Great Shaft. However, should we decide to complete the Great Shaft before visiting the other Ages - perhaps only visiting Direbo in order to open all the bridge gates - then at the start of the game we are presented with an enormous amount of information about Yeesha, all of which needs to be processed and committed to memory, and in an incredibly short space of time. It is almost impossible to sense any development in her character when we are given so much in so little time. And then we will hear nothing from her for the entire length of four Ages.

The difficulties of both these elements - character development and scattered journals - are highlighted in comparison with the devices used in *Myst III: Exile*. In the third of the *Myst* games, Saavedro also leaves pages of his diary around for us to discover, but they are to be found in every Age which we visit, rather than in just the 'hub'. They are also scattered in a non-chronological order (unlike Yeesha's journals), so that pages 1, 2 and 3 may be found in entirely different Ages, enabling the player to gradually piece together Saavedro's story, motivation and goals. This means, practically speaking, that the player does not become overburdened with information. And aside from the diary entries, there are also three paintings, three imagers in the Ages, and three messages on the central imager in J'nanim. The message which the imager replays is entirely independent of the Age the imager is in, following a set order. The same is true of Saavedro's corruptions of Atrus's messages to his sons, which play after each Age has been completed. Again, the result of this is that the player's insights into Saavedro's character are well-spaced throughout the

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game. It is also possible to explore the Ages in a non-specific pattern, whilst still developing the character in a linear manner.

Of course, all of Saavedro's messages are pre-recorded, whereas Esher is an interactive character, and he has to comment on his environment. Clearly this allows for much less freedom in positioning his speeches, and a certain awkwardness is inevitable. Yeesh's journals, however, could easily have been better spread throughout the Ages, and with no loss of credibility.

On top of these general structural problems, *Myst V: End of Ages* also contains the biggest (arguably the only) continuity errors in any of the Myst games. When we first meet Esher at the entrance to the Great Shaft, he is wearing goggles. Then we enter the the Great Shaft, and the first tunnel leads us to a junction. Right leads to the first rest area, the first linking book to Direbo, and Tahgira. As we link into Direbo, Esher appears - no longer wearing goggles - and tells us more about our quest. After completing Tahgira - during which Esher consistently wears goggles - we will return to Direbo, and then to the first rest area of the Great Shaft; at which point we will naturally enough take go left at the junction, which leads to the second rest area, the second linking book to Direbo, and Todelmer. On the way, however, we twice meet Esher - who, again, is not wearing goggles. However, he now apologises for having worn goggles, but he had to do so because his eyes are not used 'to the sun in this Age'. As I have just described, however, if we completed Tahgira first, then we have seen him in two other Ages since we last met him in the Great Shaft, so his apology is out of sync with our last five encounters with him. Still worse, when we meet him a few moments later at the rim of the shaft, he tells us that at the next level of the Great Shaft we will find a rest area with a linking book to Direbo - but also that he will meet us there. He doesn't; Esher only meets us in Direbo once, on the first occasion that we link there. Hence, when we meet him at the rim of the shaft and he tells us this, he may well be referring to an encounter which occurred seven meetings previously.

Obviously, these two speeches were originally meant to take place before we visit any other age, be it Direbo or Tahgira. My personal guess is that

there was supposed to be at still deeper level of the Great Shaft, and that the first resting place was indeed to be the one which Esher referred to. For whatever reason, that is no longer the case; but the end result is this: there is no perfect way to play through *Myst V: End of Ages*. Either we head right at the junction and complete the introductory Tahgira first, putting up with the inconsistencies of Esher's next two speeches in the Great Shaft; or we head left at the junction, Esher's speeches are in the correct sequence, but then we end up going to Todelmer first, and the introductory Tahgira is then later out of place. Actually, there is a way of making everything fit together in *Myst V: End of Ages*, but it really doesn't bear thinking about, so I've included it as a footnote only. The overall impression which all this gave me was one of a slightly rushed job - not quite getting all the parts to sit together comfortably.

Myst V: End of Ages is unfortunately riddled with structural weaknesses which undermine the freedom of exploration usually associated with *Myst* games, and which was even its own stated goal. It wants to offer the player as many Ages to explore as possible - and there are more than in any previous game - but on the other hand, it only really works on a narrative level if the player progresses through its Ages in a very specific manner. And even then the player will (almost inevitably) be faced with Esher's narrative inconsistencies. I'm actually inclined to think that it would have been a better game if the supposed 'free exploration' of Tahgira, Todelmer, Noloben and Laki'ahn had been sacrificed for a strictly linear structure, so that, for example, some information in Tahgira was required before you could progress to the next level of the Great Shaft. At least then, the narrative and character development would work.

Footnotes

Making everything fit together in *Myst V*

When you first enter the top level of the Great Shaft from the Cleft, turn right and listen to Esher's apology for wearing goggles in this Age. Then proceed to the rim of the shaft and listen to Esher tell you that he will meet you in Direbo. Then backtrack to the first corridor and go right, heading to the first rest area. When there you can read the journals and watch the imager before linking to the first island of Direbo, with its pedestal to Tahgira. You'll meet Esher there, and everything will be in order.

This process of backtracking is so counterintuitive that I simply can't believe that it is intentional; and even if you follow this method, it doesn't explain why Esher is seemingly unaware of the resting place (and linking book) on the top level. It also makes finding Yeesha's journals in the correct order extremely artificial, since there is a journal in the room where Esher apologises which must be ignored on first visit, and only collected on the second trip through the room, after completing Tahgira. I decided not to follow this method in my *Myst V* Walkthrough, because, quite frankly, it would just serve to confuse.

There is actually a still more convoluted method (which has a couple of permutations). Follow Esher's advice and proceed to the second level of the Great Shaft. Then use the linking book to go to Direbo, and meet Esher. Then backtrack (even further) by returning to the Great Shaft, taking the lift back to the top level, and then using the linking book to go to the island of Direbo which lead to Tahgira. And don't forget to ignore all of the journals you see. As I said, even more convoluted; but possible ;-)

Prison Books or Prison Ages?

A feature of the *Myst* series of computer games which is inconsistently employed. In the first two games, *Myst* and *Riven: The Sequel To Myst*, a Prison Age is entered by using a linking book which looks like any other, but which is different. The only way out of a Prison Age is for someone else to enter the Age by touching the panel in the linking book - the Age can only stand one inhabitant. In these games the Prison Ages and

commonly referred to as Prison Books, and are integral parts of the story: in *Myst*, the two errant brothers are trapped in separate books, and beg you to touch the linking panel - doing so will free one and end the game in a bloody manner. In *Riven: The Sequel To Myst*, a Prison Book must be used by the player to entrap Gehn, Atrus's megalomaniac father. This can only be done by entering the Prison first - ostensibly to prove to him that it is safe - and then exchanging places with him when he follows you.

Hence the device of one person per Prison Book is extremely clear and indeed, an understanding of it is crucial to the completion of the first two games. The next two games were not made by Cyan.

Myst III: Exile made no use of the idea (it was mentioned in passing) but in *Myst IV: Revelation* it was re-invented. Now a Prison Book contains a normal Age (hence Prison Age) which can have untold inhabitants, and the player is able to explore them as they would any other Age. What makes them a prison is the absence of an exit. When scouting for appropriate Ages to employ as prisons, Atrus made sure that the linking book which he would use for the return to Myst island - and would usually be left behind, providing an exit - would be irretrievably lost.

Cyan also directly employed this concept in *Myst V: End of Ages*, where Tahgira is described by the character of Esher as a 'Prison Age'.

(If all this seems more than a little esoteric, don't worry - it's Mystspeak.)

Slate Guide

A pictorial guide to the the general slate glyphs, both in their original context and etched onto a slate. Note that the engravings don't have to match the original depiction perfectly!

General Slates

Friendship (?)



Pain (?)



Sing (?)



Snake



Environmental Slates

Tahgira - Steam



Todelmer - Time



Noloben - Rain



Laki'ahn - Wind



Pedestals: Tahgira

First Pedestal



Second Pedestal



Third Pedestal



Fourth Pedestal



Keep Pedestal

Myst V: End of Ages



Pedestals 2: Todelmer

First Pedestal



Second Pedestal



Myst V: End of Ages

Third Pedestal



Keep Pedestal



Pedestals 3: Noloben

First Pedestal



Second Pedestal



Myst V: End of Ages

Third Pedestal



Keep Pedestal



Pedestals 4: Laki'ahn

First Pedestal



Second Pedestal



Myst V: End of Ages

Third Pedestal



Fourth Pedestal



Keep Pedestal



Noloben Glyphs and D'ni Numerals









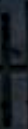


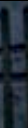

The following glyphs are paired according to the way that they are found on Noloben. The first set are Bahro glyphs, while the second set were presumably originated by Esher. It is possible to discern a mathematical structure to the second set, and it seems reasonable to order them after that pattern. Any suggestion that the Bahro glyphs actually correspond to the numbers I have ascribed to Esher's set is pure supposition.

The D'ni numerical system can be said to use a complicated form of base 5. To form the number 5 (or 10 in base 5), the symbol is turned on 90° to the right. To form the number 6 (11 in base 5) that symbol is combined with the symbol for 1. Because of this 'right-turning' process, D'ni numerals actually consist of 25 separate symbols (including "0"), and it is only necessary to place two of those symbols side-by-side (as we usually do with '11', for example) in order to form numbers of 25 and above, which would usually only be a feature of base 25. As such, it is properly described as a base-25 system, although tracing its roots in a base 5 system is important for our purposes here.



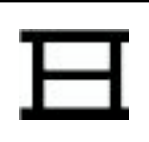








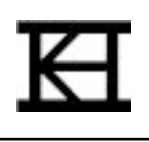

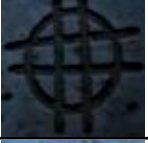
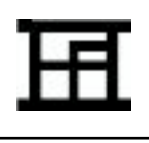





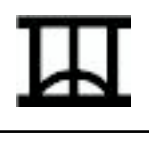


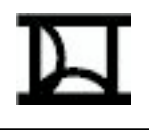
The set of glyphs which I have designated as Esher's clearly follow the same base 5 system. Numbers 1-4 are formed by a one or two vertical lines, combined with one or two horizontal lines. the number 5 is formed by a circle, which is then combined with the glyphs for 1-4 to form the numbers 6-9. Although we do not see how the system progresses beyond the number 15, it is safe to assume that the three-circle glyph will be combined with those of 1-4 to form 16-19, and the number 20 will be a four-circle glyph. Obviously, a less efficient method than that employed by D'ni numerals.














The glyphs inside the laboratory, then, are certainly the product of someone used to thinking in base 5 terms, as Esher would be. They are also an attempt to capture the same elegance of base-25 numerals that the D'ni numerals do. Why he felt the need to use these glyphs, which








would be so easy for someone from D'ni to understand, is a mystery. The Bahro would have no more chance of understanding the D'ni numerals than those of Esher, perhaps even less. It may tell us something about Esher's mind that he sought to needlessly recreate a numerical system which worked perfectly well, in order to keep the entrance to his laboratory secret from creatures which would understand neither system. That his new system is so clumsy and inefficient might also be considered instructive.

Bahro glyphs	Esher's glyphs	D'ni	Base 10	Base 5	Base 25
Unknown	Unknown		0	0	0
			1	1	1
			2	2	2
			3	3	3
			4	4	4

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Bahro glyphs	Esher's glyphs	D'ni	Base 10	Base 5	Base 25
			5	10	5
			6	11	6
			7	12	7
			8	13	8
			9	14	9
			10	20	A
			11	21	B
			12	22	C

Bahro glyphs	Esher's glyphs	D'ni	Base 10	Base 5	Base 25
			13	23	D
			14	24	E
			15	30	F
<p>For the sake of completion, the remaining D'ni numerals are listed on the right, as well as the numerals for 25 and 26.</p>			16	31	G
			17	32	H
			18	33	I
			19	34	J

Bahro glyphs	Esher's glyphs	D'ni	Base 10	Base 5	Base 25
For the sake of completion, the remaining D'ni numerals are listed on the right, as well as the numerals for 25 and 26			20	40	K
			21	41	L
			22	42	M
			23	43	N
			24	44	O
			25	100	10
			26	101	11

Yeesha's Journals

Headings refer to the same divisions as in the walkthrough, not levels.

The Great Shaft, Part 1

Journal Prologue

These pages are my journey, my story, my path. They are not meant to cover up, but to reveal. Sometimes in story, sometimes in clear, sometimes in vague, sometimes long, sometimes brief. But the release of these words is a soothing elixir to my burdened soul. The words must flow from me, or I will die.



And in the end, these words are crumbs that spill along my path. And whoever eats these crumbs will know more of me.

Journal I

I am finding where I am, by understanding where I was.

And everything I was is linked to the island of Myst - the refuge.

And I must know where they were as well. My heritage, my people, my family.



My father, the prisoner of the hidden and the revealed. Raised by Ti'ana who hid the truth. Then raised by Gehn, who revealed the truth. But Ti'ana hid for love, and Gehn revealed for power.

Myst V: End of Ages

Mother too, nothing more than a slave to what she knew and what she felt. Taught by Gehn to write what she knew. Then taught by Ti'ana to write what she felt. But Gehn's teachings imprisoned her, and Ti'ana's teachings freed her.

And in the end, through the hidden and the revealed, through the known and the felt, through the gods and the devils - they came together. Together they came: Father floating and Mother caring. Father knowing and Mother feeling.

And my great-grandmother Ti'ana watched, and my grandfather Gehn fell.

And so began our path of pain.

Ti'ana was called the destroyer, but she brought them together - and lived with them on Myst island.

Father could not keep Myst simple - new structures and new Ages he brought. Mother could not keep Myst solitary - two new sons she brought - my brothers - Sirrus and Achenar. And they grew up strong, and lustful, like their grandfather Gehn - unable to control the power of Books - the power of writing Ages.

And as a result all became prisoners. Prisoners in their refuge.

I will never return to that place.

Journal II

Pride is a thief. Pride stole the soul of the D'ni people. Pride stole my own brothers. The temptation was too great. It is not the power, but the desire for power that destroys. That desire is in my blood. The blood of my ancestors - the blood of my flesh. I fight it, but I am pulled, even now.



My father tried to hide what he valued, his Books and Ages, while my brothers tried to hide what they valued, riches and power. Father was trusting or naive and Ages and people were destroyed.

And so my family was imprisoned. My brothers in Ages written by Father; Father in a D'ni prison he had escaped from in childhood; and Mother in the world she loved and feared most - Riven - her home - her refuge.

Perhaps it's why I now fear my home - my refuge.

And then by the Maker, or by the roll, a stranger found the Book. The Book had been intended to be destroyed by fire, but by the Maker, or by the roll, it was taken far away. The Book was preserved until it was time. Surely it was the Maker who preserved the Book that would bring help.

Now it was time. A stranger found the Book, came to the island and freed Father. A lesson was learned, and a friendship was forged.

Friendship. The Least are my friends. I must use the Least wisely. I must listen to them. And respect them. They are powerful, they are willing, and they are afraid.

The Great Shaft, part 2

Journal III

The stranger, the friend, returned again to help father save Mother. Imagine - a stranger - traveling to Riven - risking all, asking for nothing. I think of humility, thinking of others.

Humility: prisoners are freed by nothing more, and nothing less.

Gehn, my grandfather, my heritage, ugh, that monster who though himself a god, was once again imprisoned. Perhaps he still rules that



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desolate, empty, and dead place, riven by the pride and bitterness of his own heart. But more likely he is in another desolate, empty, dead place, where he is weeping. I hope he is miserable. I cannot forgive him for what he did.

I hate him, because I have his same desires.

Mother and Father came again together to the refuge - to Myst island. But it was only a shell, a place to exist - a fallen place - torn apart by pride just as the great D'ni city was.

Just as I am. Torn.

What is a stranger? Someone who is not me? Yet sometimes I feel like a stranger to myself. I become two. One who I know, and one who I do not know. Where does this other one come from? Which one is me?

Journal IV

I am sick of the Grower.

Oh yes, some believe in prophecies that predict the restoration of D'ni - the fallen city of D'ni would grow. There were attempts before, and there will be attempts again. But they always fail.

Even those led by my father tried. They learned great things of the Made and the Maker. They learned of the Bahro, of the Least, and of deeper truths. They learned of Father and his wisdom in rebuilding and rewriting.

The D'ni city came alive again, for a time. The dead were properly buried and the living were cared for. D'ni took short, labored breaths. Sap flowed, though the tree did not grow, for there was no grower.



Even Father did not see then as I do now.

The Grower had not come.

I had not come.

I am the Grower.

I failed.

And I think of myself as worthy? I am nothing - the failed child, of failed parents, of failed grandparents. How many generations must fail before we give up? Why do I try?

I have failed with the Tablet already. There are no second chances here.

And yet I long to hold it, and try once more.

The Great Shaft, part 3

Journal V

Tomahna - my home - the place where I was: the place where I began. I was a spark of joy to Mother and Father, after their fire was almost quenched. And yet what joy could we have had if my brothers had been there as well?

Still torn.



Father and Mother loved and shared with me, their desert bird. Father shared wisdom and knowledge, and Mother shared visions and dreams.

When did they come to know my destiny? Surely not from birth. As I look back, they knew so much; they saw so clearly. They planted and watered,

Myst V: End of Ages

so that I would learn to do the same. I would not realize it until long after I was to see them again.

Am I the Grower because they taught me, or did they teach me because I am the Grower?

Torn.

But peace was not yet with us. From the past, an enemy came, seeking revenge. But there was help for a third time. Without help, where would we be? Would there be a Grower? Would there be a seed to grow?

It's all been so fragile.

But it must be by the Maker I am here - and there is meaning.

Or it may be by the roll I am here - and there is no meaning.

Journal VI

I was very young when I first felt strong. Indeed, I was young, but I thought I understood. I had many abilities, even then, but little wisdom. Better to have fewer abilities and much wisdom.

I knew I was doing something great for us, but what I did was foolish for me. I thought I was reuniting our family, bringing back what joy we once had. I almost brought an end to life.

Yet again, it was a friend who came to our aid.

Now I think that most things cannot be returned to how they were. My brothers were not to be released. But the Maker turned my poor choice to some small good, and Achenar was redeemed.



My tears flow as I write these memories. The suffering and pain I have caused - and endured. And yet I am thankful I will be powerful like the Bahro.

I long to be so strong.

They will sing a song of thankfulness. They will sing a song, without regard to their circumstances. They will stand and take time to sing to the Maker with hearts of joy. If only I could have such a heart.

Journal VII

There is a powerful conjunction between the in and the out, the beneath and the above. A wound, a mouth, a well, a pit. I wanted to make the journey for myself from where D'ni dug upward, where they almost came to the surface. From the place where Ti'ana first climbed downward, and where Father followed evil into the ground.



I began my journey with a heavy burden. It was Ti'ana who came to D'ni, and caused its fall. I feel I am destined to being another destruction.

Father and Mother tried to prepare me - tried to tell me who they thought I was. I still see the power of each. I have the best of each - and the burden of each. And as they watched me leave, I saw the sadness and the fear. But more terrifying, I saw their hope.

And I left my comfort to find me. And even as I took my first step away from Tomahna, my shoulders ached, for the burden I bore. Deep prophecies and weighty destinies.

So much to learn and understand about myself. My father said we can never understand - we can only understand more.

The more I understand the more powerful I become, and the more dangerous I became, the less I understood.

The Great Shaft, part 4

Journal VIII

Home was far behind - I was no longer a child. I journeyed deep - deep within myself, deep within the earth, down to the D'ni cavern. I was alone for a time as I consumed my heritage, breathing deep the air of the cavern and the knowledge of my people.



But my desire for companionship drove me mad. I engaged a senomar as my confidant, and a tredfish in the harbor became my younger brother. I spoke to them and they answer, I swear they answered.

Then my mind to a final step into madness when I walked into the library on Ae'gura and saw an old D'ni may on the floor below me. Now I was imagining people to ease my loneliness.

But he was no mirage - his name was Calam. And he was a D'ni Writer of Ages.

Trust did not come easily. There was conflict between us - between his ancient rules of D'ni that I did not respect, and my creativity, which he feared. We fought and feared and battled and screamed, until exhausted, we began to learn from each other. We learned of the power of both, just as Father and Mother had done.

So I learned to Write with all the skills that the D'ni had known - beyond what my parents had taught me. For their lessons were given by a flawed instructor and by their own trial and error. I learned to Write from a Master:

an opportunity Father was never given. Calam's abilities were breathtaking - he knew all the D'ni knew, when D'ni fell.

But I taught as well as learned. There were things that the D'ni were forbidden to Write, words they feared, concepts they shunned. Rules and boxes. I had no cultural fear of such things, so I dug deeper, asking questions that Calam could not answer. And so together we sought the answers.

That is how we learned of the Bahro and the Tablet. I learned of its power. We grew in knowledge and strength, and Calam became one of my dearest friends. I began to think it was he who would be the Grower.

But evil will find you, even in the depths of the earth, and Calam was murdered.

Journal IX

Powe is a gift. Power is a curse.

I learned of the fearsome power I wield on that day - the day of Calam's death. In a fit of rage I destroyed the murderer, and I destroyed my innocence.

And again I learned that most things cannot be returned to how they were.



And my power continued to grow even as I began to see that the prophecies of the Grower might speak of me. My destiny began to be fulfilled. But there was still more.

The Least. Abused. Mistreated. Misunderstood. Ignored. They were mocked and scorned and their hearts still show their pain, but they continue to serve.

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Such power they have, and yet they serve. They treated me with kindness, and I learned from them. They respected what I was becoming. With them I learned new laws, new rules, and new powers. I used the powers to care for a tree to come, and the Tablet allowed me to grow beyond Ti'ana, beyond Father and Mother, beyond D'ni, beyond Calam.

The Tablet held them. The Tablet chained them.

The Tablet held me. The Tablet empowered me.

I watched with them. I waited with them, I learned with them. I called them from captivity and grew while they gathered. Together we became both weak and strong.

And then my time came. My time to take the Tablet. My time to choose. I was ready. I felt the pull of holding it, of channeling and releasing the full power of the Bahro. I would right the wrongs, I would set thing the way they should be. I would choose well - I could not fail. I am the Grower.

I was so sure, so strong, so wise, but I didn't open myself and listen to the Maker. The noise of me drowned his quiet voice.

And I failed. Failed to see anything beyond myself and what was obvious. And pain came quickly, when I realized what I had done. The Tablet returned, and the Bahro continued to serve. The pain still burns me.

But the powerful Bahro simply wait and serve.

Pain is often how we learn. But it is not for us to give - we are not the teachers. We must not abuse them. We must not abuse the Bahro.

Journal X

How could I not have seen the true path? I see it now so clearly. But can I get another chance to make things right?

They came. They came to D'ni - those who felt called. I knew they would. I was prepared for them, and I pointed the way. I spoke often of the pride of D'ni, of their belief in their own power and strength and the reason why D'ni once fell. And a few understand. And they begin to follow me. I am the Grower - I would lead them to rebuild.

Yet another burden.

But what is the task of the Grower? My Father wrote another Age, but I see that a tree is not a place, but a people - the heart of a people. That is what I must grow.

If only I had another chance to make things right. The Tablet is the key - how could I have failed?



Journal XI

I know what I must do. I see it so clearly. One more chance to determine the destiny of the Tablet. I can feel it.

To be so close and be so powerless - it drives me mad. The Tablet sits there, holding the power of the Bahro captive, and I alone know what to do. I failed once, but what does that mean? Why am I punished



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when I could accomplish so much? The rules seem so arbitrary - some game of the Maker that only he understands.

This legacy of failure. And now I see this final chance to right generations of wrong. To unleash the power that has been held dormant for thousands of years. It is at my fingertips. I know what must be done, but cannot speak of it, for fear that it would somehow break the rules - tarnish the heart, taint the act, soil the innocence.

I had a dream...

I am carrying the seed of D'ni, the seed of all things that are D'ni, through a small cave. And I come to a place where the path stops, and there are two holes - one above me, and one below me. And through the hole below I can see the D'ni cavern and the great city. And through the hole above I can see the sky and sun.

A voice calls to me, "In which hole will you place the seed?"

And I know it is easy to drop the seed into the hole below, and I know it is impossible to throw the seed through the hole above. I call out to the voice, asking for wisdom.

And the voice answers me, "Do not drop the seed in the hole below, for that is easy, but that is the way of the past. Do not throw the seed in the hole above, for that is difficult, and that is the task for another. In which hole will you plant the seed?"

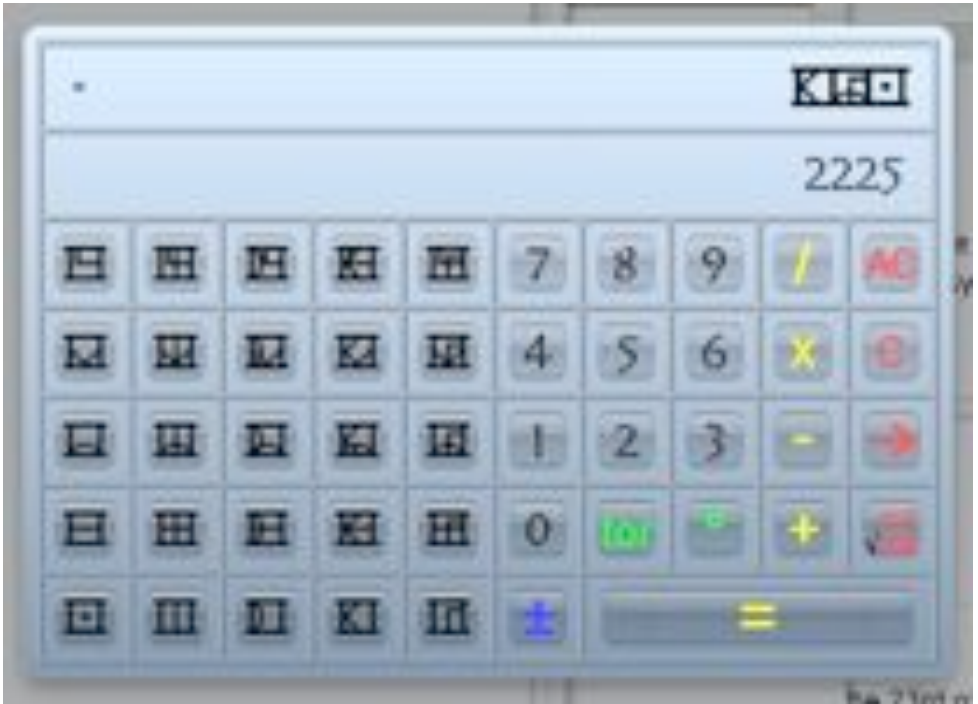
And I know what I must do.

And I know I am the Grower.

D'ni Calculator Widget for Mac OS Tiger

Introduction

Yes, I know that strictly speaking this doesn't have anything to do with *Myst V: End of Ages*, but it's part of my site, and I worked on it at the same time as writing the review and walkthrough. So in my mind at least, it's connected. And I know that a program for such a specific operating system isn't going to get many users (though it isn't doing too badly on versiontracker), but the original calculator it's based on freely available on the internet for anyone with a Java-enabled browser to use.



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The widget is an implementation of Simon Riedl's 1999 calculator (available from <http://calculator.riedl.org/>); my contribution was the new graphic interface and setting it in a stand-alone widget framework. The JavaScript is entirely Simon's. You can download the widget from my Widget Downloads Page (<http://homepage.mac.com/mjharper/FileSharing14.html>).

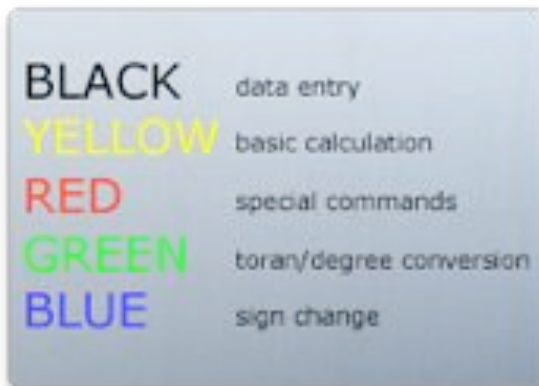
The rest of this section is intended to be a guide to the features of the calculator, and draws heavily on the manual which accompanies the original version. Generally I have paraphrased the manual, and embellished it only when I felt it was necessary.

Basics

First of all, known weaknesses:

- No keyboard input - you have to click the buttons with your mouse
- No fractions - the guide below explains why, and what the built-in workarounds are

The calculator's buttons have five colours:



BLACK	data entry
YELLOW	basic calculation
RED	special commands
GREEN	toran/degree conversion
BLUE	sign change

Buttons

Black Buttons



You can either enter Arabic or D'ni numerals.



Yellow Buttons




There isn't much to say about these buttons: they work in the same way as on any calculator, although the "divide" is represented by the / sign, as in true on just about every computer. You can see the operation sign of the button which was pressed last on the left-hand side of the D'ni display. If you haven't entered a number, you can change the operation sign by pressing another yellow button. Note that this only works with +, -, x, /, and =. Although it is not possible to mix Arabic and D'ni numerals when entering a single number, it is possible to multiply, for example, an Arabic number by an D'ni one.





Note that the result is given in both Arabic and D'ni.

Red Buttons




The  button starts a completely new calculation.

The  button deletes the current number. This is useful if you entered the wrong number, but don't want to start a new calculation.

The  button deletes the last digit entered. For example:

    - The display will show 86.

With the  button you can decide whether the calculator will round the result off to the nearest whole number, or whether it simply cuts off the digits after the decimal point - rounding down only. Simon introduced this button because the calculator can't show decimal points. The reason for this is a limitation in our knowledge of the D'ni numerical system: we have no idea how numbers like 0.5 or pi might be written in D'ni.



If the calculator rounds a number, the result will be prefixed by the \approx sign.

Green Buttons



These are D'ni-specific buttons. In the D'ni Dictionary, "toran" is defined as follows.

- toran, a unit of angular elevation [= 0.00576 degrees]: The tunnel to the surface was “cut at a maximum of 3825 torans — 22.032 degrees — from the horizontal.” (from *The Book of Ti'ana*). [15,625 (or $25 * 25 * 25$) torans = a right angle.]

The  will convert any number entered from degrees into torans, while the  button will convert torans into degrees. Any fractions will be rounded off or rounded down; see above for details.

The Blue Button




This changes the number entered from a positive value to a negative value: 349 will change to -349, for example.

Error Messages

If you cause an error, for example by entering 34 divided by 0, the displays will show the following:

 (D'ni) and  (Arabic)

This functions in the same way as the  button, meaning that you don't have to press this to clear the display.

Wikipedia Links

I know this might seem like an odd kind of index, since it doesn't actually index this book at all! It isn't actually meant to. But it does provide a comprehensive (as far as I know) list of links to Myst-related pages in the open-source Wikipedia encyclopedia. You'll find links to information about all the games; to the Ages they contain; to the characters who inhabit them; and to the people who designed them. Every one of the bold words below represents a link, either a full page, or to an anchor (section) on a page. Enjoy!

- **A'Gaeris** (page)
- **Achenar** (page)
- **adverbs** (Wikibook page)
- **Ae'gura** (anchor)
- **After the Fall: timeline** (anchor)
- **Age 233** (anchor)
- **Age 234** (anchor)
- **Age of D'ni** (page)
- **Ages of *Myst*** (page)
- **Ages of *Myst III: Exile*** (page)
- **Ages of *Myst IV: Revelation*** (page)
- **Ages of *Myst V: End of Ages*** (page)
- **Ages of *Riven*** (page)
- **Ages of *Uru*** (page)
- **Ahnonay** (anchor)
- **Ahyoheek** (page)
- **Aitrus** (page)
- **alphabet** (i) (anchor)
- **alphabet** (ii) (Wikibook page)
- **Amateria** (anchor)
- **Art of Writing** (page)
- **Aspermere** (anchor)
- **Atrus** (page)
- **Atrus heritage** (page)

- **Bahro** (page)
- **Bahro Caves** (anchor)
- **Baron's Office** (anchor)
- **Boiler Island** (anchor)
- ***Book of Atrus, The*** (page)
- ***Book of D'ni, The*** (page)
- ***Book of Marrim, The*** (page)
- ***Book of Ti'ana, The*** (page)
- **Brøderbund** (page)
- **Catherine** (page)
- **Channelwood** (anchor)
- **Cho** (character) (page)
- **Chroma'Agana** (page)
- **Cleft, The** (anchor)
- **Council period: timeline** (anchor)
- **Cyan** (page)
- **D'ni** (page)
- **D'ni Ages** (page)
- **D'ni Ages - Definition** (anchor)
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