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# THE NETBOOK OF CULTS & PRIESTS

(Version 3)



A 148 pages Netbook for use in AD&D™ campaigns.

# NetBook of Cults & Priests

(Version 3)

by

Dominique Crouzet <dominique.crouzet@mageos.com>

## **Disclaimer**

Blah, blahblah, blahblah-blah, ... as you well know it, but as I am still expected to WARN you :

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## **Introduction**

### Again on the Internet !

In January of 1999, I put on the Internet an AD&D accessory: the Netbook of Cults second edition. At first, I intended to improve the work with a third edition, and do at the same time an adaptation of the AD&D rules to science fiction. However, I lost my phone-line and access to internet due to **atrocious** problems of (lack of) money. Therefore, for those who tried to submit new materials as I called for, I owe you some apologies. I couldn't and wasn't in the appropriate situation to do anything related to AD&D. This means there won't be anymore AD&D science fiction netbook, made by me as I intended to.

### Now, this netbook.

Compared to the second edition, I mostly added character classes made with the Player Options rules on customization. The fact is that all which pertain to *customized* priests wield two problems : First, if a DM wants to create specialty priests with these rules, it will take him so much time that he risks of tiring before beginning it altogether. Second, if a DM lets a player create his own priest with these rules, he risks to get atrocious munchkin characters... Therefore, I have done the carefully designed priests that appear in this netbook to ease the work of the DMs.

## **Copyrights**

Copyrighted or not copyrighted that's the question.

The truth is that many things here have been copy-pasted from one source or another. (My intent wasn't of doing an original work, but of putting together materials relevant to the subject). Therefore, this text cannot be copyrighted. All texts which incidentally belong to someone else, still belong to them. Anyway, please distribute this file unaltered, and don't charge any money for it.

## **Credits**

TSR/Wotc for the AD&D rules.

To use this netbook you only need to have the basic rulebooks (PHB and DMG), although I also recommend the Players Options rules. In fact, most priests presented there have been done using the *PO Spells & Magic* book.

Then, here are the original authors of the first edition cults. I admit I messed up their original works, in expanding them. However, their original contributions are still to be found intact in the fifth chapter. Authors : Juan Camilo Roza, Qubrak Shata, Leonard Danao, Gareth Roberts, Lorene Turner, Andrew Nickel, Harley Smith Jr., Cural Antalas of Northern Ergoth, Mal Martin.

## **Submissions**

I will do NO further update of this work.

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## **Part One: Priests Character Classes**

**Cleric (p.06):** this is a customizable version of the cleric with limited choices and specific rules to prevent munchkinism.

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**Nature Priest (p.19):** this description include 5 types of druids, shamans, etc.

**Elemental Priest (p.25):** this is a POS&P version of the Dark-Sun priest. They can be used into any setting resembling Elric of Melnibone world, but also for cults found in distant savage countries.

**Templar (p.27):** this is the Dark-Sun templar. They can be used into any setting which have powerful immortals, lich-queens, etc., reigning on at least a city-state.

**Fanatic (p.30):** this is a strange priest belonging to those sects dedicated to the elimination of magic. Fanatics cannot use magic, but get special powers to combat it. They are the typical Inquisitor of the medieval times, and do perfect witch-hunters.

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**Bene-Gesserit (p.36):** this is an adaptation of the Dune novel's strange sisterhood. They will fit better into Spelljammer settings than in medieval campaigns.

**Bird of Magic (p.38):** this is a weird character race-class of giant-eagles spellcasters. Rather than priests they are the eyes and heralds of a powerful sorcerer or immortal living on the prime material plane. They would fit well in a "lost island", parallel dimension, or far-off planet in the Spelljammer campaign setting.

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## **Part Two: Evil cults**

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### ***Part Three: Neutral cults***

**Brotherhood of the Shadow (the) (p.66):** a secret organization of Shadow specialists wizards. In fact more of a “cloistered guild” with a devotional aspect to their art.

**Dwarnoi Order (the) (p.67):** a dwarven order of priests dedicated to the guardianship of earth (underground caverns), not dissimilar to druids in spirit.

**Guardian of the Eternal Flame (the) (p.69):** a singular twin cult worshipping a magical fire. Both cults are identical, but one is made up of evil worshippers, and the other of good ones.

**Immortal Taoists (p.71):** a sect of oriental characters who try to achieve immortality in their flesh through various strange methods.

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**Cathars (the) (p.78):** a True Faith sect condemned by the Holy-Church, but which is true to the ideals of Love and Justice as told by the Prophet.

**Heralds of the Warriors of Hope (p.80):** a group of spirits which support a network of people who share the same ideal of freedom and goodness against any evil tyranny.

**Pious Knights (the) (p.81):** a secret brotherhood of religious knights descending from the ancient Knights Templars who participated in the Crusades.

**Voice of Kelaryon (p.84):** a great entity (some say a Solar), who speaks and brings comfort to humans through the single prophet who channels him.

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### ***Part Five: Fantasy Earth Campaign***

**Mid'Gaard:** is a campaign world similar to the medieval Europe, but in a heroic fantasy fashion. It has been included in this netbook as an example on how some the various classes and cults presented in this netbook could be used in a setting.

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### ***Part Six: Original edition***

**Cult's Netbook v1 (p.138):** the original edition, as I changed everything in the second edition. I put it there to acknowledge the contribution and work of the original authors.

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# Part One:

## Priests Character-classes

Personally, I much like the Player Options rules, with which you can create custom characters. However these rules are not so well thought. For instance, when making a customized priest with the *PO Spells & Magic* handbook, you can easily end up with a ranger who has got the spell progression of druids, and the experience points progression of clerics ! On the other hand, a DM who wants to create various priesthood for his/her campaign world, will have to spend a lot of time on it.

Hence, some of you up there should find much help in the character classes presented in this section. That is, chiefly the customizable cleric which won't enable players to come up with horrendous munchkins, and the specialty and nature priests. The other classes may appear weird (especially the *fanatic*, *pardoner*, and *bird of magic*), but will certainly interest bored players and DMs. In any case most of these classes were done through *PO S&M* rules, and none of them should prove to be a super powerful character.

Note that in terms of weapon and non-weapon proficiencies, I used the system of character points of the *PO* rules. For those who don't use them, 2 character points = 1 proficiency slot. Otherwise, you will need the *Tome of Magic*, *PO*, or *Priest Spell Compendium* handbook, to have the spells in such spheres like "Thought", "Numbers", and the like. For suggested kits, I mainly refer to the *PO* rules.

Priest Character Classes			
	Class	Source	Description
1	Cleric	Players Options	This is a character class presenting easy customization for the player wanting to design a priest of his own, rather than abide by the below choices.
2	Specialty Priest	Players Options	<i>Monotheistic faiths</i> : Churchman, Monastic, Friar Mendicant, Exorcist, Preacher. / <i>Celtic mythos</i> : Celtic Druid, Celtic Bard / <i>Viking mythos</i> : Godi, Stormlord / <i>Oriental priests</i> : Sohei, Shukenja / <i>Egyptian priests of</i> : Amon-Râ, Anubis, Sekhmet.
3	Nature Priest	Dark-Sun / PO	Druid, Drune, Guardian, Animist, and Witch-priestess.
4	Elemental Priest	Dark-Sun / PO	Air, Earth, Fire, and Water clerics.
5	Templar	Dark-Sun	A sort of inquisitor working for an immortal or sorcerer-king, rather than a true priest serving a deity. Templars are more mercenaries and enforcers, than religiously devout characters.
6	Fanatic	Special	This unusual anti-magic priest belongs to those religions for which all magic is evil and the doing of demons. The perfect witch-hunter.
7	Pardoner	Special	This unusual unfaithful priest belongs to religions which have grown more secular than spiritual, and use their influence to exploit the populace in the name of God and Love.
8	Bene-Gesserit	Players Options	Adapted from Dune novel, this peculiar sisterhood of nuns do not serve a deity, but a mysterious scheming of their order. They will better fit in strange or Spelljammer settings.
9	Bird of Magic	Special	This weird character class of giant-eagle like creatures should prove interesting in strange or far-off settings. They are not true priests serving a deity, but spies and messenger of a powerful immortal or kind of sorcerer-king.



# CLERIC

Clerics are the emissaries of divine beings on the mortal world. Clerics may be the priests of a church dedicated to their deity (who is most often a god or goddess, but can also be an Immortal, a powerful spirit or demon, etc...), but this isn't often the case. Most clerics will be agents for their supernatural patrons, and as such will receive spells and powers to perform missions on their behalf. Hence, not many clerics are of the fervent religious or mystic type, even if all of them are expected to be obedient and respectful to their "master". Nonetheless, the variety of tasks they may be assigned, accounts for their good fighting skills and wide array of spells to choose from.

Unlike other priests (such as ascetics, elemental and nature priests, etc...), clerics are thus not people driven by a spiritual calling, but rather characters who made a pact with a deity to receive powers in exchange for their services. As such, they may use them for personal benefits, as long as they also further their patron's ends.

Note that the cleric presented here has been slightly changed in format and spirit, from the basic cleric of the core-rule. But otherwise, it is made using the PO customization rules.

## CHARACTER CLASS' REQUIREMENTS :

- **Ability scores** : Wisdom of 9 or better.
- **Prime requisite** : Wisdom. Clerics with prime requisite of 16 or more gain a bonus of 10% to the experience points they earn.
- **Alignment** : Clerics' alignment must be appropriate to their patron deity.

## CLERIC'S PROGRESSION TABLE :

Hit dice: **d8** ; Thac0: Priest ;  
Experience level points: Priest.

## CHARACTER POINTS (CPS) AWARD :

Base 14, + bonus for high intelligence (i.e.: bonus nb. of lang.), + 2 CPs per level above the first, if any.

First-level clerics must spend a minimum of 8 CPs on nonweapon proficiencies, and 6 CPs on weapon proficiencies (weapon & fighting style specializations included); other CPs being used, or kept for later use, freely.

## ALLOWED WEAPONS AND ARMORS :

- **Weapons** : Clerics may use any kind of weapon. However, at times, their patron deity may dictate what kind of weapon they should, or should not, use.

Proficiency costs for these weapons: 3 CPs.

- **Armors** : Clerics may wear any kind of armor, and use any shield. However, at times, their patron deity may dictate what kind of armor they should, or should not, use.

- **Allowed fighting-styles** : Clerics know the four fighting-styles : One-handed-weapon, Two-handed-weapon, Weapon-and-shield, and Thrown-weapon.

- **Fighting & weapon style specialty** : Clerics may purchase : only one fighting-style specialization (2 CPs).

## CLERIC'S COMPETENCIES :

- **Nonweapon proficiencies** : Bonus: none. Access to categories: *General, Priest*.

- **Skills** : Clerics of any level may create new spells, provided they are of the required level to cast the spell they want to create (according to its spell-level). Clerics may create scrolls upon reaching the 7<sup>th</sup>, potions upon reaching the 9th level, and magical items upon reaching the 11th level. However, all of this requires the assistance of their patron in some way or another.

- **Powers** : Clerics may gain the following powers, spheres of spells, and even limitations:

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**CLERIC** (Player's Option core-rules): the most common and basic type of clerics. These well rounded and versatile characters will often act as champions on behalf of their deity.

**Limitations** : clerics may use only blunt and bludgeoning weapons (maces, staffs, etc...).

**Major-sphere-access**: All, Astral, Charm, Combat, Creation, Divination, Guardian, Healing, Necromantic, Protection, Summoning.

**Minor-sphere-access**: Elemental (earth and water only).

**Granted power** : Turn-undead.

**Followers** : clerics may gain followers at 9<sup>th</sup> level if their patron deity agrees to it.  
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**CLERIC** (Player's Option customization): these unique characters receive 22 slots to buy the spheres of spells and granted powers they want; and they can also gain additional slots by taking optional limitations :

Limitations : the number in parenthesis, is the number of slots gained for taking the limitation (these slots are to be used to buy additional spheres of spells and / or granted powers) :

Limited armor (+2), Reduced hit-points (+2), Weapon restriction (+2).

Access to Spheres of spells : the number in parenthesis, is the cost in slots for each sphere: major-access / minor-access (a sole number meaning major-access only) :

All (1), Animal (2/1), Astral (2/1), Chaos (2/1), Charm (2/1), Combat (2/1), Creation (2/1), Divination (2/1), Elemental (4/2), Guardian (1), Healing (2/1), Law (2/1), Necromantic (2/1), Numbers (2/1), Plants (2/1), Protection (2/1), Summoning (2/1), Sun (1), Thought (2/1), Time (2/1), Travelers (1), War (1), Wards (2/1), Weather (2/1).

Granted power : the number in parenthesis, is the cost in slots for each power. Note that a cleric may not have more than three granted powers, and that the second may only be gained at 4<sup>th</sup> level, and the third at 7<sup>th</sup> level.

Immunity to natural diseases (2), Lay on hands (2), Pass without trace (1), Resistance to energy-drain (1/3), Resistance to cold (1), Resistance to fire-electricity (1), Shape-change (4), Stealth skills (2), Turn undead (3).

Followers (1/2): for one slot, clerics will gain followers at 9<sup>th</sup> level, provided they have an appropriate castle or temple. For two slots they will gain followers whenever they call for them (getting 1d10 men-at-arms per level).

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**- Spells** : Clerics can cast priest-spells. These are gained through the "Communion" with their patron deity, during meditation. That is, clerics must memorize their spells before casting them. They usually receive the spells they ask for, but at times different spells will be gained instead, according to patron's will. Otherwise, note that clerics (unlike wizards) may cast spells while wearing armor ; and they also gain additional spells when they have high wisdom scores.

They have access to spheres of spells as determined at the character's creation

Cleric level	Spell level							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Q*
1	1							
2	2							
3	2	1						
4	3	2						
5	3	3	1					
6	3	3	2					
7	3	3	2	1				
8	3	3	3	2				
9	4	4	3	2	1			
10	4	4	3	3	2			
11	5	4	4	3	2	1		
12	6	5	5	3	2	2		
13	6	6	6	4	2	2		
14	6	6	6	5	3	2	1	
15	6	6	6	6	4	2	1	
16	7	7	7	6	4	3	1	
17	7	7	7	7	5	3	2	
18	8	8	8	8	6	4	2	1
19	9	9	8	8	6	4	2	1
20	9	9	9	8	7	5	2	1
21	9	9	9	9	8	6	2	1
22	9	9	9	9	9	6	3	2
23	9	9	9	9	9	7	3	2
24	9	9	9	9	9	8	3	2
25	9	9	9	9	9	8	4	3

(\*: Q means "quest spells", from the Tome of Magic)

## CLERIC'S LIMITATIONS :

**- Constraints** : Clerics are expected to perform the tasks which they are assigned by their deities. Note that only in the case of most evil deity, a cleric will be sent to his own death to further some plan of his patron.

**- Restrictions** : Clerics usually have very few restrictions save of not going against their patron's interest. Note that a cleric will always be warned by some relevant intuition or else, when doing something would be detrimental to their patron deity.

## KITS, AND FOLLOWERS BY KITS :

**- Cleric's kits are** : Beggar, Diplomat, Explorer, Mystic, Noble, Outlaw, Peasant, Prophet, Scholar, Soldier.

**- Starting equipment** : Clerics begin their career with a magical focus linking them to their divine patron, and 3d6 X 10 gp.

**- Followers are gained at** : 9<sup>th</sup> level, upon becoming a "High priest" or "Proxy". In most cases clerics do not get followers, but they could be required to have some by their patron deity. In such rare cases (i.e.: they have the appropriate "ability" of class), they get:

a) 10-100 common men-at-arms : 1<sup>st</sup> level fighters (basic), Soldier kit. (poor equipment).

b) 1 men-at-arms' captain : 5<sup>th</sup> level fighter, Soldier kit. (good equipment, and medium warhorse).

Note however, that these followers will come only if the character has a temple or stronghold of some sort. They tend to be of the same alignment as the character.

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## DESCRIPTION OF ABILITIES :

### Granted powers

**IMMUNITY TO NATURAL DISEASES** (2 slots): renders clerics immune to all natural diseases. However, magical diseases such as lycanthropy or mummy rot still affect them.

**LAY ON HANDS** (2 slots): identical to the paladin's ability, enables the cleric to, once per day, heal himself or someone else by laying on hands. He restores 2 hit points per experience level in this fashion.

**PASS WITHOUT TRACE** (1 slot): clerics with this ability can pass without trace (as the spell), at their normal movement rate, and without being hindered by such natural things as overgrown areas (thick thorn bushes, tangled vines, briar patches, etc.). This works in any setting, thus they won't leave footprints in dust covered floors of buildings.

**RESISTANCE TO ENERGY DRAIN** (1 or 3 slots): clerics with this ability gain a +1 to saves vs energy-drain attacks of spells or undead. It is ineffective against energy-drain attacks which don't allow a save; but nonetheless apply to characters under a negative-plane-protection spell.

For 3 slots, this ability allows a cleric to attempt a save (at a -4 penalty), to avoid energy-drain attacks which normally don't allow a save.

**RESISTANCE TO COLD** (1 slot): gives clerics a +2 bonus to all saving throws vs. cold, frost, or ice-based attacks. They are in addition inured to non-magical cold weather conditions.

**RESISTANCE FIRE & ELECTRICITY** (1 slot): gives clerics a +2 bonus to all saving throws vs. fire and electrical attacks. They are in addition inured to non-magical hot weather conditions.

**SHAPECHANGE** (4 slots): clerics with this ability can shapechange into a reptile, bird, or mammal, up to three times per day. The size

can vary from that of a bullfrog or small bird to as large as a black bear; but in any case will be of a normal animal of that race. Note however, that the shape which can be assumed may be limited by the patron deity to certain species. Upon assuming the shape of an animal, the cleric:

a) Heals of 2 hit-points per level, if he was wounded prior to the transformation.

b) Takes all the characteristics of the animal : mvt rate and abilities, armor class, number of attacks, and damage per attacks.

c) Retain his own hit-points, thac0, and saving throws while in animal form.

d) The cleric's clothing and one item held in each hand also become part of the new body; these reappear when the cleric resumes his normal shape. The items cannot be used while the cleric is in animal form, however protective magical devices with "plus", still confer their bonuses.

**STEALTH SKILLS** (2 slots): "Move Silently" and "Hide in Shadows", in natural surroundings, as a ranger (or generic thief) of the same level: clerics can "move silently" and "hide in shadows", as outlined in the ranger's progression table (this skills being subjects to racial, dexterity, and armor adjustments). Note however, that unlike rangers, they are not hindered when using these skills in urban or underground settings.

**TURN UNDEAD** (3 slots): As described in the DMG p.67 or 94, or at the paragraph on priestly magic in this netbook.

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### Optional restrictions :

**LIMITED ARMOR** (+2 slots gained): Clerics with this restriction are limited to the same armors as thieves. They may thus wear leather armors only (leather, padded, and studded-leather).

**REDUCED HIT-POINTS** (+2 slots gained): Clerics with this restriction use a d6 hit-die, instead of the normal d8.

**WEAPON RESTRICTION** (+2 slots gained): Clerics with this restriction can only become proficient in blunt and bludgeoning weapons : club, flails, maces, sling, staff, warhammer, etc...

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# **SPECIALTY- PRIEST**

There are essentially two kind of specialty-priests : those of monotheistic faiths, and those of polytheist religions. Nonetheless, all priests must live by certain tenets which guide their behavior, and must attend to their religion's needs. Therefore, apart from hermits, specialty-priests are expected to serve their faith, guide and educate their community, and also enlighten themselves in their god's glory. However, this does not prevent many of them to use their powers for personal benefits, as long as they also further their faith's ends.

Priests of monotheistic religions believe that there is but one supreme being at the origin of all things and all life, including any of the so-called gods. Therefore, even if most of the time their doctrine professes love and justice, these priests tend to be intolerant of other religions. Anyway, these specialty-priests will have different abilities according to their role and place within their religion's organization (i.e.: the clergy, cloistered orders, inquisition, etc.). In this description are presented priests loosely inspired from the Christian faith.

Priests of polytheist religions may be responsible for worshipping the whole pantheon of gods, or they can dedicate themselves to a particular deity. The first will perform a wide variety of tasks related to the heavens as a whole ; the second are still bound to show the normal reverence to all their religion's gods, but will get special spells and powers by showing extraordinary dedication to a particular deity. In this description are presented priests loosely inspired from the Celtic, Viking, Oriental, and Egyptian myths.

## **CHARACTER CLASS' REQUIREMENTS:**

- **Ability scores** : Variable, in accordance to the faith followed. However, in any case, a minimum wisdom score of 9 is required.

- **Prime requisites** : Wisdom. Priests with prime requisites of 16 or more gain a bonus of 10% to the experience points they earn.

- **Alignment** : Variable, in accordance to the faith followed.

## **PRIEST'S PROGRESSION TABLE :**

Hit dice: Var. (**d8**) ; Thac0: Var. (Priest) ;  
Experience level points: Priest.

## **CHARACTER POINTS (CPs) AWARD :**

Base 14, + bonus for high intelligence (i.e.: bonus nb. of lang.), + 2 CPs per level above the first, if any.

First-level priests must spend a minimum of 8 CPs on nonweapon proficiencies, and 6 CPs on weapon proficiencies ; other CPs being used, or kept for later use, freely.

## **ALLOWED WEAPONS AND ARMORS :**

- **Weapons and armors** : Variable, in accordance to the faith followed.

Proficiency costs for these weapons : 3 CPs.

- **Allowed fighting-styles** : Priests know the four following fighting-styles : One-handed-weapon, Two-handed-weapon, Weapon-and-shield, Thrown-weapon.

- **Fighting & weapon style specialty** : Unless otherwise noted, all specialty-priests may purchase : one fighting-style specialization (for 2 CPs).

## **PRIEST'S COMPETENCIES :**

- **Nonweapon proficiencies** : Bonus: none. Access to categories: *General, Priest*.

- **Skills & Powers**: Variable in accordance to the specific faith followed:

- **Spells** : Specialty priests can cast priest-spells (spell progression is as that of clerics). They have access to spheres of spells according to the deity worshipped.

Like wizards, priests must memorize their spells. However they do not learn them in old scrolls and books, but receive them as insight from their deity through meditation. Priests usually receive the spells they ask for, but at times different spells will be gained instead, according to the god's will.

Note that unlike wizards, priests may cast spells while wearing armor. Moreover, they gain additional spells when they have high wisdom scores.

## **PRIEST'S LIMITATIONS :**

- **Constraints** : Variable, in accordance to the faith followed.

- **Restrictions** : Variable, in accordance to the faith followed.

## KITS, EQUIPMENT, AND FOLLOWERS:

- **Priest's kits** : Variable, in accordance to the faith followed. Nonetheless, the following kits will be most

- **Starting equipment** : Priests begin their career with a holy symbol, and 3d6 X 10 gp.

- **Followers are gained at** : 9th level, upon becoming a "High-Priest".

Followers gained : Devout followers of the character's faith:

a) 4-40 commoners (flock) : zero level everyday life devout followers.

b) 4-16 common soldiers : 1st level fighters, Soldier kit. (poor equipment).

c) 1 leader soldier : 5th level fighter, Soldier kit. (good equipment, and medium warhorse).

d) Retinue of priests: 2-8 acolytes (1st level priests) ; 2 assistants (3rd level priests) ; 1 chief assistant (5th level priest) ; all of them with appropriate kits. (poor equipment).

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### Here follow a description of :

(1) *monotheistic religion loosely based on the Christian faith ; then (2) priests of Celts (historical druids), Norsemen (godi), Oriental and Egyptian settings. All these specialty-priests have been designed using the Player's Option Spell & Magic rules.*

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## THE HOLY CHURCH

The main doctrine of the **True-Faith** is that there isn't any deity, but "GOD" ; that is, the ultimate Creator of the universe. Therefore, all other faiths are lies which should be combated.

Anyway, the Holy-Church professes an ethic of love and justice, even if many of its priests are prone to intolerance, which has led to the bloody crusades, and the dreaded Inquisition. However, those priests who indulge in such evil ways (as killing people in the name of God cannot be considered good in any circumstance) usually loose access to spells and other powers. In fact, evil priests who still display priestly powers, have usually succumbed to the Devil, whether they are aware of it, or not... (That is, after some period where they would have lost spells, they could attract the attention of a dark entity who will give him spells – left to the DM's discretion).

Otherwise, all the Holy-Church's doctrine is centered on the "afterlife". All that people do in life is said to have an impact on what will happen to their soul, when they die. Hence their life is centered on the concept of *Sin* (what they should do or not), and how absolve it.

**Fundamental tenets** : Its principal tenets are that the Holy Church is infallible, and must be obeyed. The Holy Church holds that the Arch-Prelate is the highest earthly authority on all religious beliefs, doctrine and scriptural interpretation. As a consequence, all other sects of the True Faith are considered heretics, and non True Faith cults considered satanic worship.

**Body & Soul** : One of the Holy Church's most fundamental tenet is that "every man has been made to the semblance of God". In fact this means that Humans are really Greater Souls which dwell in the heavens with God. Then, they choose to be incarnated into the mortal world every now and then to learn moral lessons, and to test themselves. This is easy for a soul who resides in the heavens to display divine qualities, but it is much more difficult once in the mortal world, which lies under the veil of darkness and sorrow. This much more tests their mettle and faith. Anyway, when they enter the world as babes, they forget everything, and must learn as if anew. Then, upon death the souls will return in the heavens to digest their experiences and gain the benefits of what they have learned. During this time (about 50-200 years) they remain linked to their mortal remains. But if the body is destroyed (other than by slow natural decomposition), their time has been wasted.

**Loosing One's Soul** : Being incarnated in the mortal world is not without its dangers for the immortal Soul. In fact, all incarnated beings who succumb to the "Devil", loose their soul to him, and thus will end up in the Netherworld upon their death, instead of going back into the heavens.

**The Abomination** : When a being has lost his soul to the Devil, once dead his corpse may become an undead. As an undead, his body will be inhabited either by his own soul or an evil spirit from the Netherworld. But in either case, these undead will scourge humanity into making undead of other peoples. Such victims, even if they were free from the Devil's influence, will have their souls drawn into the Netherworld, to be drained and tormented until nothing remain of them. Nonetheless, if they ever escape, they will need many more mortal lifetimes to regain what has been lost.

As it appears, all of this goes some way to explain the Holy-Church's preoccupation with proper burial of the deceased, in well-protected crypts and graveyards ; and the universal power of its priests to turn-undead.

## **Priesthood Duties and Hierarchy :**

The priesthood of the holy-Church is made of the Clergy, and the Cloistered orders.

**Clergy** : essentially made up of Churchmen priests (there are also Preachers in the clergy, but they rarely climb up high in the hierarchy.), the clergy is in charge of running the church, conducting the masses and all other religious ceremonies. The clergy are those of the church who attend to the population's spiritual needs.

### **Clergy Hierarchy :**

- 1) **Applicant**: lvl.0; a priest apprentice.
- 2) **Novitiate**: lvl.1/2; assistant to a Curate, or higher ranking cleric.
- 3) **Chaplain**: min lvl.: 3; chief assistant to a Bishop, or higher ranking priest.
- 4) **Curate**: min lvl.: 3; is generally assigned to a chapel, or a small community.
- 5) **Canon**: min lvl.: 6; is generally assigned to a town, or several chapels in a district.
- 6) **Bishop**: min lvl.: 9; is generally assigned to the biggest church (such as a cathedral) in a city, and also oversees several towns and lesser communities in a department.
- 7) **Archbishop**: min lvl.: 11; as bishop, but also oversees several Bishops in a region.
- 8) **Prelate**: min lvl.: 11; the chief leader of the church in any given kingdom. In addition, there are 12 prelates who attend the Archprelate as his chief advisors.
- 9) **Archprelate**: min lvl.: 14; the first prelate and leader of the Holy Church, he answers only before God.

**Cloistered Orders** : monastic priests live as recluses from the rest of the world, in their abbeys and monasteries. There, they spend their time enlightening themselves in god's glory, and doing scholarly researches and preservations.

### **Monastic Hierarchy :**

- 1) **Applicant**: lvl.0; a monastic apprentice.
- 2) **Novitiate**: lvl.1/2; a monastic in period of pre-ordination.
- 3) **Brother**: min lvl. 3; an ordained monastic.
- 4) **Prior**: min lvl.: 5; the chief assistant to the abbot.
- 5) **Abbot**: min lvl.: 9; the chief of an abbey or monastery. Note that every abbey-monastery is independent from the others, and that every Abbot answers only before his Archbishop ( but not other Archbishops ), the Prelate of his country, and the Pope himself.

## **CHURCHMAN**

Churchmen form the bulk of the Holy Church's clergy, from the curates to the Archprelate. They are charged with educating the flock, conducting the daily religious rituals and ceremonies, as well as enlighten themselves in God's glory.

They gain a +1 bonus to all their reaction rolls with people of their own faith.

### **Requirements:**

**Ability scores**: min. wisdom & charisma of 11.

**Alignment** : Lawful alignments.

### **Combat:**

**Hit-Dice**: d6 ; **Thac0**: Rogue.

**Weapons**: only those blunt and bludgeoning weapons are allowed (as faith forbids them to "shed blood").

**Armor**: all armors up to chainmail. Anyway, in times of peace churchmen won't wear armors.

### **Required Proficiencies:**

Read-writing, and Religion.

### **Spheres of Spells:**

Note that churchmen rarely use magic, and normally only in very ritualistic forms. Their spells are usually cast during the mass and other ceremonies, in the form of benevolent spells upon the laymen who are attending.

**Major access**: All, Combat, Creation, Divination, Guardian, Healing, Law, Protection, Sun.

**Minor access**: none.

### **Special powers:**

**Turn Undead**: gained at 1<sup>st</sup> level.

**Charm Immunity** : churchmen become immune to all *charm* effects or spells at 3<sup>rd</sup> level.

**Dispel Evil**: once per day, gained at 5<sup>th</sup> level.

**Detect-Undead** : once per day per 2 levels, plus a bonus of +2 on turn-undead, gained at 7<sup>th</sup> lvl.

**Sanctuary**: continuous spell (!) gained at 9<sup>th</sup> lvl.

### **Special limitations:**

**Holy-Symbol**: churchmen cannot cast any spell without their holy-symbol. If lost, 1d4 weeks of prayer, fasting, etc..., in a temple of their faith, will be required to create a new one.

**No Magic**: churchmen are strictly forbidden to use any magical item, or benefit from any spell, which doesn't originate from their faith/church.

### **Allowed Kits:**

Diplomat, Noble, Pacifist, Peasant, Scholar.

### **Followers:**

Normal, but only if authorized by the church.

## MONASTIC

Monastics live in their monasteries where they spend most of their time praying, fasting, etc., as well as doing many scholarly researches and preservations. These aesthetic characters rarely venture out of their monasteries, and are often pacifistic. As such, they are very weak when it comes to combat. However, they wield greater magical powers and knowledge than any other priest of the Holy-Church.

### Requirements:

Ability scores: minimum wisdom of 14, as well as minimum intelligence of 12.

Alignment : any good, or lawful-neutral.

### Combat:

Hit-Dice: d4 ; Thac0: Wizard.

Weapons: club and staff only.

Armor: no armor at all allowed, except leather armors when travelling in dangerous areas.

### Required Proficiencies:

Read-Writing and Religion.

### Spheres of Spells:

Major access: All, Astral, Divination, Elemental, Healing, Necromantic (but *Animate dead* spell denied), Numbers, Summoning, Sun, Thought, and Time.

Minor access: Charm, Creation, Protection.

### Special powers:

Turn Undead: gained at 1<sup>st</sup> level.

Proficiencies: monastics can use wizards non-weapon proficiencies at no additional cost.

Read-Languages : at 3<sup>rd</sup> level monastics gain the read-language skill as per the rogue ability. They get a 10% chance in it per level above the second, up to a maximum of 90% (at 11<sup>th</sup> lvl).

Scroll-use : at 4<sup>th</sup> level monastics gain the scroll use skill as per the rogue ability. They get a 10% chance in it per level above the 3<sup>rd</sup>, up to a maximum of 80% (at 11<sup>th</sup> lvl).

### Allowed Kits:

Mystic, Pacifist, Peasant, Prophet, Scholar.

### Followers:

Retinue of monastics : 3-30 monastics of 1<sup>st</sup> level; 3 assistants of 3<sup>rd</sup> level; and 1 leader of 5<sup>th</sup> level.

These followers only come if the monastic has a monastery, abbey, or other religious head-quarter of some sort. This may be one they build, or one of which they take the succession.

## FRIAR MENDICANT

Friar-mendicants belong to a mendicant order of wandering priests sworn to poverty and the helping of the disinherited. They seek holiness in lowliness, humility, and mercy. They reject all property, and thus are not above stealing the rich, to give to the poor (this is acceptable to their ethic, as long as those stolen would not deserve what they had). Otherwise, their most important duty is of helping the poor, sick, etc., and refusing to aid them is a major fault which may lead to a temporary loss of spells.

### Requirements:

Ability scores: minimum wisdom and dexterity scores of 9, and constitution of 13.

Alignment : any good.

### Combat:

Hit-Dice: d8 ; Thac0: Priest.

Weapons: friar-mendicants only can use blunt and bludgeoning weapons (as faith normally forbids them to "shed blood").

Armor: all armors up to chainmail and shield.

### Required Proficiencies:

none.

### Spheres of Spells:

Major access: All, Creation, Guardian, Healing, Necromantic, Travelers, Wards.

Minor access: Charm, Divination, Protection.

### Special powers:

Turn-Undead: gained at 1<sup>st</sup> level.

Rogue Skills: at 1<sup>st</sup> level friar-mendicants get the following skills: Pick-Pockets: 20%, Move-Silently: 15%, Hide-in-Shadows: 15%, Detect-Noise: 15%, and Alms 20% (similar to simony of pardoners). They receive 30 extra percentage points which they may distribute to these skills at first level, and gain an additional 20% per level thereafter.

Immunity to diseases: gained at 1<sup>st</sup> level.

### Special limitations:

Poverty: they cannot own more they can carry, and neither anything extravagant or obviously expensive. 75% of their income must be used to help the poor and the sick.

### Allowed Kits:

Beggar, Mystic, Outlaw, Pacifist, Peasant.

### Followers:

1d4 3<sup>rd</sup> lvl friar-mendicants, and 2d4 2<sup>nd</sup> lvl beggars, if the character establishes a hospice.

## EXORCIST

Exorcists are priests specialized in freeing people or places from evil supernatural entities. As such, they need to be strong of mind and faith, to perpetually withstand the atrocities they have to witness. Exorcists are normally appointed by their church, but do not belong to its hierarchy, and do not perform the religious ceremonies as do other priests. There are also a few independent Exorcists who roam the land in search of manifestations of the Devil to destroy. As such they often associate with adventurers, to have better chances to find what they search.

### Requirements:

Ability scores: minimum wisdom score of 16.

Alignment : any good.

### Combat:

Hit-Dice: d8 ; Thac0: Priest.

Weapons: exorcists are only allowed blunt and bludgeoning weapons (as their faith normally forbids them to "shed blood") against anyone but undead / fiends / etc..., against which they may employ any weapon.

Armor: exorcists can use all armors and shield.

### Required Proficiencies:

Undead-lore.

### Spheres of Spells:

Major access: All, Combat, Divination, Law, Guardian, Healing, Protection, and Wards.

Minor access: none.

### Special powers:

Turn-Undead: gained at 1<sup>st</sup> level. Also, with this ability they can turn lower-planar creatures of equal hit-dice as undead, but as if they were two level lower in experience.

Exorcism : exorcists can perform a special ceremony (1d6 hours, holy-water/symbol, etc) which will render any successful turn-undead attempt into a "D" result.

Immunity to Energy-drain: gained at 1<sup>st</sup> level.

Detect Evil: as paladins.

### Special limitations:

Reaction penalty: all undead and fiends attack exorcists on sight.

Experience Level Progression : of paladins.

### Allowed Kits:

Mystic, Scholar, Soldier, (Witch-hunter).

### Followers:

None.

## PREACHER

Preachers are the most free-willed of all the Holy-Church's priests, but they are nonetheless expected to be as faithful as the others. In fact preachers often tend to abide by their own rules rather than following the church's hierarchy, and many have been at times on the brink of heresy. Otherwise preachers will be any sort of missionaries, wandering firebrands, or even adventurers, armies' priests, etc... Many will be parish priests, who have accepted a life of hardship and poverty, and do what they can to alleviate suffering or poverty. But in any case, preachers are at least devout, even if they are uneducated and penniless.

### Requirements:

Ability scores: minimum wisdom of 13.

Alignment : any good.

### Combat:

Hit-Dice: d8 ; Thac0: Priest.

Weapons: only blunt and bludgeoning weapons allowed (as faith forbids them to "shed blood").

Armor: all armors allowed.

### Required Proficiencies:

none.

### Spheres of Spells:

Major access: All, Astral, Divination, Healing, Necromantic, and Sun.

Minor access: Animal, Charm, Creation, Protection, and Weather.

### Special powers:

Turn-Undead: gained at 1<sup>st</sup> level.

Bonus spell: preachers gain one special spell which may be cast once per day / 3 experience levels. This spell must be chosen among the following: Cure-light-wounds, Purify-food-and-drink, Detect-evil, or Detect-undead.

Lay on Hands: gained at 5<sup>th</sup> level. Restore 2 hit points per level to any living creature.

Immunity: to enchantment-charm spells gained at 9<sup>th</sup> level.

### Allowed Kits:

Most kits would fit.

### Followers:

As normal.

**Note** that degeneration of the faith among the clergy of the Holy-Church, is what led to the appearance of the Fanatic and Pardoner character classes, in replacement of true priests. (see these classes later in this chapter).



## CELTIC MYTHOS :

Druids are not nature-priests, but the priests of the Celts, even if some of them are some kind of "nature-druids" dedicated to the worship of the earth-goddess Danu. As such, druids will be responsible for worshipping the Celtic gods, not especially the powers of nature.

Here is presented a sort of generality druid, who attend to the whole Celtic religion, and not to any one deity in particular. Then, a Celtic version of the Bard, as a sub-class of the druid.

### CELTIC DRUID

Druids command great respect from the rest of Celtic society, gaining a +1 reaction bonus per two experience levels, to encounter reactions with Celtic humans.

#### Requirements:

Ability scores: minimum of 13 in intelligence and wisdom, and 14 in charisma.

Alignment : any neutral.

#### Combat:

Hit-Dice: d8 ; Thac0: Priest.

Weapons: dagger, club, sickle, sling, spear (one or two-handed), staff, and sword (kopesh).

Armor: leather armor only.

#### Required Proficiencies:

Local-history, and Religion.

#### Spheres of Spells:

Major access: All, Astral, Charm, Creation, Divination, Elemental (earth/fire), Healing, and Summoning.

Minor access: Animal, Plant, Protection, and Thought.

#### Special powers:

Secret language : druids have a secret language (the same as the Druid class).

Legend-lore History : druids have the same ability of legend-lore as bards. 5% per level.

Sanctuary : upon reaching the 3<sup>rd</sup> level, druid gain the continuous power of *sanctuary* (as per the 1<sup>st</sup> level priest spell), except that Celtic humans save at -2 against it, and people from other cultures at +2. Normal saving throws for other creatures.

#### Allowed Kits:

Mystic, Prophet, Scholar.

#### Followers:

As normal.

### CELTIC BARD

Originally, bards weren't some sorts of roguish troubadours, but instead a sub-class of druids charged with keeping the history and oral traditions of the Celts.

As such, bards are historians and genealogists, as well as poets and minstrels. Their songs and verses are almost incidental, serving mainly to guard and preserve the Celtic oral tradition in a form which will be easily remembered and then passed on. Otherwise their training and function encourages Celtic bards to gain knowledge and erudition.

#### Requirements:

Ability scores: minimum of 13 in intelligence and wisdom, and 16 in charisma.

Alignment : any neutral.

#### Combat:

Hit-Dice: d8 ; Thac0: Priest.

Weapons: the same as thieves.

Armor: all armors up to chainmail and shield.

#### Required Proficiencies:

Ancient-history, and Local-history.

#### Spheres of Spells:

Major access: All, Charm, Healing, thought, and Travelers.

Minor access: Animal, Combat, Divination.

Wizard access: one wizard school of magic, of their choice among these (memorized and cast as if they were priest spells -major access-): Illusion-Phantasm, Enchantment-charm, Song.

#### Special powers:

Free Bonus Proficiencies : Musical instrument, Singing, and Poetry ; with a +1 bonus on them per 3 experience levels.

Rogue abilities : bards gain the following skills of other rogues: Alter moods, Counter-songs, Detect-noises & Legend-lore (at 10% +5 % per lvl), and Rally-friends.

#### Special limitations:

Musical-instrument: bards cannot cast any spell without their musical-instrument. If lost, 1d4 weeks of prayer, fasting, etc..., in a temple of their faith, will be required to create a new one.

#### Allowed Kits:

Acrobat, Diplomat, Explorer, Scholar.

#### Followers:

Bards only gain 1d8 apprentices of 1<sup>st</sup> level.

## NORSE MYTHOS

Few Norsemen will ever worship a single god only. There certainly will be an occasional warrior to be a man of Thor, but as pragmatic people, the Norsemen will worship a variety of gods depending on the need and situation. Also, the Norse usually have few proper temples to the gods. However, there are many sacred sites out-of-doors in their realms, including islands, fields, mountains, rocks, and groves.

Here is presented a sort of generality priest (Godi), who attend to the whole Norse religion, and not to any one deity in particular. Then, a description of a warrior-priest dedicated to the God of thunder (Thor).

### **NORSE GODI**

Norse Godi usually function as chieftains as well as priests. Thus godi rule over districts, keep households of warriors, judge the court cases of those living in their district, and attend the "Athing" (national assembly), in addition to seeing that the proper rituals are performed and the sacred grounds protected.

#### **Requirements:**

Ability scores: minimum of 13 in intelligence and wisdom, and 14 in strength.

Alignment : any.

#### **Combat:**

Hit-Dice: **d10** ; Thac0: Warrior.

Weapons: any. However, godi tend to rather favor: battle-axe, spear, swords (broad, long, and bastard), and war-hammer.

Armor: any. However, chain-mail and shield is usually favored.

#### **Required Proficiencies:**

none.

#### **Spheres of Spells:**

Major access: All, Astral, Combat, Creation, Elemental (earth/fire), Guardian, and Healing.

Minor access: Protection, and Summoning.

#### **Special powers:**

None.

#### **Allowed Kits:**

Noble (the position of godi cannot be simply chosen, one can get it only by right of his bloodline).

#### **Followers:**

As normal.

## **NORSE STORM-LORD**

Storm-lords are the formidable priests of the "God of Thunder" (usually known as Thor).

Storm-lords are usually friendly and outgoing, being nice to others unless those take advantage of them, in which case they will "squash them like a grape". Storm-lords are otherwise the tough dudes who can't but despise all criminals and cowards, go to great length to battle giants and trolls, and take pleasure in beer and women rather than in mystical or intellectual pursuits.

#### **Requirements:**

Ability scores: minimum of 13 in wisdom, and 16 in strength and constitution.

Alignment : CG or CN.

#### **Combat:**

Hit-Dice: **d10** ; Thac0: Warrior.

Weapons: any. However, Storm-lords tend to rather favor: battle-axe, spear, swords (broad, long, and bastard), and war-hammer.

Armor: any. However, chain-mail and shield is usually favored.

#### **Required Proficiencies:**

none.

#### **Spheres of Spells:**

Major access: All, Combat, Elemental (Air), Guardian, Protection, and Weather.

Minor access: Healing.

#### **Special powers:**

Bonus save: +2 against lightning / electricity.

Combat bonus: Storm-lords receive a +4 bonus to hit against all giants, giant-kin, and trolls.

Axe / Hammer Hurling: at 3<sup>rd</sup> level Storm-lords can hurl a hammer or a hand axe, and it will return at the end of that round. At 6<sup>th</sup> level the range and damage both double, and at 9<sup>th</sup> level range triples but damage remains doubled.

Lightning-bolt: At 11<sup>th</sup> level, Storm-lords can cast lightning-bolt once per day.

#### **Special limitations:**

Hatred: Storm-lords get a -4 malus to reaction with all giants, giant-kin, and trolls ; and should attack them on sight whenever possible.

Level progression: they use the Paladin's table.

#### **Allowed Kits:**

Barbarian, Noble, Outlaw, Soldier.

#### **Followers:**

As normal.

## ORIENTAL PRIESTS :

Shukenja and sohei are the most common priests of the Oriental world (China, Japan, Tibet, etc...), but nonetheless, other specialty-priests may be found there (see Legend-Lore on that matter). In any case, they all belong to religions such as Buddhism, Taoism, or Shinto.

### SOHEI

Sohei are sorts of religious soldiers dedicated to the protection of their monasteries. As such they are more militant than holy, and receive more training in military than religion.

#### Requirements:

Ability scores: minimum of 13 in strength, and 10 in wisdom and constitution.

Alignment : LG, LN, LE.

#### Combat:

Hit-Dice: **d10** ; Thac0: Warrior.

Weapons: sohei can use all weapons.

Armor: sohei can use all armors and shield.

#### Required Proficiencies:

none.

#### Spheres of Spells:

Major access: All, Combat, Divination, Law, Guardian, Protection, and War.

Minor access: Animal, Healing, and Wards.

#### Special powers:

Ki-power: gained at 3<sup>rd</sup> level, this can be used once per day for a maximum duration of 1 turn. This fill them with berserk energy and disdain for their own life. While in this state, they : gain one extra attack per round ; improve their AC by +1 ; increase their movement rate by +3 ; gain a +1 bonus to their attack, damage, and saving-throws ; and can dodge or deflect missile weapons with a successful save vs "breath".

Weapon specialization: they can take it upon reaching the 3<sup>rd</sup> lvl (for 3 CPs)

#### Special limitations:

Hierarchy: sohei must obey any order given to them by the leaders of their temple.

Spell Level Progression : sohei gain spells as priests of two levels lower. That is: no spells at 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> level, then like first level priests at 3<sup>rd</sup> level, second level priests at 3<sup>rd</sup> level, etc.

#### Allowed Kits:

Fighting-monk, Soldier.

#### Followers:

10-40 2<sup>nd</sup> lvl sohei, and one 5<sup>th</sup> lvl sohei leader.

## SHUKENJA

Shukenja (or Bonzes) are the typical oriental priests devoted to self-enlightenment, and the helping of others. Shukenja's ethic emphasizes on non-violence, and humility (which includes of living outside the social class system). Otherwise, shukenja serve a religion, but rarely any particular deity associated with it.

#### Requirements:

Ability scores: minimum wisdom of 12, and strength and constitution of 9.

Alignment : any good.

#### Combat:

Hit-Dice: **d6** ; Thac0: Priest.

Weapons: they may use blunt and bludgeoning weapons only (but include oriental ones !).

Armor: leather, padded, hara-ate, haramaki, jingasa, studded leather ; but no shield.

#### Required Proficiencies:

none.

#### Spheres of Spells:

Major access: All, Animal, Astral, Charm, Creation, Divination, Healing, Necromancy (no reverses, nor *Animate-dead*), Plant, Protection, Summoning, Sun, Thought, and Weather.

Minor access: Combat.

#### Special powers:

Ki-power: gained at 1<sup>st</sup> level, it can be use once per day for a maximum duration of 1 turn. This ability enables them to temporarily improve all their saving throws by +3. The decision to use the ki-power can be made at any point during a round, unless the die has already been rolled for the saving throw. Once the die is rolled, the character must abide by the results.

Ritual of Purification: gained at 1<sup>st</sup> level. This requires 2d4 hours of rituals (using holy-water, etc...), and has 5% chance per shukenja's level to purify an area from a curse, or the nefarious influence of evil-spirits, demons, etc...

#### Special limitations:

Poverty: they cannot own more they can carry.

Non-violence: except for undead, demons, and the like, shukenja must restrain from violence, and do not earn ex-points for killing creatures.

#### Allowed Kits:

Beggar, Explorer, Mystic, Pacifist, Prophet.

#### Followers:

As normal.

## EGYPTIAN CULTURE :

The Egyptians worshipped the Ennead Gods who (allegedly) created them. In the following page are shown three priests of the Ennead, in the Egyptian religion. For campaign setting purpose, their civilization has been called Tanath'O'Tep.

**Priests Caste** : as such, the priests in the Tanath'O'Tep society hold the higher positions. However, not anyone may become a priest, as in fact the society is organized into a very rigid system of social castes. One has to be born in the appropriate caste if he wants to exercise the professions associated with it (see chapter on Tanath'O'Tep kits). Then, as one may expect it, the priests are the most important caste.

**Religion** : one of the fundamental tenets of the Tanath'O'Tep religion is that Humans are really Greater Souls ("Ka") which dwell in the Celestial World with the Gods. They choose to be incarnated into the mortal world every now and then to test themselves and to learn moral lessons. They surrender all their knowledge and powers and enter the world as babes. When they die they take a number of years to digest their experiences and gain the benefits of what they have learned. (about 50-200 years) During this time they remain linked to their mortal remains. If the body is destroyed (other than by slow natural decomposition) their time has been wasted. If the body becomes Undead, it is possessed by an evil spirit from the Infernum ; then the Greater Soul will be forced into the Infernum in a much weakened state, where it will be tormented and drained. If it ever escapes it will need many more mortal lifetimes to regain what has been lost. This goes some way to explain the Tanath'O'Tep preoccupation with proper embalming and burial in well-protected sarcophagus and tombs.

**The Gods** : the great Ennead (assembly of gods), is made of several gods. However, the three most important are :

**Amon-Râ**: (hawk head): Supreme leader of the gods, deity of the sun.

**Anubis**: (jackal head): guardian of the Dead.

**Sekhmet**: (Lion head) goddess of war and destruction.

## 1) AMON-RÂ

Amon-Râ is the chief leader of the Ennead Gods. Appearing as a hawk-headed humanoid, he is the embodiment of the Sun and of power, the King of Gods and the God of Kings.

As such, all pharaohs must have approval from Amon-Râ or won't be able to rule. But otherwise, this god is not overly concerned with human affairs in the mortal world.

### **AMON-RÂ PRIESTS**

Priests of Amon-Râ are advisors to kings and pharaohs, and decide of the general laws which govern the Tanath'O'Tep society.

These priests command great respect from the rest of their own society, gaining a +1 bonus per 2 experience levels, to encounter reactions with people of their own culture.

#### **Requirements:**

Ability scores: min. wisdom & charisma of 15.

Alignment : Lawful alignment.

#### **Combat:**

Hit-Dice: d8 ; Thac0: Priest.

Weapons: all weapons allowed.

Armor: all armors allowed.

#### **Required Proficiencies:**

Read-writing, and Religion.

#### **Spheres of Spells:**

Major access: All, Astral, Combat, Elemental (Air & Fire), Healing, Law, Summoning, Sun.

Minor access: Protection.

#### **Special powers:**

Turn Undead: gained at 1<sup>st</sup> level.

Fire-wings: at will (!) and gained at 9<sup>th</sup> level.

#### **Allowed Kits:**

Noble (of the highest rank).

#### **Followers:**

Retinue of priests : 3-12 acolytes of 1<sup>st</sup> level; 3 assistants of 3<sup>rd</sup> level; and 1 leader of 5<sup>th</sup> level.

#### **Fire-Wings spell** : (see OA p.83)

Lvl.3 Wu-jen spell.

1 round to cast, 1 turn duration, usable on caster only.

Priest's arms become phoenix-like wings of brilliant fire. Do not affect caster and equipment, but others within 3 feet suffer 1-2 dmg per round. Gives ability to fly at 24", and shed light as 1<sup>st</sup> level spell of that name. Rings can still be worn, but hands no more usable per se. If used in combat, a successful to-hit roll at -2 enables to inflict 2d6 of damage. Water, freezing cold, or wind tornado can snuff out these wings.

## 2) ANUBIS

Anubis is the god and guardian of the dead. He is the one who also decides what form the spirit's new body will take upon reincarnation. But otherwise, Anubis does not interfere in human affairs unless they desecrate tombs and crypts dedicated to him.

### ANUBIS PRIEST

Anubis priests preside over funerals and burial, and they honor the dead and the places in which they rest.

They may never leave a dead intelligent being unburied, and will never take part in or condone the looting or violation of a grave. Tomb robbing is for them the worst sacrilege along animating dead.

Priests of Anubis are thus also required to track down and destroy all undead they encounter.

**Requirements:**

Ability scores: minimum wisdom of 11.

Alignment : any.

**Combat:**

Hit-Dice: **d8** ; Thac0: Priest.

Weapons: all weapons allowed.

Armor: all armors allowed.

**Required Proficiencies:**

Religion, and Undead-lore.

**Spheres of Spells:**

Major access: All, Astral, Guardian, Healing, Necromantic (but *Animate dead* spells denied).

Minor access: Combat, Divination, Protection.

**Special powers:**

Turn Undead: gained at 1<sup>st</sup> level. They are at +2 on their roll, and automatically destroy any undead inferior to a lich on a roll of 20, if they are of sufficient level to turn the undead.

Detect Undead: gained at 1<sup>st</sup> level. As per the spell, but on concentration, once per day / 3 level.

Energy Drain Immunity : at 3<sup>rd</sup> level gain a +4 bonus to all saves vs. energy drain, and a non-penalized saving throw against those attacks or spells draining life which do not allow one.

Undead Charm-power Immunity : at 5<sup>th</sup> level.

**Allowed Kits:**

Diplomat, Noble, Scholar.

**Followers:**

Retinue of priests : 3-12 acolytes of 1<sup>st</sup> level; 3 assistants of 3<sup>rd</sup> level; and 1 leader of 5<sup>th</sup> level.

## 3) SEKHMET

Sekhmet is a fierce, bloodthirsty goddess of war. She is not only the goddess of fighting and killing, but also of the destruction of all that should disappear to let new things arise. Otherwise Sekhmet is merciless and relentless in her war against evil spirits and demons.

### SEKHMET PRIEST

Sekhmet priests must always be prepared to fight for their temple, can never shirk from fight, and must be in the first ranks when battle is joined.

Otherwise, they are often called upon to fight evil spirits and demons. Also, they must be ready to fight whenever they encounter demons and the like.

**Requirements:**

Ability scores: minimum strength of 15 ; and minimum wisdom of 11.

Alignment : any.

**Combat:**

Hit-Dice: **d10** ; Thac0: Warrior.

Weapons: all weapons allowed.

Armor: all armors allowed.

**Required Proficiencies:**

Endurance.

**Spheres of Spells:**

Major access: All, Combat, Guardian, Healing, Law, War, Wards.

Minor access: Protection, Summoning.

**Special powers:**

Lay on Hands: gained at 1<sup>st</sup> level. Restore 2 hit points per level to any living creature.

Immunity to Fear: gained at 5<sup>th</sup> level, against all types of fear (spells, innate powers, etc...).

Lightning bolt: as the wizard spell, gained at 9<sup>th</sup> level, usable once per day.

**Allowed Kits:**

Amazon, Noble, Soldier.

**Followers:**

Retinue of priests : 3-12 acolytes of 1<sup>st</sup> level; 3 assistants of 3<sup>rd</sup> level; and 1 leader of 5<sup>th</sup> level.



# Nature-Priest

Nature-priests are the oldest of priests, coming from the pre-historic ages and the dawn of humanity. Central to their thinking is the belief that the earth is the mother and source of all life. They revere and protect all nature spirits; and the earth, sky, sun and moon are especially sacred to them. As worshipers of nature, they are aloof from the complications of the temporal world. Their greatest concern is for the continuation of the orderly and proper cycles of nature (birth, growth, death, and rebirth). Nature-priests tend to view all things as cyclic and thus the battles of good and evil are only the rising and falling tides of time for them. Only when the cycle and balance are disrupted do they become concerned.

Nature-priests rarely serve a deity (except for the Earth-Goddess) or pantheon of deities, as other priests do. Instead, they act as a bridge between the mortal world and the unseen spirit world. The relationship between nature-priests and the spirits, although superficially similar to that of other priests and their deities, is actually more intimate. Otherwise, nature-priests are not as formal or regimented as other priests, and usually have a far more practical down-to-earth manner.

Five different types of nature-priests are presented in the following description: Druid (as the traditional Celtic nature-priest), Drune, Guardian, Shaman, and Witch-priestess.

## CHARACTER CLASS' REQUIREMENTS:

- **Ability scores** : Variable, in accordance to the type of nature-priest, but in any case, a minimum wisdom score of 12 is required.

- **Prime requisites**: Wisdom. Nature-priests with prime requisites of 16 or more gain a 10% bonus to the experience points they earn.

- **Alignment** : Variable, in accordance to the type of nature-priest, but in any case always partly neutral.

## NAT-PRIEST'S PROGRESSION TABLE :

Hit dice: Var. (d8) ; Thac0: Var. (Priest) ;  
Experience level points: Priest.

## CHARACTER POINTS (CPs) AWARD :

Base 14, + bonus for high intelligence (i.e.: bonus nb. of lang.), + 2 CPs per level above the first, if any.

First-level priests must spend a minimum of 8 CPs on nonweapon proficiencies, and 4 CPs on weapon proficiencies ; other CPs being used, or kept for later use, freely.

## ALLOWED WEAPONS AND ARMORS :

- **Weapons and armors** : Variable, in accordance to the faith followed.

Proficiency costs for these weapons : 3 CPs.

- **Allowed fighting-styles**: Nature-priests know the four following fighting-styles : One-handed-weapon, Two-hand-weapon, Weapon-and-shield, and Thrown-weapon.

- **Fighting & weapon style specialty** : Unless otherwise noted, all nature-priests may purchase : one fighting-style specialization (for 2 CPs).

## NATURE-PRIEST'S COMPETENCIES :

- **Nonweapon proficiencies** : Bonus: none. Access to categories: *General, Priest*.

- **Skills & Powers** : Variable in accordance to the type of nature-priest (see the various descriptions). However, all nature-priests gain special powers at higher levels (at 16+ as shown below).

- **Hierophant Level** : beyond the 15th level nature-priests become "Hierophants". As such, they gain new powers which are:

• *Upon reaching 16th level* :

**IMMUNITY TO POISON** : hierophants become immune to all natural poisons. Natural poisons are ingested or insinuated animal or vegetable poisons, including monster poisons, but not mineral poisons or poison gas.

**EXTENDED LIFE** : their lifespans extend by 10 years for each level they have.

**VIGOROUS HEALTH** : they become for the rest of their life, as vigorous as if they were young and healthy. They do not longer suffer bad effect from aging.

**BODY ALTERATION** : hierophants get the ability to alter their appearance at will. Appearance alteration is accomplished in one round. A height and weight increase or decrease of 50% is possible, with an apparent age from childhood to extreme old age. Body and facial features can resemble any human or humanoid creature. This alteration is not magical, so it cannot be detected by any means short of *true seeing* spell or the like.

• Upon reaching 17th level :

**HIBERNATION** : hierophants gain the biological ability to hibernate. Their body functions slow to the point where such druids may appear dead to a casual observer; aging cease. Hierophants are completely unconscious during hibernation. They awaken either at a preordained time, or when there is a significant change in their environment.

**OTHERLAND TRAVEL**: hierophants get the ability to automatically sense when they are near (10 yards per level) a gate to a parallel plane such as the Mittlemarches, Faery, etc... In addition, they can automatically use it to travel to the destination it leads into, whether they know the method to activate it, or not.

• Upon reaching 18th level :

**AIR ELEMENTAL**: hierophants become able to enter the elemental plane of Air once per day. This takes 1d6 rounds to complete. This ability also provides the means to survive on that plane, move around, and then return to the prime material plane at will. There is no time limit for remaining on such a plane. It does not confer however, similar abilities or immunities on the prime material plane.

In addition, hierophant gain the ability to conjure an air elemental once per day. This ability works like the *Conjure elemental* spell, except that the elemental is completely obedient to the hierophant, has a bonus number of hit-points equal to the hierophant's level (subject to creature's normal maximum), and is determined as follows :

Hierophant's Conjure Elemental table		
D100	Nb.	Type of creature
01-85	1	16 HD elemental
86-94	2-4	Invisible stalkers *
95-98	1	Djinni *
99-00	1	24 HD elemental

(\*: when reaching 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, and 21<sup>st</sup> levels as shown below, results are adjusted as follows : 86-94: Water-weird, Xorn, Salamander ; and 95-98: Marid, Dao, Efreeti)

• Upon reaching 19th level :

**WATER ELEMENTAL**: hierophants gain the ability to enter and survive the elemental plane of Water, and also conjure creatures from this plane, once per day. As for Air Elemental and cumulative with it.

• Upon reaching 20th level :

**EARTH ELEMENTAL** : hierophants gain the ability to enter and survive the elemental plane of Earth, and also conjure creatures from this plane, once per day. As for Air Elemental and cumulative with it.

• Upon reaching 21th level :

**FIRE ELEMENTAL**: hierophants gain the ability to enter and survive the elemental plane of Fire, and also conjure creatures from this plane, once per day. As for Air Elemental and cumulative with it.

• Upon reaching 22th level :

**PARA ELEMENTAL** : hierophants gain the ability to enter and survive all the para-elemental planes (ice, magma, ooze, steam,...), but not conjure creatures from these planes.

**ETHEREAL** : hierophants gain the ability to enter (and survive) the ethereal plane. This takes 1 round to transfer, and otherwise works as for elemental planes. Note that hierophants may go to the border or deep ethereal plane as they want.

• Upon reaching 23th level :

**ETERNAL LIFE**: hierophants cease aging, and they also become immune to non-magical weapons.

• Upon reaching 24th level :

**REGENERATION** : hierophants gain the ability of regeneration, at the rate of 1 point per turn. The power is automatic and permanent, but not if death occurs, and it does not re-grow lost limbs.

**ADAPTATION** : hierophant gain the innate and automatic ability of "adaptation" in any environment, as described for the magical item *Necklace of adaptation*.

• Upon reaching 25th level :

**ACHIEVE UNITY WITH COSMOS** : at any time, hierophants of this level (or higher levels if they so choose) can leave the mortal world and become great spirits. But once this is done, it is not reversible, and the character is retired from play. This transformation also occurs automatically if the character is slain. Note that no corpse is left behind when a hierophant of this level dies, or choose to leave the mortal world in this manner.

**- Spells** : Nature-priests can cast priest-spells, and get them as other priests and cleric do. They have access to spheres of spells in accordance to the type of nature-priest.

Note that priests may cast their spells while wearing armor (but only those armors allowed to their faith). Moreover, priests gain additional spells when they have high wisdom scores.

Lastly, the nature-priests' spell progression stops at 15<sup>th</sup> level (as from the 16<sup>th</sup> level on, it is replaced by Hierophant special powers). But in any case, casting level still matches experience level as normally.

Priest level	Spell level							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Q*
1	1							
2	2							
3	2	1						
4	3	2						
5	3	3	1					
6	3	3	2					
7	3	3	2	1				
8	3	3	3	2				
9	4	4	3	2	1			
10	4	4	3	3	2			
11	5	5	4	3	2	1		
12	6	5	5	4	2	2		
13	6	6	6	4	3	2	1	
14	6	6	6	5	4	3	2	
15	6	6	6	6	5	4	3	1
16+	idem as 15 <sup>th</sup> level.							

(\*: Q means "quest spells", from the Tome of Magic.)

### NATURE-PRIEST'S LIMITATIONS :

**- Constraints** : Variable, in accordance to the type of nature-priest. But all of them must :

**ETHOS AND DUTIES** : nature-priests are charged with protecting wilderness (in particular trees, wild plants and wild animals). By association, they are also responsible for their followers and their animals. Nature-priests recognize that all creatures (including humans) need food, shelter, and protection from harm. Hunting, farming, and cutting lumber for homes are logical and necessary parts of the natural cycle. However, nature-priests do not tolerate unnecessary destruction or exploitation of nature for profit. As such, nature-priests will often work to contain the expense of civilization in their domains.

Note that nature-priests will often prefer subtle and devious methods of action against those who defile nature, rather than direct confrontation.

**ALIGNMENT** : all nature-priests must be at least partly neutral, and most of them are in fact true-neutral. This is a philosophic attitude rather than a "don't care" behavior. As they are deeply linked to it, nature-priests realize that the natural world is a whole thing. As such, law and chaos, good and evil, and similar opposing concepts are only visible manifestations of the two contradicting forces (generation and entropy) from which the world occur. Hence, nature-priests may be neutral but have their own idea of what is proper, and what is bad : that is, all non-natural forces which intrude the mortal world and affect it are bad, whether they affect it supposedly for law, chaos, good, or evil. As such, angels and demons are equally unwelcome. However, it should be noted that good extraplanar beings usually abide by rules of minimum intervention with the affairs of mortals, which is rarely the case with demons.

**- Restrictions** : Variable, in accordance to the type of nature-priest.

### KITS, EQUIPMENT, AND FOLLOWERS:

**- Priest's kits** : Variable, in accordance to the type of nature-priest. The following kits will however, be most appropriate to nature-priests : Amazon, Barbarian, Explorer, Mystic, Outlaw, Pacifist, Peasant, Savage.

**- Starting equipment** : Nature-priests will begin their career with a holy symbol, and 3d6 X 10 gp. worth of equipment.

**- Followers are gained at** : 9<sup>th</sup> lvl, upon becoming an "Elder Druid / Shaman / etc.".

Followers gained : variable, in accordance to the type of nature-priest.

### NOTE :

The "Hierophant" rules given in this class' description are of my own, inspired from the Unearthed Arcana. Nonetheless, the five nature-priests given in the following pages have been designed as follows : the Druid comes from the basic rules, and the Guardian from the Dark-Sun setting. The others have been made using the POS&M customization rules. Otherwise, the experience level progression of druids from the ADD core rules, appears to me as a perfect nonsense. It is very fast at low level, and very slow at high level with no real justification. For that reason I suggest that all nature-priests use the same level progression as specialty priests. (If you compare the two, a nature-priest is here 15<sup>th</sup> lvl when a core-rule druid is 14<sup>th</sup> lvl ; but then is 25<sup>th</sup> lvl when a druid is 17<sup>th</sup> lvl !!).

## **DRUIDIC ORDER :**

In most campaign settings the term "druid" means a priest worshipping nature, and who can be found in almost any culture. However, that word comes from the Celts, and for those playing in medieval Europe-like campaign settings, here is a clarification :

Druids, appeared about 3500 years ago with the Celts, of whom they were the only priests. Then, a thousand years later, did appear other druids (that is, Celtic priests) who worshiped different gods rather than the Earth-Goddess Danu. As such, these different druids did not belong to the traditional Druidic order. So, it came that all Celtic priests would be called druids, even if many of them were in fact specialty priests (see page:14). Anyway, the druids who worshipped the goddess Danu (i.e.: the majority) belong to an organization often simply called the *Druidic order*. Although other nature-priests always existed everywhere, the Druidic order was limited to the Celtic regions and always remained so.

**ORGANIZATION :** all druids belong to a worldwide structure, and at their upper levels (12th and above), only a limited number of druids can hold each level.

At 12th level, a **Druid** character acquires the official title of "Druid" (below the 12th, the official name is "initiate"). However, there can be only nine 12th-level druids in any region. A character cannot reach 12th level unless he takes his place as one of the nine druids. This possible only if there are currently fewer than nine druids in the region, or if the character defeats one of the nine druids in a challenge, the loser dropping to 11<sup>th</sup> level.

Similarly, only three **Archdruids** (13th lvl) can operate in a same region. To become an archdruid, a 12th-level druid must defeat one of the reigning archdruids or advance into a vacant position.

The **Great Druid** (14th level) is unique in his region. He, too, won his position from the previous great druid.

The highest ranking druid in the world is the **Grand Druid** (15th level). Unlike great druids, only one person in the world can ever hold this title. Consequently, only one druid can be 15<sup>th</sup> level at any time. However, this ultimate position is not won through a challenge. Instead, the Grand Druid selects his successor from the acting great druids.

Lastly, when a Grand Druid reaches the 16th level, he can step down from his position (provided he can find a suitable successor), and

become a **Hierophant** druid. These druids do not belong anymore to the hierarchy, and there can be any number of them.

## **DRUID (CELTIC NATURE-PRIEST)**

Druids are those nature-priests of the Celtic society who worship the Goddess Danu. They acknowledge the other Celtic gods, but only revere the earth-goddess under her myriad of aspects (mountain, grove, river, sacred animal, etc...). As such, protection of nature is of prime importance to druids. Sacred groves and circles of standing stones are the temples of druids, never buildings.

### **Requirements:**

Ability scores: minimum wisdom of 12 and charisma of 15.

Alignment : True Neutral only.

### **Combat:**

Hit-Dice: **d8** ; Thac0: Priest.

Weapons: club, dart, dagger, scimitar, sickle, sling, spear, and staff.

Armor: leather armor and wooden shield only.

### **Required Proficiencies:**

none.

### **Spheres of Spells:**

Major access: All, Animal, Elemental, Healing, Plant, Sun, and Weather.

Minor access: Divination.

### **Special powers:**

Druidic Tongue: they speak a secret language of their own, that non-druids do not know.

Bonus saves: they gain a +2 bonus to all saving throws vs. fire or electrical attacks.

Identification: at 3<sup>rd</sup> level they can accurately identify plants, animals and pure water.

Pass without trace: at 3<sup>rd</sup> level they can pass through overgrown areas (thick thorn bushes...) without leaving a trail and at normal speed.

New languages: at 3<sup>rd</sup> level, and each new level thereafter, they can one language of woodland creatures at the cost of 1 CP.

Immunity: at 7<sup>th</sup> level they become immune to *charm* spells cast by woodland creatures.

Shapechange: at 7<sup>th</sup> level they gain the ability of shapechange into a bird / reptile / mammal, up to three times per day (see description of that power at the cleric class).

### **Allowed Kits:**

Barbarian, Explorer, Mystic, Prophet, Savage.

### **Followers:**

Druids gain 3 druids assistants of 1d4+2 levels. Then, at 12<sup>th</sup> lvl they are 1d4+5 levels, and at 14<sup>th</sup> lvl and up they are of 11<sup>th</sup> level each.

## DRUNE (DARK NATURE-PRIEST)

Drunes are nature-priests who worship the most destructive aspect of nature. For them, the weak deserve to die, in order for nature being able to grow strong. As such, civilization is the support of degeneration and must be combated.

Drunes come from an old perverted branch of the Druids (see above). They worship dark gods of the earth; refuse to help, cure, or heal anyone in need of it (even their allies); and customarily practice human sacrifices (victims speared in the chest, then thrown in bog swamps).

Their organization is a parody of that of druids.

### Requirements:

Ability scores: minimum strength, wisdom, and constitution of 13.

Alignment : N, NE.

### Combat:

Hit-Dice: d8 ; Thac0: Priest.

Weapons: dagger, mace (spiked), spear, staff.

Armor: leather armor and wooden shield only.

### Required Proficiencies:

none.

### Spheres of Spells:

Major access: All, Animal, Elemental, Combat, Plant, and Weather ; + wizard school of magic of Necromancy (see below special powers).

Minor access: Charm, Protection, Summoning.

### Special powers:

Drune Tongue: they speak a secret language of their own, that non-drunes do not know.

Immunity: they are immune to all diseases.

Wizard spells: they have access to wizard spells of the Necromancy school, in addition to their priest spheres (gained like priest spells).

Shapechange: at 7<sup>th</sup> level they gain the ability of shapechange into a bird / reptile / mammal, up to three times per day (see description at cleric).

### Special limitations:

Fanaticism: drunes cannot tolerate those not of their faith, and cannot hide their contempt for them. Hence they suffer a -4 penalty on all such encounter reactions.

Healing magic: drunes are forbidden to benefit from any healing or curing magic. Only natural regeneration, or that of shapechange may do.

### Allowed Kits:

Barbarian, Outlaw.

### Followers:

As for Druids (see above).

## GUARDIAN (SOLITARY SHAMAN)

Guardians are solitary and independent nature-priests who choose a specific area of wilderness (their "Guarded land") to nurture, and protect from any depredation, including the expanse of civilization in it.

There are no organization of Guardians.

### Requirements:

Ability scores: minimum wisdom of 12 and constitution of 15.

Alignment : True Neutral.

### Combat:

Hit-Dice: d8 ; Thac0: Priest.

Weapons: all weapons allowed.

Armor: none.

### Required Proficiencies:

none.

### Spheres of Spells:

Major access: All, Animal, Elemental (two most appropriate elements according to guarded land's nature), Guardian, Healing, Plant, and Wards.

Minor access: none.

### Special powers:

Out of sight: while in their guarded lands, they can pass without trace like druids, or when not moving nor casting spell, be totally undetectable by normal means (but not against magic detect).

Speak with animals: as the spell but permanent, gained at 3<sup>rd</sup> level with animals in guarded land, and at 7<sup>th</sup> level with all animals.

Speak with plants: as the spell but permanent, gained at 5<sup>th</sup> level with plants in guarded land, and at 9<sup>th</sup> level with all plants.

Nourishment : at 7<sup>th</sup> level they can live without food nor drink when they are in their guarded lands (they draw life energy directly from their guarded land).

Shapechange: at 9<sup>th</sup> level they gain the ability of shapechange into a bird / reptile / mammal, up to three times per day (see description at cleric).

### Special limitations:

Guardianship: they must spend at least half of their time on their guarded land nurturing and protecting it. If these are destroyed/defiled, guardians loose their spells and power until restoration is made, or other appropriate atonement is done.

### Allowed Kits:

Mystic, Pacifist, Peasant, Savage.

### Followers:

2d6 creatures native to the guardian's guarded land, randomly determined as for rangers.



## ANIMIST (TRIBAL SHAMAN)

Animists (as Tribal Shamans) are mostly found serving their tribe in savage, barbaric, or other nomadic societies. They customarily act as guides, protectors, and advisors, using their magical powers to defend the tribe. Animists also often serve as keepers of knowledge and legend for their people, and lead the tribe in various rites and ceremonies required by the tribe's belief system.

### Requirements:

Ability scores: minimum wisdom & constitution of 12

Alignment : any neutral (NG, LN, N, CN, NE).

### Combat:

Hit-Dice: **d8** ; Thac0: Priest.

Weapons: all tribal weapons allowed.

Armor: leather and studded leather armor ; and wooden shield.

### Required Proficiencies:

none.

### Spheres of Spells:

Major access: All, Animal, Healing, Protection, Summoning, Travelers, and Wards.

Minor access: Plant.

### Special powers:

Turn Undead: as for clerics / priests.

Spirit power: they have the ability to contact & summon the three classes of spirits (PO S&M ability summarized below).

### Allowed Kits:

Amazon, Barbarian, Savage.

### Followers:

1d4 animists assistants of 3<sup>rd</sup> level; and 1d4 creatures randomly determined as for rangers.

**Spirit Summoning**: this is the *PO S&M* power found pages 35-38 of that handbook.

This power enables shamans to contact and then establish a link with one or several spirits (the level determines the number and power of these spirits). Thereafter, the shamans are able to call upon these spirits to get a help which will take the form of an advice, or specific spell imparted on them.

Summoning a spirit requires 1 turn of ritual, and has a base chance of success of 10% per level, plus 10% per additional turn of ritual, minus 10% per precedent attempt at summoning the same day.

There are minor, major, and great spirits, which all belong to one of the three following categories : Spirits of the Dead (i.e.: ancestral spirits), Animal Spirits, and Spirits of Nature.

## WITCH-PRIESTESS

Witch-priestesses are in fact the descendants of ancient druids, in areas where they were wiped out by civilization. They are often accused of worshipping the Devil, but are in fact fertility priestesses. However, due to the persecutions they must endure from them, are the bitter and cruel enemies of the "True Faith" and Church. Their religious rituals greatly reminisce those of druids, but have been called "Black-Sabbat" by the ignorant and obscurantist.

For some reason, all witch-priestesses are in fact female. They are somewhat organized into Covens of their own kind.

### Requirements:

Ability scores: minimum wisdom of 12 and charisma of 15.

Alignment : N, CN.

### Combat:

Hit-Dice: **d6** ; Thac0: Rogues.

Weapons: dagger, sickle, sling, and staff.

Armor: none.

### Required Proficiencies:

none.

### Spheres of Spells:

Major access: All, Animal, Divination, Elemen-tal, Healing, Plant, and Weather.

Minor access: Charm, and Protection.

### Special powers:

Witch Tongue: they speak a secret language of their own, that non-witches do not know.

Spirit power: they have the ability to contact & summon the three classes of spirits (as per the shamans).

Identification: at 3<sup>rd</sup> level they can accurately identify plants, animals and pure water.

Immunity: at 7<sup>th</sup> level they become immune to *charm* spells cast by woodland creatures.

Shapechange: at 9<sup>th</sup> level they gain the ability of shapechange into a bird / reptile / mammal, up to three times per day (see description at cleric).

### Special limitations:

Apprentice: they must find and educate a witch apprentice when reaching 9<sup>th</sup> level. If they don't, they must earn double experience points to raise in level. The apprentice must be trained until 3<sup>rd</sup> level, then looked after.

### Allowed Kits:

Amazon, Outlaw, Peasant.

### Followers:

None

# ELEMENTAL PRIEST

Elemental-priests are all manner of priests and mystics whose spiritual path is directly linked to one of the four elements from which the universe is made. At the origin, they were probably nature-priests who over time found that by "following the path of air / earth / fire / or water", they would (in their point of view), achieve a greater understanding of the universe than mere druids and the like. Whether this may be true or not, elemental-priests usually gain greater magical powers than more traditional priests. Otherwise, most elemental-priests are free-willed characters, being more often hermits or wandering mystics than organized clergy. In fact, there is no "church of the element" per se, even if here and there are found some great powerful temples dedicated to any one of the four elements.

Although many elemental-priests recognize some deity as the archetype of their chosen element (goddesses for earth and water, gods for air and fire), they do not worship them. Instead, all elemental-priests follow a sort of religious philosophy based on the element and its spiritual significance. As such, Air is the quintessence of spirituality ; Earth is the great old-mother of the world ; Fire is the primordial energy of purification ; and Water is the source of all life. Nonetheless, elemental-priests types often reflect their chosen element "of worship". As such, flame-priests will often be enthusiast and combative (if not aggressive); earth-priests much materialistic ; water-priests sensitive and emotional; wind-priests mostly intellectual and spiritual.

## CHARACTER CLASS' REQUIREMENTS:

- **Ability scores** : Elemental-priests must have minimum scores of 12 in wisdom.

- **Prime requisites** : Wisdom. Priests with prime requisites of 16 or more gain a bonus of 10% to the experience points they earn.

- **Alignment** : Elemental-priests may only be of neutral alignments : NG, N, or NE.

## PRIEST'S PROGRESSION TABLE :

Hit dice: **d6** ; Thac0: Rogue ;

Experience level points: Priest.

## CHARACTER POINTS (CPs) AWARD :

Base 14, + bonus for high intelligence (i.e.: bonus nb. of lang.), + 2 CPs per level above the first, if any.

First-level priests must spend a minimum of 8 CPs on nonweapon proficiencies, and 4 CPs on weapon proficiencies ; other CPs being used, or kept for later use, freely.

## ALLOWED WEAPONS AND ARMORS :

- **Weapons and armors** : They may use any weapon, but they will commonly restrict themselves to those weapons that are somehow related to their chosen element :

**AIR**: weapons guided by the air: all bows, blowgun, or sling. Spears are also acceptable, used either in melee or missile combat.

**EARTH**: all weapons of stone or metal.

**FIRE**: all flaming weapons such as flaming arrows, burning oil, or any magical weapons enchanted to somehow burn or scald.

**WATER**: water being the bringer of life, all weapons made of organic origin, that is, usually wood or bone: bow, club, mace, staff, spear, etc.

Proficiency costs for these weapons : 3 CPs.

- **Armors** : They are limited to leather /studded leather armors, except for the earth elemental-priests who can only wear metal and are thus limited to chainmail.

- **Allowed fighting-styles** : Priests know the four following fighting-styles : One-handed-weapon, Two-handed-weapon, Weapon-and-shield, Thrown-weapon.

- **Fighting & weapon style specialty** : elemental-priests may purchase : one fighting-style specialization (for 2 CPs).

## PRIEST'S COMPETENCIES :

- **Nonweapon proficiencies** : Bonus: none. Access to categories: *General, Priest*.

- **Skills**: None.

- **Powers**: They all get the same powers, but as appropriate to their element of worship:

**BONUS SAVE** : they gain a +4 bonus to all their saves against spells of the element of "their worship" (wizard, priest, and spell-like abilities). Otherwise they also receive a normal, non-penalized saving throw against such spells that do not normally allow a save.

**RESIST ELEMENT** : they can ignore the presence of the element they worship, upon reaching 5th level. This may be used once per day, for up to one round per experience level. It enables the cleric (and his equipment) to move, act, and be otherwise unaffected by the element, as if it weren't there.

**GATE ELEMENT** : they can gate material directly from his elemental plane, upon reaching 7th level. This may be used once per day, and gate one cubic foot per level above the sixth. This material will always be pure, raw, and basic; although the cleric may dictate the general shape it will take (a wall of stone, a curtain of flames, etc...). Maximum range is of 15 yards, and it does 1d6 dmg per level above the sixth, if applicable.

**TURN ELEMENTAL** : they can turn and control elemental of their element of worship as clerics turn undead (i.e.: number of hit-dice).

**ELEMENTAL POWER**: at 16<sup>th</sup> level, elemental-priests gain the ability to enter and survive their related elemental plane, and to summon a creature from that plane once per day. (See nature-priest power page 20.)

**- Spells** : Elemental-priests can cast spells and gain them the same way as clerics, except these are gained through the "Communion" with their elemental plane "of worship", rather than a deity. Otherwise elemental-priests may cast spells while wearing armor ; and gain additional spells when they have high wisdom scores.

Elemental priests gain access to spheres of:

- **Major access**: All, Elemental (of elemental plane of worship only), Healing, and Sun.
- **Minor access**: Creation, Divination, and Protection.
- **Wizard access**: elemental school of magic, of their chosen element. (Memorized and cast as if they were priest spells -major access-)

### PRIEST'S LIMITATIONS :

**- Constraints** : None as such ; however if you look at their spell progression, elemental-priests gain fewer spells than other priests. But this is compensated by the fact they can wield powerful wizard spells.

**- Restrictions** : None. Elemental-priests need not restrict their activities to supporting their element on the world, but direct opposition may however cause the spells (and powers) to be withheld. For instance, a water-cleric who goes out of his way to poison or otherwise damage a source of water might suffer for this.

### KITS, EQUIPMENT, AND FOLLOWERS:

**- Priest's kits** : Barbarian, Noble, Outlaw, Pacifist, Peasant, Savage, Scholar, Mystic.

**- Starting equipment** : Priests begin their career with a holy symbol, and 3d6 X 10 gp.

**- Followers are gained at** : 9th level, upon becoming a "High-Priest".

Followers gained : Devout followers of the character's faith:

a) 4-40 commoners (flock) : zero level everyday life devout followers.

b) 4-16 common soldiers : 1st level fighters, Soldier kit. (poor equipment).

c) 1 leader soldier : 5th level fighter, Soldier kit. (good equipment, and medium warhorse).

d) Retinue of priests: 2-8 acolytes (1st level priests) ; 2 assistants (3rd level priests) ; 1 chief assistant (5th level priest) ; all of them with appropriate kits. (poor equipment).

Priest level	Spell level						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	1						
2	2						
3	2	1					
4	3	2					
5	4	2	1				
6	4	2	2				
7	4	3	2	1			
8	4	3	3	2			
9	4	3	3	2	1		
10	4	4	3	2	2		
11	4	4	4	3	3	1	
12	4	4	4	4	3	2	
13	5	5	4	4	3	2	1
14	5	5	5	4	4	2	1
15	5	5	5	5	4	2	2
16	5	5	5	5	5	3	2
17	5	5	5	5	5	3	3
18	6	5	5	5	5	3	3
19	6	6	5	5	5	3	3
20	6	6	6	5	5	4	3
21	6	6	6	6	5	5	3
22	6	6	6	6	5	5	4
23	6	6	6	6	6	5	4
24	6	6	6	6	6	5	5
25	6	6	6	6	6	6	5

(Note this table is different from that of other priests, and that they do not get Quest spells)

### NOTE :

This character class is inspired by the Dark-Sun cleric, but is of my own design (and abide by *PO* customization principles).

# TEMPLAR

Templars are the greatly feared and hated oppressors who rule many of the city-states. They are both clergymen and magistrates, charged with enforcing the laws and edicts of their religious, political organizations. Such edicts usually include enforcing worship and homage to their master (most of the time an immortal, but also sometimes a powerful tyrant like an Erriten sorcerer-king). Templars' orders are near always organized in strict hierarchical structures, and steeped in treacherous politics. To city dwellers, the templars are the enforcers of the immortal / sorcerer king's will, allowed to run rampant, enforcing the local edicts with diligent indifference, doling out punishment or even execution with their master's blessing. An organization of wicked men looking out for their own wealth and power, the templars are overrun with corruption to the highest level; but their masters generally turn a blind eye to bribery and scandal among them, provided unfailing domination is maintained among their subject populations. Templars are thus generally regarded with fear and distrust. Their power to accuse and imprison nearly anyone for any reason keeps people in terror.

Templars are initially trained as warriors and, at lower levels, are thus forced to garrison temples and palaces in their city state. Then, advancement within their ranks is often gained through all manners of bribery, theft, scheming or even assassination. Thus, the higher ranking positions in their orders, are generally held by the most powerful templars. Otherwise, their spells are received directly from the immortal or sorcerer-king they serve. Spells can be taken away by their master if the templar has somehow displeased him. If the immortal / sorcerer-king is also particularly displeased, he might well kill the offending templar.

## CHARACTER CLASS' REQUIREMENTS:

- **Ability scores** : Wisdom of 9 or better, and intelligence of 10 or better.

- **Prime requisites** : Wisdom. Templars with prime requisite of 16 or more gain bonus of 10% to the experience points they earn.

- **Alignment** : A templar character may be either of neutral or evil alignments. There are no good templars.

## TEMPLAR'S PROGRESSION TABLE :

Hit dice: **d10**; Thac0: Priest;

Experience level points: Priest.

## CHARACTER POINTS (CPs) AWARD :

Base 14, + bonus for high intelligence (i.e.: bonus nb. of lang.), + 2 CPs per level above the first, if any.

First-level templars must spend a minimum of 8 CPs on nonweapon proficiencies, and 6 CPs on weapon proficiencies (weapon & fighting style specializations included); other CPs being used, or kept for later use, freely.

## ALLOWED WEAPONS AND ARMORS :

- **Weapons** : They may use all weapons, available in the campaign world.

Proficiency costs for these weapons: 3 CPS.

- **Armors** : Templars may wear any armor, and use any shield.

- **Allowed fighting-styles** : They know the four following fighting-styles : One-handed -weapon, Two-handed-weapon, Weapon-and-shield, and Thrown-weapon.

- **Fighting & weapon style specialty** : weapon expertise (3 CPs), and fighting-styles specialization (3 CPs each). Templars may buy as many fighting-styles specialization as they want, but are limited to only one weapon expertise (that they can buy at 3<sup>rd</sup> level).

## TEMPLAR'S COMPETENCIES :

- **Nonweapon proficiencies** : Bonus: none. Access to categories: *General, Priest*.

- **Skills** : Templars, being magistrates in addition to being priests, get official powers and authority within their city-state as they advance in level:

- **A templar can call upon a slave to do whatever he wants.** Slaves (whoever could be their rightful owner) who do not do as ordered by a templar, face immediate death.

- **A templar can pass judgement upon a slave at any time.** In any matter involving disobedience or the actions of a slave, a templar may judge, sentence, or pardon a slave as he sees fit, regardless of who owns the slave. Penalties can include imprisonment, torture, or even death.



- **A templar can legally enter the house of a freeman** when he reaches **2<sup>nd</sup> level**. The freeman has no right to refuse the templar admission, under punishment of imprisonment and possible execution.

- **A templar can requisition soldiers** when he reaches **3<sup>rd</sup> level**. He can call upon 1d4 soldiers per level. These will be 1<sup>st</sup>-lvl templars with one 2<sup>nd</sup>-lvl templar sergeant. A templar can call upon soldiers any time he wishes, but the soldiers cannot be ordered to leave the city without permission from the templar's master.

- **A templar can accuse a freeman of disloyalty** or similar crimes when he reaches **4<sup>th</sup> level**. Regardless of evidence, an accused freeman will be locked in prison for as long as the accusing templar wishes.

- **A templar can gain access to all areas in palaces and temples** when he reaches **5<sup>th</sup> level**. Before that time the templar is restricted from areas such as libraries, council chambers, and a few other places, unless ordered to go there by a higher-level templar.

- **A templar can draw upon the city treasury for official investigations** when he reaches **6<sup>th</sup> level**. The number of gold piece she can draw from the treasury is equal to the roll of a number of 10-sided dice equal to the templar's level, multiplied by his level, per month. For example, a 7<sup>th</sup> level templar would roll 7d10 then multiply the result by 7. Few questions are asked when gold is requisitioned, provided no attempt is made to withdraw funds more often than once per month.

- **A templar can pass judgement on a freeman** when he reaches **7<sup>th</sup> level**. The freeman must be at least two levels lower than the judging templar, regardless of the freeman's class. Judgement can be in the form of a fine, a stretch of time in the dungeons, enslavement, execution, or anything else the templar wishes. Failure to comply makes the judged freeman an outlaw who, if caught, will be executed. Again, there need be no real evidence against the freeman being judged.

- **A templar can accuse a noble** when he reaches **10<sup>th</sup> level**. This is similar to the ability of the templar to accuse freemen, but permits the character to take action against the nobility on behalf of the sorcerer-king.

- **A templar can pass judgement on a noble** (just as he can judge a freeman) when he reaches **15<sup>th</sup> level**. The noble must be at least two levels lower than the judging templar.

- **A templar can grant a pardon to any condemned man** when he reaches **17<sup>th</sup> level**.

Only the sorcerer-king himself can nullify the pardons granted by such a character.

- **Powers** : they gain the following power, but only within their city-state however :

**COMMAND UNDEAD** : Templars have power over undead, but only to raise or ally with them, never to turn them away or destroy. As discussed for evil priests and undead in the Player's Handbook, this is resolved in the same way as a turning attempt. Up to 12 undead can be commanded; a "T" result means the undead automatically obey the character, while a "D" means the undead become totally subservient to the templar. They follow his commands (to the best of their ability and understanding) until they are turned, commanded, or destroyed by another.

- **Spells** : Templars may cast priest spells like clerics. They get access to:

- **Major access**: All, Chaos *or* Law, Charm, Combat, Divination, Guardian, Summoning, War, and Wards.

- **Minor access**: Healing, Necromantic, Protection, and Thought.

Priest level	Spell level						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1							
2	1						
3	1	1					
4	2	1					
5	3	2					
6	3	2	1				
7	3	2	2				
8	3	3	2	1			
9	3	3	3	1			
10	3	3	3	2			
11	4	3	3	2	1		
12	4	4	3	3	1		
13	4	4	4	3	2		
14	5	5	4	4	2	1	
15	6	6	5	5	3	2	1
16	7	7	6	6	4	3	1
17	7	7	7	7	5	4	2
18	8	8	8	8	6	4	2
19	9	9	9	9	7	5	3
20	9	9	9	9	8	6	4
21	9	9	9	9	9	7	5
22	9	9	9	9	9	8	6
23	9	9	9	9	9	9	7
24	9	9	9	9	9	9	8
25	9	9	9	9	9	9	9

(Note this table is different from that of other priests, and that templars do not get Quest spells)



Templars spell progression is slower at low levels, than for normal priests. At 15th level, though, the progression increases drastically as the character enters the upper ranks of the templar hierarchy. At the highest levels, templars have more spells available to them than normal priests of the same level.

Templars have normally access to extensive libraries of magical knowledge (unavailable to outsiders), in their city-state. Their use allows sage knowledge on arcane matters, and also facilitate magical research, thus templars may begin creating scrolls at 6<sup>th</sup> level and potions at 8<sup>th</sup> level (of which they have the formulas).

### TEMPLAR'S LIMITATIONS :

- **Constraints** : Templars must obey any order given to them by their hierarchical superiors within their order. The templars' hierarchy is measured strictly by experience level. A templar of higher level can negate any action taken by one of lower level (prevent the requisitioning of money or troops, release accused prisoners, etc.). Templars of the same level who disagree must seek out someone of higher level within the hierarchy to arbitrate their differences.

Lastly the templars from one city state have no association with those from another. Therefore, templars cannot transfer loyalty from one immortal or sorcerer-king to another while the first is still alive. Should a templar's master fall from power or be killed, he may petition to another one for acceptance, where he may find an open hand or the taste of steel, at the new master's whim.

- **Restrictions** : Templars also get the three following restrictions :

**REACTION PENALTY** : Templars are hated by all, therefore, they suffer a -2 penalty to all their encounter reactions with NPCs (except for other templars) within their city-state. Moreover, they have a 10% per level chance, to being the target of an assassination attempt, at least once per level...

**LIMITS ON AUTHORITY** : As a rule, Templars can have no more than one person accused and jailed per level. They may judge or pardon no more than one person per week. They may never accuse, judge, or pardon another templar who is of equal or higher level. Moreover the administrative powers and authority of templars do not extend outside their city-states.

**MAGIC** : the command-undead power of templars does not functions outside their city-state area of influence (except when an undead has been submitted). Moreover, when templars want to memorize spells outside their city-state area of influence, templars must have a special focus (holy-symbol) for doing so ; otherwise they won't be able to regain spells. Within their city-state, such focus is not required however.

### KITS, EQUIPMENT, AND FOLLOWERS:

- **Templar's basic kits** : Disciple, Priest-of-faith, Scholar, Soldier.

- **Starting equipment** : Templars begin their career with holy symbol and holy-bible, and 3d6 X 10 gp.

- **Followers are gained at** : 11<sup>th</sup> level, upon becoming a "Magistrate".

Followers gained : one 4<sup>th</sup> level templar for assistant. This follower will be replaced if slain. Otherwise, templars never gain followers as do other priests. They never receive official approval to establish religious strongholds : an immortal / sorcerer-king's life revolves around his one city and, while that may expand, he will never open branch areas that he cannot control.

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### NOTE :

The Templar class comes from the Dark-Sun campaign setting. However, the spheres of spells were somewhat different in this setting : air, earth, fire, water and cosmos instead of the regular rules' selection. Therefore, I modified the class in giving it normal spheres, and then making it fit the PO system of customization. Nonetheless, if you prefer the original version (which is the same except for spell availability and hit-dice), refer to the Dark-Sun boxed set, or the class description available for free on Wotc official Internet site.

Templars belong to the only priest class who gets spells not from deities, but instead from a powerful and mortal (that is: killable) individual, like a sorcerer-king. However, no non-godlike being should be able to give spells in that manner, even if that being is a 30<sup>th</sup> level spellcaster. Therefore I suggest that the templars' master give them spells with the help of an external source of power of some kind. This could be a powerful artefact (but the size of a pyramid), an imprisoned greater demon, etc... Alternately, the templars' master could be a minor demi-god residing on the prime plane and ruling a small region (like a city-state).

# FANATIC

Fanatics are the priests of those peculiar religions (usually monotheistic), who have in common the central belief that all magic are evil, the doing of demons, and therefore must be combated. As such, the Fanatics' primary duty is to relentlessly hunt down and destroy all magic-users ("these agents of the Devil"). Hence, fanatics do not get magic (i.e.: spells), and also cannot use nor suffer others to use any form of magic. (Even psionics are viewed with suspicion). In fact, there are no worst enemies of magic in the world, than fanatics. Anyway, fanatics must still live by strict tenets which guide their behavior. They are thus expected to serve their faith, protect their community from the "Devil", and hunt down all heresies (as for them, all other religions, especially the pagan ones, are lies and as such should be opposed). Otherwise, it should be noted that fanatics often get their powers from unyielding faith, and training, not from any god.

Fanatics are rare. They will appear only in settings where the world did much suffer from evil sorcerers, or even priests. Also, it should be noted that fanatics will rarely serve a deity but rather belong to monotheistic faiths who do worship a distant and aloof "supreme god".

## CHARACTER CLASS' REQUIREMENTS:

- **Ability scores** : Wisdom of 9 or better.
- **Prime requisites** : Wisdom. Fanatics with prime requisite of 16 or more gain bonus of 10% to the experience points they earn.
- **Alignment** : Fanatics may only be of lawful alignments (LG, LN, LE). Note that most fanatics will be LN or LE dangerous extremists. LG fanatics tend to be rare.

## FANATIC'S PROGRESSION TABLE :

Hit dice: **d8**; Thac0: Priest;

Experience level points: Priest.

## CHARACTER POINTS (CPs) AWARD :

Base 14, + bonus for high intelligence (i.e.: bonus nb. of lang.), + 2 CPs per level above the first, if any.

First-level fanatics must spend a minimum of 8 CPs on nonweapon proficiencies, and 6 CPs on weapon proficiencies ; other CPs being used, or kept for later use, freely.

## ALLOWED WEAPONS AND ARMORS :

- **Weapons** : Fanatics can use only blunt and bludgeoning weapons : club, maces, sling, staff, warhammer, etc. (As their faith forbids them to "shed blood", which should have theoretically mean of not spreading violence, but has been interpreted literally instead.)

Proficiency costs for these weapons: 3 CPS.

- **Armors** : Fanatics may wear all armors and use any shield.

- **Allowed fighting-styles** : Fanatics know the four following fighting-styles : One-handed-weapon, Two-hand-weapon, Weapon-and-shield, Thrown-weapon.

- **Fighting & weapon style specialty** : weapon expertise (3 CPs), and fighting-styles specialization (3 CPs each). Fanatics may buy as many fighting-styles specialization as they want, but are limited to only one weapon expertise (that they can buy at 3<sup>rd</sup> level).

## FANATIC'S COMPETENCIES :

- **Nonweapon proficiencies** : Bonus: none. Access to categories: *General, Priest*.

- **Skills** : Fanatics get the following skills:

**PREACHING** : fanatics are expert orators and have the ability to enthrall and influence an audience of NPCs.

When sermonizing before followers of their own faith, or a non-hostile group, fanatics can try to influence the listeners. Everyone in the group listening must roll a saving throw vs. paralyzation (for crowds, make saving throws for groups of people using average hit dice). The saving-throw is modified by -1 per three levels of the fanatic (rounded down): If it fails, the audience is enthralled (as per the 2<sup>nd</sup> lvl priest spell), for up to one hour. In addition, the fanatic can utter one *mass suggestion* (as per the 6<sup>th</sup> lvl wizard spell) on all those enthralled characters who are of his own faith.

**DETECT MAGIC** : base 15%, + 5% per level above the first, up to a 90% at 16<sup>th</sup> lvl.

It may be used at will, provided the fanatic does nothing but concentrate for a full round. He perceives the presence of magic as a dull throb in his head (dim, faint, moderate, strong or over-whelming), learning what is emitting magical radiation up to 18 yards away. Type of magic is not determined ; walls or other heavy screens tend to block the detection.

**DETECT ILLUSIONS** : 10% chance per level, up to a maximum of 90% at 9<sup>th</sup> lvl.

It may be used at will, provided the fanatic does nothing but concentrate for a full round. He perceives illusions up to 18 yards away, as translucent images, seeing through them as though these were a light mist.

**- Powers** : Fanatics cannot cast spells, and are moreover forbidden to use *any* magic (or magical item). However, their strong and unrelenting faith gives them the following powers in compensation :

**DISRUPT MAGIC** : it is a unique special power of fanatics, who have a undying hate of magic and magical creatures. They can use this ability once per day per two experience levels, in either one of these two ways :

Dispel magic : at player's choice this either functions as a *dispel evil*, or *dispel magic* spell.

Disrupt spellcaster : severs the connection between a spell-casting or magic creature, and its source of magic. This ability requires the victim must save vs. death-magic (however, magic resistance does not hinder this power). A bonus or penalty of 1 per level difference between the victim and the fanatic, is applied to this saving throw. If successful nothing happens, otherwise the victim will suffer from the following effects for one turn per level of the fanatic. (Furthermore, should the victim fail his saving throw by more than 5, this duration will be of hours per level instead of turns, and of days per levels in the case of a natural saving throw roll of 1) :

1) creatures normally immune to non-magical weapons will be affected by normal weapons for the disruption's duration.

2) Spell-casters will not be able to cast any spell or spell-like powers for the disruption's duration. (Ability to use magical items is not affected by it).

**MAGIC RESISTANCE** : fanatics have the great benefit of magic-resistance, however it is always active, affects magical items use (for those fanatics who would unwillingly use some potion, weapon, item, etc...) as well as spells, and also cannot be willingly lowered. This immunity is in addition to any saving throw normally allowed.

Mind-resistance : have a 10% per level, up to a maximum of 90% at 9<sup>th</sup> level, resistance to magical or magic-like phenomena (but not psionical) which affect the mind. This includes powers of beguiling, charm, domination, hold, hypnosis, magic-jar, possession, suggestion, sleep, etc...

Magic resistance : base 15% chance, plus 5% per level above the first, up to a maximum of 90% at 16<sup>th</sup> lvl., full MR to spells and magic of any sort.

**TURN UNDEAD** : fanatics get the ability to turn undead (but not command them).

**HEALING ABILITIES** : fanatics gain limited regenerative powers, they can either use on themselves, or other humanoid beings. However, for these powers to be effective, the character being healed will have be a devout follower of the same faith as the fanatic who intends to heal him. In fact these powers aren't magical at all, but are rather the result of self-fulfilling prophecies brought about largely by the fanatic's and recipient's belief that God will support and help His true servants in the face of adversity. However, unlike magical powers these require the recipient makes a successful save against poison to be effective (because it is more a placebo than a true healing power).

Cure diseases : fanatics can cure diseases of all sorts (though not cursed afflictions such as lycanthropy). This can be done once per week per five level of experience (i.e.: lvl.1-5 : once per week ; lvl.6-10 : twice per week ; etc...).

Lay on hands : once per day, fanatics can heal themselves or someone else by laying on hands. They restores 2 hit points per level in this fashion. However, there is an additional restriction with this ability that they should in fact "merit it". Therefore they can benefit of this power only if the wounds to be healed were gotten during a "just fight", such as trying to rid the world of a despicable user of magic.

**- Spells** : Absolutely none. It would be the worst of sins for a fanatic, to use magic.

### FANATIC'S LIMITATIONS :

**- Constraints** : as sorts of narrow-minded characters of near maniacal behavior, fanatics must indeed abide by several constraints :

**CODE OF CONDUCT** : fanatics must live in accordance to their faith's ethic, otherwise they run the risk of losing some or all of their powers (though they may be regained by way of appropriate penance, in the case of minor faults). This code of conduct is the following : Fanatics must respect and fear "God"; they may not indulge in pleasures, as it leads to vice, which is synonymous with the Devil ; and they should not laugh or be joyous, as this is disrespectful of God. Fanatics must remain chaste, and be obedient to their hierarchy. In addition, fanatics are of course expected to perform their daily duty of religious service ;

and combat paganism, heresy and sorcery relentlessly. (Note that killing, torturing, or enslaving pagans in the name of God, does not contradict their code of conduct. However it still contradict a LG fanatic's alignment.)

**MAGICAL ITEMS** : fanatics cannot possess nor use magical items of any sort. They can neither benefit from a spell cast on them by others. Magic-use is strictly forbidden to them, as it is evil, a manifestation of the Devil himself. Transgressing this precept is a major fault, which can make them lose all their special powers; sometimes only temporarily and sometimes forever :

If a fanatic ever knowingly do that violation, he must seek a high-level (7th or more) other fanatic, confess his sin, and do penance as prescribed by that fanatic. Fanatics who ever knowingly and willingly do that transgression more than once, lose their status of fanatic irrevocably (because they lost faith in "God and its sacred mission"). All benefits are then lost and no deed can restore the character to his class (and certainly not a *Wish* spell !!). Anyway, if a fanatic commits such transgression while enchanted or controlled by magic, he loses his fanatic status until he can atone for the deed. That is, he loses all of his special powers and benefits, until he completes some dangerous quest to once again prove his worth, and assuage his own guilt.

**WITCH HUNTING** : fanatics are bound to hunt down and destroy spell-casters, as such people are considered heretics, if not satanic worshipers. This concerns priests, mages, and witches without any distinctions (even for a lawful-good fanatic, a good aligned shaman who never encountered civilization before, is still considered a pagan who must be converted and atoned for his sins). Psionicists are often considered with suspicion, but they don't use magic thus can be tolerated, provided they "behave themselves".

**- Restrictions** : fanatics also abide by the following restriction :

**ASSOCIATES** : Fanatics will cooperate only with characters of their own faith. Other can be tolerated, provided they do not use magic (at least magic clearly visible; as characters wearing magical items of protection, or armor and weapons of the simplest sort can be –painfully– tolerated...) and are sincerely trying to convert themselves to the faith. However, they will not abide the company of pagans, heretics, and of course, spellcasters.

## KITS, EQUIPMENT, AND FOLLOWERS:

**- Fanatic's basic kits** : Scholar (but as a theologian), Soldier, Witch-hunter.

**- Starting equipment** : Fanatics begin their career with holy symbol and holy-bible, and 3d6 X 10 gp.

**- Followers are gained at** : 9th level, upon becoming a "Minister of the Faith".

Followers gained : Devout followers of the character's faith, which come if the fanatic has a stronghold :

a) 4-40 commoners (flock) : zero level everyday life devout followers.

b) 4-16 common soldiers : 1st level fighters (basic), Soldier kit. (poor equipment).

c) 1 leader soldier : 5th level fighter, Soldier kit. (good equipment, and medium warhorse).

d) Retinue of fanatics : 2-8 acolytes (1<sup>st</sup> level fanatics) ; 2 assistants (3<sup>rd</sup> level fanatics) ; 1 chief assistant (5<sup>th</sup> level fanatic) ; (all with poor equipment).

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## NOTE :

I designed that class for such religions, like several in our own world, who reject all magic, seeing it as a blasphemy of sorts. Clearly, such religions cannot have priests who cast spells. So I came up with this one.



# **PARDONER**

Pardoners are sort of rogue-like priests who use the church's influence to achieve wealth and power. Such characters can only be found in organized religions which grew complacent and corrupt. There, many priests do not serve anymore their god, nor follow the ethical standards they are expected to promote. On the contrary, these priests chose the orders to gain power over people *for themselves*. Outwardly, pardoner serves their faith, and they often can quote scripture and the Canon of the religion with the fervor of a prophet; but the pardoners' piety is only a clever facade. Through their knowledge of religion, they manipulate the faith of devout believers for their own gain.

This can even become worst, when a whole religion has so much degenerated, that the majority of its priests will be pardoners, and only a few real priests will remain. In such cases, most pardoners will genuinely believe themselves to be true priests of the faith, as will believe most of the followers. As such, and if they are really devout, they could get the Turn-Undead power, and even an occasional priest spell. But should they discover the error of their ways, they will have to begin it anew (dual class), to become real priests.

Anyway, it should be noted that pardoners get their abilities from training, not from God, and thus, do not risk to lose their abilities of class, solely by way of divine retribution.

In the campaign, most pardoners NPCs will belong to the Clergy, or the cloistered orders. These pardoners usually will get more religious training, than physical exercise. On the other hand, all missionaries sent by their religious order to distant lands to convert the pagans to the "true faith", or even within the civilized world to convert heretics back to "true religion", receive harder training, because their missions require they be mentally and physically tough. There also will be a few adventuring pardoners, such as PCs, armies' priests, wandering preachers, etc..., who get better fighting abilities than those who quietly remain in their churches/abbeys.

The character class description is centered on those pardoners, but the characteristics of the traditional clergy are also given in parenthesis.

## **CHARACTER CLASS' REQUIREMENTS:**

- **Ability scores** : Intelligence, wisdom, and charisma of 9 or better.

- **Prime requisites** : Charisma. Pardoners with prime requisite of 16 or more gain bonus of 10% to the experience points they earn.

- **Alignment** : Any, but pardoners better should be of an alignment appropriate to their religion. This is usually lawful (LG, LN, LE) or good (LG, NG, CG).

## **PARDONER'S PROGRESSION TABLE :**

Hit dice: **d8** ; Thac0: Priest

(\*Clergy : Hit dice: **d6** ; Thac0: Rogue.)

Experience level points: Priest.

## **CHARACTER POINTS (CPs) AWARD :**

Base 12, + bonus for high intelligence (i.e.: bonus nb. of lang.), + 2 CPs per level above the first, if any.

First-level pardoners must spend at least 6 CPs on nonweapon proficiencies, and 4 CPs on weapon proficiencies (weapon & fighting style specializations included); other CPs being used, or kept for later use, freely.

## **ALLOWED WEAPONS AND ARMORS :**

- **Weapons** : Pardoners are only allowed blunt and bludgeoning weapons such as : club, flails, maces, sling, staff, war-hammer, etc...

(\*Clergy : dagger and staff only.)

Proficiency cost for these weapons: 3 CPs.

- **Armors** : pardoners may wear all armors. It must be noted however, that pardoners will usually not wear any kind of armor, especially in times of peace.

(\*Clergy : only leather, padded, or studded-leather armors.)

- **Allowed fighting-styles** : They know the four following fighting-styles: One-handed-weapon, Two-handed-weapon, Weapon-and-shield, Thrown-weapon.

- **Fighting & weapon style specialty** : Pardoners may buy as many fighting-styles' specialization (3 CPs) as they want, and one (only) weapon expertise (at 5<sup>th</sup> lvl, and 3 CPs).

(\*Clergy : one style specialization, but no weapon-expertise.)



## PARDONER'S COMPETENCIES :

- **Nonweapon proficiencies** : Bonus: Read-writing, Religion. Access to categories: *General, Priest.*

- **Skills** : Pardoners all have the seven following special skills, which do work like thieving skills (i.e.: with % chance) : *Church-authority, Confession, Convert-new-followers, Detect-magic, Detect-noise, Read-languages, and Simony.*

To determine the initial percentage score of each pardoner's skill at 1st level, distribute 60 discretionary percentage points to these skills, which all have a base 10% at 1<sup>st</sup> level (*Clergy*: base 20%). Thereafter, each time they gain a new level, pardoners receive another 30 points to distribute.

**CHUCH AUTHORITY** : in effect, this skill is the ability to bind people to his will as with a *charm person* spell. Pardoners can employ this ability only on worshippers of their own religion ; using flattery, or making one guilty in relation to the precepts of the Church, they can influence people as if these were charmed. However, targets get a saving throw. At DM's discretion, the following modifiers may apply :

- bonus due to high wisdom score
- -2 to +2 according to a strong reputation.
- -2 if the target is LN, LG, or NG.
- -2 if the target well knows the pardoner.
- +2 if the target is CN, CE, or NE.
- +4 if the target is a criminal.

**CONVERT NEW FOLLOWERS** : in effect, this skill (which is useful chiefly to missionaries) is the ability to make new followers of the faith from pagans.

To convert new followers to the faith, pardoners will have to teach them the tenets of their faith, as well as educate and help them when the need arises. All of this requires much time and efforts ; with no certainty of success. Therefore, when encountering prospective "to-be-converted" pagans, pardoners must spend at least 1 month trying to convert them (by befriending, teaching, helping, etc...). At the end of that time a skill roll is made. If successful, the pardoner gets 1d10 new converts per level of experience. However, thereafter, these will have to be looked upon regularly (by any priest of the faith), or they will eventually abandon the faith.

Note that pardoners will then be able to exert their other skills upon these people.

**CONFESSION** : in effect, this skill is the ability to hear people in confession and thus gain useful information, or even secrets. However, not all people are ready to speak their mind on important matters, upon entering the confessional; and at other times notable information will be gotten from several mundane confessions. Thus, pardoners may hear several people everyday in confession, but only a limited number of them will tell news which may be of some use to them, and such information will rarely be automatically given to the confessor.

For each level of ability, pardoners can get one potential source of valuable information during each week. Such prospective victims are only found among worshippers of the pardoner's religion. The DM determines which information is gained. Nonetheless, these should be of some help in the course of the pardoner's objectives.

**DETECT-MAGIC** : as the thief's skill. (Note that pardoners' faith normally forbids magic, and that this skill should be used to fight it.)

**DETECT-NOISE** : as the thief's skill. (Note that pardoners gain this ability from listening people in confession, and for some, from the bad habit they have to spy on others, as their faith require they watch over their flock.)

**READ-LANGUAGES** : as the thief's skill. (Note that pardoners gain this ability mostly when they are engaged in scholarly preservation in monasteries, or in theological studies in religious universities.)

**SIMONY** : in effect, this skill is the ability to elicit donations. Those seeking to elicit more than a few coins per contributor incur penalties (-10% if eliciting more than 1d4 gp ; -25% if seeking more than one donation per month, from the same contributor). As with the pick-pockets ability check, the DM must decide the maximum amount a contributor can afford to donate ; obviously, an pardoner cannot extract a 25 gp donation from a peasant, regardless of his eloquence.

For each level of ability, pardoners can locate and solicit from one likely contributor during each day. However, such prospective victims will only be found among worshippers of the pardoner's religion. In foreign cultures (such as the barbarians lands), this ability will be of no use.

**- Powers** : Pardoners get the following powers, but only if they are true to the faith and sufficiently devout:

**TURN UNDEAD** : pardoners get the turn undead ability (but never command them).

**SOOTHING WORDS** : upon reaching the 3<sup>rd</sup> level, pardoners gain the ability to speak soothing words to ease tempers and calm angry peoples. They can use this power once per day per level of experience. Using soothing words accomplishes any one of the following:

a) Negates one *fear* spell (or similar monster ability) on a single victim.

b) Halts a single creature's berserker rage.

c) Temporarily calm down a number of animals or characters, whose combined levels or hit-dice total do not exceed twice the pardoner's level. A calmed group will usually remain calm for 1d4+1 rounds, as long as others refrain from hostile action against them, their allies, or their property. During this time, the pardoner can try to flee or negotiate.

**- Spells** : None. (However, at rare times, the DM may rule that a real devout pardoner gain a spell or two, if he were really in need of it. But this won't occur more than a few times, as this will be usually an invite to abandon the false ways he follows, and become a real priest that is : as a dual-class.)

### PARDONER'S LIMITATIONS :

**- Constraints** : Pardoners should in fact live in accordance to their faith's ethic ; typical demands including chastity, devotion, fasting, and poverty. However, many pardoners have no qualms about using their influence and power to further their own goals with no regards to whether or not this would betray the ethical standards they are supposed to promote. Nevertheless, pardoners must still obey their church hierarchy and laws (at least outwardly), or run the risk of church prosecution.

Otherwise, pardoners should only cooperate with characters of their own faith. Others can be tolerated provided they do not oppose the faith and behave themselves.

**- Restrictions** : Most of the pardoners' skills and powers come from interaction with people ; that is, people of the faith they serve. In other cultures their abilities are near useless. Therefore, missionaries and the like may have much better combat abilities than regular clergy, but it barely makes up for the lack of people with whom to exert their peculiar skills.

### KITS, EQUIPMENT, AND FOLLOWERS:

**- Pardoner's basic kits** : Beggar, Diplomat, Mystic, Noble, Outlaw, Peasant, Scholar, Soldier.

**- Starting equipment** : Pardoners begin their career with a holy bible, a holy symbol, and 3d6 X 10 gp.

**- Followers are gained at** : 9<sup>th</sup> level upon becoming a "Rector". Followers gained :

*Missionaries, adventuring friars, etc* : devout followers (usually new converts) and defenders of the faith :

a) 4-40 commoners (flock) : zero level everyday life devout followers.

b) 4-16 common soldiers : 1<sup>st</sup> level fighters, Soldier kit. (poor equipment).

c) 1 leader soldier : 5<sup>th</sup> level fighter, Soldier kit. (good equipment, and medium warhorse).

d) Retinue of priests: 2-8 acolytes (1<sup>st</sup> level pardoner) ; 2 assistants (3<sup>rd</sup> level pardoner) ; 1 chief assistant (5<sup>th</sup> level pardoner) ; all of them with Priest-of-Faith kit. (Poor equipment).

Note however, that these followers will come only if the character has a religious stronghold, abbey, or church of some sort.

(\**Clergy* : a higher ranking position within the religion's hierarchy, in any appropriate abbey or diocese : Abbot, Bishop, etc... ; plus a personal retinue of priests as "d" above.)

# **BENE-GESSERTIT**

The Bene Gesserit are a secret sisterhood of nuns bent on some secret long term goal that none really knows about. Most people say they in fact only want to get ever more power over society ; but there are some few to whisper their real intent is to create the ultimate hero who will overthrow the Emperor. Nonetheless, they are organized into a pervasive order of enigmatic priestesses which have ramifications on nearly all inhabited worlds. As such, they often appear as local benign cults instead of displaying themselves for what they really are. At other times they will also be found as high ranking officials' wives, spies, or anything, acting undercover for their order. But in any case, the Bene-Gesserit are always where they are, to further some part of the mysterious aim of their order (the higher the level of the Bene-Gesserit, the more vital will be this "part" of the vast scheming they conduct).

The Bene-Gesserit get an intensive training in various fields such as sciences, martial-arts and assassination, self-control, and use of the voice as a tool to get power over people and things. This last ability however, requires they ingest the "Spice" (something akin to using magic, and which is illegal throughout the Empire). Otherwise, Bene-Gesserit are very secretive and of utmost loyalty to their order. As such, they are trained to withstand torture and psychic detection, and will be fully accepted as members of the order only when they will have successfully passed the "Gom Jabber" or test of pain.

## **CHARACTER CLASS' REQUIREMENTS:**

- **Ability scores** : Intelligence, wisdom, dexterity, and constitution, scores of 13 or better ; charisma score of 15 or better.

- **Prime requisites** : Wisdom. Those with prime requisites of 16 or more gain a bonus of 10% to the experience points they earn.

- **Alignment** : Bene-Gesserit may only be of lawful alignments (LG, LN, LE). Note that most Bene-Gesserit will be LN.

## **BENE-GESS. PROGRESSION TABLE :**

Hit dice: **d8**; Thac0: Priest ;

Experience level points: Priest.

## **CHARACTER POINTS (CPs) AWARD :**

Base 12, +bonus for high intelligence (i.e.: bonus nb. of lang.), +bonus for character's disadvantages, if any.

At first-level they must spend a minimum of 6 CPs on nonweapon proficiencies; and 6 CPs on weapon proficiencies ; other CPs being used, or kept for later use, freely.

## **ALLOWED WEAPONS AND ARMORS :**

- **Weapons** : Bene-Gesserit may use the following weapons : blaster-weapons (hand sized only), club, dagger, darts, staff, and sword (short).

Proficiency costs for these weapons: 3 CPS.

- **Armors** : Bene-Gesserit may not wear any armor, nor use any shield. (but see special skills in compensation).

- **Allowed fighting-styles** : Bene-Gesserit know the four following fighting-styles : One-handed-weapon, Thrown-weapon, Two-handed-weapon.

- **Fighting & weapon style specialty** : weapon expertise (3 CPs), and fighting-styles specialization (3 CPs each). Bene-Gesserit may buy as many fighting-styles specialization as they want, but are limited to one weapon expertise only (that they can buy at 5<sup>th</sup> level).

## **BENE-GESSERTIT'S COMPETENCIES :**

- **Nonweapon proficiencies** : Bonus: none. Access to categories: *General, Priest*.

- **Skills** : Bene-Gesserit are trained in many skills :

**BACKSTAB** : being trained in methods of assassination, they get the backstab ability of thieves (as a thief of the same level).

**DEFENSIVE SKILLS** : Bene-Gesserit are trained to avoid blows through timing and deception (martial arts). Their natural AC improves by one point at every even level (AC9 at 2<sup>nd</sup>, AC8 at 4<sup>th</sup>, AC7 at 6<sup>th</sup>, etc...). However this ability is useless when wearing armor or device replacing armor (i.e.: bracers of defense, girdle-shield, etc...).

**ROGUE SKILLS** : Detect-Noises, and Move-Silently like a generic thief of the same level of experience. (Bene-Gesserits generally make use of these abilities to spy on others, as ordered by their hierarchy.)

**UNARMED COMBAT** : When a Bene-Gesserit makes unarmed attacks against an armed opponent, she disregards the rule of Weapons in Defense, since she is trained in dealing with armed enemies. (Normally, this rule allows the armed character to attack first with a +4 on attack and damage rolls when another character makes an unarmed attack against her.) In addition, a Bene-Gesserit begins play with a free weapon proficiency in martial arts. Every fourth level after 1st level (5th, 9th, 13th, 17th) the Bene-Gesserit gains an additional free weapon proficiency which must be used to continue specialization in this martial art. At 5th level, the Bene-Gesserit gains a +1 to hit and +2 damage, as well as one extra attack per round. Each additional specialization thereafter (at 9th, 13th, and 17th level) grants her an additional +1 to attack rolls, damage rolls, and a +1 chart bonus, to a maximum of +4 at 17th level.

**SECRET LANGUAGE** : Upon reaching 6<sup>th</sup> level (and if they have succeeded the "test of pain"), They learn a secret language that only Bene-Gesserit can understand, and which is carefully kept secret. This language permits secure conversations in almost any setting.

**- Powers**: Bene-Gesserit are highly trained into perceptions and physical resistance thus get the following powers :

**KNOW ALIGNMENT** : once per day per two experience level. Functions as the spell, except that this ability isn't magical, but should be considered as an acute sense of psychology which enable them to accurately identify someone's global personality. It only requires 1 round of concentration.

**RESISTANCE** : upon reaching the 5<sup>th</sup> level, they gain a +2 bonus to their saves against fire and electricity ; as well as a +4 bonus to their saves against all divination attempts, or otherwise a normal non-penalized saving-throw against those which normally do not allow one.

**IMMUNITY TO CHARM** : up reaching the 7<sup>th</sup> level, Bene-Gesserit become immune to all charm spells cast by wizards (or anyone using wizardry magic).

**- Spells** : Bene Gesserits can "cast spells", using priest rules (spells per levels, wisdom, etc...). They have access to the spheres of :

Major access: Charm, Divination, Healing, and Thought. (but not "All" anyway).

Minor access: Animal, and Time.

## BENE-GESSERTIT'S LIMITATIONS :

**- Constraints** : Bene-Gesserit have the three following constraints :

**CODE OF CONDUCT**: All Bene-Gesserit are expected to obey the instructions given to them by their order. Disobeying may result in being banished from the order. It means that the character won't be able to gain anymore level in the character class. Otherwise, in such cases, the character will be left alone if she was of 5<sup>th</sup> level or lower ; but for 6<sup>th</sup> level or higher Bene-Gesserit who are banished, the order may decide to have them killed to prevent they spread away the secrets of the sisterhood.

**TEST OF PAIN** : Bene-Gesserit become real members of the order only at 5<sup>th</sup> level, when they have successfully passed the "Gom Jabber", or Test of Pain. This test (left to the DM's discretion), can lead to death if failed.

**SPELL-CASTING** : Bene-Gesserit do not cast spells as regular priests do. It looks more than like wizard spellcasting, although they are unable to cast wizards' spells.

In fact Bene-Gesserit do not get spells from a deity, but instead are trained in a peculiar form of magic which involves the voice, as well as the use of the "Spice". That means that they must memorize their spells from a sort of spellbook (although it does not require any "learn spell rolls") ; and when casting spells must ingest Spice as an obligatory replacement of any material component (except for holy-symbol however).

**- Restrictions** : Bene-Gesserit cannot be multi-classed, nor dual-classed.

## KITS, EQUIPMENT, AND FOLLOWERS:

**- Bene-Gesserit's basic kits** : Amazon, Diplomat, Noble, Outlaw, Soldier.

**- Starting equipment** : Bene-Gesserit begin their career with their special spell-book, and 3d6 X 10 gp.

**- Followers are gained at** : 9th level, upon becoming a "Reverend Mother".

Bene-Gesserit never gain followers, but at 9<sup>th</sup> level may receive permission to establish a chapterhouse as an outpost of the order. When doing so, 10-40 other Bene-Gesserit will come to this chapterhouse to take up their duties there, recognizing this character as their own superior. These Bene-Gesserit will be 1<sup>st</sup> level acolytes ; except for 2-8 assistants (4<sup>th</sup> level); and 1 chief assistant (6<sup>th</sup> level).



# **BIRD OF MAGIC**

Bird-of-magic is not a character class one may choose. Instead, Birds-of-magic are a race of strange avian creatures who use magic of their own, and can increase in level/hit-die. As such they resemble more like creatures with abilities but without a class (like dragons), than characters with a profession.

Birds-of-magic resemble giant eagles with silvery feathers and ruby eyes. In fact, at a distance they could well be mistaken for some sort of mechanical bird made of brilliant metal. These creatures were created some centuries ago, by a minor immortal known as **Cellur of Girvan**. All birds-of-magic are linked to him and work for him, acting as emissaries or spies on his behalf. In exchange, they receive spells from him, in a manner not dissimilar to clerics and priests, although they do not worship him like a god. Nonetheless, it should be noted that birds-of-magic have no freedom of choice in this. Should they want it or not, they are the eyes and voice of Cellur, by way of genetics, not because they chose it. If it would happen that a bird-of-magic did cut himself from the immortal, by way of a magical *amulet of proof against detection / location* for instance, they would also lose any ability to cast spells. But in any case, and for the same reason, no bird-of-magic will ever have the idea and desire to do something like that.

Birds-of-magic may be found everywhere all around the world. Their primary duty will be of collecting information for their master, and at times delivering some message. But in any case birds-of-magic will never be given a mission which may bring them to a certain death. Otherwise, Cellur of Girvan, the "Birds' Master" lives in a fortified tower on an island at sea, and which is defended by hundreds of birds-of-magic.

## **CHARACTER CLASS' REQUIREMENTS:**

- **Ability scores** : Wisdom and charisma of 10 or better.

- **Prime requisites** : Wisdom. Birds-of-magic with prime requisite of 16 or more gain 10% bonus to the experience points they earn.

- **Alignment** : Normally, birds-of-magic are true neutral, but PCs can be of any neutral alignment (LN, NG, CN, NE, N).

## **BIRD-OF-MAGIC'S PROGRESSION :**

Hit dice: **d8**; Thac0: Special.

Saving-throws Table : Wizard.

Experience level points: Special.

## **CHARACTER POINTS (CPs) AWARD :**

Base 8 + bonus for high intelligence (i.e.: bonus nb. of lang.), + 2 CPs per level above the first, if any.

Birds-of-magic may only spend CPs on nonweapon proficiencies.

## **ALLOWED WEAPONS AND ARMORS :**

- **Weapons** : None : birds-of-magic may only use their natural weapons.

- **Armors** : None, except for magical items which they may wear, such as rings or the like.

- **Allowed fighting-styles** : They know only the two following fighting-styles : natural weapons, and Thrown-items (from the sky).

- **Fighting & weapon style specialty** : None (because they cannot wield any weapon).

## **BIRD-OF-MAGIC'S COMPETENCIES :**

- **Nonweapon proficiencies** : Bonus : none. Access to the following proficiencies : Dancing (aerial acrobatics), direction sense, endurance, languages (modern), local history, navigation (aerial only), observation, reading, weather sense.

- **Physical characteristics** : as a race, Birds-of-magic get the following attributes :

They are huge birds (size Large, stand 6-7 feet tall, wingspan 20+ feet). They have silvery feathers and ruby eyes. They are carnivorous and make their nests in tall, heavy trees and high, rocky cliffs.

**COMBAT** : birds-of-magic can only use their natural weapons in combat, that is : claws and bite, plus wings buffet (only usable on lateral creatures). The damage done by these natural weapons increase as the creature goes up in experience levels. (See table at the end of class description).

Otherwise they get two special attacks :

• **Dive attacks** : requires starting at 50 feet overhead of victim, gives a +4 bonus to hit, and double base damage for claw attacks. But bite and wings buffet cannot be used during a dive attack.



• **Snatch opponents** : against any creature of Tiny size (2 feet or less in height, weighing less than 25 lbs.) from ground, water surface, or air, carrying it away ; both claws must hit ; 25% chance that one arm of victim is pinned ; automatic claw damage may be inflicted every round on victim ; victim may be dropped from a great altitude ; bird-of-magic's speed reduced by half and Maneuverability Class reduced by one level ; then at 4<sup>th</sup> level and above, birds-of-magic may snatch Small being (4 feet or less in height, weighing less than 50 lbs.), with 50% chance of arm pin on Tiny creature.

**COMMUNICATION** : They speak their own language of cries, postures, and gestures, which is the same as that of giant eagles. They can otherwise speak any spoken language through the use of a spell-like ability (usable at will) similar to the *Tongues* spell.

**FLIGHT** : They fly at MV 48 (D), and can reach altitudes of 5,000 feet or more with updrafts. Note that they can drop at high speed toward the ground, breaking the fall or pulling out into a flat glide at the last second by spreading their wings. However, if they are wounded for 75% or more of their total hit points, flying Birds-of-magic must land at once as they are supposed to have their wings damaged. If wounded for 90% or more of their total hit points while flying, they plummet to the ground (as normal fall !).

**GROUND MOVEMENT** : Birds-of-magic walk at MV 3 on ground, and while they can carry Small-size objects in their claws in flight, they cannot carry anything in their claws when walking. Note also, that birds-of-magic cannot swim of course.

**NATURAL AC** : Birds-of-magic feathers harden with level, being of AC 10 at 1<sup>st</sup> level, up to AC 2 at 9<sup>th</sup> level (becoming as hard and protective as a field-plate armor).

**VISION** : they have eyesight so acute that they get a +6 bonus to avoid being surprised by visible creatures. Those successfully hiding in shadows or natural terrain reduces this bonus to +4. A magically invisible creature might be detected if the DM feels there is sufficient cause for this to occur (water surface disturbed, footprints appear in dust, rustling of leaves). In this event, the bird-of-magic gets a +2 bonus to avoid surprise each time such an event occurs. (See 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition DMG, p.120, for more.) They are otherwise treated as if they wore *eyes of the eagle*, giving them 100X telescopic sight (i.e.: items 1 mile away seem to be only 60 feet / 18 yards away).

**- Skills & Powers**: Birds-of-magic get the following special abilities and powers :

**SAVE BONUS** : they get a +2 bonus to their saving throws against magic.

**DETECT MAGIC** : as the thief skill, with a base 10% chance per level, up to 90% at 9<sup>th</sup> level.

**- Spells** : Birds-of-magic can cast priest spells, which are given to them by Cellur-of-Girvan. These spells are not gained and cast like clerics and other regular priests. Instead, Birds-of-magic use a system of spell-points, and never require memorization :

**1) LEVEL OF SPELL USE** : experience level determines the level of spell use : at 1st level, birds-of-magic can cast 1<sup>st</sup> lvl spells / at 2nd level: 2<sup>nd</sup> lvl spells / at 3rd level: 3<sup>rd</sup> lvl spells / at 4th level: 4<sup>th</sup> lvl spells / at 5th level: 5<sup>th</sup> lvl spells / at 7th level: 6<sup>th</sup> lvl spells / and at 9th level and above: 7<sup>th</sup> lvl spells.

**2) ACQUISITION OF SPELLS** : Birds-of-magic have access to any priest spell (major access to every sphere). However, they cannot employ any spell which would require to manipulate some kind of items.

**3) ACQUISITION OF SPELL-POINTS** : Birds-of-magic gain with each level, 4 points of Mana + a bonus for high wisdom and/or charisma scores, as follows :

Birds-of-magic Spell-points Bonuses	
Wisdom / Charisma	Spell-points gained
12-13	+1
14-15	+2
16-17	+3
18 and higher	+4

**4) SPELL-POINTS RECOVERY** : Birds-of-magic regain spell-points at the following rate : 2 points per hour of deep sleep (i.e.: undisturbed and comfortable sleep of night-time, which cannot exceed 8 hours per 24 hours periods); or 1 point per hour of rest or sleep (also cannot exceed 8 hours per 24 hours periods, as ordinary bodily functions must also be met –food, elimination, and a minimum of physical activity). Also, Birds-of-magic cannot spend and recover more than once their total of spell-points in any 24 hours period.

**5) CASTING SPELLS** : spells cost 1 point per spell-level. They are cast at the level of the bird-of-magic, but may be cast at double level for twice the required number of spell-points. Casting of spells require only will and verbal component.

### BIRD-OF-MAGIC'S LIMITATIONS :

- **Physical characteristics** : as a race, Birds-of-magic get the following attributes :

**PREHENSILE ABILITY**: Birds-of-magic do not have hands, and thus cannot use the vast majority of manufactured items. Note however when it comes to magical items, that they can wear magical rings on their claws (one ring per foot) and magical bracers or phylacteries on their legs (one per leg). They may also use scrolls if they know reading, but someone must hold the scrolls open; similarly use potions, but someone must open the bottles and pour them into a dish to allow drinking; etc. Otherwise birds-of-magic cannot use such items like wands, staves, pistols, tools, keys, etc.

- **Constraints** : Birds-of-magic must obey the directives they are given by their master, Cellur of Girvan. This is usually of getting information, or delivering some message, and in the case of PCs will never be something leading them to a certain death. In any case, birds-of-magic are linked with their master through a sort of telepathic link, through which they get their magic, and give back information (the master can see/hear through them, although he cannot control their actions). To be cut from that link (for instance with an amulet of non-detection), would prevent the bird-of-magic to regain magic.

- **Restrictions** : In any enclosed space of 1,000 cubic feet or less, birds-of-magic feel claustrophobic and suffer a -3 penalty on all rolls. Moreover they fear dark enclosed spaces, and will refuse to enter tunnels or dungeons farther than a few feet (with a quick retreat after), if they fail a d20 roll under half their wisdom score (as *PO* special disadvantages).

### KITS, EQUIPMENT, AND FOLLOWERS:

- **Bird-of-magic's basic kits** : Diplomat, Explorer. (Note that in any case, kits are poorly suited for this class/race.)

- **Starting equipment** : Birds-of-magic do not get any starting money, nor equipment.

- **Followers are gained at** : Birds-of-magic never get any follower.

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### NOTE :

If you think that this class/race is a non-sense, I cannot but agree with you! The fact is that I wanted to do something really weird. I took my inspiration from the giant eagle race created by TSR (you find it on their site for downloading), a novel called "The Pastel City" (M.J. Harisson ; 1971), and the Mana system designed by a friend (where one mage's level equal two levels of other classes, and you get one level of spell at each level of experience).

Anyway, this class could be used efficiently in strange and remote places like some distant planet in a spelljammer setting, or an alternate planes in Planescape or else. You can also use them in settings were are found sorcerer-kings and templars. Whereas these are always evil, Birds-of-magic would belong to a neutral or good (but always enigmatic) figure.

Bird-of-Magic									
Level	Exp. Points	Hit-Dice	Nat. AC	Thac0	Attacks			Spell level	Spell points
					Claws (2)	Bite	Buffet		
1	0	2 d8	10	20	1d4	1d6	1d2	1	4 + bonus
2	5000	3 d8	9	19	1d4	1d6	1d2	2	8 + bonus
3	20,000	4 d8	8	18	1d6	1d8	1d3	3	12 + bonus
4	50,000	5 d8	7	17	1d6	1d8	1d3	4	16 + bonus
5	150,000	6 d8	6	16	1d6	1d8	1d3	5	20 + bonus
6	300,000	7 d8	5	15	1d8	1d10	1d4	5	24 + bonus
7	500,000	8 d8	4	14	1d8	1d10	1d4	6	28 + bonus
8	750,000	9 d8	3	13	1d8	1d10	1d4	6	32 + bonus
9	1,000,000	9 d8 +2	2	12	1d10	2d6	1d6	7	36 + bonus
up	+250 000/lvl	+2 / lvl.	Thereafter remains identical as 9 <sup>th</sup> level						+4 / lvl. +bns

## Part Two: Evil Cults

### **Black Rose (the)**

(Chaotic Evil cult)

#### **Worships**

The last “wish” of **Eldaran Blackrose**'s spirit.

This “wish” was of making a genocide of dwarves (for reason of vengeance).

#### **Known to Society**

Very secretive, almost no one knows about it.

#### **Frequency**

Not very widespread; but wherever dwarves are serial-killed, the Black Rose is.

Anyway, the cult obviously won't appear in dwarven cities (too dangerous), nor in places where aren't any dwarves (pointless). Nonetheless, the cult being pragmatic, always searches for new opportunities to continue his nefarious business which is of getting money along with “vengeance”. Hence, their search for new towns and cities with important dwarven communities. Then, their search for those non-dwarves who bear grudges against dwarves (such as human merchants or artisans who cannot stand the concurrence of dwarves in their field). And at last, subtly persuading these people that some money in the right hand...

#### **Organization**

The cult is organised in cells of no more than five *Cloaks* so that if caught, only one cell will be captured. These cells report to a *Shadow* who will provide assistance to any cell that needs expert help on a particular contract. The Shadows themselves are organised into cells and they in turn reports to a *Master* who finally reports to the conclave and the *Grand Master*.

The conclave is made up of each of the twelve Masters and the Grand Master.

**Demands on the members:** The membership of the cult is limited to moon elves, no other race of elves are admitted and definitely no half elves are ever admitted.

Aside from this, members are expected to do their job professionally. This job is nothing more than that of professional assassins paid for their “services”. However, unlike a more common guild of assassins, this one worships Mask for its god (or replace by any god of assassination / thieves / darkness / etc... of your choice); and members are indoctrinated into hating dwarves (if it wasn't already the case, or was just a mild dislike). Nevertheless, as for most other organizations of this kind, utmost loyalty and fidelity is of course required.

**Hierarchy:** The Black Rose's hierarchy is as follows:

- 1) Cloak : lvl.1/4.
- 2) Shadow : lvl.5/10 ; and 5 years membership within the cult.
- 3) Master : min 11<sup>th</sup> lvl. and 15 years membership within the cult.
- 4) Grand Master : min 12<sup>th</sup> lvl. ; and the highest level Master in the conclave. The Grand Master is the leader of the cult (Currently, a 16<sup>th</sup> level wizard).

**Members' powers and abilities:** The classes of the members vary but the priests are always members of Mask, and a large percentage of members are thieves / assassins. The other classes are also represented, the current head of the cult is a 16th level wizard.

All members of the cult are at least proficient with the dagger. Any possible specialization is first taken with the dagger. Note that the dagger is always used for “marks” only, and in conjunction with poison. In other circumstances, different weapons will be used (its more a matter of secrecy, than a religious reason).

## **Description**

**Symbol:** A dagger along a black rose (stylized).

**Brief history:** The cult's history is as follows :

The elven shaman Tymor Goldenbark found and rescued a spirit on the ethereal plane. The spirit was of Eldaran Blackrose, an elf and former hero / priest of Mask. The spirit had been lost on the ethereal for many years after his physical body was captured and tortured to death by a dwarven raiding party. With his dying breath he cursed the dwarves and swore fell oaths to his dark god that he would have vengeance on the dwarves. With his release the spirit promised Tymor Goldenbark that if he would follow its teaching and swear to help the spirit gain its vengeance the spirit would give the shaman powers and knowledge.

Goldenbark returned to the prime material plane and gathered about him several of the more disreputable of his kin and started to hunt dwarves. The dwarves were always tortured before being killed in the same way that the dwarves of long ago killed Eldaran Blackrose. That is, the hands and feet were cut off whilst the victim was still alive and then a flaming arrow was shot into the chest to finish the job.

The cult stayed as a death squad against the dwarves for a short period of time until they realized that wealth and power could be gained by their skills as assassins. Now the cult is willing to kill anyone for a price, except fellow elves, but the main preoccupation is still to kill dwarves. Dwarves are still killed in the ritual way but methods vary with other victims. The prices of assassination vary depending on the wealth and position of the victim but for dwarves there is always a large discount.

## **Special Hindrances**

A member can call upon any other member of the cult of the same rank or lower to give shelter and aid in times of need. The cult pays 70% of the contract money to the members who took part in the contract, the other 30% is kept to further the cult's expansion. Members who are injured on a contract and return to the cult safe house will be healed for free, if healing is available.

Once you join the cult you are in it for life. If injured on a contract and unable to leave the scene then one of the other members will send the injured member to join Mask in the afterlife. Anyone who informs on the cult or one of its members will be hunted down and killed slowly. If caught by the authorities expect a quick and painful death.

## **Contributed By**

Mal Martin <M13MARTIN@aol.com>

Slight additions by Dominique Crouzet

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# **Church of Rauma, God of the Downtrodden** (Chaotic Evil cult, with outward appearance of Chaotic Good)

## **Worships**

**Rauma** (really an aspect of Myrkul, but they don't know that).

## **Known to Society**

80% of poor people, 10% of the well-to-do.

## **Frequency**

In cities where it exists, 50% of the poor and downtrodden will worship it.

## **Organization**

The church is outwardly bent on restoring justice in behalf of the poor. However, the real thing is of furthering the nefarious objectives of the cult of Myrkul. As such, and to appear more believable, there is an apparent normal organization of the Church of Rauma. All those who join the church to

become its clerics, are deceived about the true nature of their god and his “real cult”. In fact, the upper ranks of the church of Rauma are held by priests of Myrkul who know what’s really going on. The poor genuine clerics of Rauma are deceived and will never get access to the position of *Vicar* and above. In fact, should they be able to do so, they would be killed instead.

Now, the organization (and very existence) of the cult of Myrkul is of course hidden from the followers of “Rauma”. Anyway, the leaders of the Church of Rauma will (of course) have connections to the secret cult of Myrkul, and its “regular” priests. Note that the (usually small) temples of Myrkul are near always hidden very close to the temples of the Church of Rauma.

**Demands on the clerics of Rauma:** The priesthood is only accessible to people of humble origins. They are expected to attend to the poor and make them know that their current misery is due to the evil and unforgiving wealthy elite who not only despise them, but exploit them.

**Hierarchy:** The following Church’s hierarchy is in fact a decoy intended to deceive the worshippers, and genuine apprentices who don’t know what really is that cult :

- 1) Novitiate : lvl.0 ; is only a cleric apprentice.
- 2) Curate : lvl.1/2 ; their duty is primarily of going in the streets, attending to the poor and preaching the dogma of the church. (Note that as they are drawn from the same social class, curates’ preaching sounds even more believable to the poor who listen to it).
- 3) Prior : min 3<sup>rd</sup> lvl. ; as curate. In fact an honorary title showing that genuine clerics of the poor can rise above their condition and someday “restore justice in the world”.
- 4) Vicar : min 5<sup>th</sup> lvl. ; overseer of the lower ranking clerics.
- 5) Deacon : min 9<sup>th</sup> lvl. ; local leader of the Church of Rauma.
- 6) High Minister of the Church : min 14<sup>th</sup> lvl. ; is the top leader of all the Church.

**Priests’ powers and abilities:** There are two kinds of priests within the church : the priests of Myrkul (better explained in the appropriate TSR’s supplement) ; and the clerics of Rauma. These latter are normal clerics (basic AD&D rules), except that they will never be able to get 3<sup>rd</sup> level spells and higher, unless they renounce this false faith. Otherwise, they could embrace the cult of Myrkul, in which case they become normal priests of Myrkul (in terms of game mechanics).

## **Description**

**Symbol:** Three circles, two on top and one meeting them underneath.

**Brief history:** As it is, the cult of Myrkul would be hardly worshipped by normal people... And most authorities would take steps to prevent it anyway. However, under the guise of Rauma things can go much better for Myrkul.

The Church is outwardly bent on restoring justice in behalf of the poor, that is : stopping the poor from being exploited if not enslaved by the (evil) wealthy elite who “take them the skin out of their already meager bodies”. Therefore, Rauma advocates the eventual overthrow of the rich.

The way the cult works is to get a large populace of underprivileged peasants and else following, by proclaiming that Rauma is the god of the poor. Then the priests gradually work the worshippers into a mindset that the rich don’t deserve what they have... and the poor outnumber the rich. Then usually bloodshed follows, with Myrkul quite happy about it all.

## **Special Hindrances**

**Clerics of Rauma :** From 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> level, clerics gain low level spells. These spells do not require in fact, that the deity or his minions should be involved in “bringing them to the priest”. But upon reaching the 5<sup>th</sup> experience level and gaining access to 3<sup>rd</sup> level spells, things become another matter. Also, the more high level the cleric will be, the more he will be able to eventually discover the truth and become a threat to the cult of Myrkul. As such, when they reach the 5<sup>th</sup> level, clerics of Rauma are assassinated one way or another (unless they accept to become priests of Myrkul).

**Priests of Myrkul :** Once the true nature of the church is revealed, its local leader(s) must sacrifice themselves to Myrkul for their failure. This will happen if more than 50% of the followers leave after the PCs expose their folly.



## **Role-playing Tips**

I strongly suggest you to think about this : arrange for a PC to become a 1<sup>st</sup> level *good* cleric of Rauma. Then, let him have some adventuring in which he will combat evil wealthy tyrants (but were they so truly evil ???). Then, upon reaching the 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> level, he will be the target of assassination attempt(s). At first, he should be led into believing he is suffering retaliation from those wealthy tyrants he past opposed. Then let him discover in some memorable way, what the Church of Rauma really is... This plot should prove interesting.

Otherwise this cult is best used by introducing it as a normal church, then having peasants come in conflict with PCs so that the PCs notice the real attitude of the church.

## **Contributed By**

Lorene Turner <Lorene.Turner@usask.ca>

Then augmented by Dominique Crouzet

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# **Church of Sainte Calysse**

**(Lawful Evil cult)**

## **Worships**

Outwardly, the cult is a *True-Faith's church* (replace this by the most official, important, and LG faith of your own campaign world), with a specific patron saint : namely, Sainte Calysse.

However, this is only a decoy. The Church of Sainte Calysse is in fact an evil cult worshipping an ancient evil spirit residing deep underground the city (see more about this in the description).

## **Known to Society**

The Church of Sainte Calysse is in fact a Theocracy ruling over the city-state of *Rel-Mort*. It is the official, and only religion authorized within the city.

Outside the city of Rel Mort, it is unknown (except for the few travelers who would remember of it, if they had any reason for this).

## **Frequency**

The Church of Sainte Calysse is in fact unable of spreading outside the city of Rel Mort. The reason is that its priests are totally unable to regain their spells anywhere but in the city temples (any temple which would be built outside the city wouldn't work).

## **Organization**

**Demands on the priests:** City's defense and preservation, as well as service to H'Rel for the highest ranking priests (i.e.: 9<sup>th</sup> level and above).

**Hierarchy:** The Church of Sainte Calysse's hierarchy is as follows:

- 1) Applicant : lvl.0 ; is only a priest apprentice.
- 2) Servant brother : lvl.1/2 ; assistant to a Master of Servants, or higher ranking cleric.
- 3) Master of Servants : min 3<sup>rd</sup> lvl. ; chief assistant to a Sacristan, or higher ranking cleric.
- 4) Sacristan : min 5<sup>th</sup> lvl. ; is generally assigned to a city's shrine, or to a civil servant's chief position.
- 5) Dean : min 9<sup>th</sup> lvl. ; is generally assigned to one of the twelve city's temples, or to one of the major city's positions: City Guards' General, City's Taxes Overseer, Great magistrate, etc...
- 6) Patriarch : min 14<sup>th</sup> lvl. ; is the leader of the Church, and the city's Theocrat.

**Priests' powers and abilities:** There are two orders of these clerics within the church : the "Protectors" (which represent 80% of all the priests and form the backbone of the organization), and the "Theologians" (the 20% remaining, who usually occupy the leading ranks).

Character class: Specialty priest (POS&M rules).

- Minimum strength, wisdom and constitution of 11 ; Alignment: LN, LE, N, NE.
- May wear any armor + shield, and use blunt and bludgeoning weapons.
- Have access to the spheres of spells of:

\**Major access:* All, Divination, Elemental earth, Guardian, and Wards.

\**Minor access:* Charm, Creation, Healing, and Protection.

• Gain access to the wizard school of magic of Elemental Earth. They memorize and cast these wizard spells as if they were priest spells. Their base maximum number of spells per day still apply however.

• May memorize their spells only in a shrine or temple of Sainte Calysse within the city. Moreover they can only memorize 6th and 7th level spells in one of the city temples (not shrines) and have to sacrifice a victim (who is energy drained) for this.

• *Protectors* have D10 hit-dice, and use the Thac0 advancement of warriors.

• *Theologians* have the Spirit-power granted ability (see POS&M rules p.35-38). It apply to several evil earth spirits, which obey to H'Rel (see cult history below). These spirits know nearly everything which occurs within the city and its underground, and grant earth-elemental spells. H'Rel, as the great demon-spirit who lies dormant under the city, could do many thing if asked by a theologian who can contact her: such as destroying buildings with localized earthquakes, etc...

• Kits available (POS&P rules): *Protectors*: Noble, Soldier ; *Theologians*: Noble, Scholar.

## Description

**Symbol:** A Chalice similar to the Mystical Holy Chalice of the True-Faith.

**Brief history:** The cult's history is closely linked to the history of Rel-Mort.

- Acknowledged history: In 828 a holy woman of virtue, Sainte Calysse, came to the corrupted city of Rel-Mort and built a modest temple there, after having defeated its tyrant: the evil sorcerer of the Dark Tower of Midnight. Then, over the years, the city's inhabitants slowly turned to the True-Faith, as they gradually realized that this religion was their only way to salvation. Today, the Church still reveres Sainte Calysse «Our Virgin Lady of Pain» as the city's protector and savior from the Devil's clutches.

- Real history: In the beginnings, about one millenium ago, the city was only a stone quarry. Then one day, the excavating miners penetrated a long forgotten burial ground, awakening its resident. The resident was an ancient evil spirit «H'Rel» who had been bound there for untold ages. The miners paid her homage, and soon built a temple dedicated to her worship.

Thereafter, over the years, the temple grew, became a religious center, then a town, and at last the city of Rel-Mort. During the Dark-Ages the city expanded its influence and became the capital of the Kingdom of Rel. However, H'Rel's priests could not gain power from her, outside the city. Then, the kingdom fell apart and only the city remained. Later in 817, the city was nearly destroyed by raiders, when it was saved by Holrun a minor priest of H'Rel but powerful wizard (i.e.: in game terms, a dual classed 7th level priest / 13th level Conjurer who later became the great 20th level archmage who built the Dark Tower of Midnight). Under Holrun's rule, the city was rebuilt and became more powerful and magnificent than it never had been. However, it was a city of evil, and remained only a city-state.

In 807, Holrun died during the "Great Devil's Night". Holrun's shade (i.e.: in game terms, a 9th level conjurer simulacrum of the wizard) remained the sole master of the city. In 828, for political reasons (that is, because of the True-Faith crusaders coming from the southern lands) Holrun's shade reformed the cult of H'Rel to make it look like some sect of the True-Faith. Thus the cult of H'Rel became the "Church of Sainte Calysse".

Today, the Church of Sainte Calysse seems to be a peculiar sect of the True-Faith and has thus escaped much unwanted attention from the True Faith which is dominant in the neighboring lands, even if the city is suspiciously looked upon. The cult is dedicated to the worship of Sainte Calysse "Our Virgin Lady of Pain" (who is in fact H'Rel).

## Special Hindrances

**Priests :** as already said, they may gain (memorize) their spells only in their cult's temples and shrines within the city. Moreover, bloody sacrifices are required to regain spells of 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> level.

**Citizen :** as long as they pay their taxes, they don't face any problems. In fact, the church acts in a much LG manner, except that its services must be paid in gold pieces... However, it becomes

another matter entirely when one loses everything and becomes a beggar. The beggars are the ones who are taken by the priests to be sacrificed to H'Rel...

As such, it will be noted that there seems to be less beggars and poor people in the city than everywhere else (provided the PCs have the idea of looking at this). But the usual answer given is that the city is more prosperous and just. On the other hand, apart the high level priests (the low level ones don't know of this) and city dignitaries, none knows of the truth. Anyone who comes across the truth will disappear sooner or later. In fact it already occurred more than once, but each time the witness did alert the religious authorities... (unknowingly, a very bad idea!).

**Strangers :** they do not have anything to fear from the cult, because the church does not want to draw unwanted attention to itself from the neighboring righteous crusaders.

### **Contributed By**

Dominique Crouzet.

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## **Dark Druids (the)** **(Neutral Evil cult)**

### **Worships**

The **Witch Queen**.

The Dark Druids are a druidic order who instead of worshipping nature, worship an evil entity known as the Witch Queen.

(Note: during the medieval times –our real world–, witches were probably in fact, the last descendants of priestesses of pagan fertility cults. But then the Catholic Church banished all heathen beliefs, telling everywhere that their advocates were in fact “witches worshipping the Devil”. Then, over time these old pagan fertility cults degenerated into petty sorcery and “satanic masses” for people who hated –whatever could be their reasons– the clergy. As such, it is only logical to have degenerated druids who now worship the Witch Queen, and are held by common people for “witches”).

### **Known to Society**

Peltam, Forlard, and remains of Legolis : Everyone knows of the dark druids. However, only priests, scholars, rangers, and well educated people know exactly who are dark druids. Common people (peasants, etc...) only know that “everything bad comes from witches who hide in woods, where they performs their evil doings”. It is above their comprehension to understand it better, but they know of the global history of the realms they live in, and what part the so-called witches took in it. Otherwise, they vaguely know that the witches are organised into covens who worship the Witch-Queen during black sabbats (i.e.: dark druids belonging to a druidic order and who meet regularly to discuss the business of the order, and perform their religious rituals).

Other regions : only 5% of people know of the dark druids. The people who know about it are priests, scholars, rangers, and true druids. Note that true druids are dire enemies of dark druids and will do all they can to prevent them expand in their territories. They are however unable to go in the remains of Legolis empire and wipe them, because dark druids are too powerful.

### **Frequency**

You can expect to find dark druids all over the remains of the ancient empire of Legolis. There in every villages, the common people fear those “witches who live and practice their evil sorceries in the deep of woods and forests”.

In Peltam and Forlard, you can expect a dark druid of being in the vicinity of any village who has got some problems of very bad crops without reasons, plagues, etc... This occurs every now and then, but cannot be rated. You can however count on 60% of wilderness areas to have some dark druid “in charge”.

Everywhere else, it is doubtful that dark druids will be ever found.

## Organization

The Dark Druid organization is very similar to that of normal druids.

**Demands on the dark druids:** The priesthood of the cult is limited to humans, no other race may join. Other races who traditionally have druids, usually embrace life (a statement which is shown by the fact that they are all longer living than humans), and thus could not become druids of the destructive aspect of nature. Also, humanoids cannot become Dark Druids simply because they usually cannot comprehend things like theology, religion, etc., although humanoids are usually used as cannon fodder by the Dark Druids whenever they have need of an army.

Dark Druids are otherwise expected to combat civilisation whenever they can, and make life miserable for all of those who live a kind of civilised life. For instance, peasants with their agriculture are considered such civilised people, and should have their crops destroyed. However, barbarians living from hunting and gathering are acceptable.

**Hierarchy:** The Dark Druids' hierarchy is much similar to that of normal druids. However, the Dark Druids and the normal druids have no connections. The Dark Druids' order is independent (or renegade, in the eyes of the normal druids), having its own Grand Druid.

**Dark Druids' powers and abilities:** Dark Druids are of the druid class for the experience level progression, limited number of druids at higher levels, and special powers of Hierophants. Otherwise, their powers and abilities are different from that of true druids :

Character class: Specialty priest-druid (POS&M rules).

- Minimum strength, wisdom and constitution of 13 ; Alignment: N, NE.
- Dark druids have D8 hit-dice, and use the Thac0 advancement of Priests.
- May wear only those special armor/shield given to them by the cult (namely, a wood plate-mail and shield); and for weapons get proficiency in the dagger, mace (spiked), spear, and staff.
- Have access to the spheres of spells of:
  - \**Major access:* All, Animal, Combat, Plants, and Weather.
  - \**Minor access:* Charm, Protection, and Summoning.
- Gain access to the wizard school of magic of Necromancy. They memorize and cast these wizard spells as if they were priest spells. Their base max number of spells / day still apply however.
- Granted power of Immunity to normal diseases.
- Granted power of Pass without Trace ability as normal druids (gained at 3<sup>rd</sup> level).
- Granted power of Shape-change ability as normal druids (gained at 7<sup>th</sup> level).
- Dark druids have their own secret language which is unknown to other people.
- Dark druids all display fanaticism (POS&P limitation): they cannot tolerate those not of their faith, and cannot hide their contempt for them, thus suffering a -4 penalty on all encounter reactions. These guys are very antipathetic.

Character kit: Special

All dark druids get the same kit, which gives them the benefit of receiving a special equipment from their cult : a dagger (which also acts as their holy symbol), a spiked mace, a plate-mail, and a shield. All these items are made from a hardened black wood (hard as metal), engraved with all sorts of runes and flowery symbols. Then, these items gain magical properties and increase in potency when their rightful owner gains levels : +1 from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> lvl. / +2 from the 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> lvl. / +3 from the 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> lvl. / +4 from the 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> lvl. / and +5 at 15<sup>th</sup> lvl. and above.

The only drawback to this is that the Dark Druid must rededicate all of his equipment to the Witch Queen once a week and at a recognised temple. If the Druid fails in this task then his items begin to lose their potency (A comparison can be made to Drow items).

## Description

**Symbol :** A ritual dagger of hardened black wood, engraved with flowery designs.

It should be noted that the symbol is a real dagger, not a pendant in the form of a dagger. This wooden dagger (as resilient as metal) becomes more and more magical as the dark druid owning it increases in experience level.

**History and Beliefs :** The organization of the Dark Druids stretches way back into the annals of history. Their original beliefs were actually quite passive, believing that just as everything lives, all things, in the fulfilment of time, must end. They believed that it was a perversion of nature to tend to

the sick, or feed the starving, or even warn someone about the large boulder about to land on their head. To put it simpler, they were the ultimate in Non-interventionists.

Then one day, as in all things, something happened that changed the way the world looked at the Dark Druids and at the way the Dark Druids looked at the world.

It was during a siege at a city (time and place are now unknown). The populace of the city were starving, the Dark Druids at their temple in the city were not, and chose not to share their food with the populace of the city. Things turned from nasty to worst and all but one druid survived. That druid went immediately into isolation living on an island.

Nothing was heard about the Dark Druids for a few decades, until a village (Zebonis) near the island started having mysterious deaths.

Eventually the cause of the deaths was tracked down to a temple on the island, where a small band of Dark Druids lived. The temple was destroyed by the local population. 12 druids survived the slaughter and pronounced a powerful curse upon the dead body of their abbot (unknown to everyone this curse inhabited the body of a baby, who later became the Witch Queen). It was later found out that the people who mysteriously died had a form of plague which spread through the area soon after.

Since that day the Dark Druids have followed the practice of actively speeding along death. Therefore the religion has been outlawed and banned, hunted down and nearly wiped out several times only to come back stronger and stronger.

Their more current history is closely woven with that of the Empire of Legolis.

#### **6716** (or present year –579 years)

The Dark Druids, an outlawed religious sect of priests of a deity of death, managed to infiltrate some of their followers into the Emperors' private chambers in the palace at the capitol Legolithiapolis. Once there they managed to capture the Emperor and his four generals and replace them with exact clones under the sway of the Great Dark Druid himself. A reign of terror began that night, unnoticeable at first but with each passing day, securing the Great Dark Druid's hold upon the Empire of Legolis.

Several years passed before normal life and the liberties of men were infringed upon at which time a Duke of a nearby state (a boyhood friend of the Emperor) chose to visit the Emperor and discovered that the Emperor was not who he portrayed to be. The Duke quickly left the capitol and retired to his own domains and began investigations into the person who claimed to be Emperor. After much work and consultation with the gods, the duke discovered the truth behind the Great Dark Druid's schemes and, calling his friends within the nobility, declared war upon the Capitol and fake emperor. Unfortunately the Great Dark Druid had been very busy during his years in control, placing loyal followers in positions of power within the structure of the Empire.

#### **6722** (or present year –573 years)

A great battle was fought on the plains and walls surrounding the capitol. For three months various offensives were made by the Duke against the forces of the Great Dark Druid until neither side was truly capable of victory. The Duke, sick of the thousands of deaths that had occurred, chose to retire from the field of battle and instead, knowing that his enemy was incapable of doing anything, split the empire into various fragments placing trusted friends of his upon the thrones of what in future years was to become the kingdoms of Peltam and Forlard. The Duke and the Fake Emperor of Legolis signed a treaty soon after the war declaring a state of non-aggression between the new kingdoms and the Empire of Legolis.

So began the rule of the Dark Druids placing Puppet emperors upon the throne for some 120 years.

#### **6838** (or present year –457 years)

The kingdom of Peltam under the rule of Llewellyn requested that a group of powerful nobles from within his kingdom seek out and destroy any dark druid incursions into his country. The result of this request were two major wars against Legolis effectively crippling its power and an epic attack upon the Dark Druids secret home base within a mountain. After the first battle between Peltam and Legolis a powerful being known as the Witch Queen was inadvertently released from her magical prison at the same time releasing the once Emperor of Legolis and his four generals, all of whom promptly vanished. Soon after the Dark Druids withdrew to their mountain base to contend with a challenger to the office of Great Dark Druid. The result was that the Great Dark Druid was defeated by the Witch Queen who then persuaded the Dark Druids to worship her (a deity in her own right)



instead of the deity of death. None know whether the original Great Dark Druid died at the Witch Queen's hands or fled to safety. Soon after these events the nobles from Peltam attacked the mountain base of the Dark Druids whilst large forces from Peltam and Forlard attacked Legolis in an attempt to divide the forces of the Dark Druids. The nobles managed to infiltrate the mountain and with the help of the deity of death render the Witch Queen mortal in an attempt to destroy her, unfortunately during the fight with the Witch Queen one of the nobles in his haste managed to banish her to the astral plane hoping that she would be lost forever. The Dark Druids immediately lost all of their priestly powers due to the banishment of the Witch Queen.

The god of death, their earlier patron then sealed all the dark druids (that were there) in the mountain, confining them to exile, never to walk upon the surface of the planet again.

For the next 87 years what is left of Legolis is in ruins no one count or baron is around long enough to leave a lasting impression. The entire nobility of the so called empire can be challenged by those of lesser station and the phrase "Might is Right" becomes a cold hard reality.

#### **6925** (or present year -370 years)

Eight nobles from Peltam enter and take over a small piece of Legolis, over the next couple of years they gain partial control over all of Legolis.

#### **6931** (or present year -364 years)

The eight nobles become demi-gods after discovering the Temple of an ancient deity of good that was once worshipped in Legolis.

#### **6934** (or present year -361 years)

The Witch Queen returned in the body of an innocent woman during some dark ceremony carried out by a secretive group of Dark Druids. She then immediately attacked the eight demipowers of Legolis. Knowing that as a goddess herself, they would be unable to harm her, she decided to give them a choice : either become one of her followers and gain unimaginable power, or die an eternal death at her hands. From the eight, four chose to join her, and four chose to stand instead for the principles of good.

At this point a hitherto unknown entity entered the picture, calling herself "She who dreams", stated that the eight demi-gods had been tempted beyond their capability to understand and somehow stripped the Witch queen of all her powers, a conversation then took place between the eight demi-gods and "She who dreams", the result of which was that all eight became gods in their own rights, four became evil and four became good, the eight were then sent off to some other dimension, where all trace of them was lost.

#### **7295** (or present year)

Present Day.

### ***Special Hindrances***

Due to their peculiar beliefs, there are numerous hindrances to being a dark druid :

1) They do not have access to healing spells themselves ; and are moreover forbidden to receive the benefit of any kind of healing magic (it goes against their ethic). Fortunately anyway, they can regenerate themselves with their shape-changing ability.

2) At upper level, when a would be 12<sup>th</sup> (or higher) level dark druid must challenge one who already hold the position to take it from him, the combat is OBLIGATORY fought to the death.

### ***Contributed By***

Gareth Roberts <groberts@thenet.co.uk>

Then augmented by Dominique Crouzet.

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## **Demon-gods of Dread (the)**

*(Chaotic Evil cults)*

**“May the fool remember that there are no unjust power which comes for free !”**

(Patriarch Epeidemus the Saint)

These cults exemplify that eventually, evil will always bring woe to the ones who first spread it. (You are right! You’ve just come across the Moralism Campaign Setting !)

The great fear in the medieval times was the Devil. However, what you get here (in the Mid' Gaard campaign world) is not one, but nine of these dark entities struggling to take over the world, and corrupt it. These dark powers come from the outer world, far beyond the fringes of human settlements and civilizations. They are bent to (and crave for) degradation, corruption and destruction. Driven by inhuman hate and monstrous instincts, their goal is to enslave all living beings and submit them to their obscene alien will. In fact, the only thing that can be said about them is that they are the personification of Evil. These nine gods of chaos are :

### ***Worship***

Any one of the 9 Demon-gods of Dread, who are:

**AGRADOS** : Lord of Wealth, Dispenser of Abundance.

**BAALSHAUR** : Arch-duke of Power, Prince of Kings and Emperors.

**BEAST The** : Lord Supreme of the Wilderness.

**DAAG'TOTH** : Arch-mage of the Gods, Upholder of Dreams.

**KYOLLOL** : Lord of Jokes, Viceroy of Delight.

**LOBIAR** : Wrathful Avenger, Lord of True Justice.

**NECHROUL** : Guardian of Immortality, Keeper of Secrets.

**OSHRASSH** : Lord of Might, Prince of Heroism.

**SARRYLIAL** : Mistress of Love, Seductress of the Gods.

These horrid deities never stop working at seduce and corrupt the mortals, in their aim to suborn and foul the world. However, they are bent on their own destruction, and used to scheme among themselves. This sole fact has so far precluded them to take the advantage in this insidious war which is waged against humanity.

### ***Known to Society***

Everyone knows of the “Devil”, and that he is worshipped by "witches" and "heretics". However, only 5% of the population (mostly scholars and priests) know that there are nine Demon-gods, and what are their attributes and cults.

### ***Frequency***

Every now and then\*, some fool will accept to become a servant of one of these foul entities : 50% of the time, rather than a true cult, there will be only that character serving the demon with whom he made a pact. 40% of the time, it will be a small cult numbering no more than two dozen of people. In these two cases, such “cults” are usually short lived because they are hunted down and destroyed (they rarely can remain hidden, because they are obliged by their patron demoniac to create havoc all around them).

However, 10% of these cults will be more organized (and thus well hidden), long-lasting, having a special place of worship and many followers (2d12 X 10). Note these will be found mainly in large cities, which offers much more possibilities for nefarious activities.

(\*: Cannot be rated, because it is too chaotic. However, if the DM needs some statistics, there is a 10% chance of finding such a cult at any given time, in any place populated by humans. Equal chance for any cult but that of Nechroul who gain twice chances.)

## Organization

None specific. All these cults are most of the time totally chaotic and without purpose, except for satisfying the monstrous/grueling desires of their leaders. Those few cults that are really organized, don't follow a pre-determined structure as each of them is different. Also, it should be noted that normally, these cults will never associate themselves, even when worshipping the same Demon-god. In fact, the cults are usually enemies of each others, and even within a given sect, deadly hates and rivalries may be found. Anyway, the Demons-gods do not seem to care.

Otherwise, as noted above :

- 50% of these cults, are not real cults, but a single character serving its master (i.e.: spreading evil all around; making other suffer, and suffer himself). This character will be a "satanist-priest" of the demon only 15% of the time. However, whatever may be his class, he will be gifted with special powers and curses (See section C: *Description of the nine cults*).
- 40% of these cults, are small bands (2d12) of degenerated characters, under the leadership of a "satanist-priest" (01-40%), or a strong leader (41-60: fighter ; 61-80: thief ; 81-00: wizard).
- 10% of these cults, are well organized groups (2d12 X 10) of corrupted characters, under the leadership of a "satanist-priest" and his 1d4 assistants (also satanist-priests). These well organized cults usually practice their important ceremonies (i.e.: black sabbath) under the direct supervision of their patron demoniac. (Whether the appearance of it is a powerful hallucination, a projected image, a lower demon in its guise, or itself personally, is up to the DM. Also, in this last case, the statistics are left to his appreciation, but the 1<sup>st</sup> edition MM I & MM II could be used).

Anyway, even if few of these cults are organized and have defined worship and objectives, their rituals (improvised or not) always involve fear, suffering, and the worst instincts.

## Description

All the cults basically work the same way : the prospective victims (would-be followers) are first offered what they crave for the most at that moment, for a low price which always include performing some minor evil doing. At that time, the Demon-god will always appear under its most appealing guise. Then, as time passes, and the follower asks for more favors, these are less and less fulfilling/satisfying, and cost more and more (in terms of personal sacrifice and evil deed required). All along, the Demon-god appears progressively more and more atrocious, until having reverted to its true appearance.

(See section C: *Description of the nine cults*, for a more detailed account on the Demon-gods and their ways.)

**Satanists' powers and abilities:** the "satanic priests" of these demon-gods are (of course) intended to be NPCs only !!

Character class: Specialty priest (POS&M rules).

- Minimum intelligence and constitution of 11 ; Alignment: LE, NE, CE.
- Have D8 hit-dice, and use the Thac0 advancement of priests.
- May wear any armor + shield, and use any weapons.
- Control Undead.
- Have access to the spheres of spells of:
  - \**Major access:* All, Chaos, Necromantic, Summoning.
  - \**Minor access:* Charm, Divination, and Protection.
- Gain access to one wizard school of magic, appropriate to their patron demoniac : Alteration (The Beast), Conjuration-summoning (Agrados, Baalshaur, Oshrassh), Enchantment-charm (Sarrrylial), Illusion (Daag'Toth, Kyollol), or Necromancy (Lobiar, Nechroul).
- May learn and memorize their spells only as wizard do (i.e.: with spell-book, and intelligence). They however use the spell progression table of priests, but without any bonus spell for high wisdom scores (which will quickly lower anyway). These spells are generally given to them by their patron demoniac, or some of his lower demons. Note that no spell which cures, repairs, etc... will ever be given. When appropriate always use the reverse forms of the spells.
- Have the Spirit-power granted ability (see POS&M rules p.35-38). It applies to evil spirits of the dead (frequently appearing as small demons). These spirits know many things, and grant necromancy spells.
- Kits available : powers and curses given by their patron demoniac (See section C: *Description of the nine cults*).

## **Membership**

Every one who will accept/request a service or favor from the “Devil” (the generic name given by most people to these Demon-Gods), will irremediably become their slave, and lose his/her immortal soul to them... So, how could oneself being fooled to such a hideous bargain ?

To become a member, someone only has to be contacted by one of these Demon-gods, and accept the pact s/he proposes (See the section A: Diabolical Pact). An individual will always be seduced on one of his weaknesses or vices, and preferably when he will be facing hard times, crisis, and have his will weakened. A Demon-god will usually come to anyone in a dire wanting of what it pretends to represent. Then, the favor will be high (a renewed youth, beauty, wealth, power, magic...), and the price seemingly low. But if one accepts the bargain, it will be too late : sooner or later he will sink into corruption, participate in the foul rituals, and eventually become lost to his humanity.

## **Special Hindrances**

All members of the cult are eventually corrupted, and then destroyed by the atrocious demons they serve. Even as priests, they are in a constant fear of their patron demoniac. They live in torment, finding some illusionary relief of their own cursed life, in inflicting on others the horrid debasements they must themselves suffer. Usually, upon their deaths (when they have lost all their humanity), they become undead.

The kits' description will give specific curses which are laid upon the foul/fool followers (what a pun !!!). But the DMs are encouraged to modify them on a case by case basis.

## **Role-playing Tips :**

Here follows a description on how people fall prey to the Demon-gods of Dread.

**A) DIABOLICAL PACT :** they will vary, according to the different cults, circumstances, favors requested, and who is involved. Hence, the DM must handle it on a case by case basis. Here follow three examples of what could occur :

**1)** A man of old age is dying of his natural death, but nevertheless desperately tries to cling onto his life when the Devil (*Nechroul*) appears to him. He offers him one month more of life, and asks nothing in exchange. Nonetheless he tells him that at the end of the month, he will have to do something *special* if he wants to live a year more. This special thing will sounds ridiculous and without consequences, particularly if the individual has little ethics and morality, and is obsessed with his death : slaying a rat in the name of Nechroul, or kissing a corpse while saying the name of Nechroul, etc... . And then, nothing more until the year has elapsed.

However, in accepting the bargain, the man has unknowingly begun to enslave himself to Nechroul. That is, in game terms, he loses 1 Wisdom point without knowing it, and his alignment progress of one degree toward Chaotic-Evil. Next time that he will be tempted with a bargain (a little bit more evil that time), he will have to succeed a wisdom check, if incidentally he has changed his mind and wants to refuse it. (Note that even if he succeeds the check, he still will need to have an *atonement* spell cast on him if he doesn't want to do the check again, the next temptation. However, the wisdom point is definitively lost.)

Then, if he accepts all the successive bargains (note that when becoming Chaotic-Evil, he cannot choose and try anymore to refuse them), he may eventually become immortal...as a ghoul.

**2)** During the wedding day, the bride's sister is unknowingly burning of desire and lust. Full of jealousy and rage that her sister could have been preferred to her by the provost's son (even if he was much younger than her), Valinia swears before the gods that she nonetheless will have him. It is when appears *Sarrylial* who offers to give her the man. Then, when comes the moment of the wedding night, Valinia succeeds in taking the place of her sister, of whom she has magically taken the appearance, thanks to *Sarrylial*. Thereafter, Valinia only has to revert to her own appearance and scream she has been raped; preferably when her newly-wedded sister enters the chamber.

The evil is done, but nonetheless the truth about it is eventually discovered. Having been severely punished, Valinia is sent to a convent to expiate her crimes. However, once again with the aid of *Sarrylial*, she seduces the provost who is taking her off, and escapes. But for payment of that, *Sarrylial* orders that she will have to be “taken” by a dog as well. Then later, after having escaped, she stumbles on a group of gnolls who decide to eat her. But once more with the aid of *Sarrylial*, she manages to convince them of instead keeping her for another use. On the following weeks, she is violently raped

many times per day, and even if she hates these stinking brutes, Valinia cannot live anymore without their painful copulations (thanks to Sarrylial).

As time passes, the gnolls grow tired of Valinia, and she sees the coming of her end. Nonetheless, she convinces Sarrylial to give her another chance. And so she leads the gnolls to her former village, intending on kidnap as many girls as possible. If the raid succeeds, she will consecrate the captives as sexual slaves of Sarrylial, and in return will be granted to become a priestess of the foul goddess. (It is normally at that time, that PCs arrive to prevent such an abomination).

(As you see, the process of successive bargains is the same in this story, as it was in the precedent.)

**3)** This example shows how a PCs who go astray from his alignment, could be involved with one of the Demon-gods of Dread. In fact, it is exactly what occurred to one of my players.

Solomon Kane, a LN 4<sup>th</sup> level fighter, once saved a young woman who was to be burnt at the stake. She was innocent, but had been accused of being a witch by a fanatical priest. Needless to say, that when S. Kane rescued the woman (in a much heroic manner !), he made himself a mortal enemy of that priest. Then later, for some other reason, S. Kane came again to the town where this event had taken place. And there, he decided to find that priest and “judge” him (*Note that it wasn’t planned in the scenario, he decided of this on his own!*). S. Kane captured the priest and tried to have him admit he was a murderer of women ; then killed him as a “just reward” for his deeds, because the fanatical priest (convinced of his own righteousness), all the while refused to see things that way. This event attracted the unwanted attention of *Lobiar*...

The next gaming session (a solo adventure), S. Kane was in another town, searching for some information, when he stumbled upon the strange little shop of a fortune teller, who was incidentally looking at him, and inviting him to enter. The seer was a beautiful woman of pale skin, white hair, and immaculate clothes. However, she had nothing to say about the information he was searching for, but instead congratulated S. Kane for having so wisely slain that heinous priest who so justly deserved to be swiftly executed. (By the way, Lobiar told S. Kane that she witnessed the event in her crystal ball, and the PC accepted the explanation without a second thought). Then, the seer declared that such a meritorious act deserved an appropriate gift, which S. Kane gladly accepted (Ah! Greedy characters eager for magical items....) : his mundane rapier was transformed by the seer into a magical silver sword right on the spot (by way of a silvery glittering powder). The only thing S. Kane would have to do when using the rapier, to gain its full powers, was of saying: “In the name of the Lord of True Justice, you deserve to die criminal !!”. Needless to say, S. Kane was much pleased with the transformation of his rapier into a powerful magical weapon (I forget which powers I had given it), and never wasted his time thinking twice about it.

How did end this dismaying story ? Fortunately for S. Kane, the next time he used his newly improved rapier, it was broken during the first round of the fight ! (by way of a fumble-hit and the appropriate fumble dice-rolls, not because I wanted to “save” him).

**As it appears then**, the only aim of a diabolical pact, is to trick the mortal who accepts it, into servitude and complete submission to the devious power of the Demon-gods of Dread. The trick is, that when a character has agreed to a first bargain, the real things is that it weakens his will to compel him to accept the next, even if it is worse than the precedent. That is, in game terms you will have to succeed a wisdom check to be able to turn down the offer. Furthermore, each new bargain accepted will permanently reduce the character’s wisdom score by 1 point, and take his alignment a degree more toward Chaotic-Evil. Then at last, after several bargains of this sort, the character will have lost every humanity he could have had. In fact, even if at first, all his desires seemed to be satisfied, at last he remains only a hating being, fearful of his master, and who can only alleviate his sufferings in assuaging his god's monstrous instincts, which now have also become his own.

**Nonetheless**, whatever the form which may take a pact with the Devil, for being effective it will always abide to the following rules, otherwise it won't be able to corrupt anyone :

**1)** It will always be clear and evident, that *the character will do something evil in accepting the bargain*. For example, killing a rat is not especially evil. But accepting the bargain of killing a rat saying the name of Nechroul, *in exchange* for a year of life, is evil.

**2)** It will *always be clear and evident, that the character is making a bargain with the Devil itself* (or at least a greater demon working for him). No mortal (even should he be a priest of one of the Demon-gods), can propose a pact to someone else in the name of the Devil.



3) Furthermore, *the character must do his part of the bargain for the pact being effective*. In the example, the old man hasn't made any pact simply because he will live one more month, thanks to Nechroul. And if the Bride's sister who first accepted the bargain and received a magical power to do it, changed her mind and did nothing, she wouldn't have made any pact. (however, 3 aborted bargains in which a character has first requested and gained a power intending to do his evil act, will count as a pact concluded.)

4) A character *cannot be tricked in making a bargain*, and therefore considered as having made a pact. For example, the Devil appears as an absolutely ordinary man to the character, and offers him gold to bear a scroll to someone and say at the delivery an incomprehensible (at least to the character) text which incidentally means: "I give you this cursed scroll in the name of the Devil, shall you die horribly for fifty gold pieces!"

5) A character *must have the choice to refuse* (even if it leads to a certain death) a pact, and *cannot be forced in any manner* (magical or otherwise). For example, the Devil cannot appear to a fighter character and say: "the next creature you will kill, will be for me and the next treasure you will find would have been in fact put there for you as a payment". (even if the fighter kills someone and later finds a treasure, he won't have made any pact). Furthermore, the Demon-gods never do appear physically to tempt a mortal. So, if the Devil says to a Character who refuses his bargain : "If so, I'm going to kill you on the spot, foolish mortal !", it will be only words... (except maybe in a temple dedicated to him, and full of demons.).

6) Lastly, *a pact with the Devil will always and only further selfish and evil ends*. The Devil will absolutely never tempt into a bargain a character who, for example, would desperately want to live a couple more years in order to further an altruistic cause.

**B) REPENTANCE** : Another thing that must be known, is the possibility of "repentance" for a character who has fallen to the Devil and made a pact with him, but now conscious of the evil of it, wants to put it to an end.

First, the character must confess his sins, and second have an *atonement* spell cast on him by a priest of his faith. The result is that, next time the Devil will try to tempt him, he won't feel compelled to agree. That is, in game terms he won't have to succeed a wisdom check if he wants to turn down the new bargain.

However, for this to succeed, the character must be *truly repentant*, and not only wanting to escape the consequences of his doings after having benefited from them. Besides, next to his atonement, the character will have to do something appropriate in order to redeem his faults. Moreover, this may work only once, and only before the character has become Chaotic-Evil. Otherwise, only two solutions remain : first, to be shut up in a monastery for the rest of his life (where the character will be an inmate, not a monk ; and where the Devil won't come again to tempt him.) ; or second, to be put to the purifying special death sentence of the faith.

Note that "repentance", is a True-Faith's concept. Things may be different with the barbarian pagan faiths. Usually, the character will come to a priest of his faith, and ask him to be freed from the pact. There are no concepts of "sin" in these religions, but the priest will nonetheless evaluate if the character is worth the trouble (by the standards of his culture and faith). If so, he will *quest* the character in doing something special for the religion, and in exchange cast the appropriate spells to free him. Otherwise he may only offer a quick, painless death. Here also the character may have only one (maybe two) atonement. Afterwards he will be only considered a despicable coward resorting to trickery to solve his problems, and unable to face the consequences of his actions.

Finally, the wizard spell *wish* will instantly negate any pact made with the Devil, provided the spell will have been correctly formulated. Nothing more is necessary (genuine repentance, quest, or whatever), and it works *any* number of times (even if the character has already fallen Chaotic-Evil). However, *wish* spells are rare occurrences, and the "Devil" won't waste his time with characters able to use it frequently.

### **C) DESCRIPTION OF THE NINE CULTS :**

Here follows for each of the nine demon-gods of Dread, a descriptions which states :

**Will first appear as** : describes the appearance the demon will take to seduce its victims, but generally also for most of its interactions with mortals.

**But eventually reveals as** : describes the demon's true appearance, as it would be revealed by a *True seeing* spell for instance, or as it will eventually appear in front of its followers.

**Will always promise** : this is what the demon is supposed to give to people it makes pacts with. In fact it will be the case at first, but over time it will more and more altered as shown below.

**But eventually bestows** : in the end, all promises and gifts of a demon will in fact become a curse as it is described there. The demons' followers may not want to get them, but will have no choice however than suffer them.

**Kit** : shows the powers and constraints typically bestowed by the demons upon their followers (i.e.: slaves). However, these have been presented here only for easing DM's work. In fact, a demon can grant upon its slaves many different sorts of powers and curses (for instance *The Complete Book of Necromancers* will provide a good source of ideas on this subject). Anyway, these should be related somehow to the demon's sphere of influence.

#### **1) AGRADOS :**

(Lord of Wealth, Dispenser of Abundance.)

**Symbol** : a claw-like hand.

**Will first appear as** : an elegant man, with golden eyes, sumptuously dressed and wearing expansive jewelry ; **But finally reveals as** : an obese humanoid, with greasy skin, claw-like hands, small greedy eyes, and a disproportionately huge mouth full of fangs.

**Will always promise** : wealth, endless money and gold ; **But finally bestows** : avidity, voracity, greed, avarice and envy.

**Kit** : followers/priests of Agrados gain the following abilities and hindrances:

• **Special powers** :

1) *Pick-pockets* skill : 35% + 5% per lvl.

2) *Detect-treasure* ability : 30 feet radius, always active.

• **Duties / hindrances** :

1) Must give 60% of all his income to Agrados (this wealth vanishes from the campaign).

2) Eating voracity : each day must eat as much as would eat a number of hungry men equal to his level (i.e. if is 9th.lvl., must eat every day as much as 9 normal men would have to). otherwise will loses 1 constitution pt. per day from "starvation".

#### **2) BAALSHAUR :**

(Arch-duke of Power, Prince of Kings and Emperors.)

**Symbol** : a black sword dripping of smoke.

**Will first appear as** : a noble knight in black armor, wearing a shining black sword ; **But finally reveals as** : the same character, but with malevolent red eyes, and his face distorted in a grimace of rage. His sword is rusted and is continually dripping with smoke.

**Will always promise**: the true Power; **But finally bestows**: submission, slavery, and oppression.

**Kit** : followers/priests of Baalshaur gain a magical item of power, which of course is cursed (and evil). This item will aid the character in achieving his own goals (which must be related to gaining power over peoples), but at the expense of others, through evil doings. Also, the item always bears a curse which will happen at some time or another (i.e.: 5% chance per level, rolled once at each new level gained), and will enslave the owner to the item's will. Such a cursed item could be a demon-sword for example. Otherwise, these items will usually function only for the ones they were intended for at first.

#### **3) BEAST The :**

(Lord Supreme of the Wilderness.)

**Symbol** : a sharp claw, or fang.

**Will first appear as** : a huge golden wolf with green eyes, which speaks of an ancient time when humans and nature were one ; **But finally reveals as** : a horrid werewolf with a poisoned mouth.

**Will always promise** : a return to the nature of the origins ; **But finally bestows** : the denial of thought and consciousness, in favor of bestiality.

**Kit :** followers/priests of the Beast gain the following abilities and hindrances:

• Special powers :

1) *lycanthropy* at will. With thac0 of a monster of same lvl. (or at least 17); otherwise see description of werewolves in Monsters' Handbook (p.240).

• Duties / hindrances :

1) Must turn to werewolf and kill, every night.

2) As a werewolf cannot cast spells, use items, or think clearly. As a werewolf only becomes a savage beast eager for blood and rampage.

**4) DAAG'TOTH :**

(Arch-mage of the Gods, Upholder of Dreams.)

**Symbol :** an ivory and jeweled, horn.

**Will first appear as :** a handsome horned adonis with ivory skin ; **But finally reveals as :** a huge and terrifying horned demon.

**Will always promise :** a dream-world of thousands of magical wonders ; **But finally bestows :** unending deceptions and nightmares.

**Kit :** followers/priests of Daag'Toth gain the following abilities and hindrances:

• Special powers :

1) Unknown power (curse) of self-delusion : each new level, the character seemingly gains a magical ability. However, whatever may be this spell-like ability (normally usable once per day), it only will be an illusion (similar to *Spectral force*), affecting everyone, including the character.

2) Gets a special follower upon reaching name's level. This may be a wonderful magical steed, or perfect lover for examples. This followers will be (at first) a perfect servant in his field, always obeying the wishes of his master.

• Duties / hindrances :

1) The character will always believe that his "special powers" (#1 above) are real. Nothing can make him believe, or even discover, the contrary. Therefore, if a target of his "special powers" is not affected by them (because he saves or sees through the illusion), the character will be convinced that the target has got special protections. He will never admit that his "special powers" could in fact be a delusion. And in addition, with each level gained the character will get a cumulative penalty of -1 to all his saving-throws vs. illusionary magic.

2) The special follower will slowly reveal as a horrid monster who does not obey the character, but instead leads him to his doom. With the examples above, the steed will reveal as a *nightmare* who will eventually bring him to Hell, and the perfect lover will reveal as a *succubus*. Such follower is under no obligation to obey the character, but lets him believe so. He will do as asked, but always in twisted manners.

**5) KYOLLOL :**

(Lord of Jokes, Viceroy of Delight.)

**Symbol :** a sneering jester head.

**Will first appear as :** a colorful sympathetic jester always laughing ; **But finally reveals as :** a gray, distorted caricature of the viewer, displaying an evil chuckle.

**Will always promise :** eternal delight and laughter ; **But finally bestows :** humiliation, self depreciation, scorn, and mockery.

**Kit :** followers/priests of Kyollol gain the following abilities and hindrances:

• Special powers :

1) *Tashas' Uncontrollable Laughter* once per day per 3 levels.

2) Bard ability of *Alter moods*, by telling jokes, making humor. However, this humor must always involve the humiliation of someone else, or the character himself.

• Duties / hindrances :

1) -4 to reaction, because of the evil, stupid, and perpetual grin the character will wear on his face, and the fact that he will laugh at the most inopportune times.

2) When using the *Alter mood* ability, the character must mock someone or himself. The result will be that: when mocking other people making enemies of them, and when self-deprecating making people despise him.

## **6) LOBIAR :**

(Wrathful Avenger, Lord of True Justice.)

**Symbol :** a white dagger in a white hand.

**Will first appear as :** a beautiful armored woman all in white (skin, hair and armor) ; **But finally reveals as :** the same frost maiden, but with a chilly face, and radiating an icy cold all around herself.

**Will always promise :** rightful vengeance ; **But finally bestows :** torture, pain, misery, and mutilations.

**Kit :** followers/priests of Lobiar gain the following abilities and hindrances:

**• Special powers :**

1) *Detect lie* (but see below) once per day per three experience levels.

2) Retaliation power : the character gains the ability to make a special wounding attack, upon any “wrongdoer” discovered and confounded through the use of his detect lie power. Upon saying: “*In the name of the Lord of True Justice, you deserve to die criminal !*”, the character will be at +4 to hit, and double base weapon damage during all the combat, but against this “wrongdoer” only.

**• Duties / hindrances :**

1) Each time the character slays someone through the use of this “Retaliation power”, he gets a cumulative 5% chance that next times he will use his detect-lie power, it will work exactly the reverse (lies detecting as truth, and truth as lies). The idea is of eventually getting the character murdering innocent people (while criminals are believed to be paragon of honesty).

## **7) NECHROUL :**

(Guardian of Immortality, Keeper of Secrets.)

**Symbol :** a skull adorned with a snake.

**Will first appear as :** a young smiling teenager, full of vitality ; **But finally reveals as :** a horrifying lich.

**Will always promise :** eternal life ; **But finally bestows :** undeath

**Kit :** followers/priests of Nechroul gain the following abilities and hindrances:

**• Special powers :**

1) Cease aging.

2) Command Undead as a priest of same level (or at +2 lvl if already possesses this ability).

**• Duties / hindrances :**

1) Upon death, or when reaching end of normal lifespan, becomes an undead of equal hit-dice.

2) Loses 1 point of charisma each level, slowly becoming more and more like a living cadaver.

Moreover, as times passes, he becomes more and more carnivorous: obliged to feed on meat, then raw meat, then finally putrefying flesh.

## **8) OSHRASSH :**

(Lord of Might, Prince of Heroism.)

**Symbol :** a spiked mace dripping with blood.

**Will first appear as :** a handsome powerful and heavily muscled warrior ; **But finally reveals as :** a horrid brutal demon with horns, cloven hooves, and so on.

**Will always promise :** valor and courage on the battlefield, as a hero ; **But finally bestows :** cowardice, brutality, and hate.

**Kit :** followers/priests of Oshrashh gain the following abilities and hindrances:

**• Special powers :**

1) Strength permanently raised to 18<sup>00</sup>.

2) +2 hit-points per level gained in addition to all other bonuses.

**• Duties / hindrances :**

1) Becomes a berserker (as per the cursed sword of berserking), each time he feels he is insulted. There is no save against this, except that the character will never attack people more powerful than him (but in this case he will go and attack someone else !). The insult may well be imagined, in any ambiguous case must make a wisdom check for not feeling insulted.

2) Becomes a coward : the character will never dare attack someone who seems to be more powerful than himself. In fact, the character only attack people or creatures seemingly weaker, then slay them without pity (“the weak deserves to die”).

### **9) SARYLLIAL :**

(Mistress of Love, Seductress of the Gods.)

**Symbol :** an ass.

**Will first appear as :** a beautiful nymph, with a much promising smile ; **But finally reveals as :** a stinking, nude, old, female human, with the head of a dog, and who constantly acts in an obscene manner.

**Will always promise :** love and pleasure ; **But finally bestows :** painful debauchery, sexual debasement.

**Kit :** followers/priests of Saryllial gain the following abilities and hindrances:

**• Special powers :**

1) Seduction : the character gains +1 point of charisma each level, but in the eyes of members of the opposite sex only. When doing sexual advances to members of the opposite sex, these must succeed a wisdom check at -1 per +1 bonus charisma of the character, to resist the overture.

2) Immunity to diseases.

**• Duties / hindrances :**

1) Ugliness and sexual debasement : the character will get a -1 point of charisma each level, but in the eyes of members of the same sex, and any paladin or cleric/priest of good alignment. The latter are also immune to the character's sexual advances. Otherwise note that the character will always make such proposals in an obscene and crude manner, and will take pleasure only in humiliation and masochism.

2) *Cause disease*, through sexual intercourse. It is an automatic and passive ability the character cannot prevent, and is usually unaware of.

### ***Contributed By***

Dominique Crouzet.

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## **Favoured of Tarigath**

***(Chaotic Evil cult)***

### ***Worships***

**"Tarigath the Sublime :** Lady of Beauty and Birds" ; who is in fact a hateful and greedy deity of chaos and evil, who perform her petty deeds through the doing of crows and ravens.

(see also : Tyaa, the evil bird goddess of Nehwon. TSR Legends & Lore book)

### ***Known to Society***

Very Secret, due a very limited number of worshippers, and because when known is promptly stamped out of society. Only 5% of society is familiar with it.

### ***Frequency***

Not very widespread, only about 25% of cities have a "base" in them. In any case, they are found only in big and rich cities. Currently, the head of the cult is located in a great merchant city (or in Lankmar if you use this setting).

### ***Organization***

With such a vain, chaotic and evil goddess, and also because the cult is so small, there isn't any real organization of the cult. Usually, any attempt at organization quickly falls into chaos due to leadership quarrels.

However at the present time, the cult is run by two strong leaders, who are also friends. As such, the cult is renewing, with a firm organization, and it has a very clear goal and plans for the future.

**Demands on the priestesses:** Recruit new followers for the cult, and steal from the rich and wealthy, preferably gems and jewelry. Make fools of men, whenever possible.



**Hierarchy:** The cult's hierarchy is as follows:

- 1) Feathered friend : lvl. 1/2 ; is only a thief or priestess apprentice.
- 2) Feathered sister : min 3<sup>rd</sup> lvl. ; oversee the apprentices, assistant to a higher ranking priestess.
- 3) Winged sister : min 5<sup>th</sup> lvl. ; operates as a (leading) thief, or messenger, for the cult.
- 4) Talon sister : min 7<sup>th</sup> lvl. ; infiltrates thieves' guilds, and carry out the cult's punishments.
- 5) Bird of Prey : min 9<sup>th</sup> lvl. ; a local temple high-priestess of the cult.
- 6) Voice of Tyaa : min 11<sup>th</sup> lvl. ; is the overall leader of the cult. (Currently two of them, see description).

**Priestesses' powers and abilities:** Specialty priest (POS&M rules).

- Minimum dexterity and wisdom of 11, and charisma of 15 ; Alignment: any evil.
- Priest saving throws, and exp. progression.
- D6 hit-die ; Thieves' weapons and Thac0 ; Proficiency crossover group with Rogues.
- Thieves' skills : Pickpockets, Hide-shadows, Move-silently, Hear-noises. As thief same lvl.
- Backstab and Thieves' cant at 3<sup>rd</sup> level. As thief same lvl.
- Shapechange at 5<sup>th</sup> level, as druids but birds only.
- Spheres of spells : *Major*: All, Animal, Chaos, Charm, Elemental-air, Summoning.  
*Minor*: Divination.
- Followers : as thieves ; Kits : burglar, seductress, spy, etc...

## Description

The cult is in fact primarily a cult of thieves. However, thieves who delight in cruelty and mischief, and are otherwise self-serving, vain, and hedonistic.

This organization does not have a long history. It supports evil and chaos by supporting Tyaa, the evil bird goddess. The cult is still run by its two women founders of great power and cold ambitions :

– The first (Cynthiaraa), is a beautiful human blonde (18 cha.) who actually holds a position of power and renown in the city. However, none knows she is the high-priestess and leader of the cult. She got, and now maintains this position, through her spying network of birds, the riches the cult stole, and her stunning charm which she uses to good ends. As a priestess, she oversees all the cult, but from her palace (rarely ventures out). Cynthiaraa is a 14<sup>th</sup> lvl priestess of Tyaa, who uses *eyes of charming*.

– The second (Alysaraa), is a very cute half-elf girl with jet black hair and blue eyes (16 cha.). None knows of her, except for the cult upper ranks' members, who anyway never saw her under her real guise. As a priestess, she travels the different temples of the cult which are scattered over the land, telling of the cult's policies, collecting riches, etc... In fact she applies what Cynthiaraa decides for the cult. Alysaraa is a 13<sup>th</sup> level thief / 11<sup>th</sup> lvl priestess of Tyaa, who uses a *hat of disguise*.

Currently, the cult is trying to expand. For the first part, young beautiful women are recruited, and then trained as thieves (for the most), and priestesses (for the most promising of them). For the second part, the cult is infiltrating the local thieves' guilds, to double cross them. Needless to say, that sooner or later, there will be some retaliation (PCs characters ?). However, it should be noted that they not only do that for the money, but also for the sole pleasure of tricking the thieves, and also merchants, who are their victims (and incidentally are most often, men). The cult is working very efficiently at this, but so far, it doesn't seem to have any other ambition than enrich itself and making its victim anger. The cult has no desires, as it seems, to rule over all the thieves guilds, and create a vast criminal underground empire.

## Special Hindrances

Only evil women may join this cult (because their patron deity only tolerate of being worshipped by women). Moreover, to join, a supplicant must present at least one of the following characteristics : being cute (min. 15 charisma) ; being rich (upper classes) ; being a thief ; or have magical powers.

All potential new members have their gender and alignment checked by spells : all men seeking to join are first invited into the guild hall, and then promptly sacrificed.

## Contributed By

Qubrak Shata <qshata@geocities.com>

Then, augmented by Dominique Crouzet

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# Oracle of the Dragon-Spirit

(Neutral Evil cult)

## Worships

Primarily the ideals of "Power and Richness".  
Secondary, the being known as the "Dragon Spirit".

## Known to Society

In the city where the cult operates, 60% of people in positions of power know of the cult (and are likely to be members of it). However, less than 5% of all other people (commoners, peasants, etc...) have heard of it.

## Frequency

Currently only one city, but the cult has plans to expand his influence in other cities. At DM's discretion, this could begin in a city where the cult is beginning to develop, then lead into the original one which is totally corrupted by it.

## Organization

There is no priesthood nor traditional worshippers in this cult. The cult is in fact organized into two branches: (1) the "Informers", who are a network of spies, thieves and spell-casters ; and (2) the "Chosen", who are all rich merchants and businessmen who work in fact for the cult's coffers. The Chosen don't know anything about the Informers, but these carefully spy onto the Chosen, and report to the "Oracle" (who is the Dragon).

**Demands on Members:** Give 50% of all their income to the cult. This may look excessive, but the cult help the members to acquire wealth increased in such a manner that even while giving half of it to the cult, they still have more than when they weren't members. Besides, the cult has found ways for its members to safely evade taxes; so members do not pay them anymore, replacing them by this tithing.

**Hierarchy:** This not really a hierarchy :

1) Chosen : wealthy businessmen and merchants. none can join because he so desires it. Instead, the cult search for new members itself, and once an appropriate one is found, the cult slowly work to eventually get him into the cult.

2) Informers : thieves and spell-casters. They have their own hierarchy which has five ranks. The 5<sup>th</sup> rank, the lowest is made up of low level "Informants" (thieves lvl. 1-3); the 4<sup>th</sup> rank of "Spies" (thieves lvl. 4-5); the 3<sup>rd</sup> rank of "Foremen" (thief/mages lvl. 4-6); the 2<sup>nd</sup> rank of "Supervisors" (thief/mages lvl.7-9); and the "Overseer" (a powerful wizard of 11<sup>th</sup> level). The Overseer himself reports to the Oracle, without knowing his real identity.

3) The Oracle : the dragon himself. However, none ever saw him under his real guise, as he always appears polymorphed into an old human seer.

**Members' powers and abilities:** No special powers or abilities are gained for being a cult member. However, the cult being a well organized underground Mafia, provides all the necessary information (via the Oracle) and criminal interventions (via the Informers), to help the Chosen have very successful businesses, and earn much more money than they were able, before being members of the cult.

## Description

**Symbol:** An obsidian dragon figurine in a golden circlet.

**Brief history:** The cult was founded 10 years ago by a Saashta'matchas a venerable shadow dragon (characteristics of spells, and possible psionics left to the DM's discretion). His intent in doing this was to get great wealth without taking too much risks. Also, the whole thing much entertained him (not all dragons are mere beasts waiting in their lair for robbers to come). Thus, the cult is before all a criminal organization (it uses a thieves' guild) who mask under a strange religious cult, its real aim of stealing riches from human / demi-human communities, without having to attack them (which has a tendency to attract unwanted good-doers of great skills and abilities).

The cult developed as follows: At first, a seer with great knowledge and wisdom, made himself known, then employed by a thieves' guild of the city. This man was in fact Saashta polymorphed as a human. Once inside the guild he had no problems taking control of it. Then, he eventually managed to take control of all the other thieves' guilds of the city. After that, instead of openly rob the rich people, which would have been too risky, he organized a network of spies to get a maximum of information about the local economy. Afterward, he carefully chose the first members of his cult among wealthy and unscrupulous city merchants and businessmen. He appeared to them as a sort of seer charged to "reveal them who they really were". Through a good mixture of flattery and magic, he convinced them that they were of "draconian ascendancy" (!), and thus much above the petty lowly and inferior humans. Hence, the "Dragon Spirit" would help them achieve the true power and wealth "their kin" deserved. What occurred thereafter, was that through the invisible help of Saashta's criminal network, these businessmen got the good information and (unknown) interventions necessary to propel them into extraordinary success and wealth.

Nevertheless, in any case the Chosen don't know of the Informers. They believe they receive the divinatory advice and good luck from the Dragon Spirit (of whom they are the "spiritual children"). The truth is that the criminal network of Saashta controls the economy. He arranges for his "Chosen" to take all of the business from other merchants, artisans, etc... Then half of the money goes into his own treasure, but it is given freely by the Chosen !! Now, the side effect of all of this, is that all the city's wealth is slowly drained to the benefit of Saashta. Bankrupt, unemployment, poverty, etc... are increasing at an alarming rate. It comes from that to get that so much money, the Chosen have to take the business of others; pay their employees less and less; etc..., and all of this as advised by the "Oracle".

All of this has provoked some riots in the city, and law enforcers have tried to investigate on what is really happening. However, the Informers are well informed (which sounds logical), and such rebellions always end quickly. Otherwise, if powerful characters intervene in it, Saashta will personally (but discreetly) "make something about it".

### ***Hindrances***

**Chosen :** Any member who wants to leave the cult is free to do so, and none will try to convince him otherwise. However, ex-members always end badly. This may be not necessarily in death, but these people will quickly fall into hard times and finally go bankrupt. If they speak openly against the cult, they will quickly be found dead. However, a ruined ex-member of the cult may redeem himself and be accepted back again into the cult ; but he will have to begin all anew. The intent of this is of appearing reassuring to other members, and incite them of staying into the cult, bringing more money to it. The dragon does not care for the cult's members, he only cares for his coffers...

**Informers :** All traitors, and those who try to leave the cult are mercilessly eliminated.

### ***Role-playing Tips***

Good aligned PCs, and especially paladins, should be reminded once they get the dragon's treasure, that it was mainly robbed from the city people who were victims of that criminal economy.

### ***Contributed By***

Dominique Crouzet.

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# The Paratheo-Anatemamystikhood of Eris Esoteric (Poee)

*(Chaotic Neutral cult, with evil tendencies)*

## Worships

Eris/Discordia, the goddess of chaos.

## Known to Society

15%.

## Frequency

Small cabals in many areas.

## Organization

Many small groups of people following their own ideals of chaos. There is no real organization in fact. In one town the cult could well have a temple open to all, but in the next, it will be a secret and underground organization bent to some nefarious end. In fact, all in all, it is only the will and power of the Polyfather that currently makes the cult appears organised.

**Demands on the members:** The members must be Chaotic and have a minimum wisdom of 8. Otherwise, the members are expected to show involvement, understanding and the acceptance of the philosophy.

**Hierarchy:** The cult's hierarchy is generally as follows, at least for the upper rank priests.

- 1) Disciple : lvl.1/2 ; is only a cleric apprentice, or mundane worshipper.
- 2) Deacan : min 3<sup>rd</sup> lvl. ; oversee the disciples. There usually are one deacan for five disciples.
- 3) Chancelor : min 5<sup>th</sup> lvl. ; head of a local cult. He is always appointed by the Polyfather.
- 4) Holy Apostle : min 12<sup>th</sup> lvl. ; there are never more than five of them. What they do is unknown.
- 5) Polyfather : min 15<sup>th</sup> lvl. ; chief leader of the cult.

**Priests' powers and abilities:** Specialty priests designed with the customization system (POS&M), i.e.: I suggest using the cleric shown at page 6 of this netbook. Every priest is different in spells and abilities, from the others. Nonetheless, access to the sphere of Chaos (major access) is required, and access to that of Law is forbidden.

## Description

**Symbol:** The holy symbol was changed so many times, that none does know for sure what is it at the present time. The problem is that the Polyfather has yet to find one which pleases him.

**Brief history:** There is no real history for this cult. It seems to appear and disappear every now and then. Also, it seems that it exists solely by the will of his powerful head, the Polyfather. None knows from where does the Polyfather come from. A dwarf who was a member of that cult for some times is the only source of information (it was his 3<sup>rd</sup> enlistment in a religion, then he left and decided to become a mariner, but first felt the urge of saying all he knew about it to a sage): he pretended that the Polyfather came from another dimension because "he had become tired of his home world". The man was apparently powerful (in fact 19<sup>th</sup> level priest of Discord), and protected from detection magic (Immunity to any form of anyone trying to detect his alignment or lies).

It doesn't seem that there is much to be said about the cult. Most of its members are rebellious people, but not to the point of all of them intending to overthrow society in a bath of blood and take what they want by force. It is only the case for a few number of them. Otherwise, rumors abound on the cult, but they have to be verified (once, a vindictive deacan held that the Holy Apostles were in fact preparing the demise of the civilization, and would rule over a freed world thereafter).

The cult only appeared to be "evil" recently, when some high priest of the cult revealed that the half dozen of demons who had pillaged the village of Nühmril (before being killed by the Company of the Glowing Swords), had in fact been summoned by the chancellor of a "rival cabal". Then, shortly thereafter, as the informant was found dead, it may well appear that there may be truth in his sayings.

## **Special Hindrances**

None as it seems. If there are hindrances with this cult, that is, on a regular basis, it could be that members and priests tend to often have diverging points of view on what the philosophy of the cult should be, and how the goddess (some say he is in fact a god) should be worshipped.

## **Contributed By**

Andrew Nickel <anickel@mail.win.org>

Then augmented by Dominique Crouzet.

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## **Red Cord (the)**

**(Chaotic Evil cult)**

### **Worships**

No one really. It's more a "philosophy" of hate, racism, and vengeance.

### **Known to Society**

Turmish land : Almost everyone knows of the cult (and fears it).

Others : Except for those who travelled extensively in Turmish, it is unknown.

### **Frequency**

Only a handful of cultists' groups remain, probably no more than a half-dozen.

Their head temple having been destroyed by the authorities some years ago, they now meet in some secret places, none of which is a true temple, but rather an abandoned building, etc...

### **Organization**

Red Cords intermingle with every level of society. As such, they are forced to take great pains to appear as mundane members of whichever social class they are trying to infiltrate during a particular assignment. Thus, they are all prominent and well respected members of their community who lead double lives, stealing out at night to prove their devotion to the Cult by strangling innocent victims with their knotted red cords. Their chief targets usually include the government officials, but also wealthy merchants who refuse to contribute to the cult's coffers. In fact they use their power to extort fabulous wealth from the terrified populace.

**Demands on the members:** To become a member of the Red Cord the person must be of true Turmish stock and human. They will be approached by a junior member of the cult and sounded out on their feelings towards foreigners and the government. If the answers are to the liking of the questioner then the prospective member will be taken to a place where the more senior members of the cult will question him. If they like the answers then the prospective member will be taken on as a probationary member of the cult. The probation lasts for as long as the cult feels is necessary to prove the person's loyalty and desecration. Once the prospect is accepted by the cult (if he isn't then he's dead), he will be initiated into the mysteries of the cult and can never leave, except by death.

The cult will teach the members all thief skills for free, if available by class, as they rise in levels. The cult will always try to rescue a member captured by the authorities (at least by taking back the corpse to avoid spells such as *Speak with dead*). The cult once entered can never be left.

**Hierarchy:** The Red Cord's hierarchy is as follows:

1) Bravo (Apprentice) : lvl.1/4 ; a probationary member of the cult. They act as spies and infiltrate the upper classes of society, to get information on prospective members and victims. However, they don't know much about the cult's organization.

2) Murderer : min 4<sup>th</sup> lvl ; and 1d4 years membership within the cult. They are initiated into the mysteries of the cult (get the Red Murderer kit), and oversee the actions of the Bravos, and perform minor assassinations (traitors, witnesses, etc...).

3) Executioner : min 7<sup>th</sup> lvl ; and 5 years membership within the cult. They supervise a branch of the spying network, and perform semi-important assassinations (minor officials, etc...).



4) Senior Executioner : min 9<sup>th</sup> lvl. ; and 10 years membership within the cult. They organize the cult's agenda, and perform the major assassinations (officials, etc...).

5) Grandfather of the Red Cords : min 11<sup>th</sup> lvl. ; is the leader of the cult. He has made known that he did swear of murdering the king himself; however, the grandfather seldom kills anyone himself, except for the Executioners and Senior Executioners who would betray, or otherwise fail the order.

**Members' powers and abilities:** The classes of the members vary but the priests are always members of a god of assassination or chaos, and a large percentage of members are thieves. Anyway, all members of the cult, whatever may be their class all have the following kit (which should be restricted to NPCs ):

### **RED MURDERER**

Murderers are members of the Red Cords, a secret and murderous cult whose intent was first of "getting rid" of all foreigners and non-humans, but then extended its activities to any who would "ally themselves" with the enemies (i.e.: targets) of the cult. Murderers are fanatical killers who spread death all over Turmish by murdering for the Cult. They advance it into the heart of society, efficiently eliminating any who speak out against them. They deviously believe that murder is their most sacred mission, a holy and meritorious enterprise under-taken in the service of their "national identity". The cult's goal is to subvert society and destroy the government through strife, terror, and coercion.

### **REQUIREMENTS :**

Murderers are all of evil alignments, with a majority of them being CE.

Allowed classes: any, but above all : thieves, and priests of a god of assassination.

### **WEAPON PROFICIENCIES :**

*Habitual proficiencies* : Silken-knotted-cord (with specialization), bow, dagger, short sword.

### **NONWEAPON PROFICIENCIES :**

*Habitual proficiencies* : Etiquette, Disguise, Reading-writing, Rope-use, Set snares, Tightrope walking.

### **SPECIAL BENEFITS :**

**1) Strangulation** : All Murderers know how to wield the silken garrote to strangle their victims. It is used as follows:

**a)** The Murderer must attack from behind with a normal to hit roll. Surprise provides a +3 modifier; no surprise incur a -3 modifier.

**b)** Holding the victim in the garrote for 3 consecutive rounds kills the victim. But, to do this, a successful attack roll is required for each of the 3 rounds. The first attack is rolled normally; the second and third are rolled against the victim's armor class calculated using only magical armor bonuses and dexterity bonuses.

**c)** Otherwise, the cord has a speed factor of 2 and inflict 1d4 points of damage. Note that Murderers receive also a +1 to hit / +2 damage bonus due to specialization.

### **SPECIAL HINDRANCES :**

**1) Murder restrictions** : Murderers must kill the victims of the cult with the knotted red cord only (which is left around the victim's neck thereafter). Such a cord is a specially enchanted item to escape magical detection of its user once left there (one use only). Murderers are otherwise strictly forbidden to kill people who were not targeted by the cult, by way of strangulation, and in such case must use normal weapons instead.

Also, they do not murder those individuals who purchased their immunity by making lavish contributions to the cult, or swearing to serve it as a mole or spy.

## ***Description***

**Symbol** : A red knotted cord.

**Brief History** : This cult was prevalent in the lands of Turmish several years ago. The cult started quite small over two hundred years ago when a small group of nobles and priests decided that the influence of foreigners and none humans was starting to affect the traditional ways of life and must be stopped. They decided to form a secret organization to dissuade foreigners for settling in the land. This started by making goods and services hard to obtain and when this did not work then more drastic means were applied , setting fire to crops and killing live stock where used if this did not work then

the settlers were killed. The killings were done in a ritualistic way by strangling with a red silken cord and the cord left tied around the neck with special knot as a warning to others to leave.

The cult flourished for many years until they started to kill their own people who had dealings with foreigners. As many influential persons at court made their money from overseas trade then the government decided to act. They did set up a secret organization of their own to track down and bring back dead or alive the leaders of the cult. The operation was a qualified success in that the government managed to capture or kill most of the leaders and many of their henchmen but several escaped and went underground.

That is the way things stand at this moment. The government is still trying to eradicate the cult completely but the cult has now changed its targets from foreigners to government officials, members of the aristocracy and members of foreign governments in the land.

### ***Special Hindrances***

Members who disobey or fail the cult's orders might well become the target of a murder attempt with the knotted cord.

The government and its agents go to great lengths to eradicate the cult. They will kill any one suspected of being a member of the cult. Foreign governments will also either kill or capture suspected members of the cult found in their lands.

### ***Contributed By***

Mal Martin <M13MARTIN@aol.com>

Then augmented by Dominique Crouzet.

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# Part Three: Neutral Cults

## Brotherhood of the Shadow (the)

(True Neutral cult)

### Worships

The “One Beyond The Veil”.

Some clueless (low-level) members of the brotherhood pretend this is the “God of Shadow Magic”. However, there is no more god of shadow magic, that there are gods of abjuration magic, or alchemy magic. Nonetheless, this mysterious being is obviously a power to be reckoned, on the demi-plane of shadow. It could well be the greatest and most ancient shade in existence.

### Known to Society

Only a few, about 5% of Society knows.

Anyway, all shadow mages know of the brotherhood, and normally belong to it.

### Frequency

In almost any place where you find some shadow mage, you also find at least a connection to the brotherhood. In any region where are found shadow mages, there will be a headquarter of their brotherhood, usually in the nearest town or city.

### Organization

This Organization is very secretive. It consists of all Shadow Mages. Those who want to study to become a shadow mage must first find a Shadow Mage sponsor. The Brotherhood is very secretive, only teaching those with the most potential. One can be evil, good or neutral but one must not fight each other while in the confines of Holy ground. Otherwise Good vs. Evil goes on as usual. In other words, Good and Evil Brothers will socialize in holy ground but fight amongst themselves on the outside.

There can be only one Dark Shadow; he is at least of the 20th level, and the only way one can be a Dark Shadow is to fight for the Position. The fight does not have to be to the death. No one can be of a higher level than the Dark Shadow, and one must be a Shadow to challenge the Dark Shadow.

**Demands on the members:** The membership of the cult is limited to Shadow Mages (i.e.: wizards specialists of the school of shadow).

**Hierarchy:** The brotherhood's hierarchy is as follows:

- 1) Brother (junior) : shadow mage of any level.
- 2) Brother (senior) : min 5<sup>th</sup> level ; and a five year membership as junior member. Then, as soon as a brother of at least 15<sup>th</sup> level becomes a shade, he is allowed within the ranks of Shadows.
- 3) Brother (head of a chapter) : min 9<sup>th</sup> level ; and a five year membership as senior member.
- 4) Shadow : min 15<sup>th</sup> level ; and also must be a “shade”. They are the agents and messengers of the Dark Shadow.
- 5) Dark Shadow : min 20<sup>th</sup> lvl. and also must be a “shade”. The Dark Shadow is constantly linked to the Shadows through a form of telepathy.

**Members' powers and abilities:** As wizard specialist of the school of shadow. Shades are characters who transmuted their flesh and blood substance, in that of the evanescent stuff of the plane of shadow, thus becoming undying (but they aren't undead anyway), but also definitively apart of the normal and mortal world of men.

### Description

The brotherhood has existed since there have been shadow mages. It is said that this school of magic was initiated by the “One Beyond The Veil”, a mysterious and powerful figure about whom

nothing is known. The fact is, that this being gets most of his power from the brotherhood. In exchange, the members get spell formulas, help and protection, etc... (Note for spells that it means all Shadow Mages of the brotherhood will gain access to all spells of that school as listed in the POS&M handbook).

Otherwise, the brotherhood doesn't have any particular agenda related to the prime material world. And for the demi-plane of shadow, only the members of the upper ranks know (Shadows, and Dark Shadow).

### ***Special Hindrances***

**Brothers :** All members of the brotherhood are expected to render some service to the brotherhood at some time or another. They otherwise must tithe 25% of all their incomes (as well as one magical item out of four they find) to the Brotherhood.

**Shadows :** For acquiring that position, one not only has to be a shade, but also give up permanently one point of constitution to the Dark Shadow. Otherwise no Shadow may rise above the level of the Dark Shadow, unless winning the position through a fight which does not have to be to the death. Note that anyway, the Dark Shadow who lost such fight will generally disappear forever from the brotherhood. Maybe he gets a special assignment from the One Beyond The Veil, to do things which have nothing to do with the brotherhood.

### ***Contributed By***

Leonard Danao <mmi@eden.rutgers.edu>

Then augmented by Dominique Crouzet.

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## **Dwarnoï Order (the)**

***(True Neutral cult)***

### ***Worships***

The Earth Mother, and the Mountain Father.

### ***Known to Society***

70% of mountain dwarves and deep gnomes are familiar with the dwarnoï, but only 35% of other dwarves and gnomes know of them. Non-dwarves and non-gnomes never heard of them. As the Dwarnoï Order is a branch of the Druidic Order, any druid (who know of dwarves and gnomes) has 5% chance per level of knowing them. Note that the Great and Grand Druids all know of the Dwarnoï (even if they seldom speak about it).

### ***Frequency***

Every dwarven/gnomish town or city will have at least one dwarnoï ; and any underground clan of dwarves will get a 5% cumulative chance per 10 members of the clan to have a dwarnoï. For gnomish clan, the percentage is of 2% per 10 clan members. Towns' and Cities' dwarnoï will be of 1d6+6 levels ; and those of clans of 1d12 levels.

Note that Elder and Venerable dwarnoï reside in their own sacred caverns, which are always apart from towns and cities. Needless to say that such places are heavily defended.

### ***Organization***

The Dwarnoï Order is akin to the druidic order. In fact the Dwarnoï are a specific and demi-human branch of the druidic order : when nearly all druids (there are a very few exceptions) worship and protect nature on the surface, dwarnoï do it in the underground, especially with respect to rock and earth (not underground life, which is the province of a few gray druids --see CDHD). However the objectives are much similar in spirit.

**Demands on the priests:** A dwarnoi must be a dwarf or gnome (the DM may even wish to limit the class to Mountain Dwarves, and Deep Gnomes). Note that like any other dwarven priest, dwarnoi are limited to the 10<sup>th</sup> level of experience (9<sup>th</sup> for gnomes). That means that only dwarnoi with a wisdom score of 19 or more, may reach the 14<sup>th</sup> level (13<sup>th</sup> for gnomes), which is the ultimate level and position for a dwarnoi within his hierarchy.

The Dwarnoi are expected to protect the underground from the depredations of greedy miners (although they tend to be more tolerant when these are of their own race). No dwarnoi will ever dig the earth to get gold and gems.

**Hierarchy:** The dwarnoi hierarchy is the same as that of druids.

- 1) Initiate : lvl. 1 to 11.
- 2) Dwarnoi : lvl.12 ; There is only nine of them in any underground region.
- 3) Elder-Dwarnoi : lvl.13 ; There is only three of them in any underground region.
- 4) Venerable-Dwarnoi : lvl.14 ; There is only one of them in any underground region.
- 5) Grand Druid : lvl.15 ; (see the druid class). In any (munchkin) case, a Grand Druid *cannot* be a dwarnoi, because they don't know anything of the druidic things.

**Priests' powers and abilities:** This is a new character class open to dwarves and gnomes only. Stone is to the Dwarnoi as nature is to the druid. The Dwarnoi use the magic within stones to protect and serve their race, and are well regarded by other dwarves/gnomes.

Character class: Specialty priest (POS&M rules).

- Experience level progression of druids.
- Minimum constitution of 15, and wisdom of 12 ; Alignment: N.
- Have D8 hit-dice, and use the Thac0 advancement of priests.
- May wear any armor + shield, and use blunt and bludgeoning weapons.
- Have access to the spheres of spells of:
  - \**Major access:* All, Creation, Elemental, Guardian, and Healing.
  - \**Minor access:* Protection.
- Gain access to the wizard school of magic of Elemental Earth. They memorize and cast these wizard spells as if they were priest spells. Their base maximum number of spells per day still apply however.
- They can speak a secret language of their own (similar to that of druids, but not the same) in addition to any other they know (doesn't cost any slot). This language is limited to dealing with the earth and rock, as well as natural underground events. In addition, they have a secret language consisting of stone-tapping. It is rudimentary, at best, but is sufficiently developed to transmit simple messages. Like all secret tongues, it is jealously guarded.
  - At 3<sup>rd</sup> level, they can automatically perform all the abilities of underground detection of dwarves and gnomes, with a 90% accuracy.
  - At 3<sup>rd</sup> level, they can learn one language per level from the languages of mountain races or creatures of stone (cost 1 CP each).
  - At 7<sup>th</sup> level, they gain a +4 bonus to their saves against earth elemental magic, and a normal, non-penalized save against such spells which normally do not allow a saving throw.
  - Followers: as for druids (but with dwarnoi initiates).

## Description

**Symbol:** The holy symbol of the Dwarnoi is simply a piece of stone. As an acolyte, the dwarnoi receives his stone from the mother rock. This is a boulder from which all members gain their holy symbol from. As time goes by and the dwarnoi rises in level, the rock becomes more smooth and well-rounded. Losing the stone require a penance of some sort; probably some minor quest if the loss was due to a good reason, a major endeavor if not.

**Brief history:** The Dwarnoi Order is akin to the Druidic Order. In fact druids revere the earth as mother and source of all life, but the earth is primarily that: a big rock in space. Thus it is only logical to have cousins of druids who revere the earth for what it is: an immense rock. However, only dwarves and gnomes (because they are an underground race) may be dwarnoi, for the same reason they cannot be druids or nature-priests.

The Dwarnoi ethos states that the earth is a living being, the source and mother of all life, and that extracting its riches is to lack respect for her. Dwarnoi believe that veins of gold are to the earth what blood vessels are for living beings. It would thus be a sacrilege for a dwarnoi to mine gold. As such,



dwarnoi respect the mountains and stones, and the treasures they conceal within. They consider these metals (silver, etc...) to have been placed in stone to be shaped, and carved into new and wonderful works, not pillaged. Mining solely for profit is detested by the dwarnoi, though they will avoid entangling in such affairs.

### ***Special Hindrances***

All dwarnoi belong to the worldwide structure of druids, and as such, at their upper levels (12<sup>th</sup> and above), only a limited number of dwarnoi can hold each level.

At 12<sup>th</sup> level, a dwarnoi character acquires the official title of "Dwarnoi" (below the 12<sup>th</sup>, the official name is "initiate"). However, there can be only nine 12<sup>th</sup>-level dwarnoi in any geographic region (see campaign setting). A character cannot reach 12<sup>th</sup> level unless he takes his place as one of the nine dwarnoi. This is possible only if there are currently fewer than nine dwarnoi in the region, or if the character defeats one of the nine dwarnoi in a challenge, the loser dropping to 11<sup>th</sup> level. Similarly, only three Elder-Dwarnoi (13<sup>th</sup> level) can operate in a region. To become an Elder-Dwarnoi, a 12<sup>th</sup>-level druid must defeat one of the reigning Elder-Dwarnoi or advance into a vacant position. The Venerable-Dwarnoi (14<sup>th</sup> level) is unique in his region. He, too, won his position from the previous Venerable-Dwarnoi.

### ***Contributed By***

Original author unknown.

Then augmented by Dominique Crouzet. (Note: I came across the Dwarnoi character class in the tome I of the Great Classes' & Kits' Netbook. I did not like how the class had been made, but I otherwise found the idea much interesting. Hence I put there my own version of it.)

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## **Guardians of the Eternal Flame (the)** ***(A twin cult, with one NE and the other NG)***

### ***Worships***

The "Eternal Flame".

A flame that never dies, nor can it be put out. It is clearly not a deity, and it doesn't give spells to its "priesthood". However, it is somewhat sentient and have magical powers.

### ***Known to Society***

0% to 30%, varies with region.

Near the cult's headquarters only 30% of the population knows about it. Other people believe it to be mere superstition and/or feud between the two families. Anyway, the cult doesn't attract much interest in people (after all, it isn't a real religion). Everywhere else this singular cult is totally unknown.

### ***Frequency***

Unique. This twin cult is only found in areas directly surrounding their two headquarters.

### ***Organization***

Strangely enough, each one of the cult displays exactly the same organization. The reason lies in the nature of the "Eternal Flame" which imposes this, rather than the whims of the cults leaders. Otherwise, these cults aren't faith (in the traditional religious sense), but resemble more some kind of monastic order, or sect. The members of the good cult call themselves the "White Guardians", and those of the evil one, the "Black Guardians".

**Demands on the members :** Promote the expansion and influence of the cult, while at the same time oppose the expansion of the other cult, and try to reduce its power and influence.

**Hierarchy:** The cult's hierarchy is as follows:

1) Regular members : characters of any classes and levels, but more probably zero level commoners. These often follow the cult more for convenience than real faith, as they often don't see it as a religion, but rather as a sort of clan or brotherhood.

2) Outer Circle members : 20 characters, of any classes (except priest classes) but who all are at least of the 5<sup>th</sup> level. They oversee the regular members, and carry out the various tasks of the cult (defense, promoting the cult, etc...). Otherwise, they are chosen by the inner circle members from the ranks of the regular members. In any case they cannot outnumber 20 (for some unknown reason).

3) Inner Circle members : 5 characters, of any classes (except priest classes) but who all are at least of the name's level (9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup>). They supervise the cult doings. Otherwise they are chosen by the Oligarchs from the ranks of the outer circle members. In any case they cannot outnumber 5 (for some unknown reason).

4) Oligarchs : there are two Oligarchs, one for each cult. These are the founders of the cults, and are by no way priests. The "White Oligarch" is a 19<sup>th</sup> lvl human ranger (NG) ; and the "Black Oligarch" is a 24<sup>th</sup> lvl human thief (NE). They rule the cults from their respective fortresses, rarely, if ever, venturing out.

**Priests' powers and abilities:** None, the cult members aren't real priests. However, the members can have the following kit : *Guardian of the Eternal Flame*

### **GUARDIAN OF THE ETERNAL FLAME**

- The kit is intended for the outer and inner circle members (and oligarchs of course), but not for the regular members. The only requirement is of being accepted within the ranks of the cult. Note that a character entering the cult automatically discards his own kit, to take on that one.

- Upon taking the kit (during a special ceremony), the character has his alignment turned to that of the Flame : NG for the White Guardians, NE for the Black Guardians.

- The kit imparts (as *imbue with spell ability* priest spell) the character with a 1<sup>st</sup> level priest spell, each time he participates in the ritual of prayer around the flame (but maximum once per day). It otherwise enables him/her to benefit from the flame's powers.

- The character is now expected to serve the cult, and participate in the ritual of the Flame at least once per week (they usually do it once per day).

### ***Description***

A long time ago, and far from here (i.e.: far from the twin cults' location), in a mountainous region, there was a great battle who opposed some forces of good against others of evil. However, this battle occurred in a forest which was destroyed in the process. Seeing this, the archdruid who was in charge requested a Quest spell, then did cast it with the intent of striking both parties who had been engaged in that battle. Blasts of thunder and lightning erupted from the sky, and devastated the field. Thereafter, the only remain was that rock who burned with a supernatural and inextinguishable fire.

Then, about 200 years ago, Maëldan and Koriandos of Whitekeep, the two sons of a noble of xxxxxx (the region where the cults are located), came in this wilderness area, and found that flame burning on a rock on the side of a mountain. They were entranced by the magic which radiated from the Flame, and thus decided to pick up the rock, and brought it back to their keep. It is how the Guardians of the Eternal Flame were founded. Unfortunately, one brother was good, and the other was evil, so they never got along very well. One day the evil brother took a torch, and lit it with the Flame. He ran off with the torch and then had his own fortress built, some distance from his brother's. After this happened, both brothers founded identical orders (perhaps at the request of the now double flame), one dedicated to good, the other to evil. The NG "White Guardians" and NE "Black Guardians" were born.

Nowadays, the main effort of both orders is to keep the other order from gaining too much power. In fact, it has turned into an unending feud over the years, with recurring periods of violence when one side seems to grow too strong. At such times, there is a near open war between the two cults (and the PCs could well become involved into one of them). As each one of the Oligarchs fears to be the target of an assassination attempt from his brother, they remain elusive. As such, they have so far kept their identities hidden from their followers. None knows what they look like, what are their habits, and so on. Only their names are known. There are many rumours about them (like they have powers related to fire ; or that their respective children belong to their respective cults in the inner circle hierarchy,

etc...). The only thing which is sure is that they perform the rituals and ceremonies of the flame everyday (but wearing a hooded robe, masking their features). Also, these two Oligarchs have been alive for more than two centuries ; a fact which certainly may be explained only by the Flame which somehow kept them alive.

None can say what were the powers and characteristics of the Flame when it was one. Nonetheless, today both halves of the Flame look exactly the same (color, form, heat, etc...), and their powers seems to be identical : they give their “worshippers” who participate in the rites, the benefit of a *cure light wound* spell ; *cure serious* for outer-circle members ; *cure critical* for inner-circle members ; and *heal* for Oligarchs. They also give the benefit of a *imbue with spell ability* priest spell (see kit). In fact, the only way to tell the flames apart is by detect good/evil or by what they are burning on. The Flame of the White Guardians burns on a rock, while the Flame of the Black Guardians burns on wood, and must be kept fed.

Note lastly, that the two cults in their rituals, display a True Neutral obvious tendency. What makes the two cults different is primarily the cults’ members behaviour in their everyday life.

### **Special Hindrances**

Members of each cult are the regular targets of the other cult for assassination or eviction. Being a member of one of these two cults is to engage in a life of unending feud.

### **Contributed By**

Harley Smith, Jr. <shadowstar@wgserv.crystal-mtn.com>

Then, augmented by Dominique Crouzet

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## **Immortal Taoists**

**(True Neutral cult)**

### **Worships**

The “**TAO**”, sometimes called by Taoists: the “Jade Emperor”.

Note, this is not a god in the sense of a powerful being. Tao is a concept, it is the ultimate void that encompasses everything ; all is born out of it, and eventually returns to it. Anyway, this concept has been better explained (if it can be explained, may the purists forgive me), by Lao Tseu in the Tao-Të-King.

(Taoism is primarily concerned with otherworldly mysticism. Taoists believe in a oneness-of-being. To them, life is the same as death and all things are part of the same harmonious state of existence. The only way to achieve knowledge of this mystic state is to enter a trance and merge with the infinite. The Taoists believe that any order imposed on nature is destructive and bound to create unhappiness, so they are generally opposed to law and government.)

### **Known to Society**

In oriental settings, everyone knows of Taoism. Immortal Taoists are men of great renown among common people who suspect them of wielding incredible powers and, as their name imply of course, of being immortal. For instance, there are many legends on the Eight Immortals, who are traditional figures of the oriental folklore. These characters are alchemists, magicians, but also poets and adventurers whose heroic exploits span the centuries. Where in other countries mighty heroes of legend have been dead for ages, in the Orient the Eight Immortals are always in activity.

As Taoism is opposed to law and government, it is seldom popular with the ruling class. However, and maybe for that reason, it is the most popular religion of the lower classes. Taoism, as a religion, is organised into a church, complete with a formal hierarchy, rites, festivals, and an escape to the Mystical Garden for the faithful. Anyway, the Immortal Taoists discussed here aren’t Taoist priests, but recluse characters devoted to their own enlightenment and “Transmogrification”.

In non oriental settings, Taoism is unknown, and Immortal Taoists even more. The mere mention of such characters would be scoffed at.

## Frequency

Taoism is much widespread, and most Asian cities will have Taoist temples. However, there is a distinction which must be made between Taoist Priests, and Immortal Taoists who are rather some kind of monks. Every Taoist temple is run by Taoist priests. But only 15% of these temples will have Immortal Taoists residing within their walls. As a sect, Immortal Taoists usually prefer to live in seclusion, that is, in small monasteries located deep within the wilderness, far from human settlements. As such, nearly 100% of Taoists monasteries found in such settings, will be of Immortal Taoists.

## Organization

Monasteries' organizations are usually very simple (doing it otherwise, would go against their doctrine). There are usually an Abbot (min. 9<sup>th</sup> lvl), several Tao-shih (i.e.: adepts), and a few holy-men who remain apart of the others. These venerated holy-men are high-level characters (above the 15<sup>th</sup> lvl) who are on the brink of "Transmogrification" (i.e.: of becoming truly immortal). Only those latter characters deserve the name *Immortal Taoist*.

Immortal Taoists' monasteries are independent from each others. They do not belong to a religious organization of Taoism, as it would be the case in some western well organized religion. These monasteries are dedicated to the pursuit of enlightenment and immortality, not religious service. However, some of them may perform religious ceremonies for the common people, and help in any capacity they have, for the sole prospect of earning the necessary money to run the monastery.

## Description

This "cult" is said to have been founded by the Eight Immortals, the first men to have discovered the secrets of immortality (*Legend-Lore* p.85, with but one change: add 6-10 to the level of each one of them).

The purpose of Immortal Taoists, is to obtain immortality. But this is not immortality as in eternal youth, and certainly not immortality in undeath! Their immortality is obtained through the fabled methods of "Transmogrification". Aside from this lofty goal, Immortal Taoists are not interested in the worldly affairs of men.

However some of them are supposed to belong to a Taoist organization devoted to the preservation of nature (like a druidic order), and opposed to the expansion of civilization. There also are rumors of Immortal Taoists who were unable to discover the process of Transmogrification (or had not the courage to perform it as it is), and thus turned to the darker paths of foul necromancy to become immortal (in undeath)...

The *Transmogrification* is a process by which a character turns himself into a higher state of being. This affects primarily the body, which is transformed into "something else" (DM's determination : an Avangion, a Deva, etc., or Unity with the Tao as described for the Ascetic character class). In addition, a character achieving this transformation also leaves the mortal world, and disappears into the heavens. Thus, as a PC he is retired from play. However, no more worthy end could be thought of for an Immortal Taoist.

Now, the Transmogrification process may vary widely from one monastery to the other (DM's discretion). In fact there are several methods, but all of them require that the adept go through lengthy daily training, and periodic stage progressions. See at the end of this cult description, the *Sien-Jen* kit which better explains it. All Immortal Taoists should have that kit; and I suggest that PCs who want to become adepts of this cult, can discard their own kit, and replace it by this one (however, this should require some quest, tests, etc...).

## Special Hindrances

Despite the fact that nearly anyone (i.e.: any character class) may be able to join and become an adept and benefit from it (as shown by the kit), only a few have the potential to become immortal. That means, in game terms, that only those of the Ascetic character class will ever be able to become truly immortal (after the 20<sup>th</sup> level).

The Ascetic character class will be found in the TSR *Legend-Lore* book p.125, or in the *Complete Net Psionics Handbook* of Charon the Boatman. In both cases, you may replace without problem the concept of Brahman, by that of the Tao (which, from my point of view, is pretty much the same thing, but described by two different cultures).

Another option is to introduce the Druid class, in oriental settings, as Immortal Taoists (but not regular Taoist priests). In the *Legend-Lore*, Lao-Tseu avatar is a druid; and druids share the following beliefs with Immortal Taoists : they revere nature, and the natural order of the “cosmos”; they live in the wilderness; and they believe that civilization is a sort of corruption of nature. Otherwise, powers of shape-change are coherent with the concept of “Change” central to Taoism; and lastly, the extended life druids get at 16<sup>th</sup> level is very much appropriate for Immortal Taoists. I only suggest the following revisions, related to level progression :

There are no limited numbers of Immortal Taoists at higher levels, as it is the case for 12<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> level druids. Nonetheless, there still can be some Taoist organization dedicated to the defense of nature, and opposed to civilization. This organization, would be similar to the druidic order, thus only a limited number of its members would be of 12<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> level. However this does not prevent other Immortal Taoists of these levels to exist at the same time, but they do not belong to the organization, as they rather spend their time pursuing their self enlightenment.

Anyway, Immortal Taoists who do not belong to this organization do not get any followers, and at 15<sup>th</sup> level, do not get the bonus spells the Grand Druid gets.

Moreover, Immortal Taoists who do not belong to this organization, use the experience level progression table of clerics. (In fact, you don’t have to go against the rules with this, because you could well make some customized cleric very much like a druid, but which is still a “cleric”, with the POS&P rules).

### ***Role-playing Tips :***

Here follows a description of the Sien-Jen kit, which fleshes out the adepts of the “cult”:

#### **SIEN-JEN**

Sien-Jen are those famed Taoist characters who devote all their time and efforts to obtain immortality. They may range from eccentric alchemists ingesting strange elixirs at preordained times, to recluse tao-shih practicing complex exercises of meditation and respiration everyday. However, all have in common the use of secret and dangerous techniques which may well bring them to their doom, if incorrectly performed, rather than making them immortal. It should also be noted that, where bonzes for instance, try to become immortal in spirit after their death, Sien-Jen try to become immortal in their flesh. Their ultimate goal usually is to have their body “transmogrified”, that is, turned into an inalterable but also immaterial substance who will exist forever.

Sien-Jen are seldom found in large urban Taoist temples. Rather, they generally spend their lives in small secluded monasteries forgotten in the deep wilderness, far from the agitation of the civilization. In these serene places, Sien-Jen are free to pursue their lofty objectives without being disturbed.

#### **REQUIREMENTS :**

Sien-Jen must have minimum scores of 13 in intelligence and wisdom.

Sien-Jen must be of neutral alignments.

Sien-Jen may be of any character class, but only Psionicists, Priests, and Wizards classes will get a chance to effectively become immortal in the end.

#### **WEAPON PROFICIENCIES :**

Required : None.

Recommended : Jo-stick, Kiseru, Lasso, Nunchaku, Sling, Staff, Tetsu-bo, Tonfa.

#### **NONWEAPON PROFICIENCIES :**

***Bonus*** : Endurance, Slow-respiration.

***Recommended*** : Alchemy, Astrology, Ancient-history, Ancient-languages, Concentration, Healing, Herbalism, Hypnotism, Iron-will, Religion, Research, Sage-knowledge, Spellcraft.

#### **SPECIAL BENEFITS :**

***1) Ruggedness*** : due to their training, Sien-Jen become more resistant to suffering and injury than any other character. This ability manifests itself in the following ways :

***Natural Healing*** (upon taking the kit): Sien-Jen heal twice faster (i.e.: natural healing only) as other characters (they get 2 hit-points per day of rest rather than 1).

***Resist death*** (upon reaching 4<sup>th</sup> level): If missing a saving throw would result in their death, Sien-Jen are reduced to 1 hit-point instead. However, this ability doesn’t work if they have less than 5 hit-points remaining when this occurs.



Will to live (upon reaching 7<sup>th</sup> level): Unlike other characters, Sien-Jen do not become unconscious between 0 and -10 hit-points. They cannot further attack or engage in any strenuous activity, but can bind their wounds and seek further healing.

**2) Immortality** : At higher levels, Sien-Jen become able to withstand the effects of aging, and extends their life.

Slow Aging (upon reaching 10<sup>th</sup> level): Sien-Jen's rate of aging slows by one half (that is, they age only one year for two years which pass), this also apply to magical aging.

Slow Aging (upon reaching 16<sup>th</sup> level): Sien-Jen's rate of aging now slow by one fourth (that is, they age only one year for four years which pass), this also apply to magical aging.

Cease aging (upon reaching 20<sup>th</sup> level): Sien-Jen cease aging. They are now immortal, but still can die from injury, etc... Moreover, they can now achieve transmogrification, the ultimate goal in their pursuit of immortality (however, when this occurs they definitively leave the mortal world).

### **SPECIAL HINDRANCES :**

**1) Daily practice** : Sien-Jens must perform their meditation and exercises, at least 4 hours per day. Failure to do so results in the loss of their special powers of toughness for that day. Moreover, if a Sien-Jen too often neglects his training, he will be considered as having abandoned his kit (DM's discretion). Afterwards, the character won't have any reason to remain within his monastery. He won't be banished, but will politely be suggested to depart by the others Sien-Jens.

**2) Dangerous practices** : Sien-Jens will get their special powers (at 4<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, and transmogrification), only if they successfully pass through the special rituals / alchemical ingestions / etc..., required for these powers to be obtained. Whatever the method is used, the adept must make a system shock survival. If successful, he gets the power and may continue ; but if he fails, he dies ! (If raised thereafter, he may not be anymore a Sien-Jen, the kit is lost). Note that if a Sien-Jen wasn't very strict about his daily training, he will suffer maluses (at DM's discretion) to his roll. Also, non-Sien-Jen who try the rituals, etc..., incur a 60% penalty to their sys. shock score, when making the roll (trying to do it a second time if raised from the dead after a failed attempt: direct death).

Note that some characters may try to pass these stages at different levels than shown in the special benefit description. If so, they get a malus/bonus of -10% /+10% to their sys. shock score, per level of difference, compared to the appropriate level to get these powers.

The practices Sien-Jen must abide to, will vary from one adept to the other. Here follow the most common of these paths to immortality :

– Alchemical way : the adept must follow a very strict regimen, and use unguents, creams, etc, with which he rubs his body for hours, and so on. Then, the gaining of the Sien-Jen powers, at appropriate levels, is done by ingesting special potions and elixirs which are made specifically for the character (one cannot use another's Sien-Jen mixture).

– Ascetic way : the adept spend untold hours in meditation and Yoga exercises. Then, the gaining of the Sien-Jen powers, at appropriate levels, is done by way of a special sort of psychic self surgery the adept performs on himself during some prolonged retreat spent in fasting and meditation.

– Magical way : the adept also spend untold hours in meditation and breathing exercises. Then, the gaining of the Sien-Jen powers, at appropriate levels, is done by casting special spells which they must learn (or even create), then cast upon themselves. These special spells (often of the *alteration* school of magic) serve no other use, and are long to prepare and then cast.

This cult could be used for a PC wanting to become immortal (often an obsession of wizards). After some search, he would discover that in a far-off land unknown to most, some people there are said to know the secret of immortality. This would give an excuse for adventuring in remote places. Then, the character could eventually find these would-be immortals, and get the opportunity of becoming a Sien-Jen him/herself. (Hence, the DM should authorize the PC to abandon his current kit, and change it for this one.)

### ***Contributed By***

Dominique Crouzet.

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# Spinning Ones (the)

(Chaotic Neutral cult)

## Worships

**Lliira** (Forgotten Realms). You may also instead use Fu-Hsing (in oriental settings; LL p.77), Dionysus (in greek/roman settings, LL p.113), or any god of happiness, joy, etc...

## Known to Society

In cities where the cult exists, most people have heard of it.  
Otherwise, only 20% of the population know about it.

## Frequency

60% of cities and towns; but only 10% in rural settings. The rituals of the cult do not happen on a regular basis, but at random, and mostly in summer (never in winter for obvious reasons).

Otherwise, the cult is most favoured by bards and gypsies.

## Organization

The cult has no real organization, nor hierarchy (see description on how it functions). As such, no special demands are put on its members, although most of them will usually be young people, and it is doubtful that anyone of lawful alignment will join.

## Description

**Symbol:** The “holy” symbol is a multifaceted gem. This gem is not necessarily valuable.

**Brief history:** All worshippers of Lliira know of the cult, and many people in the towns where they hold their gatherings have heard and witnessed them in their strange rituals.

The gatherings are held frequently in many cities throughout Faerun. The gatherings start when one of the spinning ones has a vision of where to hold the next gathering. The information is passed by word of mouth throughout the city within a day.

The followers gather at the chosen site, usually a disused warehouse, and set up the bands and lights. The lighting is usually provided by local apprentice wizards who have mastered the *Dancing Lights* and other spells of similar vein, and the bands are usually young bards who are into heavy percussion. The gathering start at dusk and quite often carry on till the dawn.

It has been noted that certain narcotic substances are smoked and swallowed at these gathering. The local authorities in many cities have tried to ban these gatherings due to the disturbance caused to the residents and the narcotic substances sold at the gatherings, because of the suppression by the local authorities the gatherings are of necessity clandestine.

Usually the rituals are conducted as follows : It begins when the night has come, and the worshippers first drink some alcoholic beverages, or even consume drugs, although it's not required to participate in the rituals. Then, when they begin to feel joyous (or one could say: drunk), they work themselves up into a near hypnotic state of mind by looking at the holy symbol of the cult spinning in front of a light source, reflecting entrancing streaks and flashes of light. Eventually, then they are in trance, they go and dance wildly, in spinning upon themselves. Generally, it continues until dawn, where the worshippers end with a “spinning headache”.

## Special Hindrances

The local authorities in many cities have tried to ban these gatherings due to the “disturbance caused to the residents, and the narcotic substances sold at the gatherings”. But the truth could well be that the more traditional and stern religions had a part in trying to forbid the cult (maybe from fear that their worshippers would leave them for this joyous cult). Anyway, because of the suppression by the local authorities the gatherings are of necessity clandestine.

## Contributed By

Mal Martin <M13MARTIN@aol.com>

Then slightly augmented by Dominique Crouzet.

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## Wolf Cult (the)

(True Neutral cult)

### Worships

The Wolf's Spirit ; not much as a deity, but rather revering wolves instead.

### Known to Society

About 1-3% of the population have heard of it.

### Frequency

Very isolated. Usually away from large centers of civilisation. In the author's world, so far there is only one village that has these cultists. The entire village are members, and there is a population of about 30-40 people.

### Organization

Governed by priests of any nature religion (in the author's world, the priests are druids.). Shamans are particularly well suited to this cult.

**Demands on the members:** All members of this cult, upon initiation, must have their right arm scarred. This is done by raking the entire length of the forearm with a wolf's claw. This scar must NEVER be concealed, otherwise the cultist is shamed. Initiation gives them the special "kit" as shown below.

**Hierarchy:** The cult itself has no hierarchy. However, the priest leading the cult still abide by the normal hierarchy of his faith if any (as for example druids).

Worshippers' powers and abilities: Nature-priests, shamans, druids, etc... get the normal abilities and power of their class. However, all members of the cult, whatever may be their class get the following "kit":

### WOLF CULTIST

- Wolves never attack a member of this cult (unless being magically controlled). It should be noted that werewolves and wolfweres will usually leave cultists alone.
- Cultists gain the "special resistance" of wolves (who can run after a prey for days without tiring, nor eating): They can go for one day of solid exertion (such as forced march) per three levels of experience (rounded up) without any fatiguing effects.
- Cultists will gain automatically a wolf of the greatest size and power for follower, when they reach name's level (this is in addition to normal followers). They will also gain the ability to *Speak with wolves* at will (as per the *Speak with animals* spell), if they are druids or rangers.
- Cultists will do everything in their power to protect a wolf, and would never consider attacking a wolf. If they attack a wolf on their own decision, it means that they do not belong anymore to the cult (and will be rejected by the other cultists). Otherwise, if forced to fight a wolf (such as a magically controlled one, or a werewolf), they suffer a -2 to their hit rolls. For werewolves, the position of the cult is ambiguous : they usually don't know what should be their policy about them.

### Description

**Symbol:** A wolf head (stylized).

**Brief history:** The Wolf Cult is a small, little known cult that springs up mainly in small villages or hamlets. Often, where the cult is present, the entire village will be followers of this cult. Although the cult is best suited to rangers and druids, there are other followers of this cult as well.

Followers of this cult are mistrustful of large cities and towns, preferring to live in small rural areas instead.

The cult has a very odd sense of ideals, for they consider wolves to be above anything else. They would not even consider harming a wolf (thus the -2 to hit), and revere them as majestic beasts. Wolves do not fear members of this cult, and rarely do they attack cult members (usually only occurs if they are being magically controlled). Many cultists have a wolf as a companion, and these wolves

are often well trained. Often, the village or hamlet where the cult is located will have wolf dens and a resident wolf trainer among their ranks. They are a proud cult, and will fight fiercely to defend their homes. They will give their lives to protect a wolf.

### ***Special Hindrances***

Things being as they are, members of the cult who are known as such will receive a –4 reaction roll for reactions. In fact most people will suspect them of being werewolves or something like that. Otherwise, the fact of displaying the scar (see membership) will lower the cultist comeliness (or charisma) by 1 point, in the eye of non-cultists (even if these do not suspect anything of the cult). Of course none of these hindrances are applied when dealing with other cult members, for they find the scars to be appealing rather than revolting.

Cultists cannot wear metal armors. Cannot own more items than they can carry with them.

### ***Contributed By***

Cural Antalas of Northern Ergoth <Cural@bigfoot.com>

Then augmented by Dominique Crouzet

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## Part Four: Good Cults

### Cathars

(Neutral Good cult)

#### Worships

This monotheistic religion worships "God", the almighty and unique creator of the universe.

Cathars are a sect of the True Faith who rejected the Holy Church (the self-professed only true representatives of God on earth), and determined their own religion as based on the "original spirit of the faith and the Prophet's teachings".

#### Known to Society

In Mid'Gaard 75% of people have heard of it. However, few of them know the Cathars for what they really are, but usually believe them to be heretics of the worst sort, as told by the Holy Church.

#### Frequency

Most Cathars will be found in the Frankish lands, and especially in south Poitaine. The frequency thus normally will be of : 40% of people being followers of that cult in southern Poitaine, 15% in other parts of that region, 5% in the other Frankish regions, and almost nobody outside of Frankish lands, although here and there a small community of Cathars may exist.

#### Organization

The faith is organized in a manner similar to that of the Holy Church.

**Demands on members:** Cooperation and good will between members, to achieve a shared objective of common benefit. Priests make vows of chastity, non-violence, never lying, and poverty.

**Hierarchy:** The following titles are not gained solely by gaining the appropriate level, but also for appropriate service :

- 1) Humble believer : lvl.0 ; is only a cleric apprentice.
- 2) Humble devotee : lvl.1/2 ; assistant to a Curate, or higher ranking cleric.
- 3) Perfect : min 5<sup>th</sup> lvl. ; cleric assigned to a village or chapel ; or chief assistant to a Bishop, or higher ranking cleric.
- 4) Deacon : min 7<sup>th</sup> lvl. ; is generally assigned to a town, or several chapels in a district.
- 5) Bishop : min 9<sup>th</sup> lvl. ; is generally assigned to the biggest church (such as a cathedral) in a city, or oversee several towns and lesser communities in a department.
- 6) Holy man : min 11<sup>th</sup> lvl. ; it is at least a perfect, but not necessary a deacon or bishop, whose insight and wisdom have been recognized by the others. Such men usually travel the lands to help those of the sect who are in trouble, etc...

**Members' powers and abilities:** priests are clerics, friars-mendicants, or preachers (see specialty priest description) of good alignments. They usually get the Pacifist kit, but can also get that of Mystic or Peasant. Other followers do not get any special ability.

#### Description

**Symbol:** the Cross.

**Dogma:** Also called the "Good Men", Cathars are characterized by a rigid asceticism and by a dualistic theology based on the belief that the universe comprises two conflicting worlds\*: the spiritual world created by God and the material world created by Satan. The cult's object is the spread of the faith by preaching and teaching, or the fulfillment of whatever else is judged the most urgent need of the people considered at the time. Education has been its chief activity almost from the outset, and helping people. Their priests (Perfects clerics) must be stringent on the spirit of the religion, and make vows of poverty and helping others for the glory of God, not their own (their motto is "*Ad maiorem*



*Dei gloriam*” which means “to the greater glory of God”). Also, Cathars priests should spend their time learning and practicing, and should use magic only with the intent of helping others. Otherwise, compassion and love are central to the lives of Cathars.

(\*: at a basic level, people will see it as the prime material plane being the world of Satan, and the heavens the world of God. However, what it really means is this : Those who seek more material possession than the strict necessary will soon concentrate their attention on material things and forget that they are creatures of God born from the heavens. In fact, acquiring ever more wealth and power only increases the need for getting more. Desires can never be fulfilled that way, they can only be augmented. As such, people will eventually resort to cheat, theft, murder, etc., to get what they want, as the urge for things and power grow even stronger in them, making them forget everything else. Then, when such people turn to that path, they darken their soul, enabling spirits of darkness to further influence them to evil. On the contrary, the more one turns himself toward spiritual things, the more he becomes fulfilled, and thus lives a paradisiacal life on that same world.)

**Brief history:** In the end of the Tenth Century, most of Mid'Gaard civilizations had adopted the True-Faith religion. However the Holy-Church, its official representative, was becoming more and more corrupt and intolerant. Actually, nobles would get the higher ranking positions within the church hierarchy to further their own ends, more concerned with wealth, power, and privileges rather than spiritual matters. (Note that such "priests" would have in fact none of the priestly powers normally afforded to true clerics). Hence, the educational standards of the rest of the clergy was also rapidly declining. Eventually the clergy no longer carried out its duties, but instead indulged in abuses of many sorts, and lived off the common people more than it ever had.

As a result, many people rejected the Holy Church and began to search for a better religion. Also many of the remaining honest clergy (who often were simple parish priests of humble origin), turned their back on the Holy Church and converted to new doctrines. It is when one of those priests, in southern Poitaine (a Frankish land), began to "convert lost followers to the original doctrine of the prophet". The people he met quickly realized that he was a Saint, and that he felt concerned by their well-being, contrary to the regular clergy of the Holy Church. As such, in a few decades many people turned to that new religion of the True Faith.

However, this of course attracted the enmity of the Holy Church who was losing its power in favor of the Cathars. They began a crusade against them, and performed many atrocities in the name of the Prophet, burning these "heretics" on the stake at every opportunity. As a result, southern Poitaine has been ravaged by civil religious war during the last years. Most Cathars hide their faith, pretending they belong to the Holy Church, while others live in well defended fortresses in the hills and mountains.

### ***Special Hindrances***

Cathars are hated and combated at every opportunity by the Holy Church.

### ***Contributed By***

Dominique Crouzet.

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# Heralds of the Warriors of Hope

(Chaotic Good cult)

## Worships

The cult worship the ideals of freedom and goodness, against any lawful evil tyranny.

## Known to Society

Only 15% of society know of them.

## Frequency

In any evil tyranny, the chance of finding some members of the cult is of: 10% in rural places (villages, etc...); 30% in towns; and 70% in important cities.

In areas without tyrannical oppression, the chance for finding members of that "cult" drop to: 1% in rural areas; 5% in towns; and 20% in important cities.

## Organization

This is not really a cult (that is: a religious sect), but rather an organization devoted to freedom and goodness. It is considered a cult because of the members' shared belief in these ideals, rather than mere people only wanting to get rid of a dictatorial government. Also, it is a cult because it is supported and initiated by a group of powerful spirits, which is of course seldom the case with any political organization trying to resist an unwanted rulership.

The cult has a peculiar organization, which is intended to keep members free of any hierarchy (as the cult is chaotic), and relatively safe from treason. It is organized in a vast network in which every member knows a few other members (one per experience level), but not the whole of the cult. That way, it is very difficult to infiltrate the cult and dismantle it wholly. Also, due to the fact that there is no leader, the cult cannot be "beheaded". Nonetheless, the higher level members get more responsibilities and opportunities of actions than lower level members.

Otherwise there is no priesthood in this cult, and priests of various faiths could join without that this questions their faith or church (for those of freedom and goodness ideals of course).

**Demands on members:** Cooperation and good will between members, to achieve a shared objective of countering the evil tyranny. However, anyone is free of his decisions (one of the basic tenets of the cult), and is the only judge of what he should do or not. However, members who do not do anything for the cult, will sooner or later lose all contacts with it. It should be noted that it rarely anger the other members however: "No man (or demi-human for that matter) should be expected to be perfect".

Otherwise, the cult will tend to recruit good aligned members, and preferably members with access to magical or psionical powers.

**Hierarchy:** None, as stated above.

**Members' powers and abilities:** being a member of the cult does not give any power in itself (no special priest class, and no special kit). However, members of the cult will be somewhat protected by the spirits who initiated the cult. As such, they gain a +1 bonus for not being surprised, and a +2 bonus to their saving throws for not being detected (spells, psionics, or otherwise) as members of the cult. Otherwise, the members will be warned in their dreams of important things (pertaining to the cult and its agenda) by these spirits. Needless to say that these spirits are not easily fooled and won't let traitors infiltrate the organization. Similarly, those members who are much involved in the cult agenda will receive more assistance than those who aren't. Note at last, that the spirits, or any other member of the cult, will never ask a member something beyond his/her capacities, or who would lead him/her to a certain death.

## Description

**Symbol:** None.

**Brief history:** When the Pentocrator eventually conquered Byzantium, thus finally bringing the city-state under the rule of the Cesarean Empire, he had the leader of his last opponents executed in a much horrible manner, in order to firmly establish once and for all his dictatorship.

Hence, when Cellius Asundar died, all hope seemed to disappear forever from the heart of the vanquished. Anyway, during his long agony Cellius swore that if he had lost a battle, he had not lost the war, and that he would come back and bring down the tyrant. Then, once the former High-priest of **Athena** was dead and his mutilated corpse thrown to the dogs, the Pentocrator only laughed at his menaces.

However, Cellius' spirit survived his body, and joined his god in the afterlife. And as he had been the highest of His priests, **Athena** rewarded Cellius with Deva status (not bad!). Cellius the Deva was then allowed years later to come back to the mortal world (as a spirit), and do what he had sworn he would. However, as an agent of the gods, Cellius may not personally attack the Pentocrator (which is of course still there, maybe as a lich, or maybe the last heir of his dynasty). He is only allowed to lead humans into rebellion (which is a fair play considering that the forces of "evil" do the same, but through the doings of demons).

The goal of the cult is to counter the spread of evil, and bring down the tyranny. They work primarily to anticipate the deeds of evil beings, head them off, and counter them whenever possible. Law is not important to the cult, everything is done in regard to goodness.

Note that apart Cellius who is a Deva, the other spirits may be anything (but "good") the DM want them to be. Choices could include Couatls, Ki-rins, etc... Nonetheless, all of these beings *never* do appear physically on the prime material plane, but instead remain in the Astral (or Ethereal), contacting the cult's members through magic or psionics. Would all these spirits be "killed", the cult would certainly disappear, but not necessarily.

### **Special Hindrances**

Members of the cult will more often than not, be actively hunted by those they oppose. Death is the usual sentence (however, the organization will near always try to rescue them).

### **Contributed By**

Dominique Crouzet.

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## **Pious Knights** (Neutral Good cult)

### **Worships**

"God", the almighty and unique creator of the universe.

### **Known to Society**

The brotherhood is practically unknown. Those who have heard of it (5%), always in fact heard rumors and legends which rarely reflect the truth.

### **Frequency**

As shown below, pious knights exist nearly everywhere all over the civilized lands of Mid'Gaard, but always in small numbers. Anyway they are the most numerous in the Frankish Lands.

### **Organization**

The Pious Knights' secret and underground organization (called Pious Brotherhood in Mid' gaard, and Shemsou-Hor in Arunta) is structured in a cellular hierarchy. In order to perpetuate their order and pursue their mission, Pious Knights are organized into networks spread all over the world. The network is made up of "Chapters" consisting of 3 to 12 *Brothers* of 3<sup>rd</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> level, led by a *Commander* of 9<sup>th</sup> level or higher, who knows how to contact two other chapters. In any given region there are never more than seven chapters. The size of each region may vary, but it is never so large as to making communication impossible. Thereafter, a *Preceptor* (a 13<sup>th</sup> or higher level Pious Knight) coordinates the activities of several chapters within the same region. A preceptor is expected to make important decisions, but also delegate duties to others. If problems arise, a preceptor will first try to

deal with them using the chapter under his direction. Nonetheless, if he needs more help, he is legitimate to summon up to two other commanders to his side (who bring their chapters with them). Otherwise, there is no specific leader on top of the organization, aside the "Council of Preceptors".

**Demands on members:** Pious Knights are religious warriors with high ideals and standards, but also must remain discreet in a world which outlawed them without mercy. As such, Pious Knights must behave in a chivalric manner, and pushed by the conviction of their faith will undertake the most dangerous and noble quests to prove themselves and their ideals as worthy and righteous. Nonetheless, they also will try to keep a low profile wherever they travel, only revealing themselves when and if they determine that the locals will not react in an adverse manner. Otherwise, strict adherence to the True Faith ideals of love and justice, and the law of their order, is absolute binding. Straining from it, and the brotherhood will know of the act and sanction it accordingly. Usual penalties may include : penance; a quest for atonement; banishment; or death.

**Hierarchy:** The Pious Brotherhood hierarchy is as follows :

From 1<sup>st</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> level, Pious Knights are *Brothers*. At 1<sup>st</sup> level they are novitiates and do not yet belong to a cell/chapter, not even that of their mentor. At 2<sup>nd</sup> level, they become initiates. The experience level determines the rank: a 2<sup>nd</sup> level Pious Knight is an "Initiate of the 1<sup>st</sup> circle" (red); a 3<sup>rd</sup> level Pious Knight an Initiate of the 2<sup>nd</sup> circle (orange); etc., up to the 8<sup>th</sup> level as an Initiate of the 7<sup>th</sup> circle (violet color).

At 9<sup>th</sup> level, a Pious Knight reaches a sort of transitory level. He usually becomes the first lieutenant of his chapter's leader. Most often, this commander will be a preceptor pursuing his sacred quest to become "Radiant". As such, the Pious Knight becomes the one in charge of the chapter during the commander's absence. He will not advance to commander level himself, until either another member of the chapter reaches the 9<sup>th</sup> level and takes his place, the commander has died or has become a Radiant (thus finished his quest). When one of these three possibilities occur, the Pious Knight is entitled to reach the 10<sup>th</sup> level, thus organizing his own chapter, or taking control of the one he belonged to if the leader had died. (For PCs, the lenient DM will always let one of those three events occur when the character has enough experience points to reach the 10<sup>th</sup> level.)

Then, at 10<sup>th</sup> level, a Pious Knight becomes a *Commander* and is expected to organize his own chapter. He is from that level on, an "Immaculate" (white: the combination of all the seven colors). Finally, at 13<sup>th</sup> lvl, a Pious Knight becomes a *Preceptor*. All of them are normally engaged on a special quest which, if successful, will bring them to the condition of "Radiant" (light), the highest rank for a lawmaker. Note that this doesn't necessarily relate to level, but to fulfilling the quest. There could well be a 13<sup>th</sup> level Radiant, and a 16<sup>th</sup> level Immaculate.

In any case, however, the rank (Initiate, Immaculate, and Radiant), determines who has precedence and authority. In case of two Immaculate Pious Knights, a Preceptor makes the difference over a Commander.

**Priests' powers and abilities:** This is a new warrior class open to humans and half-elves only. Pious-Knights are made using the PO S&M rules for customized priests, but are considered a warrior character class for saving-throws, exceptional ability-scores, weapon specialization, etc.

Character class: Specialty warrior/priest (POS&M rules).

- Experience level progression of paladins.
- Minimum strength of 14, and wisdom of 13 ; Alignment: LG or NG.
- Have D10 hit-dice, and use the Thac0 advancement and number of attacks of warriors.
- May wear any armor + shield, and use any weapon. They must be proficient in at least a sword, but against humans of the True Faith must use blunt and bludgeoning weapons.
- Pious Knights gain the ability to cast spells at 2<sup>nd</sup> level, and thereafter gain and cast spells as clerics of one level lower (1<sup>st</sup> level cleric at 2<sup>nd</sup> level, 2<sup>nd</sup> level cleric at 3<sup>rd</sup> level, etc.). They otherwise have access to the spheres of spells of:
  - \**Major access:* All, Combat, Divination, and Law.
  - \**Minor access:* Guardian, Healing, and Protection.
- They can detect-evil exactly as paladins do.
- At 3<sup>rd</sup> level, they learn to speak a secret language of their own (similar to that of druids, but not the same) in addition to any other they know (doesn't cost any slot).
- At 3<sup>rd</sup> level, they gain a special holy symbol which give them magical protections (see below).
- Followers: none.

## Description

**Symbol:** a "Life Flower", that is a geometrical figure of a circle in which seven smaller circles design a flower at their intersection.

At 2<sup>nd</sup> lvl, all lawmakers get a magical amulet displaying this holy symbol. It is non-magical in the hand of anyone but a lawmaker; and the powers given by this item depend on the level of the lawmaker wearing it. These items are created by high level lawmakers of the *Radiant* rank, and given to new members of the order. However, most of the time these will be inherited from deceased lawmakers. When such an amulet is lost, lawmakers will go to great ends to recover it. The magical properties of these amulets are all the same, cumulative, and the level of the wearer is reflected by the color it takes (the amulet is made of mithrill) :

- Red / 2<sup>nd</sup> lvl: *Faithfulness (as phylactery)*
- Orange / 3<sup>rd</sup> lvl: *Protection +1 (as ring)*
- Yellow / 4<sup>th</sup> lvl: *Wound Closure (as periapt)*
- Green / 5<sup>th</sup> lvl: *Health (as periapt)*
- Blue / 6<sup>th</sup> lvl: *Protection +2 (as ring)*
- Indigo / 7<sup>th</sup> lvl: *Long Years (as phylactery)*
- Violet / 8<sup>th</sup> lvl: *Life Protection (as amulet)*
- White / 10<sup>th</sup> lvl+: *Protection +3 (as ring)*
- White gold / 13<sup>th</sup> lvl, and Radiant rank : shed light upon command (as a magical sword). This light is equal to a *Continual-light* spell.

**Brief history:** Pious Knights are, in the Mid'Gaard campaign world, a near extinct class of characters descending from the ancient Knight-Templars whose religious and military order was dismantled about one century ago. In the XI<sup>th</sup> century, the *Knight-Templar Order* was created by the pope Urban-Levictus II, to fight the forces of chaos who swept the land from the eastern reaches of the world. The Knights Templars were monastic warriors led by a few warrior-clerics to fight the goblinoid and trollish raiders worshipping demon-gods. This were the crusades.

Then, an army of Knights Templars were sent beyond the Holy Kingdom, to recover the remains of the Prophet. The mission failed, and many knights died. However, a few daring of them, were led by Fate, to distant desert lands where they met a most ancient and sacred brotherhood : the Shemsou-Hor. This order's origins were lost in the mists of time, but its last members said it came from the legendary epoch of the Atla'an civilization. Whether it had been true or not, this dying order jealously defended their holy "Principles of Good". Then, some of the knights converted to this strange faith, which seemed to them, to be the real embodiment of the Prophet's teachings. As such, the Shemsou-Hor became the "Pious-Knights", an odd and secret order of chivalry, thanks to its new members.

However, not all Knights Templars who had met with the Shemsou-Hor, had converted to their strange faith. Some of them returned to the Archprelacy, and told about it. Meanwhile, in Mid'Gaard the Knights Templars Order had become more and more powerful, and venerated by the common people. However as a result, the traditional clergy and also the nobility, were losing their influence before them. Hence they came to hate them and eventually the Order was dismantled on the false accusation of "witchcraft practice" as well as heresy. As such, the Knights Templars became known as "Witch-Knights". Afterwards, the scornful appellation subsisted to the present days; though the name now usually applies to Pious Knights.

Anyway, despite the public opprobrium they must suffer, Pious Knights are in fact champions of virtue and courage, very much similar in spirit to paladins. However, rather than pursuing endless quests of glory, Pious Knights perpetuate their ancient order by preserving the esoteric and religious knowledge of the sacred Principles of Good. As such, their primary purpose is to restore order to the world, and restore Good to evil lands and situations (including protecting the sincere and innocent believers from the clutches of all those who oppose the True Faith, including what has become of the Holy Church in these days of hate and ignorance). They do this in various ways, but never by creating more evil. Pious Knights are also expected to accomplish their mission quietly, and act behind the scenes. They may never divulge any of their secrets to outsiders, even if their death might result.

## Special Hindrances

- When they reach the 7<sup>th</sup> level, Pious Knights must find and train a prospective apprentice, to become in his turn a Pious Knight. This apprentice follows them everywhere, serving them as appropriate. Nonetheless, he is under the responsibility of the Pious Knight whose duty is of training him, as



well as teach him the order's philosophy. As such, a Pious Knight won't be able to reach the 10<sup>th</sup> level (i.e.: even if he has enough experience points), until his apprentice has proved his worth and loyalty to the order, and reached the 3<sup>rd</sup> level.

- Upon reaching the 13<sup>th</sup> level, a Pious Knight must undergo a cleansing ritual which ends with his receiving a vision of some special quest to complete. Typically, such quest will include for the Pious Knight to search for and confront his greatest fear (something which may well lead him to his death). Pursuing this quest may last for years; then, once completed, the Pious Knight comes back to a sacred place of the brotherhood with the remains of that confrontation. He then must go through the ultimate initiation during which he dies and is thereafter resurrected. This initiation normally lasts three days, and here also, the Pious Knight can fail.

Only those Pious Knights who successfully completed the quest become *Radiant* preceptors. Having succeeded the quest gives them a wisdom of 18 (or 19 if already having a 18), and they become immune to magical alteration of their mind (helm of changing alignment or the like).

### **Contributed By**

Dominique Crouzet.

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## **Voice of Kelaryon**

**(Neutral Good cult)**

### **Worships**

The ideals of "Divinity of Mankind".

### **Known to Society**

Only 5% know of the "cult", but it is considerable for a cult limited to one priest only.

### **Frequency**

Unique. There is a single prophet of Kelaryon, and he (in fact Kelaryon) does not intend on taking disciples, and create a true cult / religion. This prophet always travel from places to places to tell of Kelaryon's revelations.

### **Organization**

There is no organization, and of course no hierarchy, of the cult, as there is only one priest/prophet, and only informal attendants at the communications given by Kelaryon through his prophet.

**Priest's powers and abilities:** The priest of Kelaryon never wanted to reveal his name, as he said that people should not appraise him, but reckon Kelaryon of whom he is only the "voice". For that reason, he is mostly known as "The Voice of Kelaryon".

Character class: Specialty priest (POS&M rules): Level: 14.

- Str.: 10 ; Dex.: 11 ; Con.: 15 ; Int.: 14 ; Wis.: 19 ; Cha.: 15 (17 due to pacifist kit).

- Hit-points: 60 ; Alignment: LG ; Age: 57 years old.

- Cannot wear any armor, and use only a staff for weapons.

- Have access to the spheres of spells of:

*\*Major access:* All, Astral, Charm, Creation, Divination, Healing, Numbers, Protection, Sun, Thought, Time, and Weather.

- Has the benefit of a continuous *Sanctuary* spell at all time. Moreover, it incurs a -3 penalty to the saving throw roll.

- Turn Undead.

- When channeling Kelaryon, the prophet seems to remain the same, but in terms of game mechanics, he becomes in fact a solar (Kelaryon) under the guise of his prophet. Note however that the prophet remains conscious all the while.

- Will never get followers (Kelaryon doesn't want him to found a new religion)

## **Description**

**Symbol:** None.

**Brief history:** This is not really a cult, nor a sect. In fact Kelaryon is a powerful and "otherworldly" entity (probably a Solar), which speaks directly to humans through the mouth of the prophet who "channels" him. That is, the prophet does not speak his own interpretation, but lets Kelaryon invest him and speak through him.

Kelaryon's will is absolutely not of creating a new religion. (Kelaryon is a solar, who --as told in the monster manual-- could be a deity in his own right but instead chose of not having any priesthood). Kelaryon's will is to divulge that a new era is coming, when the gods and demons will come down on earth and battle. As such he encourages people of no longer rely on their religious or secular authorities, but take control of their own destiny. In fact Kelaryon promotes the compelling idea that mankind is nearly a divine being (having been made to the semblance of God), and should do as much as he can to achieve perfection (physical, mental, and emotional) always and in all ways. However, Kelaryon is devoted to the cause of peace and love. He will always advocate for all conflicts to be settled non-violently. Hence people are encouraged to develop power on their own life, but certainly not power on other people.

Kelaryon's prophet is constantly travelling, and goes wherever send him Kelaryon, that is, usually in places where people have lost faith, or have submit to some evil authority, etc... Note that the prophet has been many times the target of assassinations attempts. But always, it seems that fate did something for him, saving him in unexpected manners : PCs arrive to help him, etc

People who attend to the Channeling sessions (that is, when Kelaryon speaks through his prophet), will get the following benefit, provided they are not opposed to him : their next failed saving throw will be automatically successful instead (work only once per blessing, with only one blessing per channeling session, and these blessings aren't cumulative).

It should be noted that the prophet of Kelaryon is absolutely unable to channel the great entity at will. Sometimes he is unable to do it for weeks (in fact it seems to have worsened over time). However he will never tell it, doing as if he could channel whenever people come to him seeking the solar's advice. Deep inside himself, the prophet is ashamed of the lie. But so far he hasn't got the courage to tell the truth. It could be that he fears that people wouldn't come again (a probable occurrence), or that they so dearly need Kelaryon's encouragement, that lying to them is better than telling them He wasn't there that time.

## **Special Hindrances**

None.

## **Role-playing Tips**

This cult could be very useful for introducing a new campaign with low level adventurers. The prophet of Kelaryon is of no specific faith, thus there shouldn't be any opposition with any (good aligned) character. As he is constantly travelling, he could be found by the PCs when it is useful for the DM to help them with healing magic, introduce new scenarios, and so on.

## **Contributed By**

Dominique Crouzet.

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# Yeldhin Faith

(Lawful Good cult)

## Worships

This monotheistic religion worships "God", the almighty and unique creator of the universe.

## Known to Society

In the Holy Kingdom, this is the principal (and only recognized) religion, thus everyone knows it, and has 95% chance of being of its followers.

In other lands where Yeldhin people live, 50% of people have heard of it. However, in such cases what people know is a misconception, and often is opposite to the truth. That is, for some reason many people believe the Yeldhin to be wizards, while their religion in fact forbids it !

## Frequency

This is the religion of the Yeldhin people, who are 95% of the time followers of it. So, in every area where live Yeldhin people, the religion will also be found. This means that it is found everywhere in the Holy Kingdom, and one temple will be found in every outside community of the Yeldhin. As there are no more than a dozen cities in Mid'Gaard which have such communities among their citizen, so will be the frequency for that religion.

Non Yeldhin people almost never belong to this religion.

## Organization

The religion is a patriarchal one, in which women rarely get any position.

**Demands on members:** Observance of the precepts which include daily prayer, purification at least once per week, etc., and of course rejection of all magic. In addition, priests are expected to become erudite in various fields of science and religion. Otherwise, a Yeldhin should always help another who is in need of it, especially for those Yeldhin who live outside the Holy Kingdom.

**Hierarchy:** The religion's hierarchy is as follows :

- 1) Applicant : lvl.0 ; is only a priest apprentice.
- 2) Novitiate : lvl.1/2 ; assistant to a Merrhin, or higher ranking priest.
- 3) Merrhin : min 3<sup>rd</sup> lvl. ; priest assigned to a village or chapel ; or chief assistant to a Raddrhin, or higher ranking priest.
- 4) Raddrhin : min 7<sup>th</sup> lvl. ; is generally assigned to a town, or several chapels in a district.
- 5) High Raddrhin : min 9<sup>th</sup> lvl. ; is generally assigned to the biggest temple in a city, or oversees several towns and lesser communities in a department.
- 6) Patriarch : min 11<sup>th</sup> lvl. ; there are twelve patriarchs which forms the council of the religion.

**Members' powers and abilities:** normal followers can be of any character class and kit except spellcasters, as magic is strictly forbidden by the religion. Being followers of the faith gives them a +2 bonus to all their saves against magic. However, they also must save (with that bonus) against magic who could be beneficial to them (healing spells, potions, etc.), even if such magic do not normally allow a save.

**Priests' powers and abilities:** all priests belong to the Fanatic class (see page 30), with the few following modifications :

- Yeldhin priests must be lawful-good. As such, unlike other characters of their class, they are strictly forbidden to kill and torture, and heretics and witches are not an exception to this rule. If witches or other spellcasters are discovered among their community, these will be merely banished rather than killed ; or, if need be, put to a fair trial.
- Yeldhin priests can marry and have children. Sexuality within marriage is not a sin.
- Yeldhin priests must spend most of their leisure time learning and teaching (history, religion, sciences, etc.). As such they all must be of the Scholar kit.

## Description

**Symbol:** A star with seven branches.

**Brief history:** The religion's history is directly linked to that of the land it appeared in.

Back in time well before the Prophet's birth, the Yeldhin called their land **Chaldilee**, or the "Land of Milk and Honey". During those times they often were at wars with their neighbors to the east; the city-states of Kenghir\*. Already at that epoch the Yeldhin were monotheistic, and worshiped God the creator of the universe. On the contrary, the city-states of Kenghir worshiped numerous different gods, among which were many demons ; and Kenghir's demonisers plagued the land with the atrocious beings they summoned from the netherworld.

(\*: for more information on this setting, see the much excellent world of Kurt A. Johnson: *KENGIR THE LAND OF RIVERS*, available on the Internet.)

This worsened over time. All these dealings with demons brought down the fall of the city-states of Kenghir. Eventually only a couple or so of these city-states remained, and they were ruled by demoniser-kings. Of course they decided to conquer Chaldilee. Fortunately, the Yeldhin had in the meantime grown to power, and had a great magician-king, namely : King Salomon. So Chaldilee won the war against the evil city-states of Kenghir which disappeared forever. However the war had cost a heavy price on the kingdom of Chaldilee. The mighty king succeeded in banishing all the remaining demons (see the *Seven Seals of Salomon*), but was so weakened thereafter that he died once his work done. Chaldilee had suffered a lot and wouldn't recover from it thereafter. As such, it would be an easy prey for the forthcoming invaders :

**323 BP:** Chaldilee was conquered by *Alexander the Mighty*, and became a province of the Hellenian Empire.

**67 BP:** Chaldilee, was then conquered by the Cesareans and annexed in their Empire.

**Year 0:** Birth of the Prophet in Chaldilee, as had been prophesied by some oracles of the Yeldhin.

At that time, the situation was that the Yeldhin had suffered three centuries of external oppression. Hence, their faith was declining, and there was divisions among them on the subject of magic and sorcery. Since the time of Salomon who ultimately had died battling demons (even if he had won), the conquerors had also been magic-users. Thus the Yeldhin were dominated by a class of magicians despots. As such, the dissension was that some Yeldhin thought they should convert to magic-use (that is : pantheistic cults with gods giving spells), while others wanted to remain true to their original faith (which saw magic as the best way for one to become presumptuous and defy the laws of God).

However, when the Prophet came, as it had been foretold, his teachings weren't much understood nor accepted by the Yeldhin. Firstly he spoke of God's infinite compassion for all humanity; not a god of the Yeldhin, who would free them from oppression through a holy war. On the other hand, the Prophet stated that magic wouldn't have existed if God hadn't allowed it. Thus he condemned only the way it would be used, allowing it only to further the general goodness, but forbidding it when it came to personal benefit. Thus not surprisingly, only a few Yeldhin converted to the true Faith. But it seemed that the Prophet had somewhat reawakened the traditional religious identity of the others.

**100 AD:** the True Faith is officially authorized within the Empire. The Yeldhins' faith being viewed as the same thing by the authorities, is thus also officially sanctioned.

However it was not the same, and furthermore was separated into two factions which had their own ideas on what should be the Yeldhin religion. The two agreed on the principle that humans should not rely on outside beings (i.e.: deities and the spells bestowed by them) while God had given them everything they could need to live. However, one faction stated that magic was thus a blasphemy, while the other claimed that God having created everything, had thus also "created" magic. Therefore they said, using it is not a blasphemy and has indeed been given by God to men, for them to use (especially against demons, as did the great king Salomon in the ancient times).

**458 AD:** As the Cesarean empire is weakening, the Yeldhin do secession and their land regains its freedom. The Cesarean province of Chaldilee thus becomes the **Holy Kingdom**.

**512 AD:** The Holy Kingdom eventually establishes a unified religion of the Yeldhin.

Of the two factions had won that closer to the original principles of the traditional faith. From that time on, magic\* would be considered a blasphemy, and forbidden in the Holy Kingdom. Then, the minority of Yeldhin who supported magic were banished out of the land. As such hundreds of Yeldhin migrated to other countries, and settled all over Mid'Gaard. They would thereafter live in their own communities within the various lands who had hosted them. Instead of the True Faith they practice

their own religion in which magic has got a much important part. Their priests are magicians and sages often known as "Qabbalists".

(\*: A note on psionics : They are considered a natural ability of the humans much different from magic which uses energies and creatures not from this world).

**1095 AD:** Beginning of the Crusades. The goblinoids again ravaged the land, descending in great numbers from the mountains of the north-east. The Holy-Kingdom was submerged in many parts, and several cities were destroyed. Then, Jerichaleem was taken by the Invaders (but luckily not burned). This was the sacred city where is the tomb of the Prophet. As such the Holy Church in Mid'Gaard decided to come to the rescue of the Holy Kingdom to free the tomb of the Prophet. These have been the Crusades from that time on. There is however dissension between the Yeldhin and the westerners, as the Holy Church would like to convert the Holy Kingdom. And of course, no Yeldhin would ever accept something like that.

### ***Special Hindrances***

As already stated, all followers of this religion are strictly forbidden to use magic. Doing otherwise is a major sin.

### ***Contributed By***

Dominique Crouzet.

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## Part Five: Fantasy Earth Campaign



(You can get this map at: [www.rpgghost.com](http://www.rpgghost.com) at the Map Archive section)

As several priest-classes and cults described in this netbook refers to the world of **Mid'Gaard**, I have put it there for reference. It is not a complete setting, but rather a set of guidelines for a heroic fantasy campaign set in a world much similar to Europe, during the Dark Ages and medieval era. For more information, I suggest to get a look at TSR *Historical Reference Campaign Sourcebooks* : Celts, Charlemagne's Paladins, The Crusades, and Vikings.

I never was overly fond of what I will call "mundane heroic-fantasy". In particular, I don't like those handful of gods who abound in the AD&D game. For me, real priests should live for their spiritual ideals, and it is seldom the case with any of the priests portrayed in a basic AD&D game. On the other hand, what I like the most in heroic-fantasy are Arthurian legends, Celtic and Vikings sagas, Medieval and Christian epics, etc... For all of these reasons I designed this setting to bring about in the game the medieval Europe as it appears in tales : those of the pious knights of the round table, fabled magicians, and holy priests of the Christian faith, in addition to the usual AD&D elves, dwarves, etc....

As such, **Mid'Gaard** Campaign Setting is an evocation of the European middle Ages and its legends. You will note however, that this world is NOT an historically accurate setting. The intent is rather to get the "fairy tale" kind of flavor. For instance, around the year 1100 (time of play in the game): castles weren't beautiful stone buildings ornate with gothic carvings and sculptures, but rather crude wooden fortresses of the motte and bailey type.

# 1 : The World

This chapter specifies which cults and religions can be found in the various regions of Mid'Gaard. There are no description of these lands and areas (inhabitants, government, cities, etc.), except for a very short summery. In fact the DM will have to do this work by him/herself.

## Mid'Gaard :

Mid'Gaard is a continent much similar to western Europe in the Dark Ages and medieval era, except this is a world of heroic fantasy, with monsters, elves and dwarves, magic, and so on.

### Brief history :

In the dawn of times, when the Celts, elves, and dwarves flourished all over those lands which weren't yet called Mid'Gaard, most religions were cults to nature which revered the Earth Goddess. This was an age of women priestesses, and the divinity was thought to be female (in fact the Earth Mother goddess).

Thereafter, two thousands of years ago things changed, with the appearance of the Hellenian, then Cesarean empire. From that time on, the world would be ruled by men, in an age of violence and conquests. Women were abducted and became "inferior" to men.

Then, a man of divine ascendancy and great wisdom was born somewhere in the Cesarean empire, and brought a new faith based on peace and love. Slowly his faith, called the *True Faith* expanded until it became the official religion of the empire, 300 years after his leaving from the mortal world.

From that time on, the True Faith expanded and became the religion of most of Mid'Gaard, even after the Cesarean empire had disappeared (around 400-450 AP). However, despite it professed love and justice, the True Faith has been in fact an excuse for unending atrocities and crimes. The *Holy Church* proclaimed itself the only righteous representative of the True Faith. All other sects were declared heretics and hunted down. Needless to say that the old religion (cults to the Earth Goddess) thus quickly became Satanic worship.

Nowadays, those priests and monks who remain true to the Prophet's teachings are a minority within the Holy Church. The clergy is before all made up of pardoners and other unfaithful priests who use the influence of the Church to further their own ends. Violence (women and heretics burned at the stake,...) and simony have become the meat and drink of a majority of people claiming to serve God while in fact they betrayed Him. Needless to say that such priests do not anymore get any power from God, and this certainly accounts for the fact they declared magic to be the worst of abomination.

### Technological level :

Early Middle-ages : (500-900) Tech.rating: 8 to 9 (casting of metal tools and weapons ; swords and chainmails, plus appearance of the plate armor in the end ; wood basic fortresses and buildings, but roads and stone fortresses are also built ; writing on parchment, first locks ; first universities ; development of the cavalry/chivalry ;)

Late Middle-ages : (900-1300) Tech.rating: 10 to 12 (important feudal kingdoms ; high availability of plate armors including full-plate ; but also decline of chivalry before archery and infantry ; gothic style and mighty castles ; glass, paper, and printing ; extensive trade, craft, and mining).

### Magic :

Magic can be as common or rare as the DM wishes it, however in any case it is kept hidden. Thus the world appears as it would, if it was devoid of magic (candles replace *continual light* spells, etc.).

## Frankish Lands

*Burgundie, Dauvence, Gevaudan, Nivernois, Poitaine*

The Frankish Lands are the typical medieval and feudal civilization. They come from the old Carolingian empire which was divided by *Louis the Pious* between his five sons upon his death in 840.

The Holy Church is the official and major religion. However, this is a corrupt Church made up of pardoners and the like, who live off the common people. Only 10% of all priests are real and sincere clerics. Also, the Benedictine order, a cloistered order, has remained true to the ideals of the True Faith, and all its monks are real Monastic Clerics.

Otherwise witches are found all over the land, and also a few warlock cults (see [Demon-gods of Dread](#)). They are actively hunted down, even if only the latter really deserve it.

**Burgundie** : rich lands where did appear the *Knights Templar Order* in the 11<sup>th</sup> century (which may still exist or not, depending on the epoch of play).

**Dauvence** : sunny land where the Archprelacy of the Holy Church remained from the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup> century (in the city of Avilles). Several communities of exiled Yeldhin in this region.

**Gevaudan** : arid mountains and deep canyons. Many wolves (and werewolves ?) haunt the land. It is rumored that some pagan people still worship wolves in the backcountry (see [Wolf Cult](#)).

**Nivernois** : this rich region is often at war with the raiding nations of Vikings to the north.

**Poitaine** : the southern part is the land of the Cathars (see [Cathars](#)) who have been at war with the Holy Church for several decades, with neither side taking over. In the northern part is found the city of Capetia, a maze of towers, castles, and underground network. It is the capital of the Frankish Lands, where live all its kings.

## Western Lands

*Duchy of Breizh, Ronceval, Lyonesse*

**Duchy of Breizh** : a land of hills and deep forests, inhabited by direct descendants of the Celts. These are fiercely independent, and thus the duchy has remained outside of the Frankish Lands so far. The True Faith is represented by the *Celtic Church*, an independent (and nearly heretic) order of the Holy Church. Otherwise, there still are a few druids in the woods of Broceliande.

**Ronceval** : a mountainous kingdom, protected by high peaks at his borders. It is ruled by paladins since the battle of Roncesvalles in 807. All kings wield the great sword artefact "Durandal", as the symbol of their authority. They all swear that they would rather break the sword than let it fall in the hand of the enemies. This kingdom being ruled by paladins, thus even if the only religion is that of the Holy Church, only true clerics and monastics are accepted. Pardoners and the like who may happen there are usually quickly driven away.

**Lyonesse** : a much ancient kingdom. The city of Compostel is a major religious center (of the True Faith), where people continuously come into pilgrimage. Compostel is one of the rare place where the priests and monastics are stringent on the spirit of their faith : all are true clerics and monks, there are no pardoners and the like (aside pilgrims).

## Western Isles

*Cruaran, Highlands, Kingdom of Albion*

**Cruaran** : the last place still inhabited by Celts as in former times. Aside from a few monasteries of the Celtic Church (an order theoretically belonging to the Holy Church, but which is in fact much independent, and not corrupt), the main religion is Druidism. Otherwise Cruaran is inhabited by Sidhé people (elves) and SmallFolks (halflings and gnomes).

**Highlands** : a land of harsh mountains and bottomless lakes ("lochs"). Its inhabitants are fiercely independent near-barbarians living in clans. No organized religion has succeeded in establishing itself in these areas. As a result, priests encountered will be sturdy adventurous clerics (see [Cleric, but also Preacher](#)), guardians (see [Nature Priests](#)), and witches / witch-priestesses (*idem*).

**Kingdom of Albion** : a green land of feudal knights and fairies. In former times (around 800), it was the great fabled kingdom of the *Round Table's Knights*. Nowadays, the land is torn apart by a civil war. On one side are a league of chivalrous and honorable knights, most of them being the descendants of ancient knights of the Round Table. On the other side are a coalition of nobles led by Prince John (considered an usurper by many), who take over the crown as his brother, king Richard, has disappeared during the crusades. The religion follows the same division : corrupt churchmen (pardoners and the like) side with Prince John, while true clerics and witches will be found along outlaws and oppressed peasants, in the backcountry and the fiefs belonging to the *League*.

## Norse Realms

### *Norsjörd, Snaëfland, Karelia*

The Norse Realms are the lands of fierce barbarians. A cold land of mountains and fjords also inhabited by dwarves, trolls, and giants.

**Norsjörd** : the Vikings inhabit this land. They revere before all freedom, and are not known for pity and compassion, but for strength and hardiness. Uppsalir is their capital, a massive stone city built by giants, ages ago. The True Faith is almost non-existent in these regions. The Vikings are essentially pagans worshipping the Norse pantheon. There is no organized religion of the Norse Gods, and priests are usually communities leaders of some sort (see [Specialty priest: Godar](#)). Otherwise, the Drones (see [Nature-priest: Drune](#)) are also found in Norsjörd. They worship Odin under his dark aspect of the "Old Master of Crows" (It is an AD&D misconception to see Odin as a neutral-good deity; he is in fact an ambivalent figure who can be, at times, much evil).

**Snaëfland** : A frost land of glaciers and snowy mountains. The surface is inhabited only by frost giants, but the dwarves have carved vast subterranean kingdoms under the mountains. These dwarves do not worship AD&D pantheons of deities. Instead they will be earth-clerics (see [Elemental-priests](#)) or Dwarnöi (see [Dwarnöi order](#)).

**Karelia** : north to Trolhell, this savage land contains a small kingdom of troll. Its kings have always been sorcerers of great powers.

## Northern lands

### *Daneland, Nordsia, Warlords Baronies, Tötenheim*

North to the Frankish Lands lie several nation of Norsemen, and other Germanic peoples.

**Daneland** : these blond Norsemen are cousins to the Vikings living in Norsjörd, but are much more civilized. They also worship the Norse gods, but a minority of them (20%) are converted to the True Faith.

**Nordsia** : another land conquered by the Viking (in 900). Nordsia is culturally an intermediate between the Viking barbarians, and the feudal world. As such, 60% of the population is converted to the True Faith, while 40% still worship the Norse pantheon. Nordsia people, like other Norsemen much favor their independence. So the True Faith is represented by various sects, rather than solely by the Holy Church. Also, pardoners and the like usually don't get much success with the free-willed Norsemen. Therefore, almost all True Faith priests are true priests (see [Cleric and Specialty-priest](#)), not unfaithful ones.

**Warlords Baronies** : a collection of petty fiefs always at war with their neighbors, and whose rulers change regularly with the fortune of war and other disasters. Various faiths and cults can be found there.

**Tötenheim** : the Germanic kingdom of the Teutonic Knights. The Holy Church is the official religion, but only 25% of its priests are true to the faith. Many of the others have other masters than what they pretend... (see [the Church of Sainte Calysse](#) ; or even the [Templar class](#)). Otherwise, witches and warlocks also roam the land. Note that the Holy Church is here even more belligerent against all other cults, whoever its priests really worship (i.e.: God, or some darker spirit).

## Southern countries

### *Castillan Theocracy, Principality of Eastalia, Condiotteri Dominions*

Here follows a description of the southern lands who have all in common a hot-temperate climate, and a level of civilization above all the other countries of Mid'Gaard.

**Castillan Theocracy** : In this rich kingdom, the Holy Church is superseded by the Inquisition. This dreaded order of the Church was born there, but fortunately wasn't able to extend far beyond the kingdom's borders. The Inquisition ([for character class, see the Fanatic](#)) has declared that all magic is a manifestation of the Devil, and therefore must be destroyed at all costs. Even true faithful priests will be arrested and burned at the stake if they display magical abilities (i.e.: normal spell abilities of clerics !). As such the Inquisition kills and burns people in the name of God at every opportunity. Now, and strangely enough, warlocks' cults ([see Nine Demon-gods of Dread](#)) appear more frequently in the Castillan theocracy than everywhere else. Some have said that the much evil ways of the Inquisition tend to favor the appearance of such abominations.

**Principality of Eastalia** : a collection of rich cities and pleasant rural areas, governed by several princes and dukes who are perpetually scheming the ones against the others. Among all these counties are the Archprelacy state. There resides the Archprelate of the Holy Church.

**Condiotteri Dominions** : several city-states and territories who are continuously conquered then lost, by dynasties of condottieri, that is, military warlords and mercenary captains. Needless to say that all cities, farms, monasteries, and else are fortified. There is always work for stout soldiers in these regions, but for them, life tend to be short.

## Eastern Reaches

### *Byzantium, Holy Kingdom*

**Byzantium** : This is the most ancient city of all Mid'Gaard, and the first place to convert to the True Faith, centuries ago. Currently, the political organization, culture, etc., of Byzantium reminisce that of the old Cesarean empire. The religion is the True Faith, except that the city-state doesn't recognize the authority of the Holy-Church on that matter. All churchmen are real priests ([see clerics and specialty-priests](#)), and they must all have the Mystic, Pacifist, or Scholar kit.

**Holy Kingdom** : Certainly the most ancient civilized country of Mid'Gaard, this is the land of the Yeldhin people, who practice their own religion ([see Yeldhin Faith](#)). The Prophet of the True Faith was born there. Currently the Holy Kingdom is the battleground of the Crusades, between the hordes of unholy creatures coming from Trollhell, the forces of the Holy Church (who wants to protect the Prophet's sepulcher), and the Yeldhin (who want to protect their land and families).

## Slavian Realms

### *Chaosescu, Rus, Traslavia, Crowsferatu*

The Slavian Realms are generally sinister regions of dull cities, and dark forests where undead abound. Here winters are deadly cold, farmlands poor, skies gray, and a minority of nobles rule over a population of serf. (It isn't a coincidence if the word *Slav* so much resemble the word *slave*.) For religions, the better and the worst can be found.

**Chaosescu** : a harsh land of tundra, pestered by wolves (including Winter, and Astral wolves) and all manner of wolf-like creatures, including bands of marauding gnolls. Its capital Gardariki, is very ancient and ruled by a necromancer-king through his templars ([see the Templar class](#)) who wear black plate-armors with helms shaped as wolves' heads.

**Rus** : a land of hills and forests whose nobility are mainly the descendants of Vikings raiders and conquerors from the past. Cults: the Drunes are much present in these areas, and a few nobles worship the Norse pantheon (with a preference for Loki) – or the Finnish Mythos (if the DM can get the TSR 1<sup>st</sup> edition Legend Lore book).



**Traslavia** : a land of dark castles and fearful peasants. The nobility is supposedly made up of vampires. Anyway, here and there a few courageous real priests of the True Faith have established small monasteries or chapels, and make their best to help the desperate population.

**Crowsferatu** : a haunted land of dark forests and sinister mountains. The land is said to be plagued by undead, and those humans living there are said to all make "unholy pacts" to get the powers necessary to survive in such a hostile region.

## **Wastes of Trollhel**

A land of monsters and sorcery. This area can be anything the DM wishes, but it is mainly hostile wilderness without any civilization. Here and there lie an occasional dark fortress occupied by some inhuman creatures. It could also well be that Trollhel's underground is a vast network of caverns and tunnels (the "Underdark"), but nobody knows.

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## 2 : Character Classes

### Generalities

The normal character classes are all available in a Dark-Ages setting, such as **Mid'Gaard** based upon a medieval Europe of fantasy. However, some clarifications have been added on how they should fit to create the appropriate mood. Note that the following descriptions include suggestions for those using basic PHB classes only, those also using the POS&P rules, and finally my own additions to the rules. The latter are optional modifications for some of the normal character classes. Also, a new character class has been included (in addition to all the priest classes detailed elsewhere in this netbook) : the Assassin.

Otherwise, what should remain clear for DM and players about this setting, is that magic is often frowned upon, unlike more Heroic Fantasy types of campaigns. In Mid'Gaard, magic is supernatural and mystery. It is not something one will show off to others like a modern-day teenager showing the latest technological item to his/her friends, as if it were perfectly normal !

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### Priests

- Priests are, with the knights, the most important characters of the medieval age. In those times, death is ever-present, and many people live in fear and superstition. The faith is only what most have got to alleviate a daily life of hardship and uncertainty, with only death at the end of the road. Thus, religion is central to everybody's life, whatever may be this religion. Furthermore, priests are the ones who traditionally detain knowledge, as much on spiritual questions, than on more secular matters (like general erudition for instance). Lastly, in the Mid'Gaard campaign where priests vastly outnumber wizards, they are those who hold magical powers ! Therefore, it is not surprising that priests have got the most important and influential place in society.

Priests are normally supposed to serve their faith, and use their special abilities to further its aims. However, in practice this is not always the case, and priests often use their powers to further their own benefits instead. Of course, this theoretically cut off a priest from his magical powers, but more rarely does it affect his influence on the population. Also, many a priest who did fall from grace from his deity, turned to the worship of more nefarious entities in order to regain his lost magic...

- There are many religions, sects, and cults, in the Mid'Gaard setting, but they can be divided into two main conflicting groups: the "pagan" cults, and the monotheistic *True-Faith* :

- The pagan cults are very ancient, but have nearly disappeared with the cultures which did forebear them. These cults are those dedicated to the pantheon of gods of barbarian cultures (Vikings, Celts, etc.), and those dedicated to the worship of Nature (or the Earth Goddess). For classes, you may use the specialty-priests found in the *Legends & Lore* rulebook, and the druid from the normal PHB rules. I however recommend in the Mid'Gaard setting the nature-priests (which include druids, witch-priestesses, shamans, etc.) and specialty-priests (which include priests of Celtic and Norse pantheons) I have designed using the POS&M rules.

- The monotheistic True-Faith was born 1200 years ago, and since then has become the dominant religion of the "civilized" world. However it comprises many different sects, some of which are antagonistic, even if they all support the same dogmas and tenets. In fact their differences come more from political disagreement rather than religious ones. For classes, you may use the normal cleric of the PHB rules. I however recommend in the Mid'Gaard setting the specialty-priests (which include the ecclesiastic, monastic, exorcist, etc.) I have designed using the POS&M rules.

## Psionicists

- Words like "psionist", "science", and "devotion", clearly refer more to a futuristic setting than a medieval one set in old Europe. However, these powers of the mind can fit very well in a Mid'Gaard campaign. After all, the well known power of "second sight" displayed by a few gifted Norse people, has more to do with psionics than spells. The same apply to many a wise-woman all over Europe who would display a natural talent for clairvoyance or healing, without belonging to any cult nor practicing magic. Therefore my suggestions are the following :

- Psionicists are rather called **Mediums**, and all other terminology get a similar change as shown in the table below. Mediums can be found everywhere, and in fact outnumber wizards for that matter. For instance, nearly any village will have a medium among the villagers (albeit usually a low level one), while this is rarely the case with wizards, or even witches (who rather prefer to live in the wilderness). Nonetheless, such medium will often keep their powers secret, for fear of witch-hunters or the Inquisition. Otherwise three important things should be noted about mediums :

- 90% of mediums are women. It seems that women are more introspective and more in touch with their inner self than men, thus more able to develop such abilities. Also, it could be that nature has given them a sort of compensation in this, for having got less physical strength than men.

- 90% of mediums are more or less superstitious. Most mediums see their powers as some sort of gift (or curse !) from fate, the gods, or whatever else. In fact these powers of the mind are seldom recognized for what they are, but rather taken for second-sight, witchcraft, etc. Sometimes, there are even superstitious mediums who employ ineffective spell-books, ignoring that these useless items have nothing to do with their supernatural abilities !

- 90% of mediums never belong to any sort of organization. Unlike priests who normally belong to organized religions or cults, and wizards who also tend to join guilds or schools of their own, mediums most of the time find themselves cut off from others of their abilities. Rarely, a powerful medium will seek out characters with the "gift" to teach them what she knows. However, even if such a medium develop a (secret) seminary of her own, it will never grow into a vast network of psionists all over the country. Mediums are in most cases "self-made-women" (or men) who remain alone (in their own community) for the rest of their lives. A medium typically got her powers from one of her family member who had the same abilities and taught her how to develop them. Thus, in turn, she will likewise probably teach it to one of her children or nephews who would display the "gift".

Psionic Different Vocabulary			
Psionist	<b>Medium</b>	Clairsentience	<b>College of Perception</b>
Psionic Discipline	<b>College of Sortileges</b>	Psychokinesis	<b>College of Matter</b>
Sciences	<b>Major Sortilege</b>	Psychometabolism	<b>College of Body</b>
Devotions	<b>Minor Sortilege</b>	Psychoportation	<b>College of Movement</b>
Psionic Strength (PSP)	<b>Will Potential</b>	Telepathy	<b>College of Thought</b>
Wild Talent	<b>Latent Sortilege</b>	Metapsionics	<b>College of High Sortileges</b>

## Thieves

- Thieves are, with fighters, the most frequently encountered class in the Mid'Gaard setting. However, while the "thief" name suggests that the class is clearly criminally oriented, this ain't necessary so in this setting. In fact, as a class, *thieves* are primarily characters who prefer to operate by stealth and tricks, rather than rely on strength of arms as it is the case for warriors. As such *thieves* come in all sizes and shapes, and not all of them are criminals who make a living as robbers and cutthroats. Many *thieves* are just mere vagabonds who developed a few thieving skills on their own only to survive. On the other hand, there are also characters of this class who make use of "thieving skills" while being in fact respectable members of society. Such *thieves* characters will usually include clerks, couriers, heralds, merchants, troubadours, etc., as well as women denied access to other professions (warrior or priest), in male dominated cultures.

- Given the many sorts of thieves who may exist, I thus strongly recommend the POS&P customized version of the class, rather than simply use the basic PHB thief who is effectively clearly criminally oriented (pickpocket, backstab, etc.).

## Bards

- Bards were originally a sub-category of druids in Celtic society, charged with keeping the oral traditions of their culture. Such bards were clearly not rogues casting wizards' spells. In fact these true bards (called *Fillidh*) will be found in the Specialty-priest description in the first chapter. On the other hands, the basic PHB bard is depicted like a sort of troubadour. However, in the Mid'Gaard setting where magic is persecuted, and spell-books expensive, there are few justifications for a minstrel being able to cast wizards spells. Thus, most troubadours encountered will rather be of the thief class, and only one in ten will be of the bard class. For all of this I suggest the following for the bard class in a Mid'Gaard campaign :

- Bard characters will either be Lyrists or Courtiers, whose abilities are much similar, but whose spirits are much different :

- **Lyrists** are the heirs of the Celtic *Fillidh* (see druidic bard). Due to the advent of the True Faith, traditional bards gradually became some kind of minstrels. Thus lyrists still are the keepers of Celtic traditions and lore they were in ancient times, but now act as entertainers rather than priests. As such they lost the religious function and duties which were theirs when they still were a sub-class of Celtic druids. Nonetheless, as a reminiscence of those times lyrists gain spells\*, but like witches. That is, lyrists being the descendants of fillidh, still practice (in secret) the old religion\*. As such, they gain the same spells as witches (see my own witch-priestess class, or the witches' spells from the *Complete Netbook of Witches & Warlocks*). Note however that the main reason for lyrists not being suspected of witchcraft at first sight, is that they often mingle with normal troubadours who do not cast spells! (\*: lyrists who aren't worshippers of the old religion don't get any spell at all. Do either a customized bard not able to cast spells, or a normal bard who don't cast spells until he/she converts to the old religion, in which case he/she will be able to cast spells normally.)

- **Courtiers** are very different in spirit from entertainers, even if they are of the bard class. Courtiers are not minstrels, but rather kinds of Jack-of-all-trades able in many skills but masters of none. As their name implies, courtiers are often found in the courts of nobles, where their elegance and charm is a much more useful asset in intrigue or flattery, than a bias for the sword. Also, many characters of noble descent, and particularly noble women in the Mid'Gaard setting (as the men would rather be warriors), are drawn to this class. It enables them in fact, to learn many skills without having to dedicate themselves to only one. Some nobles have a tendency to idleness, while others need to know many skills to attend to their obligations. In addition, it should be noted that practically only nobles will have enough time and money to learn music, magic and swordplay at the same time. Note that those who learn magic, will learn it (as the normal class) like wizards : with spell-books and formulas.

- I otherwise recommend the following improvement for the bard character class :

**LEGEND LORE** : Bards with this ability have a broad knowledge of legends and legendary things. When confronted with something magical or supernatural, they have a base 5% chance per level to know something about it. And on a natural roll of 01 to 05, the bard should know almost everything there is to know about it. The Legend-Lore ability applies to :

Legendary places : the bard knows if a particular site (be it a castle, forest, mountain, etc...) has some distinctive magical or supernatural feature, or has witnessed some legendary event in the past. The bard could also know some important facts about the place, such as for instance, how to access a valley in Faery from some special location.

Legendary creatures : the bard encountering a supernatural monster (such as a dragon, lich...) could know some facts about it (its name, history, weaknesses, etc.). Otherwise, they will know everything about monsters as told in part 4 of this chapter (p.116).

Magical items : the bard identifies the item as being magical, and knows facts such as the item's history, maker, name, and other less technical aspects. Information such as the number of pluses, exact command words, etc., are rarely learned. This type of specific information is left for spells, such as *identify*.

The following table randomly determines what is known about an item that was successfully examined by a bard. To use this table, the bard must first succeed with the legend lore percentile roll. If this roll succeeds, the player should roll on the following table once per level of the bard. Results that come up more than once are not rolled again :

LEGEND LORE TABLE : 3d6 roll for Information Gained :			
3	How many charges/uses left	11	Where it was made
4	Whether item is intelligent	12	Who crafted it
5	Whether items is cursed/evil	13	Alignment of owners
6	Value on the open market	14	Who can use it
7	Name of item	15	General effects
8	Famous past owners	16	How to activate it
9	Age of item	17	Item type (as per DMG)
10	What race created it	18	Let player read DMG entry

## Assassins

- In the Dark Ages, assassination as a quick and convenient method of getting rid from those in someone's way, was much favored by nobles, and all those able to pay for the services of a hired murderer. So, assassins clearly belong to the Mid/Gaard campaign setting. However, it is up to the DM to determine if there is a specific class of assassins, or not. Clearly, killing someone for the right price doesn't necessitate of being of a special character class. Nonetheless, there could be professional assassins in the employ of the rich, powerful, and... unscrupulous.

- The DM has of course the last word on whether there are a special class of assassins in his setting or not. But I suggest this being kept secret for more mystery during the campaign. Anyway, here is my version of the Assassin class :

Character class: **ASSASSIN** (inspired by the 1<sup>st</sup> edition class).

- Assassins are a sub-class of rogue
- Assassins may not be multi-classed nor dual-classed.
- Minimum strength and dexterity of 12 ; Alignment: evil only
- Assassins have D6 hit-die, and saving-throws of rogues
- Assassins have warrior Thac0, and fighters' experience progression (instead that of rogues)
- Assassins can only wear and use the same armors and weapons as thieves
- Assassins get weapon and non-weapon proficiencies like thieves
- Assassins get "thieving" skills (pick-pockets, etc.) like generic thieves, except that they do not get the customary 60 points to distribute among these skills at 1<sup>st</sup> level.
- Assassins never get followers.
- Assassins always run the risk of being discovered when plying their trade. The base chance is of 10% cumulative per day (in a village), per week (in a town), per month (in a city), per year (in a great city, like the capital of a country).
- *Poison identification* : assassins' knowledge of poison allows them a 5% chance per level to identify toxic substances. If an assassin has the herbalism proficiency, a +10% is added to the final number. The means of identifying poisons include sight, smell, taste, or by a victim's symptom. An assassin with the healing proficiency gets a +1 / 10% above bonus to treat poison victims.
- *Assassination* : assassins get the special ability of *Backstab* as thieves. However, when doing a backstab attack, assassins can also opt for an assassination attempt. This is made as a called shot (incurring a -4 penalty to hit, and +1 penalty to initiative), and instantly kills the victim if the assassin succeeds a % roll, as determined below. Otherwise, only a normal backstab damage is inflicted (which may however still lead to the victim's death).



Ass. Level	Level of Intended Victim									
	0 - 1	2 - 3	4 - 5	6 - 7	8 - 9	10 - 11	12 - 13	14 - 15	16 - 17	18 +
1 - 2	50 %	45 %	35 %	25 %	10 %	01 %	--	--	--	--
3 - 4	55 %	50 %	40 %	30 %	15 %	05 %	--	--	--	--
5	60 %	55 %	45 %	40 %	20 %	10 %	--	--	--	--
6	65 %	60 %	50 %	45 %	25 %	15 %	01 %	--	--	--
7	70 %	65 %	55 %	50 %	30 %	20 %	05 %	--	--	--
8	75 %	70 %	60 %	55 %	40 %	25 %	10 %	01 %	--	--
9	80 %	75 %	65 %	60 %	45 %	30 %	15 %	05 %	--	--
10	85 %	80 %	70 %	65 %	50 %	40 %	20 %	10 %	01 %	--
11	90 %	85 %	75 %	70 %	55 %	45 %	25 %	15 %	05 %	--
12	95 %	90 %	80 %	75 %	60 %	50 %	30 %	20 %	10 %	01 %
13	99 %	95 %	85 %	80 %	65 %	55 %	40 %	25 %	15 %	05 %
14	100 %	99 %	90 %	85 %	70 %	60 %	45 %	30 %	20 %	10 %
15	100 %	100 %	95 %	90 %	75 %	65 %	50 %	40 %	25 %	15 %
16	100 %	100 %	99 %	95 %	80 %	70 %	55 %	45 %	30 %	20 %
17 +	100 %	100 %	100 %	99 %	85 %	75 %	60 %	50 %	40 %	25 %

Note that circumstances may alter these chances of success. A bonus can never exceed +25%.

## Fighter

• Fighters are the most common of characters in a Dark Ages setting. All societies in the world maintain armies of fighters to protect themselves from attack or to wage wars of plunder and annihilation against their neighbors. Fighters usually are both the commanders and soldiers in these armies, and at higher levels are experts in both individual and formation combat, leadership, and morale. Usually, most of them learned their fighting skills as levies on their king's battles, or in militia defense of their lands. Anyway, fighters come in many shapes all around the world, from sturdy peasants using a bow, to heroic knights in plate armors wielding great swords.

• For the fighter class I suggest using the basic PHB fighter improved as follows :

— **SINGLE-CLASS FIGHTERS** can specialize in multiple weapons, one at a time at 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> levels, and so on. They can also acquire weapon mastery (+3/+3) at 9<sup>th</sup> level, in one weapon they already are specialized in (at the same cost as weapon specialization).

— Single-class fighters will automatically gain the following abilities as they gain levels :

**ROGUE SKILLS** : they get two thief skills to help them in their profession :

*Detect Noises & Things* : base 15% at first level. Their profession often require of being able to look after the enemy, and also to detect ambushes on the battlefield. *Climb-Walls* : base 40% at first level. Their profession often require of being able to scale fortresses walls.

Thereafter, each time they gain a new level, fighters get 10 more points to distribute as they please in these abilities (up to a max. of 95%).

**WAR MACHINES** : at 3<sup>rd</sup> level, they gain the knowledge to operate the heavy war machines appropriate to their culture (ballistae, catapults, rams, bores, and siege-towers in medieval times).

**SUPERVISOR** : at 5<sup>th</sup> level, they become able to supervise the building of defensive work such as ditches, pits, fields of stakes, and hastily built wood-barricades. With time permitting, they can also supervise the building of semi-permanent fortifications.

**LEADERSHIP** : at 7<sup>th</sup> level, they gain the ability of leading large troops into battle. They are able to take charge of up to 100 soldiers per level. They also gain the ability to use messengers and signals ; become familiar with military terminology ; and understand how to move large numbers of men in the chaos of a battle (something other character classes won't be able to do).

— **MULTI-CLASS FIGHTERS** do not gain the above abilities. They cannot specialize with weapons until the 9<sup>th</sup> level. They can acquire weapon specialization at 9<sup>th</sup> level, in one weapon they already are proficient in (at the normal cost).

## Paladin

- The paladin is the noble and heroic warrior per excellence, an embodiment of truth and justice in the world. As such he has high ideals and standards that he must maintain at all times. Honor, virtue, righteousness, as well as bravery and chivalry are the meat and drink of a paladin. However, living up to such epitome is hardly an easy task, and failing from grace may come quickly. Hence, paladins are rare, and will be found most of the time on perilous divine quests, battling evil, or rescuing the weak in distress.

- In a world ruled by priests and knights, paladins can only be the epitome of characters. In the Mid'Gaard setting they thus are the typical medieval exalted knights, in shiny metal armor (who should have the Chevalier kit found in this netbook, or at least the Cavalier kit from the CFHB). As defenders of law and goodness, paladins fight to secure the benefits of the True-Faith civilization, but will mercilessly denounce its corrupted priests. On the other hand, paladins do not belong to such cultures as the Celts and Viking, thus will never be found as natives of these barbarian settings. (Also, I strongly advise against the "anti-paladin" class, a favorite of many players. They do not fit in the Mid'Gaard setting, and will better be replaced by Werebeasts or evil Warlocks, for that matter.)

- I otherwise recommend the following improvement for the paladin character class :

AURA OF PROTECTION : paladins (as in the AD&D 1<sup>st</sup> edition) benefit from a continuous *Protection from evil* spell, which may not be dispelled, and is always effective except for the repulsive aura which affects summoned or extra-planar beings. This aura is not effective when the paladin is engaged in combat. Otherwise, this spell is not ended by the paladin entering in combat.

DISEASES IMMUNITY : paladins are immune to all forms of diseases, (including bubonic plague, leprosy, and diseases caused by spells). However, only upon reaching the 9<sup>th</sup> level, do they also become immune to cursed afflictions, like mummy rot and lycanthropy.

MAGICAL ITEMS : paladins may not possess more than 10 magical items as per the normal rules, but furthermore should also be restricted to magical items consecrated and holy from a religious perspective.

## Ranger

- Rangers are warriors who share a strong tie with the savage nature they live in. As such, rangers are competent in most wood-lore skills, and are at home in the wilderness ; being often trackers and hunters in woods and glens. Nonetheless, rangers are much more than mere foresters. For instance, many rangers eventually turn to mystical paths to gain knowledge of the secret powers of nature (i.e.: through the old religion). Otherwise rangers are often protectors of their homeland, guarding the country from evil denizen of the wild. However, not all rangers abide to this role of guardian, as some of them are rather loners who chose to live in tune with nature. Anyway, even in barbarian cultures, most rangers tend to stand apart from their communities.

Also, rangers tend to be grim in appearance and dress, as they spend rough lives in the wilderness, and tend to choose brown and neutral colors for stealth concerns.

- In the Mid'Gaard setting, rangers will come mainly from the Celtic and Norse cultures. They also abound among Sidhé peoples and the like. Rangers otherwise tend to remain rare in the civilized world of the True Faith. The reason is that rangers are more than mere foresters : they are in spirit, affiliated to nature-priests, and at higher levels gain spells like them.

- For designing ranger characters, the POS&P and POS&M rules are a good idea. It enables you to create rangers with no magical abilities adapted to regions where the True Faith rules ; and rangers with more magic than usual, much appropriate to Sidhé people and worshippers of the old religion.

- I otherwise recommend the following improvement for the ranger character class :

SPECIE ENEMY : rangers can hit with non-magical weapons, creatures normally immune to them, if these creatures are their chosen "special enemy". Moreover, the +4 bonus to hit also applies to damage.

MAGIC : basic PHB rangers normally get spells at 8<sup>th</sup> level. However, instead of gaining them somewhat automatically, I suggest for them that :

- They could be able to get spells as soon as the 6<sup>th</sup> level, and with a wider selection of them (druid or witch spells). Nonetheless, this won't occur automatically, but from appropriate circumstances and roleplaying. For instance, rangers who belong to the old religion and serve it well, or have performed a major quest for nature, could be instructed in the ways of magic by some elder druid or the like (witch-priestess, etc.).

- 8<sup>th</sup> level rangers who never belonged to druidic or witch cults, but remained true to their ideals of rangers, could be contacted by some nature spirits. These would then instruct them in the ways of the Earth Goddess, and thus how to cast spells like nature-priests.

NO MAGIC : some rangers could reject magic (in fact a common occurrence in civilized lands of the True Faith). Such rangers will be allowed to acquire weapon specialization instead (which is normally unavailable to them). As above, this will be obtainable at 8<sup>th</sup> level, but could intervene sooner (i.e.: at 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> level), according to specific circumstances and role-playing. (Of course, this will preclude the character to be able to get spells ever after, in terms of rule-mechanics.)

## Wizard

- Wizards are the masters of arcane abilities, the wielders of magic. They are before all, learned individuals, experimenters and scholars. These practitioners use all manners of astrology, cabalism, study, and other magical paraphernalia to gain access to extraordinary powers. Wizards may be generalists able in all sorts of spells, or specialists who dedicate themselves to the study of a single school of magic. Nonetheless, their quest for power and knowledge has often led them into realms where mortals were never meant to go.

- In the Mid'Gaard setting wizards are the rarest of spellcasters ; witches, priests, but also mediums (psionicists) being much more common. The reason is that wizardry requires a high level of education, and a lot of money (take a look at the cost of spell-books, compared to all other prices and normal earnings): something very difficult to obtain in a Dark Ages world. Moreover, in this epoch where the Inquisition tries to eradicate all magic-users, wizards cannot practice their art openly. Anyway, most wizards will be encountered in big cities, near universities and the like. Likewise, and for reasons that monasteries are the traditional repositories of knowledge, many wizards have at one time or another be monks for the sole purpose of having access to secret lore. Otherwise wizards will often be nobles or scholars ; there are no such things as a peasant-wizard (peasants do not have access to erudition and usually lack money).

- For character classes I think that if you compare a 1<sup>st</sup> level cleric with a 1<sup>st</sup> level wizard, the latter is at a loss (for hit-points, number of spells, combat abilities, and experience progression). Therefore as a compensation I suggest this :

- All wizards get bonuses spells for high intelligence exactly as priests get for high wisdom.
- Generalists wizards get in addition to their spells, the use of *Detect-magic* and *Read-magic*, each of them once per day per three experience levels they have (rounded up).

## Witches

- Witches clearly belong to the Mid'Gaard setting, and should appear in it frequently. However, who really are witches ?

The problem is that the ignorant populace, held in fear by the "righteous" religious authorities, will be prone to see a witch in every character displaying seemingly supernatural abilities. Furthermore, these same authorities spend their time repeating that those who can use "magic" can only get it from the Devil, with whom they made a pact (Faust-like characters, or the typical warlock). As such, it should prove difficult for a PC to know the truth about witches. On the other hand, most NPCs will treat someone wielding magic or psionic powers as being a (evil) witch all the same. Therefore my suggestions are the following :

- Witches should remain a mystery to player characters. Even if the DM only uses basic PHB rules, he should not tell his policy on the subject of witches. Are witches a special character class?, are they some kind of degenerated nature-priests turned to evil practice?, are they wizards (with *witch kit*)?, are they psionicists?, or are they common fear and superstition put on anyone able to cast spells? The true answer should be kept secret by the DM.

- My own rules in the Mid'Gaard campaign are these : witches are in fact the last descendants of nature-priestesses whose cults were outlawed and persecuted by the True-Faith. Despite the religious authorities claim that all witches are satanic worshippers of the Devil, most of them are more akin to Celtic druids (and neutral in alignment). However, as the True-Faith persecutes them, these priestesses who would have been otherwise peaceful characters, have become the sworn enemies of the Church. In addition, the tyranny exercised by the Holy-Church is what precisely brought into existence the true satanic cults. (The many abuses and atrocities perpetrated by the Inquisition led some angered people to choose these dark ways as an expression of their revolt. Note also, that the Church speaking of the magical powers held by Devil's worshippers, encouraged some other people to become such worshippers to gain these magical powers !). Lastly, as it has already been said, anyone wielding magical (or psionic) powers will quickly be labeled a witch by the fearful and ignorant populace.

For classes, see my own versions of the witch (see [Witch-priestess](#)) and warlock (see [9 demon-gods of Dread](#)). Otherwise I recommend to get a look at the *Complete Netbook of Witches and Warlocks*, to be found on the Internet. Witches should be at least witch-priestesses, that is, a variation of druids in a world where they do not exist anymore as such.

## Witch-Knights

- Witch-knights are a legend in the Mid'Gaard setting, about which none will probably ever know the truth. This legend speaks of warriors who would be the consorts of witches and defend them with sword and magic alike. However, a few scholars state that this legend tells in fact of a secret order of magic-using knights who were the descendants of the defunct (and forbidden) Knight-Templars Order. What is certain however, is that there has been (and still is?) a discreet organization of warriors who practiced their own secret cult and had magical abilities.

- As with witches, the DM should keep secret if witch-knights do really exist in his campaign. Are they an organization of rangers who revere nature and protect their priests and priestesses (druids and witches)? ; are they the last descendants of the Knight-Templars (see [Pious Knights](#)), a secret order of mounted warrior-priests hunted by the Inquisition? ; are they a secret order of half-elven fighter-mages? ; are they only a legend?...

Whatever maybe the option chosen by the DM, he shouldn't tell. Witch-knights, like witches, should remain a mystery.

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# Knights

Here is presented a detailed version of the Knight kit, to use in the Mid'Gaard setting.

**Knights** are the central figures of the medieval world. Knights are primarily noble, horse-owning, trained warriors wearing heavy metal armors and wielding lances and swords. It should be noted that in medieval times, most men will know how to use weapons, since hunting is a part of everyday life; also soldiers and mercenaries will be a common occurrence; but usually only the noble classes can afford the armor, weapons, horses, and the leisure to train in their use that makes a true Knight. To the medieval world at large, Knights are powerful heroes. In fact they embody everything a true and ideal cavalier calls for : quests for Truth, Justice, and the elimination of Evil. However, even if most Knights abide to such lofty ideals, there are also those who only are preoccupied with upholding the privileges of their class.

Note that many sort of Knights will be found in the campaign world. Some are secular knights, and others belong to religious orders. See at the end of the kit's description, the different Knights which are :

- *secular*: Chevalier, Gallant Knight, Noble-Knight.
- *religious*: Monastic-Knight.

## **REQUIREMENTS :**

Knights must have minimum scores of 15 in strength and constitution, and 10 in dexterity, intelligence, and wisdom.

**Probation's period** : A character cannot begin his career directly as a Knight. He must first be a squire under the tutelage of another Knight (for at least an entire level). Then upon reaching at least the 4<sup>th</sup> level, the character will be ordained (during a special ceremony), becoming a full Knight. Note that until that time, a squire has not to adhere to the hindrances of the kit; but also won't get its special benefits.

**Classes & Races allowed** : see each variation of the kit.

## **WEAPON PROFICIENCIES :**

**Required** : lance (medium *or* heavy *or* jousting), and sword (bastard *or* broad *or* long).

**Recommended** : dagger, horseman's flail, horseman's mace, lance (medium, heavy, jousting), sword (bastard, broad, long, two-handed).

## **NONWEAPON PROFICIENCIES :**

**Required** : Etiquette, Riding-horse.

**Recommended** : Animal-handling, Armorer, Blind-fighting, Dancing, Debate, Grooming, Heraldry, Iron-will, Leadership, Reading-writing, Religion, Riding-horse-specialization.

## **SPECIAL BENEFITS :**

Knights get different special benefit according to which kind of knight they are (see sub-kits section). Otherwise, all Knights get the following adjustment to encounter reactions :

• **Reaction adjustment** : Knights have such an air of confidence, pride and power, that it affects others who meet them: They receive a +3 reaction from anyone of their own *medieval* culture; except criminals and characters of evil alignment, from whom they receive a -3. Otherwise, people from other cultures won't be affected according to their alignment, but nonetheless will instinctively perceive that such characters should be approached with care.

## **SPECIAL HINDRANCES :**

• **Station** : Knights must always have the highest-quality armor, weapons, and horse they can afford. Therefore, no Knight will stand for less than a chain-mail and a light war-horse. However as they get money, they'll constantly try to buy better equipment. Their goal is to have a set of plate armor, and a heavy war-horse.



• **Code of war** : First: Knights cannot attack an opponent at range if they can instead charge ahead and attack him in melee or jousting combat. Therefore, they cannot snipe on enemies with a bow or crossbow; they cannot use a polearm from behind a shield wall. They have to be on the front line, meeting their foes face-to-face. (A Knight could conceivably shoot an opponent with an arrow to stop that opponent from killing an innocent person; that doesn't constitute a violation of his code. But he couldn't shoot the enemy to protect a friend if his friend is fighting that enemy honorably... even if his friend is losing.). Second: In any combat, Knights must attack the enemy who is the biggest and most powerful-looking. If they are held up by lesser troops, they must dispatch them as quickly as possible and then get to their "real" opponent.

• **Code of chivalry** : Knights must also follow the very strict Code of Chivalry. Most of the time, such a code will include these following rules :

A Knight must cheerfully perform any noble service or quest asked of him;

A Knight must defend, to the death, any person or item placed in his charge;

A Knight must perform military service to his lord whenever asked;

A Knight must show courage and enterprise when obeying his rulers;

A Knight must show respect for all peers and equals;

A Knight must honor all those above his station (his social class);

A Knight must show courtesy to all ladies (if the Chevalier is male);

A Knight must demand respect and obedience from those below his station; he must scorn those who are lowly and ignoble (he will not help the ill-mannered, the coarse, the crude; he will not use equipment which is badly-made or inferior; he will fight on foot before riding a nag; etc.);

A Knight must regard war as the flowering of chivalry, and a noble enterprise; he must regard battle as the test of manhood, and combat as glory; he must achieve personal glory in battle: he must slay all those who oppose his cause; and he must choose death before dishonor.

Knights who do not respect their code of chivalry will eventually get bad things upon themselves. They may lose their status of Knight, they may be put on trial by their fellows, or they even could be hunted down on becoming « black knights », etc...

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KNIGHT-1:

## **Chevalier**

Chevaliers are the most warlike of Knights, and spend most of their time practicing weapons and warfare. They often belong to military orders of cavaliers devoted to the protection of their kingdom, like the Teutonic Knights ; but many will be lone characters like the typical knight errant. Chevaliers are brave and heroic, relentlessly fighting all those who threaten their lands and people. However, they aren't as pious as Monastic-Knight, or of lofty ideals as Gallant-Knights. They look more like Noble Knights, but are much more strict about the code of war and chivalry nonetheless.

**Typical Chevaliers ranks are :**

Page. 0 level apprentice (usually a young boy).

Valet. 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> level squire under the tutelage of another Knight.

Knight errant or guardian. 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> level Knight.

Grand knight. 7<sup>th</sup> level Knight.

Knight Bachelor. 9<sup>th</sup> level Knight.

Knight Banneret. 9<sup>th</sup> level Knight, having his own "lance" (that is: a medieval military unit containing an average of 30 men : a valet, 1 or 2 servants, about 5 to 10 mounted archers, plus 1 or 2 dozens footmen.).

Lord. 9th level Knight, having established his own stronghold and fief, and having followers.

## **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS :**

Chevaliers must be of lawful alignment.

**Classes allowed** : fighter, paladin ; fighter-cleric.

**Races allowed** : Humans, Fairy-born (half-elves), Trollborn.

### **ADDITIONAL SPECIAL BENEFITS :**

- ***Mental confidence*** : Chevaliers gain a +4 bonus to save vs. fear (be it magical or otherwise). They also gain a +2 bonus to saves vs all mind affecting spells such as *charm, hold, hypnotism, geas, sleep*, etc...

- ***Weapons of choice*** : Chevaliers gain three weapons of choice, with which they gain bonuses to hit, as they gain more levels. The particular weapons destined to be the three weapons of choice must be specified, and cannot be changed thereafter. (Also note that Leonine Knights may only have weapon specialization /expertise with those weapons of choice). These bonuses are gained at the following levels :

Lance (the chosen required lance): +1 at 1st level, increasing to +2 at 7th level. (but is effective only when horseback).

Sword (the chosen required sword): +1 at 3rd level, increasing to +2 at 9th level.

Horseman's flail or mace : +1 at 5th level, increasing to +2 at 11th level.

- ***Chain of command*** : Chevaliers adhere to rigid chains of command. Any high-level Chevalier can give commands to lower-level knights from the same fief or military order, as appropriate. The lower-level knights must follow these orders as if they were given by the liege. However, a Chevalier has only authority over those of at least three levels lower than himself. For instance, at 7<sup>th</sup> level, a Chevalier can command 4<sup>th</sup> level knights and lower (but not higher).

- ***Sanctuary*** : Chevaliers may request sanctuary in any stronghold of their kingdom/duchy/etc.. By custom, the owner must provide the Knight with shelter, food, and water for up to three days; the offer also extends to a number of companions equal to the Knight's level.

### **ADDITIONAL SPECIAL HINDRANCES :**

- ***Chain of command*** : as above. Chevaliers must obey orders given to them by their liege, or by any other knights of their fief / military order, who are of three levels higher.

- ***Sanctuary*** : Chevaliers who have a stronghold of some sort are expected to host any other knight of their kingdom/duchy/etc.. By custom, the Chevalier must provide the knight with shelter, food, and water for up to three days; the offer also extends to a number of companions equal to the knight's level.

- ***Weapons restrictions*** : Chevaliers are forbidden to learn missile weapons.

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KNIGHT-2:

### **Noble Knight**

Noble Knights are from the nobility, and represent everything the ruling class stands for. This means chivalry, courage, protection of the defenseless, and (especially) upholding the rights of the ruling class. They are the romantic ideals which most of the society looks up to; supposed to be dedicated to honorable deeds. But that's just what society expects from them. In fact many of them are mere brutes in shiny armor, who take what they want, murder the innocent, and continually betray the code they should follow.

Noble-knight ranks are the same as Chevaliers (see above)

### **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS :**

None.

**Classes allowed** : bard (courtier) ; fighter, paladin, ranger ; fighter-wizard, fighter-bard.

**Races allowed** : Humans, Changeling, Fairy-born (half-elves), Sidhe People (elves), Trollborn.

### **ADDITIONAL SPECIAL BENEFITS :**

- ***Mental confidence*** : Noble Knights gain a +2 bonus to save vs. fear (be it magical or otherwise).

- ***Chain of command*** : the same as Chevaliers.

- ***Sanctuary*** : the same as Chevaliers.

- **Code of chivalry** : Noble Knights have the less stringent requirements about following their special hindrances :

- 1) Noble Knights are normally expected to obey the chain of command, and give sanctuary to other knights the same as Chevaliers. However if they can refuse to do it with a seemingly good excuse (which is in fact a bad one), nothing adverse will result of it.

- 2) Not following the code of war and chivalry strictly, generally won't engender adverse effects in itself. For instance, when loosing a battle Noble Knights are used to surrender to their foes, sparing their lives in exchange to a ransom ; something unacceptable and unthinkable for a Chevalier.

#### **ADDITIONAL SPECIAL HINDRANCES :**

- **Station** : Noble Knights must pay, at least, an additional 10% per experience level they have to anything they purchase, be it equipment, food and lodging or else. It is because they must always buy the best (or at least the better looking).

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KNIGHT-3:

### **Gallant Knight**

Gallant Knights are the purest and most romantic of knights, blessed with charm and grace. They are not driven by blood lust or the desire to slay monsters for the sake of destroying evil. Instead, they are romantic at heart, and travel the lands in search of beauty and true love. They are used to defend innocence, love, and other romantic causes, such as the traditional maiden in distress. Otherwise, the pastime of many Gallant Knights is the medieval tournament, where they often win the heart of onlookers and steal the day's glory away from the victorious cavaliers.

#### **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS :**

Gallant Knights must have minimum scores of 15 in charisma, and must be of good alignments (chaotic good, neutral good, lawful good).

**Classes allowed** : bard (courtier) ; fighter, paladin, ranger ; fighter-wizard, fighter-bard.

**Races allowed** : Humans, Fairy-born (half-elves), Sidhe People (elves).

#### **ADDITIONAL SPECIAL BENEFITS :**

- **Mental confidence** : Because of their purity of heart, Gallant Knights who are true to their code, get a +2 bonus which may be applied each round to either their : attack rolls ; damage rolls ; armor class ; or saving throws. During each round, the Gallant Knight's player may decide to use the +2 bonus at any time before rolling the dice that will be adjusted. Once, it is used in a round, it is not available again until the next round. The bonus cannot be split into two +1 modifiers.

#### **ADDITIONAL SPECIAL HINDRANCES :**

- **Equipment** : Gallant Knights can wear any armor, but must favor quality and appearance, rather than actual protection. Thus they will don a gleaming suit of chainmail instead of a dented suit of plate mail. Then a *studded leather* +1 will be favored over a gleaming chainmail, a +3 *chainmail* over a +1 *platemail*, and so on. Then, this logic applies to all of their equipment.

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KNIGHT-4:

### **Monastic Knight**

Monastic-Knights are religious warriors who belong to the Knights-Templars, or the Hospitalers Knights orders. These religious warrior-monks promote the True Faith's most high ideals by defending the religion and its followers against the hordes of evil, and other invading heretics. Monastic-Knights embrace a strict monastic lifestyle, combining the roles of fighter and monk. As such, they must take the benedictine vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

### **Monastic Knights' ranks are :**

Novice. 0 level apprentice (usually a young boy).

Brother. 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> level squire under the tutelage of a Monastic Knight.

Sergeant. 4<sup>th</sup> or higher level warrior within the Order, not having yet been ordained Knight.

Faithful Knight. 4<sup>th</sup> or higher level Monastic-Knight.

Knight of the Cross. 7<sup>th</sup> or higher level Faithful-Knight, having proved his valor to the Order through at least 5 years of perfect service.

Knight of the Thorn. 9<sup>th</sup> level LG Knight-of-the-Cross, having proved his valor and served the Order for at least 7 years.

Knight of the Rose. 11<sup>th</sup> level LG Knight-of-the-Thorn also able to cast spells (paladin, etc.), having performed some heroic deed, or a dangerous quest or mission, on behalf of the Order, in addition to serving it for at least 9 years.

Commander. 9<sup>th</sup> level Knight-of-the-Cross or better, commanding a stronghold of the Order.

Grand Master. 13<sup>th</sup> level Knight-of-the-Rose, and leader of the Order.

### **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS :**

Monastic-Knights must be of LG or LN alignments.

**Classes allowed** : cleric (and similar class like Pious Knight) ; fighter, paladin ; fighter-cleric.

**Races allowed** : Humans, Fairy-born (half-elves).

### **ADDITIONAL SPECIAL BENEFITS :**

- **Chain of command** : Monastic-Knights adhere to rigid chains of command. Any high-level Monastic-Knight can give commands to lower-level Monastic-Knights from the same religious order. The lower-level Monastic-Knights must follow these orders as if they were given by the liege. This applies in relation to ranks, as well as levels. A Monastic-Knight can command other knights of his order who are of lower level, and equal or lower rank.

- **Sanctuary** : Monastic-Knights may request sanctuary in any stronghold of their religious order. By custom, they are provided with shelter, food, and water for up to three days; the offer also extends to a number of companions equal to the Knight's level.

Note, that the Monastic-Knight is also in turn expected to do the same for other knights (if he has himself a stronghold of course).

- **Special initiation** : those Monastic Knights who performed some heroic deeds on behalf of their order, or served it well for years, usually get some mystical initiation which gives them special abilities and privileges within the order.

Knights of the Cross : are given magical +1 weapons and armors if they do not have yet. They gain a +1 bonus to hit, damage, and saving-throws rolls when fighting enemies of their faith (which customarily include demons and evil sorcerers).

Knights of the Rose : are given magical +2 weapons and armors if they do not have yet. Non-spellcasters gain the ability to cast priest spells like paladins ; spellcasters gain the use of one Dispel-evil spell once per day in addition to their normal selection of spells.

Knights of the Thorn : are given magical +3 weapons and armors if they do not have yet. They become immune to all mind-affecting spells and other powers ; and can use holy swords like paladins.

### **ADDITIONAL SPECIAL HINDRANCES :**

- **Chain of command** : as above. Monastic Knights must obey orders given to them by their liege, or by any other knights of their religious order, who are of higher rank and/or levels.

- **Tithe** : Monastic Knights must give all of their income to their order, keeping only

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## 3 : Character Races

### Generalities

Mid'Gaard, being based upon a medieval Europe of fantasy, is mainly a human setting, but all the typical AD&D races should apply. The difference is that they appear in much fewer number, and do not live in the same realms as humans. Otherwise, when not identical to the basic PHB rules, these races have been determined using the Player's Options rules. These races are :

**Humans.**

**Changelings** (tiefling), **Fairy-born** (half-elf), **Troll-born.**

**Norse Dvergar** (dwarf), **Sidhe people** (elf), **Small folk** (gnome and halfling).

### Humans

- Humans are the dominant race of Mid'Gaard. Their lot is most of the time one of fear, misery, and violence. Therefore, most humans are prone to evil doings given the opportunity\*, while they usually tend to be lawful-neutral or neutral, in alignment. Good aligned characters are uncommon at best\*, found mainly in people with a strong personality and deep religious feelings. Note lastly that most humans are greatly superstitious, believing tens of inane things like: "horses may die if their owner eats an odd number of eggs".

(\*: This may be exaggerated to some, but I would remind the reader that in those times, for examples : When a poor woman was to be burned at the stake for being supposedly a witch, people would joyously gather at the execution, and laugh upon seeing her die horribly in the flames. On battle sites when the night came, the habit was for nearby peasants to come and slay the wounded who laid there, to pillage their belongings. Otherwise, as everyone knows it, torture was the habitual mean for interrogating suspects of religious "crimes" (i.e.: namely free thinking). However, what is less known, is that there was no concerns for innocents being left alive. For instance a good method to determine if a woman was a witch or not, was to plunge her (tied with ropes) under water : if she survived she was a witch, but if she died she was innocent, peace to her soul...)

- **Religious tendencies**: 95% of humans are of the same faith as their parents (i.e.: of their cultural background). This may be any of the religions presented in this netbook.

- **Characteristics**: as in the basic rules (all scores ranging from 3 to 18, and no special abilities). However, some humans (PCs and noteworthy NPCs) can get a birth-gift. Birth-gifts are either special talents or objects given to the character at the moment of his birth by the Gods, Fate, or his/her ancestors. A Human character may check for a Birth-Gift at the time of character generation. This is done by rolling 1D20 and consulting the table. No player is required to make this check. However, once the player makes the die roll he must accept the result. If the player refuses to check for a gift, he cannot make the attempt in the future. Only one check is allowed :

#### Birth Gift Table

##### 1-3 Courage

The character is noted for fearlessness, giving him a +3 bonus on all saving throws vs. fear-based attacks.

##### 4-6 Handsome

The character is exceptionally charming and good looking. He/she gains a +2 bonus to his/her Charisma. In addition, when dealing with Characters of the opposite sex, and/or when trying to seduce them; the character gains a +2 bonus to reaction in addition to all other adjustments (charisma, comeliness and magic).



### 7-8 Luck

The character is born lucky, and gains a +1 bonus to all die rolls with a single type of die: D6, D8, D10, D20. The modifier is applied only to rolls affecting the character specifically, and not to rolls affecting a group of which the lucky character is member.

### 9-10 Learning ability

The character has a natural ability to learn. That is, he receives a +10% bonus to his/her experience points, in addition to any other like bonuses he/she may still have.

### 11-12 Inheritance

The character gains from a parent, ancestor, family member, or other, a magical object. Most of the time it will be a special magical object, such as for example: a +2 magical weapon which becomes a -1 cursed weapon when handled by anyone who is not a close member of the character's family.

### 13-14 Mixed blood

The character has some faerie's or other blood in his/her veins. He/she appears perfectly human, but this ancestry has given him/her one of the following, randomly determined on a d4:

- 1) Part Sidhe (half-elf ancestor): infravision 60 feet.
- 2) Part Sidhe (half-elf ancestor): may be multi-classed as for half-elves.
- 3) Part Fomorian (half-orc ancestor): +1 to strength and constitution, as well as a +2 bonus to all saving throws vs. poison.
- 4) Part Fomorian (half-orc ancestor): has gotten a hard skin giving him/her a natural AC8, and half damage from blunt weapons.

### 15-16 Magical affinity

The character was born with an aptitude for magic, and may become a multi-classed character, adding wizard (generalist only) or witch (if the rules from the *Complete Netbook of Warlocks and Witches* are used), to any chosen character class except Cleric/Druid, regardless of any rules which would normally prohibit this.

### 17-18 Medium (psionic wild talent)

The character is automatically a "wild talent", as outlined in the Complete Psionic Handbook p.19-21. If the character is already a psionist, he gains a one time bonus of +10 PSPs at first level. If a human character normally rolls a psionic wild talent as per the CPH rules p.19-21, he then cannot roll for a birth-gift, as *this is* his birth-gift (however, the DM may let the player character choose his psionic powers). Note that in a Dark-Ages setting, people displaying psionic abilities will rather be called *mediums*, and will often be mistaken for witches or sorcerers. Also, ignorant and superstitious mediums could well use ineffective rituals or spell-formulas when employing their powers, being convinced that these are absolutely necessary, despite it isn't the case in any way.

### 19 Battle-fury

The character touched with battle-fury has the ability to go berserk in battle. Whenever wounded in battle, faced by unequal numbers or otherwise enraged, the character can attempt a saving-throw vs. Death-magic (with a +1 bonus cumulative per successive attempts on the following rounds of a fight). If the save is successful the character goes berserk. This state confers the following advantages and restrictions:

- While berserk the character is at +1 to hit, +3 to damage, and +5 hit points.
- The character gains a +4 save bonus against all mind affecting spells/attacks.
- The character is immune to Knock Out results from punching-sapping attacks.
- While berserk the character may only fight in melee combat.
- The character must fight each opponent until it is slain or down; moving to the nearest enemy each time one is eliminated.
- While berserk the character cannot think and act intelligently or cunningly, he is treated as having half of his intelligence.
- Finally when the character comes out of the berserk state (when there are no more enemies), he loses all the berserk benefits, and collapses into exhaustion (no save) for two rounds per round s/he was berserk.

*Special note:* This power cannot be cumulated with the Berserker kit (from CFHB).

### 20 Player's choice

The player can choose the birth-gift he/she wants for his/her character, in the list above.

## Changeling

• In Mid'Gaard there are a some characters who are not true humans, but "changelings". This occurs when some fairy creature steals a particularly good or beautiful child to raise as their own. In its place they leave an ugly or deformed non-human being, a changeling, who the bereaved parents must raise\*. Changelings are thus non-human, racially speaking, but being raised by humans, they usually become human from a cultural perspective. Changelings are rarely aware of their unnatural origin, but nonetheless share common traits.

(\*: A good example of this appears in Poul Anderson's novel: *The Broken Sword*. In that story, set on a legendary Earth, an elven prince cannot have children, but still wants to. He thus steals a beautiful human baby and replaces it by a changeling born magically from a female troll and his own semen. Then, the changeling is raised by the human parents unaware of the permutation. However, even if the changeling looks like the stolen child's twin, he is malevolent and becomes a hateful being. The hero –i.e.: the stolen child– is eventually doomed to combat the changeling to the death).

• **Religious tendencies:** Changelings usually reject the dominant religion of the society they were born into. Mysterious and secret faiths generally have their favor, especially malevolent ones. Changelings of evil alignments are usually attracted to warlocks' cults.

• **Characteristics:** use either Tiefling characteristics as in the Planescape rules, or :

**Changelings** gain a +1 bonus on one ability score of their choice, except charisma which suffers a –1 and cannot exceed 15 in any case. They cannot be of good alignments. They also gain a number of special abilities and hindrances randomly determined on the tables below (3 abilities / 1 hindrance). Changelings can be priests (12), warlocks (16), witches (16) ; psionicists (12) ; bards (14), thieves (16) ; fighters (12) ; wizards (including specialists) (16). They may also pursue multiclass options: fighter/priest, fighter/psionicist, fighter/thief, fighter/wizard, priest/ thief, psionicist/thief, wizard/thief.

### Special abilities :

**01-10 :** +2 saves and ½ dmg. vs acid

**11-20 :** +2 saves and ½ dmg. vs cold

**21-30 :** +2 saves and ½ dmg. vs electricity

**31-40 :** +2 saves and ½ dmg. vs fire

**41-50 :** +2 saves and ½ dmg. vs poison

**51-60 :** +2 saves vs petrif-polmph-paral.

**61-70 :** +2 saves vs rod-staff-wand-spells.

**71-76 :** Infravision 18 yards

**77-79 :** *charm person* once per day

**80-82 :** *chill touch* once per day

**83-85 :** *darkness 15' rad.* once per day

**86-88 :** *detect magic* twice per day

**89-91 :** *ESP* once per day

**92-94 :** Harmed only by magic and silver weapons

**95-97 :** regenerates 1 hit-point per hour, but not if dead, and severed members do not re-grow.

**98-00 :** magic resistance of 10 to 25% (1d4+1 X 5%). However this works anytime, whether the magic would be harmful or beneficial, and anytime the changeling casts a spell or uses a magic item.

### Special weaknesses :

**01-30 :** Demonic feature which may be nonetheless concealed, such as : pointed teeth ; forked tongue ; cloven hooves instead of feet ; small thin tail ; etc...

**31-40 :** Demonic feature which cannot be concealed by conventional means, such as : black, red, or feline eyes ; six fingered hands ; scaly skin ; small horns on forehead ; etc...

**41-50 :** Ashy, rotting, or sulfurous stench which surround the body at all times.

**51-60 :** Presence causes unease in animals, reactions at –4.

**61-70 :** Presence causes unease in NPCs, reactions at –4.

**71-80 :** Prolonged touch (1d3 rounds) withers normal plants (small plants, not trees).

**81-90 :** Holy water inflicts 1d6 of damage.

**91-00 :** Cannot enter «holy» areas.

## Fairy born (Half-elves)

- In the Dark Ages' world, fairies encompass all those strange magical creatures said to live in the realms of Faëry. Elves are said to be the highest creatures of those lands. Many elves are also said to harbor considerable animosity toward humans, and encounters between elves and humans usually tend to end badly. However, at times, elves fall in love with humans, and vice versa. Although unfortunately such affairs usually end in tragedy or sadness, children are sometimes born from these unions. These half-castes are called *fairy-born* people.

Fairy-born characters never stay long in the realms of Faëry if they were born in it. Generally at age of 4 or 5, they are sent forever in the world of men with no hope of ever returning. As such, all fairy-born people eventually become human, culturally speaking.

In appearance, fairy-born seem extremely human. Their eyes are slender and their mouth is small. Their eyebrows are very thin and their complexions very pale or golden. The men are always smooth-shaven, without beards or mustaches. In fact, most fairy-born come close to the ideal of human beauty. In character, fairy-born tend to be individualistic, introspective, and often have a fascination for magic.

- **Religions:** They can be of any religion, although fairy-born characters will rarely be priests of the True-faith (which view them with suspicion). Nonetheless, fairy-born usually feel attracted toward religions of nature (druids).

- **Characteristics:** use *Half-elf* characteristics as in the basic rules (PHB). At DM's option, fairy-born should have a charisma score (or comeliness if used) of 14 minimum.

## Troll-born (Half-ogres)

- Trollborn are crossbreeds between trolls (Mid'Gaard trolls, as detailed at the end of this chapter) and humans, sharing the features of the two races. Trollborn have the adaptativeness of their human ancestry, and the toughness of their troll lineage. They usually are feared and respected people, noted for their strength and cunning. Ugly, powerful, and ill-tempered, they are easily identified from the common human stock. Some may grow as tall as seven feet in height, and have rippling bulging muscles. Their temperaments range from bad to worse, although they do have their good moods and sense of humor. Note also that most trollborn are born from a human female raped by a troll during some raid. As such, these characters will often be rejected by their mother in addition to being despised by other peoples. However, in a time where violence usually rules, being strong is most important. Therefore, trollborn usually pass for lucky people who have been gifted by destiny. Nonetheless, where trolls often scream that they are the "only worthy race in a world of weaklings and degenerates who spoiled them of what they deserved", trollborn tend to resent bitterly of being just half-weaklings. In any case, trollborn do not have definite tendencies in lifestyle and socialization, even if they tend to be individualistic, rarely bowing to authority.

- **Religions:** Trollborn are rarely religious at heart. Even if they believe in the gods, trollborn do not feel inclined to worship them, and are rarely afraid of the supposed "wrath of the divinity" (as humans tend to be). However, trollborn can still be priests, even if it is rarely the case. As priests they will never be of the True-faith, but will typically serve (mainly for the powers they get in exchange) Norse gods such as Loki or Odin. Otherwise, darker deities are also often their choice.

- **Characteristics:** use either *Trollborn* characteristics as in the HR1: Viking Campaignbook, or the following version (mixed with half-ogre):

**Trollborn** gain +1 to strength and constitution, -1 to wisdom, and -2 to charisma. They have infravision (60 feet) ; a +2 bonus to saving throws against poison ; and their hard skin gives them a natural AC of 8 (but this doesn't modify AC of armor worn), and half damage from blunt weapons. They cannot be of lawful alignments. Trollborn can be priests (10), warlocks (15) ; fighters (15), rangers (15) ; wizards (including specialists) (15). They may otherwise pursue multiclass options: fighter/priest, fighter/wizard, priest/ wizard.

## Norse Dvergar (dwarves)

• Dvergar are usually short and of stocky features, often grotesque in appearance. A few can pass for normal, though stunted, men\*. Dvergar are strong, brave, but tend to be dour and taciturn as well. They concern themselves much more with hard work than pleasure and humor. Nonetheless, they are fascinated by gold. In addition to their considerable magical abilities (i.e.: in game terms many will be elemental priests, or multi-classed priests), the Dvergar are the finest of all craftsmen for making magical devices. It should be noted that Dvergar normally live in northern lands, and are almost never encountered. Most meetings are with travelers lost in the deep mountains, as it is the traditional areas where they live (underground). Otherwise, many Dvergar live in the otherworldly realms of Niflheim and have the power to cross from the normal world to the otherworld.

(\*: In a time where many people suffer from starvation and diseases, humans born hunchbacked, stunted, goitrous, etc., are not rare. Therefore, among humans dvergar usually pass for such disgraced people, and aren't rejected more than are these. However, if the character is discovered as being of an unnatural origin, people will certainly try to "rightfully" kill him/her.)

• **Religions:** Dvergar do not worship the gods, and have nothing to do with the True faith. They nonetheless acknowledge the Earth-mother, and worship her in their own ways (the Dwarnoi order, related to human druids). Otherwise, Dvergar will often be elemental priests of the Earth. Some of them sometimes choose to be elemental priests of Fire or Water (which can be found underground), but they cannot be priests of Air.

• **Characteristics:** use either Dwarf characteristics as in the basic rules (PHB), or a customized character (specific rules close to that of POS&P) as follows :

All **Dvergar** have racial innate abilities of : Infravision (60 feet), Resistance to poison and magic (saving-throws bonuses due to high constitution score), Mining detection abilities ; and suffer from a base 20% chance of any magical item (not suited to their character class) they try to use won't function magically. Otherwise, for learned abilities choose one of the following :

### Troll-slayer (melee combat)

The character gains a +1 bonus to his attack-damage rolls, and a +4 bonus to his AC, when fighting trolls, trollborn, giants, and the like. Note this is due to special training and tactics, not hatred or small size.

### Magical affinity (innate spell-use)

The Dvergar can be (unlike other dwarves) a wizard (any specialty allowed except Air elementalists), and in addition can cast the priest spell Stone-tell, once per day.

### Psychic (psionic wild talent)

The character is automatically a "wild talent", as outlined in the Complete Psionic Handbook p.19-21. However the character's powers are not determined randomly, but always are that of Expansion and Reduction. If the Dvergar is a psionist, these powers (and the PSPs) are gained in addition.

### Stealth

The character gets a +1 bonus to surprise others and not being surprised himself. Underground this bonus is of +2, and they get a 25% (base or bonus, as relevant) for Hiding-in-shadows (as thief's skills but underground only).

## Sidhe people (elves)

- Sidhe people are elegant and graceful with delicate features. They are as tall as human but leaner, and have golden or silver hairs along pointed ears. Sidhe people concern themselves with natural beauty and artistic activities such as dancing, music, and poetry. They find magic fascinating, but are not overly interested in money and gain. Sidhe people are an otherworldly race living in the fabled realms of Faëry (or Annwn), where they construct marvelous magical castles. When they come to the world of humans (a rare occurrence however), Sidhe people always employ appropriate magic in order to appear like normal humans, or remain invisible.

- **Religions:** Sidhe people aren't much inclined toward religion. They rather revere nature, but not in a ritual fashion : there will be elven witches, but not druids. Otherwise, there can be at times elven priests of Frey (Norse god of elves), or Nuada (Celtic god related to the Sidhe people).

- **Characteristics:** use either Elf characteristics as in the basic rules (PHB), or a customized elf (POS&P rules) as follows :

All **Sidhe people** have racial innate abilities of : Infravision (90 feet) ; 90% resistance to charm and sleep related spells ; keen senses for detecting secret/concealed things (+1 on d6) ; and stealth (+4 bonus to surprise opponents, +2 if must open a door). Otherwise, for learned abilities choose one of the following :

### Weapons knowledge

The character gains a +1 to-hit when using any type of bow or sword. In addition, Rangers and multi-classed warriors are allowed to specialize in the bow and the sword (which is normally unavailable, unless customizing a class with relevant options as per POS&P rules).

### Sage knowledge

The character gains the Legend-lore ability of bards at 5% per level. Otherwise, they need only 4 hours (instead of 8) worth of sleep to be rested (a time normally used to learn, read...).

### Sorcerous knowledge

The character can, once per day, and in addition to any other spell he may use, cast : faerie-fire, dancing-lights, and darkness. When reaching 4th level, he also gains : levitate, detect-magic, and know-alignment.

## Small folk (gnomes and halflings)

- Gnomes and halflings belong to the races of fairies which also encompass all magical creatures such as dryads, korreds, pixies, sprites, etc. The small folk are normally found in the otherworldly realms of Faëry, but many like to roam the mortal world, and interact with humans (at least when these are not opposed to them).

Gnomes are small and light, but have much larger pointed ears. They tend to favor colorful and strange clothes, as well as all kinds of odd magical or mechanical items. Gnomes have great sense of humor, and are fond of jokes. They prefer to live in rolling and well wooded hills, where they usually build underground villages, or live in large, hollow trees. In the realms of Faëry, gnomes says they will have fun, whatever may be the world they are in; but others hope that at last someone will get the sneer off the little giggling things.

Halflings are round and plump small people, with curly hairs and haired feet, as well as small pointed ears. They are peaceful by nature, and tend to prefer much more a quiet comfortable life to adventuring. What they enjoy the most are banquets and conversation. Halflings typically dwell in comfortable burrows located in quiet pastoral countries. In the realms of Faëry, halflings only want to live their peaceful lives without being bothered by others' squabbings ; but most of the others find fortunate to not being bored either.



• **Religions:** The Small Folk is not very religious, often revering nature but rarely worshipping any god. As priests, the Small Folk will generally serve Titania or Oberon, not true gods, but respectively the Faerie Queen, and the Seelie Court's King. These figures are related to the Earth-goddess in some ways, and halfling and gnomes priest will in fact get their abilities from Her, through Titania or Oberon. (In game terms they can only be clerics –as detailed in this netbook–, but not priests of the True-faith, nor druids, nor witches and warlocks.)

• **Characteristics:** use either Halfling and Gnome characteristics as in the basic rules (PHB), or a customized character as per POS&P rules. In this latter case, any combination may be possible, like the following example of gnome :

Pluck "the smiling" : A gnome of a size small even by Small Folk's standards. His long beard is light green, and his eyes bright green in color. However his skin looks like that of a human. Pluck has got the following abilities : Infravision 90 feet ; ability to Pass without trace through woodlands and forests unhindered (like druids) ; Hide-in-woods, like a generic thief of the same level using Hide-in-shadows ; Stealth ability enabling him to remain discreet in most circumstances, and surprise opponents at +4, and not being surprised himself (+2 bonus) ; then, an innate ability to Identify potions by sight or scent with an accuracy of 5% per wisdom score's points (in his case 14 Wis = 70%).

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## 4 : Mid'Gaard Monsters

### Generalities

#### Typical creatures and monsters encountered in a Mid'Gaard setting.

From Aarakocra to Zombies, AD&D monsters easily amount over a thousand different creatures. However, before throwing beholders, cloaklers, dragons, grells, modrons, or satyrs, at player characters, take a little time to consider the place of monsters in a **Mid'Gaard** campaign.

As the campaign intent is on creating a legendary ambience, AD&D numerous monsters will have to be sorted out. Basically, all the creatures you could find in Celtic and Viking sagas, medieval legends, and Tolkien epics, will apply. See below a list of the monsters which are suited to the campaign.

Otherwise, all monsters who belong to other mythologies (such as the Greek, Egyptian, and oriental), and those that have been created out of nothing for the game are inappropriate. As such, I recommend to avoid all weird things such as : *Aboleth, Ankheg, Arcane, Argos, Aurumvorax, Beholders, Bulette, Bullywug, Carrion crawler, Catoblepas, Cave fisher, Centaur, Centipede, Cloaker, Couatl, Crabman, Crocodile, Dinosaurs, Disenchanter, Displacer-Beast, Fungus (shrieker, mold, etc...), Gibberlings, Giffs, Gith, Githyanki, Githzerai, Grell, Hatori, Hook-horror, Hydra, Insects (giant), Intellect devourer, Ixitxachitl, Kenku, Ki-rin, Kuo-toa, Lammasu, Lizards, Lizard-men, Lurker, Mimic, Mind-flayer, Modrons, Morkoth, Muckdweller, Mudman, Myconid, Neogi, Ooze, (slime, jelly, pudding, ...), Otyugh, Piercer, Quaggoth, Rakshasa, Remorhaz, Roper, Rust monster, Sahuagin, Satyr, Sea-lion, Shedu, Slaad, Sphinx, Stirge, Su-monster, Tabaxi, Tarrasque, Thought eater, Thri-kreen, Troglodyte, Umber-hulk, Wemic, Worm, Xorn, Yeti, Yuan-ti, etc.*

### Appropriate monsters :

**Animals** and **giant animals** (but mostly European animals, not elephants, tigers, etc...)  
**Birds** and **giant birds** (but mostly European birds, not condors, vultures, etc...)  
**Chaos creatures** (chimera, griffon, hippogriff, Lamia, mantichore, nagas, owlbear, etc...)  
**Dwarves** (derro, duergar)  
**Dragons** (all dragons)  
**Elementals spirits** (all elementals and related creatures)  
**Fairy creatures** (brownies, dryad, leprechauns, nymph, spriggan, sprites, pixies, etc...)  
**Gargoyle**  
**Giants** (cloud, ettin, firbolg, fire, fomorian, frost, hill, mountain, stone, and verbeeg)  
**Goblinoid creatures** (bugbear, goblin, Kobold, hobgoblin, ogres, etc...)  
**Hags** (all hags)  
**Infernal creatures** (demons, devils, hell-hound, Nightmare, etc...)  
**Kraken**  
**Lycanthropes** (bear, boar, rat, wolf)  
**Mist** (crimson-death, vampiric)  
**Selkie**  
**Treant** (and other plant-monsters)  
**Trolls** (all trolls)  
**Undead** (all undead)  
**Unicorn**  
**Will'o'wisp**  
**Werewolf** (and jackalwere)

## Special monsters :

The fact is, with such a limited monster selection, that players usually know them all, and react accordingly, even if their characters meet them for the first time. Then, the game becomes quickly boring. Another thing is, that such favorite monsters of the DMs and players alike, such as the beholder or genies are not included in the campaign's appropriate monsters. Thus, here follow a few suggestion :

**Beholder** : these monsters have nothing to do in a campaign featuring Celts, Vikings, and Arthurian knights. However, did you ever heard of *fomorian* giants ?

The fabled fomorian's leader "Balor" had a single eye which was several feet across and had a terrible gaze that could kill. Now, imagine such a fomorian with a single eye on his head, plus one eye on each of his ten fingers, and all of them can cast spells. It is a perfect legendary fomorian, but you can use all the statistics of a beholder !

**Minotaur** : these are not a race of creatures roaming the wilderness, and even less a player character race. However, you could occasionally use that creature as some human hideously transformed into such monster for a specific reason. That reason could be the "Curse of the Baphomet" : some character wanted to gain occult knowledge and power, but not deserved it, or failed to pass the test required to gain this knowledge. As a result he didn't die, but was changed forever into a minotaur, doomed to guard the place (a labyrinthine network of tunnels and rooms) where that knowledge is supposed to be found.

**Will'o'wisp** : these monsters are perfectly appropriate to the campaign. However, everybody knows how to deal with them the most efficiently possible. Now, imagine that they appear as small evil translucent fairies which first speak with their victims before attacking them...

## Monstrous Common Knowledge

Here follows a brief description of the campaign world's evil denizen. This is common knowledge most people are familiar with. Thus, players should be able to look at it, in order to know what their character already know of the creatures they could encounter. Then, when they effectively come upon these, do not tell players of the creature's real name (i.e.: AD&D monstrous compendium determination), but the name they are given in the campaign world (i.e.: see below). For instance ghouls, zombies, or wights are all "Barrow-wights", however there are some of them which are more powerful than others...

**Banshee** : The banshee is the spirit of an elven or human maiden who died before her time (often in childbirth). They typically haunt a single family or bloodline, keening when someone is about to die, or causing the deaths themselves. A family or individual may become haunted by a banshee as the result of a powerful curse or great misdeed.

**Dopplegänger** : These undead are invoked by certain evil necromancers who dispatch them out into the world to carry out their wicked demands. These undead may be more or less powerful, but all share a peculiar ability : on sight, they can pass for living humans. Some of them even have the ability to change their appearance at will.

Nonetheless, these creatures are rare; but at times, some free willed undead will be mistaken for these creatures.

**Dragons** : These creatures are the oldest of all, and have been living since before men walked on the world. Dragons are usually black, but the most ancient and powerful of them appear in shimmering hues or gleaming scales. They are well known for being fire-breathers, although some of them have been known to breath thunder, death smoke, and so on. All dragons are evil. These creatures are not and never have been friends to man or virtually any other creature. Fortunately, the immense majority of them have been asleep for centuries. The appearance of a dragon is normally a portent of great disaster.

**Fairy creatures** : Brownies, dryads, korreds, leprechauns, nymphs, spriggans, sprites, pixies, etc., but also gnomes and halflings are "magical" creatures originating from the Faëry lands. However, they are often found in the human world, usually in enchanting places of wild nature, near portals to their hidden magical realm.

In the Celtic and Viking societies, fairy creatures are usually well liked and respected. There, although it remains uncommon, humans have been known to befriend gnomes and halflings, and help each others when the need arose. However, most Celts and Norsemen will leave them alone, as they tend to believe that dealing with such creatures eventually bring doom to the human who does it.

On the other hand, the medieval world is predominantly xenophobic, and view all other races as a threat. Fairy creatures (elves, dwarves, and gnomes included along the same), are a hated race "that steal human infants and hide them in their magical realms, leaving behind a horrid and sickly changeling to torment their mothers". They all are evil monsters completely opposed to human society and all it stands for. For instance, "it is well known" that gnomes (like their cousins, trolls) live under bridges and devour helpless travelers...

**Firbolgs** : They are the race who inhabited the land of men before they came. Firbolgs are much reclusive and live deep in forests or mountain areas. They are polite but cautious in their dealings with other races, and very reluctant to trust. They avoid the Sidhe, and hate fomorians with a passion, but try to remain on even terms with other non-evil races. Firbolgs live in the world of men, but unseen by almost all humans. As a race, firbolgs are said to have immense strength and powerful magical abilities.

**Fomorians** : These hideous and evil giants are found mainly in the Celtic world where they are the scourge of men and Sidhe alike. Fomorians are always huge and ugly, but these are the only constants in their appearance. Some have two or more heads, some are smaller but are expert at making ambushes, and a few of them (which are usually their leaders) have only one, or several eyes, and wield magical powers.

**Giants** : These terrifying humanoids are found mostly in the north, the lands of the Vikings. Once they were populous and lived throughout the world. However, with the rise of men the giant population dwindled and their race retreated. In their own realm of Jötunheim, giants abound ; but of those remaining in Mid'Gaard, most dwell in the distant lands of Trollheim, or in the frozen wastes of the great north. Fortunately, because they live in distant and icy lands, giants seldom become involved in the affairs of men.

Giants come in a broad range of guises from the cunning and clever, to the brutish and stupid. They otherwise share the worst characteristics of humans, being deceitful, greedy, malicious, jealous, and violent. In fact, nearly all giants are evil. Although some giants live near volcanoes, most giants will be found in mountainous or cold regions. In the human world, most giants stand from 30' to 40' tall (i.e.: 9 to 12 meters), however in Jötunheim the average height is 50' (15 m.), and their leaders and kings can easily stand up to 100' tall (30 m.). Some giants are quite intelligent and skilled in magical arts, and in Jötunheim such individuals can be very powerful.

**Kobolds and goblins** : In the Mid'Gaard setting these malevolent creatures are the evil counterparts of the Fairies. They come from the same magical realm, and never let pass an opportunity to go to the human world to wreak havoc, and then depart quickly.

In appearance, they usually look like hateful and ugly humanoids of various sorts, with blotched skins. Most of them are of small sizes, but this is not always the case. Kobolds and goblins are a generic name, and their ranks include such creatures as AD&D : kobolds, goblins, bugbears, gnolls, spriggans, and others. Otherwise, in the Mid'Gaard campaign, these creatures often crave for magic. Thus, as they generally are unable to understand the basics of wizardry, turn to demoniac entities and become warlocks to be able to cast spells.

**Lycanthropes** : In all human societies, men who can turn into savage beasts (usually werewolves), have been known to scourge human settlements. Most lycanthropes are werewolves, but in cities wererats have been reported, and in Norse and Celtic lands werebears and wereboars are also well known.

**People of the Sidhe** : called “fées” in the medieval world, and “elves” by Norsemen, the Sidhe are the remnants of a proud pre-human race. They are skilled in magic and in all arts and crafts and once ruled much of the world before the rise of humans. Now however, they are on the decline, and have increasingly less to do with the normal world. They reside in their own realm (which beyond the world of men), usually called “Faerie” or “Annwn”.

Sidhe are beautiful by human standards, they live for hundreds of years and do not seem to die of old age. Their dress and equipment are always of the most magnificent quality and beauty.

Sidhe normally prefer to avoid any encounter with humans. However, at times, some Sidhe will fall in love with a human. Since both races frown on inter-racial liaisons, the Sidhe meets his/her paramour in secret, and is careful never to be seen by other humans. Nonetheless, after a while though, the Sidhe always becomes bored and abandon him/her, often leaving a broken heart behind. Half-elves are born from such unions.

While most Sidhe tend to be good, or at least neutral, it is said that some Sidhe have turned to a deep and sinister evil. These Sidhe are called dark-sidhe (or dark-elves), in reference to their corrupted spirits. However, they are almost indistinguishable from other Sidhe, except for their malevolent eyes and their unnatural resistance to magic.

**Revenants** : These undead are the spirits of deceased people who return in the world of men in an attempt to complete their affairs : right a wrong, finish something left undone, deliver a message (most of them can speak), or harass those whom they hated in life. Revenants are not necessarily malevolent or evil, their behavior is influenced by what remains undone.

Revenants may be more or less powerful (some are slow and easy to destroy, others can drain life on touch), but all share the following abilities : Their bodies are always of decaying flesh, even if they are not overly horrid. Moreover, their appearance always reflects the means by which they died (drowned men appear dripping wet, and those who died in battle often sport fresh wounds). Furthermore, revenants can be defeated and their bodies destroyed, but this only delays them. By the next night, the body will have reformed, and they will return. Revenants can only be permanently laid to rest when their missions are completed, or if they have been put down by the proper ritual (such as an exorcism, or a particular trial).

**Spectres** : These mysterious incorporeal undead are the spirits of unknown persons forced to haunt the world. Spectres usually lurk in lonely regions, seeking to cause harm to those who wander within their range. Spectres are however only active at night. They typically kill their victim by draining their strength, lifeforce, or youth.

**Swanmay** : These ever young, and usually beautiful maiden, who can shape-change into swans, may marry human men of good alignment if they consider them worthy. However, the offspring of such marriages are human in every way, and have no shape-changing abilities.

**Trolls / Ogres** : (Mid'Gaard trolls replace those of the normal AD&D rules, as well as being a substitute for AD&D ogres. As such, trolls use the normal statistics –hit-die, damage, etc.– of the AD&D monsters but are much more intelligent and civilized, with a different appearance, as shown below. Alternately, you could use the Ogre-mage's statistics, or Wang Liang creature from Oriental Adventures' monstrous compendium.)

Trolls are a Norse race of evil and powerful humanoids. They are more common in these cold regions but can be found everywhere, although they will generally be called ogres instead. Trolls are huge and ugly, with a hideous skin ranging from a scaly grey, to barky brown with streaks of green. Their eyes are usually two “small yellow fires” in deep dark holes; and their mouths are full of sick-



ening teeth that usually reek badly. Nonetheless, it appears that 5% of female trolls are strikingly beautiful by human standards, except that they stand at least seven feet tall.

Trolls are often intelligent, and 30% of them will be magic-users of some sort (although never of benevolent magic). They otherwise aren't social creatures. Each trolls' family live more or less by itself. Their homes are found in deep forests, rocky sea-cliffs, high mountains, or deserted heaths, although trolls will usually been found in realms of Trollhel and the like. A troll will sometimes seek out a human mate, although why they feel the need is a secret only they know. A few trolls have been known to ally themselves with cruel or evil kings and chieftains.

**Wights** (Barrow wights\*) : These undead always reside in the mounds and mausoleums were they were buried. Wights seldom venture out of their resting place, and when it occurs, it is always a portent of great evil. Nevertheless, they attack on sight all intruders and trespassers. Like revenants, wights cannot be definitively destroyed unless by a proper ritual. They typically will pursue grave-robbers out of their tombs, going back to it only when all that was stolen has been recovered and the thief killed. Wights are typically known for draining the life out of their victims, or paralyzing them with their chilling touch.

(\*: which for some obscure reasons have been sometimes called "singing undead" by bards...)

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## 5 : Annex

### Languages

Every character knows his native language at no cost. He can then learn other languages, but is limited by his intelligence for the maximum number of languages he may become proficient in. The native language of a character is :

- 1) Humans, Changeling, Fairy-born : depend of their native country :
    - *Britonian* in the Kingdom of Albion ;
    - *Carolingian* in the Frankish Lands, Ronceval, and Lyonesse ;
    - *Castillan* in the Castillan Theocracy ;
    - *Erse* (or *Celtic*) in Cruaran, Highlands, and Duchy of Breizh ;
    - *Latin* in the Principality of Eastalia, Condottieri-Dominions, and Byzantium ;
    - *Old-norse* in Nordsia, Daneland, and Norsjörd.
    - *Slavic* in the Slavian Realms.
    - *Yeldhin* in the Holy-Kingdom.
  - 2) Norse Dvergar : *Kuzdhul* and *Old-Norse*.
  - 3) Sidhe People : *Fairy tongue*.
  - 4) Small folk : *Fairy tongue*.
  - 5) Trollborn : *Dark tongue* and as humans (but usually *Old-Norse*)
- 

### Languages (modern)

(2 CPs / ir: 9 / Int.) (1 slot / Int.)

*Crossover group: General.*

The character has learned to speak a language of the known world. To do so, there must be a teacher available. This could be another player character, an NPC hireling, or simply a local townsman. The different languages used in Tarn campaign are :

**Britonian** : native language of the Kingdom of Albion.

**Carolingian** : native language of the Frankish Lands, Ronceval, and Lyonesse.

**Castillan** : native language of the Castillan Republic.

**Common** : a degenerated and poor form of *Latin* plus *Carolingian*. It is often used by merchants, travelers, adventurers, etc..., in all Mid'Gaard. Note that the common isn't a native language for anybody, and thus is not known by everybody (in fact only 1 NPC on 6 will know it). However, it can be easily learned, practically everywhere.

Note that characters speaking Latin or Carolingian, may converse with people speaking the common; and vice-versa. However, the common as it is, does not enable a character to convey elaborate meanings, and literacy. Also, it cannot be written.

**Erse (Celtic)** : native language of the Celts.

**Dark tongue** : native language of trolls, it is also widely spoken by all goblinoids and giants in Trollhel. This language makes use of grunts and gestures as well as words. It is somewhat limited, as the various tribes of goblinoids and others who speak it, tend to have dialects of it. As such, the Dark Tongue is unable to convey complex meanings, and there is no literacy and poetry in this language.

**Fairy tongue** : language of all fairy creatures such as pixies, brownies, etc., plus the sidhe People and Small-Folk. It is a complex and singing language, which impose a -2 penalty on the proficiency check to all non-natives of that tongue who try to learn it and use it.

**Latin** : native language of the Principality of Eastalia, Condottieri-Dominions, and Byzantium. In addition, it is the most widespread language of the continent, as it is learned by all literate people of other languages for legal and administrative matters.

**Kuzdhul** : the high language of the Dvergar, known only to them (never spoken before non-dvergar), and used mainly for important matters, ceremonies, legal agreements, etc...

**Old Norse** : native language of the Dvergar, as well as the Vikings (Daneland, Nordsia, Norsjörd, and Snaëfland).

**Slavic** : native language of the Slavian Realms.

**Yeldhin** : native language of the Yeldhin people.

### **Languages (ancient)**

**(4 CPs / ir: 7 / Int.)** (1 slot / Int.)

*Crossover groups: Priest, Wizard.*

The character has mastered a difficult and obscure tongue, now primarily found in the writings of pedantic sages and sorcerers. The main use of the language is to read tomes of ancient secrets written by long-dead mystics. This proficiency enables the character to either read and write, or speak the language (his choice). Some ancient languages which are still known, and can be learned :

**Hellenian** : Spoken and written.

**Tanath'o'tep hieroglyphic** : written only. It is the early Stygian written language.

### **Reading-Writing**

**(2 CPs / ir: 8 / Int.)** (1 slot / Int.+1)

*Crossover groups: Priest, Psionicist, Wizard.*

The character can read and write a modern language he can speak, provided there is someone available to teach the character (another PC, a hireling, or an NPC). This proficiency does not enable the character to learn ancient languages (see Languages, Ancient).

Here follow the campaign's different types of writings. Note that: 1) knowing a phonetic writing (i.e.: cuneiform, cyrillic, and sindarin) enables a character to read/write any of the associated language he can speak. 2) a character may learn a ideographic writing (i.e., oghamic and runic) even if he doesn't speak the associated language.

**Cyrillic** : derived from the original Latin written language. Nowadays used by the Britonian, Carolingian, Castellan, Latin and Slavic languages.

**Cuneiform** : the Yeldhin written language.

**Oghamic** : the Celts' written language which is little used as their culture is essentially oral.

**Runic** (see Dwarf Runes, and Runelore) : written language of the Norsemen and Dvergar.

**Sindarin** : the written Fairy Tongue.

### **Rune Lore**

**(2 CPs / ir: 7 / Int.)** (1 slot / Int.)

*Crossover groups: Priest, Wizard.*

Runes are the basic alphabet of the northern barbarians (namely, the Vikings). These stick-like letters are easily carved with a knife, a tool every man and woman commonly carried. A piece of wood, shaved flat on one side, commonly serves as a "tablet." Runes are carved into wood and stone, and used for things such as contracts, boundary markers, and memorial stones. Thus the Vikings have their own written language and aren't illiterate. However, runic script has its limitations. Most important (and what makes the Norsemen seem illiterate) is that only short messages may be written using this method. Paper, parchment, and hides are not used, and boards are just not practical for writing books. Thus, Viking literature is all oral and not written down.

Runes are not a phonetic form of writing, but a conceptual one, with each rune delineating an idea or implying a range of ideas depending on placement. It's a matter of knowing what the rune means

and how it is to be interpreted in context. Runes do not contain conjunctions or pronouns, but proper names are represented by altering an existing rune.

In fact, the Norse runes are copied from the dwarven runes. However, they are not so complex as these. Therefore, a character proficient in Runelore will be able to decipher dwarven runes at -4 on his proficiency check.

Note that being proficient in Runelore enables to read and write runes, but not to use runemagic (see Runecraft). Anyway, a character proficient in Runelore may determine (with a proficiency check at -8 however), if a particular rune he comes across is magical, and if so, what power it may wield.

### **Dvergar Runes**

(2 CPs / ir: 6 / Int.&Wis.) (1 slot / Int.)

*Crossover groups: Priest, Wizard. (General for any dwarf).*

Dvergar runes are the basic dvergar alphabet and are taught to all young dvergar as a part of their basic education. Some tell that runes have been a gift from the gods, and others that they are a creation of the dvergar themselves. Nonetheless, runes are an important part of the Dvergar cultural heritage.

Dvergar runes are found engraved in stone and only rarely written on such transitory materials as parchment, cloth or paper. They are used to denote ownership, give warnings of nearby dangers and to record history. The tombs of dwarves who have been properly interred, as opposed to hasty burial during battle, are engraved with runes which tell the occupant's clan, parentage, and his deeds.

More important, runes will often be used as a vessel to convey magical power. This particular magic is known as "Runemagic". Some say that magic was the first and true reason for runes, and that later use as a written language has been a depreciation of them. However, Dvergar Runes proficiency doesn't enable to cast runemagic. It nonetheless enables to determine (with a proficiency check at -4) if a particular rune the character comes across, is magical or not, and what sort of magic it wields.

Dvergar runes are not a phonetic form of writing, but a conceptual one, with each rune delineating an idea or implying a range of ideas depending on placement. A single rune might convey pages of human or elf writing or be as simple as a sign saying "stairs". It's a matter of knowing what the rune means and how it is to be interpreted in context. Dvergar runes do not contain conjunctions or pronouns, but proper names are represented by altering an existing rune. This makes runes difficult for other races to understand, and dwarves consider themselves superior to races who cannot read even the most simple of them.

Lastly, it should be noted that the Norse runes (see Runelore) are in fact derived from Dvergar runes. Therefore, any character proficient in Dvergar Runes, can also decipher Norse runes.

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## **Money and Currency**

The currency of Mid'Gaard are based on the following currency : **1 gp. = 10 sp. = 100 cp.**

Note about other metal value equivalences : **1 pp. = 5 gp. ; 1 gp. = 2 ep. ; 1 ep. = 5 sp.**

1) Castillan Theocracy :

Gold **Doublon** (1,5 gp.), Silver **Peso** (5 sp.), Silver **Real** (1 sp.), Copper **Maravedi** (1 cp.).

2) Kingdoms of Albion, and Highlands :

Gold **Guinea** (2 gp.), Silver **Crown** (5 sp.), Silver **Shilling** (1 sp.), Copper **Penny** (1 cp.).

3) Frankish Lands and neighboring countries :

Gold **Louis d'or** (1 gp.), Silver **Ecu** (3 sp.), Silver **Pistole** (1 sp.), Copper **Sou** (1 cp.).

4) Exotic currencies :

Gold dvergar **Grand-wheel** (5 gp), Gold dvergar **Wheel** (2 gp), Gold dvergar **Demi-wheel** (1 gp), Platinum elfin **Star** (10 gp), Platinum elfin **Half-star** (5 gp), Electrum elfin **Moon** (1 gp), Electrum elfin **Half-moon** (5 sp), Gold Byzantium **Besant** (2 gp), Gold Yeldhin **Drachm** (3 gp), Gold Norse **Arm band** (5 gp), Silver Norse **Arm band** (1 gp), Amber Norse **Disk** (1 sp).

## Social Rank

All characters in the Mid'Gaard setting have their own Social Rank, as the world is very power and class conscious. From the meanest beggar, to the most gaudy emperor, they have their roles to play, and their position in relation to one another. This relative position is called Social Rank. It is a measure of social stature, wealth, and power, and determines how others perceive a character in the known world.

Social Rank is hereditary, however it is flexible and subject to change during play. Any character may increase his Social Rank through hard work and good luck, but also maintaining higher Social Rank tends to bring an increased cost of living.

### 1) Effect of Social Rank :

Social Rank affects NPC reactions and loyalty, the cost of living, and sometimes the requirements of honor. It intervenes mostly in role-playing situations :

- Characters of lower Social Rank are expected to greet those of higher Social Rank first, and to treat them with deference. To do otherwise is a great insult; certainly no favors will be won while ignoring the protocol of Social Rank.
- Social Rank may also come into play in encounter reactions. Individuals of higher Social Rank may modify the reaction roll 1 point in their favor for every 2 full points of difference in station.

Note however that Social Rank is of little use in combat, against monsters, or against bandits and others who attack first and talk later. Social Rank also means little to intelligent creatures who do not interact with the normal society (such as dragons). Furthermore Social Rank is not the only factor that defines a person. Ability and honor are often as much if not more important to most people.

### 2) Increasing Social Rank :

Social Rank can be increased three different ways :

- The first is by royal decree. If a king, noble, bishop, or other local leader honors a character for heroism or outstanding service, that character's Social Rank increase by one to three. However such advancement is extremely rare. Note that such character's Social Rank cannot be increased in this fashion, to higher than the benefactor's Social Rank minus 2.
- The second is by conspicuous spending (money is a marvellous thing). A character with sufficient cash can simply buy a higher Social Rank. The cost is listed in Social Rank table. Note that Social Rank of 1, 18, 19, 20 cannot be bought. Also note that even though a character can purchase Social Rank 13 to 16, this does not confer knighthood or a title on the character. It does make that character the social equal of a knight or a minor nobleman. (When a character buys a new Social Rank, the money he spends disappear in new kerchiefs, embroidery, tailoring, entairtaining, carousing and feting those people who he wishes to impress. Very little goes into anything measurable, such as land or buildings. If the character wants to buy an estate, it will cost him extra.)
- The third way is by gaining experience levels. As soon as a character's experience level exceeds his current Social Rank, the Social Rank improves to equal the experience level. At their highest levels, adventurers may rival great nobles in the respect they command. Note however that Social Rank of 1, 18, 19, 20 cannot be attained that way. If characters should lose experience levels, their Social Rank drops accordingly, to a minimum equaling their original position (Social Rank gained by the other two methods isn't lost anyway).

### 3) Losing Social Rank :

Keeping up appearances is not cheap. To maintain his Social Rank at its current level, a character must spend the appropriate money listed in the Social Rank table, every month (this money is simply removed from his purse at the end of the month). If the character runs out of money, he may get credit for a month or two. However, if he cannot pay his debt and pay the maintenance cost of his Social Rank anymore, his Social Rank is reduced by one point (but it cannot reduce to less than the character's experience level that way). To get his old Social Rank back, he must purchase it all over again. Note that if a character's Social Rank declines of one class (Commoners, Lower-middle-class, Upper-middle-class, Nobility) or more, he may become disgraced (this is especially true for nobles).



#### 4) Masking one's Social Rank :

Social Rank is as much a part of men and women as their skin, their hair, and their souls. It is revealed by their choice in clothing, their gesture, their walk, their accent and their word-choice. A hundred small and subtle things declare a person's Social Rank to the world, and near every people is used to sense them. However, characters can mask their Social Rank and pretend to be better (or worse) than they truly are. Concealing one's station usually involves the use of the Acting and/or Disguise proficiencies. A penalty of 1 per two point of Social Rank difference is applied. A successful proficiency check indicates that the character has passed as whatever Social Rank he is pretending to be. Failure indicates that the cover has been blown, with results suited to the situation at hand.

#### 5) Social Rank table :

Social Rank level / Typical social equivalent / Purchase price / Monthly maintenance cost\*.

(\* for NPC it includes all living costs such as food, lodging, etc...)

##### Commoners:

1. / Beggar, / na / 1 gp.
2. / Vagabond, / 10 gp. / 1 gp.
3. / Poor farmer, / 12 gp. / 3 gp.
4. / Poor craftsman, / 15 gp. / 5 gp.
5. / Poor soldier, / 20 gp. / 7 gp.

##### Lower middle-class:

6. / Poor merchant, / 30 gp. / 10 gp.
7. / Successful farmer, / 50 gp. / 15 gp.
8. / Successful craftsman, / 75 gp. / 15 gp.
9. / Successful soldier, / 125 gp. / 15 gp.
10. / Successful merchant, / 250 gp. / 20 gp.

##### Upper middle-class:

11. / Wealthy farmer, / 500 gp. / 20 gp.
12. / successful landowner, / 1000 gp. / 25 gp.
13. / Master Artisans (jewelers, armorers, ...), Scholars, / 2000 gp. / 35 gp.
14. / Senior military officers, / 3500 gp. / 50 gp.
15. / Wealthy merchant, Great scholars, / 6000 gp. / 75 gp.

##### Nobility:

16. / Wealthy landowner, / 10000 gp. / 75 gp.
  17. / Baron, Bishop, ... / 25000 gp. / 100 gp.
  18. / Count, Archbishop, ... / na / 150 gp.
  19. / Duke, Marquis, Prelate, Minister, ... / na / 200 gp.
  20. / King, Emperor, Pope. / na / 400 gp.
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## 6 : Feudal Lexicon

This lexicon was found on the Internet, but I don't know the author's name, thus I cannot acknowledge him. Anyway it is a lexicon of old english feudal words. I have put in parenthesis / green, the places it will refer to in the Mid'Gaard setting.

### A

**ABBEY:** A monastic community of either monks or nuns. Ruled by an (m.) Abbot or (f.) Abbess Usually founded by a particular monastic order and bound by their rules. Abbeys many times owe some form of feudal obligation to a lord/lady or higher organization. Basically they are self contained with all basic function performed by the residents and needs from the local area.

**ABJURATION:** A renunciation, under oath, of heresy to the Christian faith (True Faith), made by a Christian wishing to be reconciled with the church.

**ADULTERINE CASTLE:** A castle build with out a persons liege lords approval.

**AMERCEMENT:** A financial penalty inflicted at the MERCY of the king or his justices for various minor offences. The offender is said to be "IN MERCY" and the monies paid to the crown to settle the matter is called "amercement" (See also Fines).

**ANATHEMA:** A condemnation of heretics, similar in effect to major excommunication. It inflicts the penalty of complete exclusion from Christian society.

**APOSTATE:** The term used to describe one who leaves religious orders after making solemn profession. It is considered a serious crime in the eyes of the church, being not only a breach of faith with God but also with the founders and benefactors of their religious house.

**ARD-RIGH** (Ir.): High King in Gaelic (Cruaran). RIGH meaning King.

**ARPENT:** A measure of land roughly equal to a modern acre.

**ASSART:** To turn woodlands into pasture or cropland. To assart lands within a forest with out license is a grave offence.

**ASSIZE:** The meeting of feudal vassals with the king it also refers to decrees issued by the king after such meetings.

**ASYLUM** (Right of/Also called Right of Sanctuary) The right for a Bishop to protect an fugitive from justice or to intercede on his behalf. Once asylum is granted the fugitive cannot be removed, until after a months time. Fugitives who find Asylum must pledge an oath of adjuration never to return to the realm, after which they are free to find passage to the borders of the realm by the fastest way. If found within the borders after a months time they may be hunted down as before with no right of asylum to be granted ever again.

**AUGUSTINIAN CANONS:** Religious/ Monastic rules based on Love of God and Neighbor, respect for authority, care of the sick, and self-discipline.

## B

**BAN:** A King's power to command and prohibit under pain of punishment or death, mainly used because of a break in the King's Peace. Also a royal proclamation, either of a call to arms, or a decree of outlawry. In clerical terms, an excommunication or condemnation by the church.

**BANALITIES:** Fees which a feudal lord imposes on his serfs for the use of his mill, oven, wine press, or similar facilities. It some times includes part of a fish catch or the proceeds from a rabbit warren.

**BARBER-SURGEON:** Monastic who shaves faces/heads and performs light surgery.

**BARD:** A minstrel or poet who glorifies the virtues of the people and chieftains.

**BARON:** A vassal who holds directly from the crown and serves as a member of the king's great council. It is not, of itself, a title, but rather a description of the Tenants in Chief class of nobility.

**BARROW:** An earthen burial mound.

**BELTANE EVE:** The night of April 30, one of the two times of the year when mortal rules are believed to be suspended and supernatural occurrences are most common. Sometimes called May Day Eve. See Samhain Eve.

**BENEDICTINE ORDER:** Monastic order founded by St. Benedictine. Monks take vows of personal poverty, chastity and obedience to their abbot and the Benedictine Rule.

**BENEFICE** (L. *beneficium*): A grant of land given to a member of the aristocracy, a Bishop, or a monastery, for limited or hereditary use in exchange for services. In ecclesiastic terms, a benefice is a church office that returns revenue. Also known as a the fee, feud, or fief coming from the Germanic *feofum* which comes from the Frankish "fehu" and "od" meaning live stock and movable possessions or property "chattel".

**BENEFIT OF CLERGY:** A privilege enjoyed by members of the clergy, including tonsured clerks, placing them beyond the jurisdiction of secular courts.

**BLACK CANON:** A common name for Augustinian Canons, derived from the color of their robes.

**BLACK MONKS:** A common name for members of the Benedictine Order derived from the color of the habits.

**BORDERS** (The): Name given to the Border lands between the Britannic Empire (*Albion*, but also *Frankish Lands*) and else where.

**BOROUGH** (also burg, burgh and burh): A tow with the right of self government granted by royal charter.

**BOROUGH-ENGLISH:** A term which designates the custom of *ultimogeniture* (All lands inherited by the youngest son).

**BREHON LAWS** (also called Feinechus) : An ancient Gaelic (*Cruaran*) legal system.

**BURGESS:** The holder of land or house within a borough.

## C

**CANONS:** See elsewhere for definition.

**CANTREF:** A welsh political and administrative division, similar to English shires.

**CARDINAL VIRTUES:** Prudence, Temperance, Fortitude and Justice.

**CARUCATE:** A measurement of land, equal to a hide (used in Danelaw)

**CASTLE:** Fortification:

**Arrow Loop:** A narrow vertical slit cut into a wall through which arrows could be fired from inside.

**Bailey:** Castle year or Ward.

**Barbican:** The gateway or outworks defending the drawbridge.

**Bastion:** A small tower at the end of a curtain wall or in the middle of the outside wall.

**Batter:** A sloping part of a curtain wall. The sharp angle at the base of all walls and towers along their exterior surface.

**Battlement:** A narrow wall built along the outer edge of the wall walk to protect the soldiers against attack.

**Berm:** Flat space between the base of the curtain wall and the inner edge of the moat.

**Cesspit:** The opening in a wall in which the waste from one or more garderobes was collected.

**Corbel:** A projecting block of stone built into a wall during construction.

**Crenelation:** Battlement.

**Daub:** A mud of clay mixture applied over wattle to strengthen and seal it.

**Drawbridge:** A heavy timber platform built to span a moat between a gate house and surrounding land that could be raised when required to block an entrance.

**Dungeon:** The jail, usually found in one of the towers.

**Embrasure:** The low segment of the altering high and low segments of a battlement.

**Finial:** A slender piece of stone used to decorate the tops of the merlons.

**Foundation:**

**Garderobe:** A small latrine or toilet either built into the thickness of the wall or projected out from it.

**Gate House:** The complex of towers, bridges, and barriers built to protect each entrance through a castle or town wall.

**Great Hall:** The building in the inner ward that housed the main meeting and dining area for the castle's residence.

**Half-timber:** The common form of medieval construction in which walls were made of a wood frame structure filled with wattle and daub.

**Hoarding:** A temporary wooden balcony suspended from the tops of walls and towers before a battle, from which missiles and arrows could be dropped or fired accurately toward the base of the wall.

**Inner Curtain:** The high wall the surrounds the inner ward.

**Inner Ward:** The open area in the center of a castle.

**Merlon:** The high segment of a alternating high and low segments of a battlement.

**Moat:** A deep trench dug around a castle to prevent access from the surrounding land. It could be either left dry or filled with water.

**Mortar:** A mixture of sand, water, and lime used to bind stones together permanently.

**Outer Curtain:** The wall the encloses the outer ward.

**Outer Ward:** The area around the outside of and adjacent to the inner curtain.

**Palisade:** A sturdy wooden fence usually built to enclose a site until a permanent stone wall can be constructed.

**Portcullis:** A heavy timber grille that could be raised or lowered between the towers of each gate house to open or close the passage.

**Postern Gate:** A side or less important gate into a castle.

**Putlog Hole:** A hole intentionally left in the surface of a wall for insertion of a horizontal pole.

**Rubble:** A random mixture of rocks and mortar.

**Scaffolding:** The temporary wooden frame work built next to a wall to support both workers and materials.

**Siege:** The military tactic that involves the surrounding and isolation of a castle, town or army by another army until the trapped forces are starved into surrender.

**Steward:** The man responsible for running the day to day affairs of the castle in absence of the lord.

**Truss:** One of the timber frames built to support the roof over the great hall.

**Turret:** A small tower rising above and resting on one of the main towers, usually used as a look out point.

**Wall Walk:** The area along the tops of the walls from which soldiers defend both castle and town.

**Wattle:** A mat of woven sticks and weeds.

**CATHEDRAL CHURCH:** The church of the diocese where a Bishop has the throne (cathedra) and where he presides. Simplified to Cathedral.

**CHAMBERLAIN:** An officer of the royal household. He is responsible for the Chamber, meaning that he controls access to the person of the King. He is also responsible for administration of the household and the privates estates of the king. The Chamberlain is one of the four main officers of the court, the others being the Chancellor, the Justiciar, and the Treasurer.

**CHANCELLOR:** The officer of the royal household who serves as the monarch's secretary or notary. The chancellor is responsible for the Chancery, the arms of the royal government dealing with domestic and foreign affairs. Usually the person filling this office is a Bishop chosen for his knowledge of the law.

**CHARTER OF FRANCHISE:** Documents granting liberty to a serf by his lord. The term also applies to the freedom granted to the inhabitants of a town or borough. the issue of a Charter of Franchise frees the town from servitude to feudal lords.

**CLERGY:** Term used to include all members of religious orders. The clergy are generally exempt from jurisdiction of civil courts as well as from military service.

**COMMON LAW:** The term referring to the legal procedures that are becoming universal.

**COMMUNE CONCILIUM:** Norman equivalent of Anglo Saxon Witan. Decision taken at such meetings, either judicial or military, are binding on the vassals.

**CONFESSION:** The public or private acknowledgment of sinfulness regarded as necessary to obtain divine forgiveness.

**CONSTABLE:** The title of an officer given command of an army or an important garrison. Also the officer who commands in the king's absence.

**COTTAGER:** A peasant of lower class, with a cottage, but with little or no land.

**COUNT:** The continental (Frankish) equivalent of the English Earl. Ranks second only to Duke.

**COUNTY:** The English Shire.

**COUNTY PALATINE:** See PALATINATE



**COURT OF COMMON PLEAS:** A common law court to hear please involving disputes between individuals. Almost all civil litigation is within its term of reference, as is supervision of manorial and local courts.

**CRANNOG:** An Irish dwelling residing on a natural or man-made island.

**CRUSADES:** Self explanatory.

**CULDEES:** Religious ascetics "Culdee means servant of god" Irish/Scottish preservers of old Gaelic Customs. (In Mid'Gaard could be Guardian nature-priests)

**CYMRAEG:** Welsh Language Name for itself.

**CYMRU:** Welsh name for the Welsh. (CUMREE)

## D

**DANEGELD:** Tribute paid to the Danes (Dane Gold).

**DEMESNE:** The part of the lord's manorial lands reserved for his own use and not allocated to his serfs or freeholder tenants. Serfs work the demesne for a specified numbers of days per week. The demesne may either be scattered among the serfs land, or a separate area, the latter being more common for meadow and orchard lands.

**DENARIUS:** The English silver penny, hence the abbreviation "d" and the coin most common circulation.

**DIOCESE:** A district subject to the jurisdiction of a Bishop/Archbishop. The name is derived from the administrative districts created by the roman emperor Diocletian

**DOUBLE MONASTERY:** Combined monastery for men and women but sexually separated. Ruled by either an abbot or abbess.

**DRENG:** The name given to a free peasant in Northumbria and sometimes in Yorkshire and Lancashire (Albion). The name usually implies that land is held in return for military service.

**DUKE:** A title from the Roman Dux, which has been held over from roman time by the ruler of a district called a duchy. In England (Albion) the title is reserved for members of the royal family.

**DUN:** Scottish (Highlands) single family hill fort.

## E

**EARL:** The highest title attainable by an English (Albion) nobleman who is not of royal blood. Also known in earlier times as Ealdorman. Word related to Jarl.

**EIRE:** Ireland (Cruaran).

**ERSE:** Irish (Celtic) Language.

**ESCHEAT:** The right of a feudal lord to the return of lands held by his vassal, or the holding of a serf, should either die with out lawful heirs or suffer outlawry.

**EXCHEQUER:** The financial department of the royal government. The chief officers of the Exchequer are the Treasurer, the Chancellor and the Justiciar. Sheriffs, in their role as regional chief accountants, present reports to the exchequer at Easter and Michaelmass.

**EXCOMMUNICATION:** Exclusion from the membership of the church or from communion with faithful Christians. Those judged "tolerati" may still mingle with the faithful, but those "vitandi" cannot and are exiled.

**EYRE:** The right of the king (or justices acting in his name) to visit and inspect the holdings of any vassal. This is done periodically, usually at irregular intervals of a few years.

## F

**FAIR:** A market held at regular intervals, usually once to twice a year. Fairs tend to offer a wider range of goods than normal markets. They are generally licenced by either the king/a local lord or a chartered town.

**FARM:** A fixed sum, usually paid annually, for the right to collect all revenues from land; in effect, rent. Lords may farm land to vassals, receiving a fixed annual rent in place of the normal feudal obligation. Many sheriffs farm out their shires, contracting in advance to pay a fixed annual sum to the crown, thus obtaining the right to collect any additional royal revenues for their own profit.

**FEALTY (Oath of):** The oath by which a vassal swore loyalty to his lord, usually on a relic of saints or on the bible.

**FELONY:** In feudal law, any grave violation of the feudal contract between lord and vassal. Later it was expanded in common law to include any crime against the King's peace and has come to mean any serious crime. Example: Murder is now a Felony, taking the burden off prosecution from the victim's family and giving it to the crown.

**FEUDALISM:** The system of governing whereby semiautonomous landed nobility have certain well defined responsibilities to the king, in return for the use of grants of land (fiefs) exploited with the labor of a semi-free peasantry (serfs).

**FIEF:** Heritable lands held under feudal tenure; the lands of a tenant in chief. Sometimes this can apply to an official position. Often called a Holding. Normally a land held by a vassal\* of a lord in return for stipulated services, chiefly military. Sometimes unusual requirements were stipulated for transferring a fief. For example: Henry de la Wade held 42 acres\* of land in Oxford by the service of carrying a gyrfalcon (see: falconry birds) whenever King Edward I wished to go hawking.\*

**FIEF DE HAUBERT:** 11 cent French term equivalent to the knight term Knights Fee (see: knighthood) because of the coat (hauberk\*) of mail\* which it entitled and required every tenant to own and wear when his services were needed. This provided a definite estate in France (**Frankish Lands**), for only persons who had this estate or greater were allowed to wear hauberks.

**FIEF-RENTE:** money paid by a lord in an annual manner to a vassal in return for homage\*, fealty\*, and military service (usually knight service) and it could include various other things than money, such as wine, cheese, provide chickens, or wood

**FINE:** A sum of money paid to the Crown to obtain some grant, concession, or privilege. Unlike amercement, a fine is not a monetary penalty, although failure to offer and pay a customary fine for some right, will undoubtedly lead to an amercement.

**FITZ:** An Anglo Norman prefix meaning son.

**FORFEITURE:** The right of a feudal lord to recover a fief when a vassal fails to honor his obligations under the feudal contract.

**FORMARIAGE** (also called merchet): The sum commonly paid by a serf to his lord when the serf's daughter marries a man from another manor.

**FRANK PLEDGE:** The legal condition under which each male member of a tithing (district) over the age of twelve is responsible for the good conduct of all other members of the tithing.

**FYRD:** The Anglo Saxon (**Albion**) Militia. Special King's Peace prevailed while to or from or during Fyrd service.

## G

**GAEL:** A name given to Celtic inhabitants of Scotland (**Highlands**), Ireland (**Cruaran**) and the Isle of Mann.

**GUILDS:** A term applied to trade associations. The aims of such association are to protect members from the competition of foreign merchants and maintain commercial standards. The first guilds were merchant guilds, later came craft guilds as industry has gotten more specialized. Guilds maintain a system of education, whereby apprentices serve a master for five to seven years before becoming a journeyman at about age nineteen. Journeymen work in the shop of a master until they can demonstrate to the leaders of his guild that they are ready for master status. Guild members are forbidden to compete with each other, and merchants are required to sell at a "just price".

## H

**HANSEATIC LEAGUE:** An association of merchants and towns of northern Germany (**Tötenheim in Mid'Gaard setting**).

**HEPTARCHY** (seven kingdoms of the): Names given to the seven pre-Viking Kingdoms of England (**Albion**). Wessex, Mercia, Northumbria, Kent, East Anglia, Essex and Sussex.

**HERESY:** Any religious doctrine inconsistent with, or inimical to, the orthodox beliefs of the church (**for instance the Cathars**).

**HERIOT:** A payment which a feudal lord may claim from the possessions of a dead serf or other tenant, essentially a death tax. There are various forms of heriot. Generally if a tenant dies in battle the heriot is forgiven.

**HIDE:** A unit of measurement for assessment of tax, theoretically 120 acres, although it may vary between 60 and 240 acres. It is by custom the land that can be cultivated by one eight ox plow in one year.

**HOMAGE:** The ceremony by which a vassal pledges his fealty to his liege, and acknowledges all other feudal obligations, in return for a grant of land.

**HONOR:** A holding or group of holdings forming a large estate, such as the land held by an Earl.

**HOUSESTEADS:** Housesteads are forts strategically placed on a craggy precipice.

**HOWDEN:** A college of secular priests.

**HUE AND CRY:** The requirement of all members of a village to pursue a criminal with horn and voice. It is a duty of any person discovering a felony to raise the hue and cry and his neighbors are bound to assist him in pursuit and capture of the offender.

**HUNDRED:** Anglo Saxon (**Albion**) institution. Subdivision of a Shire. Theoretically equals one hundred hides but hardly ever. Generally has their own court which meets monthly to handle civil and criminal law. In Danish is called a wapentakes (weapons taking?).

## I

**INFIDEL:** Any one having a strong adversity to Christianity (**True Faith**).

**INTERDICT:** The ecclesiastical banning in an area of all sacraments except for baptism and extreme unction. In general it does not ban high feast days. Used to force persons / institution / community or secular lords to a view dictated by the church/pope.

**INLAND:** Land exempt from tax (See Warland).

## J

**JUS PRIMAE NOCTIS:** the right by which a lord may sleep first night with the bride of a newly married serf, although the custom maybe avoided by the payment of a fine.

**JUSTICIAR:** The head of the royal judicial system and the king's viceroy when absent from the country.

## K

**KNIGHT:** The retainer of a feudal lord who owes military service for his fief, usually the service of one fully equipped, mounted warrior. The ideals to which a knight may aspire are notably prowess, loyalty, generosity and courtesy.

**KNIGHT'S FEE:** In theory, a fief which provides sufficient revenue to equip and support one knight. This is approximately twelve hides or 1500 acres, although the terms applies more to revenue a fief can generate than its size; it requires about thirty marks per year to support a knight.

**KNIGHT HOSPITALLER:** Holy order knights pledged to administer to the sick and protect the holy places. (**See kit of Monastic Knight**)

**KNIGHT TEMPLAR:** Similar to the KNIGHT HOSPITALLER (**see kit of Monastic Knight**).

## L

**LEASE FOR THREE LIVES:** A term of lease of land, usually for the life of its holder, his son or wife, and a grandson.

**LEET:** The term used for a subdivision of land in Kent equivalent to a hundred.

**LIVERY:** To be given land as a gift from the king. Also means to be given the right to wear a lord livery (modified form of his coat of arms).

## M

**MAN:** In this sense to be a lord's man, to owe obligations to, in the forms of labor or service. A woman can be someone's man.

**MAN-AT-ARMS:** A soldier holding his land, generally 60-120 acres, specifically in exchange for military service. Sometimes called a Yeoman.

**MANOR:** A small holding, typically 1200-1800 acres, with its own court and probably its own hall, but not necessarily having a manor house. The manor as a unit of land is generally held by a knight (knight's fee) or managed by a bailiff for some other holder.

**MARCHER LORDS:** The name commonly given to Norman landholders on the Welsh border.

**MARK:** A measure of silver, generally eight ounces, accepted throughout western Europe (Mid'Gaard). In (Albion) England is worth thirteen shillings and four pence, two thirds of one pound.

**MARKET:** A place where goods may be bought or sold, established in a village or town with the authorisation of a king or lord. This noble extends his protection to the market for a fee, and allows its merchants various economic and judicial privileges. See also fair.

**MICHAELMASS:** Feast of St. Michael on 29 Sept.

**MILITARY RELIGIOUS ORDERS:** See Knights Templar and Hospitaller (or Pious Knights).

**MINSTREL:** A poet and singer, also called a jongleur, who lives and travels off of the largess of the aristocracy.

**MONASTERY:** A place where Monks or Nuns live for a religious life.

**MONEYER:** A person licenced by the crown to strike coins, receiving the dies from the crown, and keeping 1/240 of the money coined for him self.

**MORMAER:** A Gaelic Title (Great Steward) given to the rulers of the seven provinces of Celtic Scotland (Highlands).

## N

**NUN:** Women dedicated to the religious life usually a member of a religious order.

## O

**ORDEAL:** A method of trial in which the accused is given a physical test (usually painful and/or dangerous) which can only be met successfully if he is innocent.

## P

**PALATINATE:** In England (Albion), a county in which the tenant in chief exercises powers normally reserved for the king, including the exclusive right to appoint justiciar, hold courts of chancery and exchequer, and to coin money. The king's writ is not valid in a County Palatinate.

**PRIMOGENITURE:** The right of the eldest son to inherit the estate or office of his father.

**PRIORY:** Any religious house administered by a prior or prioress. If the prior was subject to a resident abbot, the house is called an abbey or monastery. The title prioress is held in certain religious houses for women.

## R

**RAPE:** The Sussex (**Albion**) equivalent of a "hundred".

**REEVE:** A royal official, or a manor official appointed by the lord or elected by the peasants.

**RELIEF:** The fee paid by the heir of a deceased person on securing possession of a fief. Tradition determines the amount demanded.

## S

**SCUTAGE:** The sum that the holder of a knight's fee may pay his lord in lieu of military service. Sometimes used as a form of tax.

**SERF:** A Semi-free peasant who works his lord's demesne and pays him certain dues in return for the use of land, the possession (not ownership) of which is heritable. These dues, usually called corvee, are almost in the form of labor on the lord's land. Generally this averages to three days a week. Generally subdivided into classes called: Cottagers, small holders, or villeins although the later originally meant a free peasant who was burdened with additional rents and services.

**SERGEANT:** A servant who accompanies his lord to battle, or a horseman of lower status used as light cavalry. Also means a type of tenure in service of a non knightly character is owed a lord. Such persons might carry the lords banner, serve in the wine cellar, make bows/arrows or any other dozen occupations. Sergeants pay the feudal dues of wardship, marriage, and relief but are exempt from scutage (non knightly).

**SHERIFF:** The official who is the chief administrative and judicial officer of a shire. Many of its jobs were taken over by the itinerant justice, coroner, and justice of the peace. Collected taxes and forwarded them on to the exchequer, after taking his share. Also many times responsible for making sure that the Kings table is well stocked while king is in his county (I.e.. Royal Game Preserve).

**SHILLING:** Measure of money used only for accounting purposes and equal to 12 pennies.

**SHIRE:** English (**Albion**) county. The shire court conduct the administrative, judicial and financial business of people living in the county.

**SIMONY:** The buying or selling of spiritual things, particularly church offices and benefice.

**SMALL HOLDER:** A middle class peasant, farming more land than a cottager but less than a villein. A typical small holder would have 10-20 acres.

**SOKEMAN:** Another name for a free villager.

**SULONG:** A measurement of land in Kent. Equal to two "hides".



## T

**TALLAGE:** A tax levied on boroughs and on the tenants living on royal estates.

**TENANT IN CHIEF:** A lord or institution (Church being most common) holding land directly from the king. All Earls are Tenants in Chief.

**TEUTONIC KNIGHTS:** German Fighting Order with main bases in Prussia, Hungary and Germany (**Tötenheim in Mid'Gaard setting**). Recruits almost exclusively from German Speaking peoples of Europe.

**THANE:** Originally meaning a Military Companion to the King. It has come to mean a land holding administrative office.

**THIRD PENNY:** the local earls one third share of fines in shire or hundred courts, often allocated afterwards to a particular manor or church as income.

**TITHE:** One tenth of a persons income given to support the church.

**TONSURE:** The rite of shaving the crown of the head of the person joining a monastic order or the secular clergy. It symbolizes admission to the clerical state.

**TOURNEY:** Mock combat for knights.

**TOWN AIR IS FREE AIR:** Words used in many town charters to proclaim freedom any serf who lives there for a year and a day with out being claimed by his lord.

**TREASURER:** The chief financial officer of the realm, and senior officer of the "Exchequer".

## U

**USURY:** The interest charged on a loan. Forbidden by church law (based upon biblical). Commonly used by Knight Hospitallers and Knight Templars in Later Medieval Times.

## V

**VASSAL:** A free man who holds land (fief) from a lord to whom he pays homage and swears fealty. He owes various services and obligations, primarily military. But he is also required to advise his lord and pay him the traditional feudal aids required on the knighting of the lords eldest son, the marriage of the lords eldest daughter and the ransoming of the lord should he be held captive.

**VILLEIN:** The wealthiest class of peasant. they usually cultivate 20-40 acres of land, often in isolated strips.

**VIRGATE:** One quarter of a "hide".

## W

**WAPENTAKE:** See Hide

**WARLAND:** Land liable for tax, as opposed to inland, which is generally exempt from tax.

**WARDSHIP:** The right of a feudal lord to the income of a fief during the minority of its heir. The lord is required to maintain the fief and to take care of the material needs of the ward. When the ward come of age, the lord is required to release the fief to him in the same condition in which it was received.

**WASTE:** The term generally given to land which is unusable or uncultivated with in a holding. It is not taxed. It is sometimes referred to land destroyed by war or raids, which is like wise not subject to tax.

**WITAN** (also called the Witenagemot): Council composed of nobles and ecclesiastics which advised the Anglo Saxon Kings of England (**Albion**). Also chose the successor to the throne. Resembles the "commune concilium".



**YOKE:** A measurement of land in Kent (**Albion**) equal to one quarter of a "sulong".



# Part Six: Original Work

## **The Cults NetBook**

by

**Juan Camilo Rozo**

<jcr@geocities.com>

<http://www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Hills/1116>

### **Introduction**

Well, finally here it is, the first edition of the cults net.book. I've worked hard with it, so I hope you enjoy it. I have seen very many things for role playing games on the Internet, but I never saw anything that could be used as encounters or bases for adventures, at least not in this way. What you will find here is a collection of cults, secret societies that worship a god, a creature, or an item. Unfortunately, not too many people contributed to this NetBook, so there are only 10 cults compiled here, although most of them are very complete. Note that some cults were changed in order to not violate any copyright policies of RPG development companies.

### **Copyrights**

There's not much to say here, really. This guide is *not* copyrighted. Just please distribute this file, unaltered, and don't charge any money for it. If you want to add things to this guide, just contact me and I will include your additions in the next edition of this NetBook. Thanks to all contributors!

### **Credits**

Here are the original authors of the first edition cults. I admit I messed up their original works, in expanding them. However, their original contributions are still to be found intact in the fourth chapter.

Juan Camilo Rozo <jcr@geocities.com>

Qubrak Shata <qshata@geocities.com>

Leonard Danao <mmi@eden.rutgers.edu>

Gareth Roberts <groberts@thenet.co.uk>

Lorene Turner <Lorene.Turner@usask.ca>

Andrew Nickel <anickel@mail.win.org>

Harley Smith, Jr. <shadowstar@wgserv.crystal-mtn.com>

Cural Antalas of Northern Ergoth <Cural@bigfoot.com>

Mal Martin <M13MARTIN@aol.com>

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## **Part One: Evil Cults**

### **Tarigath**

#### **Worships**

Tyaa.

If you need more information on the Legend & Lore, then you can go to the following address  
<http://www.geocities.com/TimesSquare/4777/gods.htm>.

### ***Known to Society***

Very Secret, 5% of society is familiar with it.

### ***Frequency***

Not very widespread, only about 25% of cities have a "base" in them.

### ***Organization***

2 Leaders, currently both are friends. When this is not the case, the organization falls into chaos due to leadership quarrels.

### ***Description***

This organization is still run by its two founders. It does not have a long history. It supports evil and chaos by supporting Tyaa, the evil bird goddess. All the members of the organization are women, because their patron diety is worshipped only by women. All men seeking to join are invited into the guild hall and promptly sacrificed.

### ***Special Hindrances***

Only evil women may join this cult. All potential new members have their gender and alignment checked by spells.

### ***Contributed By***

Qubrak Shata <qshata@geocities.com>

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## **Black Rose**

### ***Worships***

The last "wish" of Eldaran Blackrose's spirit.

### ***Known to Society***

Very secretive, almost no one knows about it.

### ***Frequency***

Not very widespread; wherever dwarves are killed The Black Rose is.

### ***Organization***

The cult is organized in cells of no more than five Cloaks so that if caught, only one cell will be captured. The cells report to a Shadow who will provide assistance to any cell that needs expert help on a particular contract. The Shadows themselves are organised into cells and they in turn reports to a Master who finally reports to the conclave and the Grand Master.

The conclave is made up of each of the twelve Masters and the Grand Master.

Cloak levels 1 to 4.

Shadows levels 5 to 10; membership of the cult for a minimum of five years.

Masters 11 level and over; membership in the cult for a minimum of fifteen years.

Grand Master; the highest level Master in the conclave.

### ***Description***

The elven shaman Tymor Goldenbark found and rescued a spirit on the ethereal plane. The spirit was of Eldaran Blackrose, an elf and former hero / priest of Mask. The spirit had been lost on the ethereal for many years after his physical body was captured and tortured to death by a dwarven raiding party. With his dying breath he cursed the dwarves and swore fell oaths to his dark god that he would have vengeance on the dwarves. With his release the spirit promised Tymor Goldenbark that if

he would follow its teaching and swear to help the spirit gain its vengeance the spirit would give the shaman powers and knowledge.

Goldenbark returned to the prime material plane and gathered about him several of the more disreputable of his kin and started to hunt dwarves. The dwarves were always tortured before being killed in the same way that the dwarves of long ago killed Elderan Blackrose. That is the hands and feet were cut off whilst the victim was still alive and then a flaming arrow was shot into the chest to finish the job.

The cult stayed as a death squad against the dwarves for a short period of time until they realised that wealth and power could be gained by their skills as assassins. Now the cult is willing to kill anyone for a price, except fellow elves, but the main preoccupation is still to kill dwarves. Dwarves are still killed in the ritual way but methods vary with other victims. The prices of assassination vary depending on the wealth and position of the victim but for dwarves there is always a large discount.

The membership of the cult is limited to moon elves, no other race of elves are admitted and definitely no half elves are ever admitted. The classes of the members vary but the priests are always members of Mask, and a large percentage of members are thieves. The other classes are also represented, the current head of the cult is a 16th level wizard. All members of the cult are proficient with the dagger.

### ***Special Hindrances***

A member can call upon any other member of the cult of the same rank or lower to give shelter and aid in times of need. The cult pays 70% of the contract money to the members who took part in the contract, the other 30% is kept to further the cult's expansion. Members who are injured on a contract and return to the cult safe house will be healed for free, if healing is available.

Once you join the cult you are in it for life. If injured on a contract and unable to leave the scene then one of the other members will send the injured member to join Mask in the afterlife. Anyone who informs on the cult or one of its members will be hunted down and killed slowly. If caught by the authorities expect a quick and painful death.

### ***Contributed By***

Mal Martin <M13MARTIN@aol.com>

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## **Church of Rauma, God of the Downtrodden**

### ***Worships***

Rauma (really an aspect of Myrkul, but they don't know that).

### ***Known to Society***

80% of poor people, 10% of the well-to-do.

### ***Frequency***

In cities where it exists, 50% of peasant populace will worship it.

### ***Organization***

Hidden from followers, but one priest in every town with connections to a priest of Myrkul who never appears himself (usually a small temple of Myrkul is hidden nearby).

### ***Description***

To explain why Myrkul would be worshipped by normal people... Rauma advocates the eventual overthrow of the rich, the way the cult works is to get a large peasant following by proclaiming to be the god of the poor, then gradually the priests work the worshippers into a mindset that the rich don't deserve what they have... and the poor outnumber the rich. Then usually bloodshed follows, with Myrkul quite happy about it all. Usually this cult is best used by introducing it as a normal church,



then having peasants come in conflict with PCs so that the PCs notice the real attitude of the church. The symbol of Rauma is three circles, two on top and one meeting them underneath.

### ***Special Hindrances***

Once the true nature of the church is revealed, the leader must sacrifice themselves to Myrkul for their failure. This will happen if more than 50% of the followers leave after the PCs expose their folly.

### ***Contributed By***

Lorene Turner <Lorene.Turner@usask.ca>

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## **The Parattheo-Anametamystikhood of Eris Esoteric (Poe)**

### ***Worships***

Eris/Discordia, the goddess of chaos.

### ***Known to Society***

15%.

### ***Frequency***

Small cabals in many areas.

### ***Organization***

1 Polyfather, 5 Holy Apostles, 1 Chancellor or High Priest per cabal, the latter is a chancellor appointed by the Polyfather, a number of deacons and disciples in roughly a 1:5 ratio.

### ***Description***

Many small groups of people following in their own ideals of chaos. The organization of the ranks is merely to show involvement, understanding and the acceptance of the philosophy.

### ***Special Hindrances***

Must be Chaotic and have a wisdom of 8. Deacons are always of at least 3rd level, chancellors of at least 5th, and only 5 apostles at one point in time may exist, those being at least 12th level. The polyfather(1), is at least a level 15 priest of Discord. (further information later) Immune to any form of anyone to try to detect his alignment or of lies.

### ***Contributed By***

Andrew Nickel <anickel@mail.win.org>

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## **The Dark Druids**

### ***Worships***

The Witch Queen.

### ***Known to Society***

Author doesn't tell, but read the description.

### ***Frequency***

Same as above.

## **Organization**

Read the description.

## **Description**

### **History and Beliefs**

The organization of the Dark Druids stretches way back into the annals of history. Their original beliefs were actually quite passive, believing that just as everything lives, all things, in the fulfillment of time, must end. They believed that it was a perversion of nature to tend to the sick, or feed the starving, or even warn someone about the large boulder about to land on their head. To put it simpler, they were the ultimate in Non-interventionists.

Then one day, as in all things, something happened that changed the way the world looked at the Dark Druids and at the way the Dark Druids looked at the world.

It was during a siege at a city (time and place are now unknown). The populace of the city were starving, the Dark Druids at their temple in the city were not, and chose not to share their food with the populace of the city. Things turned from nasty to worst and all but one druid survived. That druid went immediately into isolation living on an island.

Nothing was heard about the Dark Druids for a few decades, until a village (Zebonis) near the island started having mysterious deaths.

Eventually the cause of the deaths was tracked down to a temple on the island, where a small band of Dark Druids lived. The temple was destroyed by the local population. 12 druids survived the slaughter and pronounced a powerful curse upon the dead body of their abbot (unknown to everyone this curse inhabited the body of a baby, who later became the Witch Queen). It was later found out that the people who mysteriously died had a form of plague which spread through the area soon after.

Since that day the Dark Druids have followed the practice of actively speeding along death. Therefore the religion has been outlawed and banned, hunted down and nearly wiped out several times only to come back stronger and stronger.

Their more current history is closely woven with that of the Empire of Legolis.

### **6716**

The Dark Druids, an outlawed religious sect of priests of a diety of death, managed to infiltrate some of their followers into the Emperors private chambers in the palace at the capitol Legolithapolis. Once there they managed to capture the Emperor and his four generals and replace them with exact clones under the sway of the Great Dark Druid himself. A reign of terror began that night, unnoticable at first but with each passing day securing the Great Dark Druid's hold upon the Empire of Legolis.

Several years passed before normal life and the liberties of men were infringed upon at which time a Duke of a nearby state (a boyhood friend of the Emperor) chose to visit the Emperor and discovered that the Emperor was not who he portrayed to be. The Duke quickly left the capitol and retired to his own domains and began investigations into the person who claimed to be Emperor. After much work and consultation with the gods, the duke discovered the truth behind the Great Dark Druid's schemes and, calling his friends within the nobility, declared war upon the Capitol and fake emperor. Unfortunately the Great Dark Druid had been very busy during his years in control, placing loyal followers in positions of power within the structure of the Empire.

### **6722**

A great battle was fought on the plains and walls surrounding the capitol. For three months various offensives were made by the Duke against the forces of the Great Dark Druid until neither side was truly capable of victory. The Duke, sick of the thousands of deaths that had occurred, chose to retire from the field of battle and instead, knowing that his enemy was incapable of doing anything, split the empire into various fragments placing trusted friends of his upon the thrones of what in future years was to become the kingdoms of Peltam and Forlard. The Duke and the Fake Emperor of Legolis signed a treaty soon after the war declaring a state of non-aggression between the new kingdoms and the Empire of Legolis.

So began the rule of the Dark Druids placing Puppet emperors upon the throne for some 120 years.

**6838**

The kingdom of Peltam under the rule of Llewellyn requested that a group of powerful nobles from within his kingdom seek out and destroy any dark druid incursions into his country. The result of this request were two major wars against Legolis effectively crippling its power and an epic attack upon the Dark Druids secret home base within a mountain. After the first battle between Peltam and Legolis a powerful being known as the Witch Queen was inadvertently released from her magical prison at the same time releasing the once Emperor of Legolis and his four generals, all of whom promptly vanished. Soon after the Dark Druids withdrew to their mountain base to contend with a challenger to the office of Great Dark Druid. The result was that the Great Dark Druid was defeated by the Witch Queen who then persuaded the Dark Druids to worship her (a deity in her own right) instead of the diety of death. None know whether the original Great Dark Druid died at the Witch Queen's hands or fled to safety. Soon after these events the nobles from Peltam attacked the mountain base of the Dark Druids whilst large forces from Peltam and Forlard attacked Legolis in an attempt to divide the forces of the Dark Druids. The nobles managed to infiltrate the mountain and with the help of the diety of death render the Witch Queen mortal in an attempt to destroy her, unfortunately during the fight with the Witch Queen one of the nobles in his haste managed to banish her to the astral plane hoping that she would be lost forever. The Dark Druids immediately lost all of their priestly powers due to the banishment of the Witch Queen.

The god of death, their earlier patron then sealed all the dark druids (that were there) in the mountain, confining them to exile, never to walk upon the surface of the planet again.

For the next 87 years what is left of Legolis is in ruins no one count or baron is around long enough to leave a lasting impression. The entire nobility of the so called empire can be challenged by those of lesser station and the phrase 'Might is Right' becomes a cold hard reality.

**6925**

Eight nobles from Peltam enter and take over a small piece of Legolis, over the next couple of years they gain partial control over all of Legolis.

**6931**

The eight nobles become demi-gods after discovering the Temple of an ancient diety of good that was once worshipped in Legolis.

**6934**

The Witch Queen returned in the body of an innocent woman during some dark ceremony carried out by a secretive group of Dark Druids. She then immediately attacks the eight demipowers of Legolis. Knowing that as a god herself they were unable to harm her she decides to give them a choice, either become one of her followers and gain unimaginable power, or die an eternal death at her hands. From the eight four chose to join her and four chose to stand instead for the principles of good.

At this point a hitherto unknown entity entered the picture, calling herself 'She who dreams' stated that the eight demi gods had been tempted beyond their capability to understand and somehow stripped the Witch queen of all her powers, a conversation then took place between the eight demi gods and 'She who dreams', the result of which was that all eight became gods in their own rights, four became evil and four became good, the eight were then sent off to some other dimension, where all trace of them was lost.

**7295**

Present Day.

### ***Special Hindrances***

Only Humans can become Dark Druids, the reason being that of all the demi-human races, they all embrace life, this is shown by the fact that they are all longer living than humans.

Humanoids cannot become Dark Druids simply because they usually cannot comprehend things like theology, religion, etc., although humanoids are usually used as cannon fodder by the Dark Druids whenever they have need of an army.

All weapons, shields, armour and magical items of the Dark Druids are, at the least, quality items. As the Dark Druid gains levels their items become more potent, some becoming magical in nature, increasing in power as the Dark Druid gains levels. The only drawback to this is that the Dark Druid must rededicate all of his equipment to the Witch Queen once a week and at a recognised temple. If the Druid fails in this task then his items begin to lose thier potency (A comparison can be made to Drow items).

### ***Contributed By***

Gareth Roberts <groberts@thenet.co.uk>

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## **The Red Cord**

### ***Worships***

No one really, just they want to get rid of foreigners.

### ***Known to Society***

Almost everyone knows it exists.

### ***Frequency***

Not shown by the author.

### ***Organization***

None specific.

### ***Description***

This cult was prevalent in the lands of Turmish several years ago. The cult started quite small over two hundred years ago when a small group of nobles and priests decided that the influence of foreigners and none humans was starting to affect the traditional ways of life and must be stopped. They decided to form a secret organization to dissuade foreigners for settling in the land. This started by making goods and services hard to obtain and when this did not work then more drastic means where applied , setting fire to crops and killing live stock where used if this did not work then the settlers were killed. The killings where done in a ritualistic way by strangling with a red silken cord and the cord left tied around the neck with special knot as a warning to others to leave.

The cult flourished for many years until they started to kill their own people who had dealings with foreigners. As many influential persons at court made their money from overseas trade then the government decided to act. They set up a secret organization of there own to track down and bring back dead or alive the leaders of the cult. The operation was a qualified success in that the government managed to capture or kill most of the leaders and many of their henchmen but several escaped and went underground.

That is the way things stand at this moment. The government is still trying to eradicate the cult completely but the cult has now changed it's targets from foreigners to government officials, members of the aristocracy and members of foreign governments in the land

### ***Membership***

To become a member of the Red Cord the person must be of true Turmish stock and human. They will be approached by a junior member of the cult and sounded out on their feelings towards foreigners and the government. If the answers are to the liking of the questioner then the prospective member will be taken to a place where the more senior members of the cult will question him. If they like the answers then the prospective member will be taken on as a probationary member of the cult.

The probation lasts for as long as the cult feels is necessary to prove the persons loyalty and desecration. Once the prospect is accepted by the cult, if he isn't then he's dead, he will be initiated into the mysteries of the cult and can never leave, except by death.

### ***Special Hindrances***

The cult will teach the member all thief skills for free, if available by class, as he raises in levels. The cult will always try to rescue a member captured by the authorities. The cult once entered can never be left. The government and its agents will kill any one suspected of being a member of the cult. Foreign governments will either kill or capture suspected members of the cult found in their lands. Members of the cult never wear armour heavier than leather and may only wear one magical item of protection. Members of the cult are free to use magical spells if they are allowed by class but they are not allowed to use magical weapons. Other magical items are useable depending on class but the victims of the cult must be killed by the Red Cord.

### ***Contributed By***

Mal Martin <M13MARTIN@aol.com>

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## **Part Two: Neutral Cults**

### **The Brotherhood of the Shadow**

#### ***Worships***

God of Shadow Magic.

#### ***Known to Society***

Only a few, about 5% of Society knows. But all Shadow Mages must belong to it.

#### ***Frequency***

In almost all cities.

#### ***Organization***

1 Dark Shadow, 10 Shadows, the rest Shadow Mages.

#### ***Description***

This Organization is very secretive. It consists of all Shadow Mages. Those who want to study to become a shadow mage must first find a Shadow Mage sponsor. The Brotherhood is very secretive, only teaching those with the most potential. One can be evil, good or neutral but one must not fight each other while in the confines of Holy ground. Otherwise Good vs. Evil goes on as usual. In other words, Good and Evil Brothers will socialize in holy ground but fight amongst themselves on the outside.

There can be only one Dark Shadow; he is at least of the 20th level, and the only way one can be a Dark Shadow is to fight for the Position. The fight does not have to be to the death. No one can be of a higher level than the Dark Shadow, and one must be a Shadow to challenge the Dark Shadow. The same goes for all Shadow Mages that want to move up in the world. They must challenge.

#### ***Special Hindrances***

None showed.

#### ***Contributed By***

Leonard Danao <mimi@eden.rutgers.edu>

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## **The Guardians of the Eternal Flame**

### ***Worships***

The Eternal Flame (a flame that never dies, nor can it be put out; its other powers are up to the DM).

### ***Known to Society***

0% to 30%, varies with region.

### ***Frequency***

Rare. Only found in areas surrounding their 2 headquarters.

### ***Organization***

2 Oligarchs (one for each sect), 2 inner circles (5 members each, again one circle per sect), 2 outer circles (20 members each, again, one for each sect), then regular members.

### ***Description***

The Guardians of the Eternal Flame were founded over 200 years ago by two brothers, who found the flame burning on a rock on the side of a mountain. They picked up the rock, and brought it back to their keep. Unfortunately, one brother was good, and the other was evil, so they never got along very well. One day the evil brother took a torch, and lit it with the Flame. He ran off with the torch and built his own fortress, some distance from his brothers. After this happened, both brothers founded identical orders (perhaps at the request of the now double flame), one dedicated to good, the other to evil.

The main effort of both orders is to keep the other order from gaining too much power. The Oligarchs are the Original Founders, who have kept their identities hidden from their followers. Apparently, the Flame itself has kept them alive. Both halves of the Flame have taken on the respective alignment of their owners and Guardians. The White Guardians are Neutral Good. The Black Guardians are Neutral Evil. Both Flames are the same color, so the only way to tell them apart is by detect good/evil or by what they are burning on. The Flame of the White Guardians burns on a rock, while the Flame of the Black Guardians burns on wood, and must be kept fed. The Oligarchs choose the Inner Circles, the Inner Circles choose the Outer Circles, the Outer Circles initiate new members. Only people from the towns near the HQ's of the Guardians will know them 30%. Farther away it lessens.

### ***Special Hindrances***

The White Oligarch is a high level human ranger. The Black Oligarch is a 24th level human thief. Members of the Inner Circles will be at least 10th level, any class. Members of the Outer Circles will be at least 5th level, any class. Regular members will be anywhere from 0th level up (but few will be very powerful, or else they'd be in the Circles).

### ***Contributed By***

Harley Smith, Jr. <shadowstar@wgserv.crystal-mtn.com>

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## **The Wolf Cult**

### ***Worships***

Wolves (not as a deity but honors them).

### ***Known to Society***

About 1-3% of the population have heard of it.



### ***Frequency***

Very isolated. Usually away from large centers of civilization. In the author's world, so far there is only one village that has these cultists. The entire village are members, and there is a population of about 30-40 people.

### ***Organization***

Governed by priests of any nature religion. (In the author's world, the priests are druids.)

### ***Description***

The Wolf Cult is a small, little known cult that springs up mainly in small villages or hamlets. Often, where the cult is present, the entire village will be followers of this cult. Although the cult is best suited to rangers and druids, there are other followers of this cult as well. All members of this cult, upon initiation, must have their right arm scarred. This is done by raking the entire length of the forearm with a wolf's claw. This scar must NEVER be concealed, otherwise the cultist is shamed.

Followers of this cult are mistrustful of large cities and towns, preferring small rural areas instead. None of the hindrances reducing ability scores are applied when dealing with other cult members, for they find the scars to be appealing rather than revolting.

The cult has a very odd sense of ideals, for they consider wolves to be above anything else. They would not even consider harming a wolf (thus the -2 to hit), and revere them as majestic beasts. Wolves do not fear members of this cult, and rarely do they attack cult members (usually only occurs if they are being magically controlled). Many cultists have a wolf as a companion, and these wolves are often well trained. Often, the village or hamlet where the cult is located will have wolf dens and a resident wolf trainer among their ranks. They are a proud cult, and will fight fiercely to defend their homes. They will give their lives to protect a wolf.

### ***Special Hindrances***

Cannot wear metal armor. Cannot own more items than they can carry with them. Can go for one day of solid exertion (such as forced march) without any fatiguing effects.

### ***Contributed By***

Cural Antalas of Northern Ergoth <Cural@bigfoot.com>

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## **The Spinning Ones**

### ***Worships***

Lliira.

### ***Known to Society***

Most people have heard of them.

### ***Frequency***

Not shown by the author.

### ***Organization***

Non-existent; read the description to understand.

### ***Description***

All worshippers of Lliira know of the cult, and many people in the towns where they hold their gatherings have heard and witnessed them in their strange rituals.

The gatherings are held frequently in many cities throughout Faerun. The gatherings start when one of the spinning ones has a vision of where to hold the next gathering. The information is passed by word of mouth throughout the city within a day.

The followers gather at the chosen site, usually a disused warehouse, and set up the bands and lights. The lighting is usually provided by local apprentice wizards who have mastered the Dancing Lights and other spells of similar vein, and the bands are usually young bards who are into heavy percussion. The gathering start at dusk and quite often carry on till the dawn.

It has been noted that certain narcotic substances are smoked and swallowed at these gathering. The local authorities in many cities have tried to ban these gatherings due to the disturbance caused to the residents and the narcotic substances sold at the gatherings, because of the suppression by the local authorities the gatherings are of necessity clandestine.

### ***Special Hindrances***

None shown by the author.

### ***Contributed By***

Mal Martin <M13MARTIN@aol.com>

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## **Final Note**

I know this is not a big collection of cults, but I do think that the cults you found on this book can be very helpful when designing adventures, as here you have encounters and even full bases for adventures. I've worked hard (believe it or not) on passing on the cults that were given to me. Please distribute this file as it is. Any addition should be sent to me via email.

**Juan Camilo Rozo**

<jcr@geocities.com>

<http://www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Hills/1116>

## **Editing Notes**

The document has been edited for legibility purposes by

**Olik — Ole A. Ringdal**

<olear@online.no>

<http://home.sol.no/olear>

Spelling errors were removed, and the layout generally edited for consistency and ease of view. Nothing of the contents has been altered, except for some weird language constructs.

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