

The World of Gaiah

RELIGIONS OF GAIAH

Version 1.1

A selection of the Churches of the World of Gaiah

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Foreword

The churches of Gaiah were meant to have a leading role in the campaign from the very start. Since the main thrust of the story was a conflict of ideologies it was inevitable that the religious institutions of the world were going to get involved. And, of course, any Channeling character needs a god to follow.

What I was not expecting was the way that some of these churches went on to define major elements of the campaign's character in ways I was not anticipating. They simply took on a life of their own and careered on without my guidance. The political in-fighting of the Church of the Eternal Path; the push for new knowledge of the Cathedral of the Great Architect, and the struggle for survival of the Church of Brigantia all became major backgrounds for the campaign.

Of course, these things all worked because I had somehow managed to create something that my players and I found interesting. They eventually became autonomous because they had been explored so much; and they started to symbolise the campaign as a whole because a people's belief system is the most fundamental definition of their unique character.

I think the campaign worked because it created a consistent, but slightly alien people, and it only managed that because I got some of the churches right. I have absolutely no idea how I managed it.

I hope that you and your players will find some of them interesting too.

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January 2000

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Notes On The Church Descriptions

A Matter of Time

The Gaiah campaign is an evolving environment. Some of the religious institutions described in this net book have changed during the campaign. Most of these changes have been minor (change of High Priest etc.), but a few of the churches have undergone serious upheavals – one has even split into two factions.

The main descriptions given here detail the churches in the state they were in on 1st Martius 1605; at the start of the campaign (with one exception – The Knights of Sulis do not come into existence until early 1606). Minor changes that occur after that date are noted in brackets in the main text. Major changes are detailed in a section entitled “Things to Come” which appears at the end of the church description where necessary.

It is up to the GM how he incorporates these changes in his campaign. He may wish to absorb some of these future events into his campaign’s past (so that the worshippers of Sulis have already divided by the start of the campaign, for instance), or he may want to include them in the campaign itself, either as background events, or as events in which his PCs play an active part.

Description Layout

The descriptions of the churches follow a standard layout. The format is detailed here;

Name of Church; The usual name of the church.

Area of Influence; The geographic area in which the church is active. Some churches are active over a wide area. In this instance, the church described in this particular section is that of the area named first. Any other areas in which the church is active is given next, in brackets. Reference may be made to branches of the church in other areas if it is relevant. For instance, the details given in Religions of Gaiah for The Church of the Eternal Path centre on the Orthlan branch of the church. However, the church is active over a much wider area, and the heart of it’s following is considered to be in the Mandorian city of Sulanis. Therefore the entry in this section reads; Orthlan (Mandoris, Karsethra), and reference may be made to other branches of the church.

Worshipped God; The name(s) of the worshipped god or goddess.

Portfolio; The god’s area of influence and interest. For example, Libriarna is the goddess of Law and Justice.

Symbol; The holy symbol used by the church.

Representation of the God; The manner in which the god is usually depicted in religious art.

Social Standing

The sections under this sub-heading give an indication of the church’s relationship with the rest of the world; how it interacts with it’s followers or the government, what different sections of society think of it etc.

Church’s Character; A rough summery of the church’s character. Is it charitable, or a shrewd business operator? Does it take an active hand in politics, or is it more introspective, and interested only in spiritual matters?

Typical Building; Description of the standard design of the church’s religious buildings.

Church’s Wealth; Rough estimate of the church’s monetary worth, plus an indication of how they use their wealth and how much importance they attach to it.

Political Power; Describes the nature and extent of the church’s influence with the government, nobility and the common folk.

Number of Followers; Rough estimate of the number of clergy and lay members in the named area of influence. May give indications of wider membership. Note that the figure give here for lay membership indicates faithful followers, those that devote themselves to a church all the time. A high portion of Orthlan’s population show devotion only at special times, i.e. a woman who discovers she is pregnant will prey to Sulis for aid, even though she is not usually a devote followers.

Church Personnel

This section details the church's organisation of its personnel.

Current Head of the Church; The name of the most senior clergyman in the church, plus his usual title.

Lower Orders; The hierarchy of lower members of the church, including their proper titles.

Military Organisation; The nature of the church's military wing.

The Clergy in Detail

This section gives details on the church's clergy; what classes are permitted, training, and any possible special abilities etc. This section is used when developing a clerical PC.

Typical Clergy; Lists the character classes that may become clergy of this church.

Minimum Requirements; Any requirements that characters must meet in order to be able to join this church as a clergyman. Often refers to minimum stats.

Typical Training Period; How long it takes to train.

Special Abilities; Any special abilities available to clergy of this church. These include; Cleric Lore lists (see Rolemaster Companion I).

Are Holy Champions used (see Spell Users Companion)?

Church specific Channels; many of the churches of Gaiah receive their own versions of the Black Channel spells (see the spell list Dark Channels). For instance, the Cathedral of the Great Architect uses a unique version of this list called Architect's Channels. These unique spells are listed here, along with guidelines listing who is permitted to use them (they are usually open only to Clerics, but some churches have more widely available channels).

Any miscellaneous special abilities; for example; at 20th level a clergyman of Brigantia can transform any liquid into pure water, by touch, up to 5x/day.

Starting Items; What items a clerical PC of this church would begin play with.

Codes of Behaviour; Lists the expected conduct of a clergyman of this religion. Includes any particular restrictions, taboos etc.

History

The history of the church.

Myths

Major myths associated with the worshipped god. This section may also detail any periodic holidays or rites.

Artefacts

Any major items or relics associated with the church.

The Religions in Detail

The Cathedral of the Great Architect

Area of Influence; Orthlan (Karsehra, Lyonesse, Mandoris)

Worshipped God; The Great Architect

Portfolio; Creation, Alchemy, Crafts, Philosophy

Symbol; A white perpendicular arch crossed by an inverted pair of compasses.

Representation of the God; The Great Architect is never shown in human form. Instead he is represented by compasses, rules, diagrams and other alchemical symbols.

Social Standing

Church's Character; The Cathedral of the Great Architect has the highest profile of any religion in the urban areas of Orthlan (it has no holdings in rural areas). It attracts a high proportion of the wealthiest people in the country; the artificers and the artisans. It also appeals to many scholarly characters.

It is the only church which maintains an openly friendly relationship with the University of Magia.

It's political power is unrivalled by any religion in Orthlan, as is it's wealth.

It is a strange organisation - crossing the boundaries of church and guild. It looks after it's members' interests in much the same way as a guild and usually has strong connections with the crafting guilds in any town. It is also viewed as a countrywide Architects guild, since most Lord Architects have connections with it.

Typical Building; There is no such thing as a typical building in this church. All have unique floor plans. However, all have some qualities in common; they are dramatic, carefully built, and usually the tallest building in any town. They are always built in fine stone - often a faintly rose - coloured granite.

The Cathedral of Orthlan (the most important church) is in Orthlandris.

Church's Wealth; This is by far the richest church in Orthlan. Its income exceeds that of the crown by a considerable margin.

The clergy are expected to donate 10% of their income, and given that most of the clergy are Adepts, Geomancers etc. they have quite an income. Artificer clergy are also expected to donate a certain amount of finished products to the church too. Lay members are expected to donate 5% of their income (and a high portion of them are alchemists).

Political Power; High. The church's almost total monopoly of Geomancers and Adepts means that the crown would be mad not to acknowledge it. They also monopolise certain alchemical knowledge of value to the military etc. The Cathedral of the Great Architect is virtually assured one seat in the House of Lords and one on the Guild Counsel of every major town. Add this to the fact that the builders, carpenters, stonemasons and artificers guilds are all in the church's pocket so that they can probably sway almost every Guild Counsel in Orthlan.

Moreover, it is traditional for the monarch to name the Lord Architect, and probably other high-ranking members of the church as personnel advisors. How much influence derives from this position depends upon the monarch at the time.

Number of Followers; (In Orthlan only): Order of the Golden Dome ~ 600. Order of the Knights of the Golden Dome ~ 50. Order of the Knights of the Rose Stone ~ 500. Order of the Knights of the Rose Castle ~ 800. Lay members ~ 15,000.

Church Personnel

Current Head of the Church; The current Lord Architect of Orthlan is Lady Rosemere (39th level Adept). She is addressed as "Your Grace".

Lower Orders; Residential clergy are referred to as Archbishops or Bishops of the Golden Dome. Working architects are Knights of the Golden Dome. Working artificers are Knights of the Rose Stone. Other wandering clergy are Knights of the Rose Castle. All are referred to as Lord or Lady.

Military Organisation; Directly, none.

However, most Clerics of the religion have some combat training, and the religion can call upon a large proportion of Orthlan's Engineers in times of need.

The Clergy in Detail

Typical Clergy; Clerics, Adepts, Geomancers. A few Healers.

Minimum Requirements; Must have an Intuition of at least 90.

By third level clergy of all orders should have:

One rank of Religion.

Two ranks of Alchemy.

One rank of Geomancy.

Latin 6/6.

Typical Training Period; The standard is three years training on top of a normal education. The church will sponsor poor but talented children through their education.

Special Abilities; Cleric Lore: Symbolic Ways (Adept Base).

Architect's Channels:

BC I Word of Solomon. Range: 25' RR Mod: -30

Target is stunned by the wisdom of Solomon. Only 50% activity for 1-10 hours.

BC II Hand of the Archemaster. Range: 25' RR Mod: -30

Shrivels the target's hands - destroying muscles and tendons.

BC III Philosopher's Perfection Range: 50' RR Mod: -30

Target's blood is transformed into gold.

BC IV Perfect Life Range: 50' RR Mod: None

Target's body dissolves into nothing. Takes 6 rounds.

The Church holds the knowledge needed to create Rose Steel and Soul Steel. This is made available to their clergy at 25th level, if they desire it.

Starting Items; Work out the starting items of PCs of this church as if they were non-clerical PCs.

However, Clerics of this church will never have less than 10F starting money, Adepts 20F and Geomancers 25F.

Codes of Behaviour; Clergy of this religion must uphold "the good of society". They must always seek to restore and maintain the correct pattern of things. Personal philosophy also plays a major part.

History

The Cathedral of the Great Architect is a relatively recent religion in Orthlan. Its history in the area goes back no more than 600 years and its beginnings are woven into those of the widespread study of magic and symbols in Northern Calendor.

In the beginning it seems that the church catered for magic of all types, but as it became clear where the power lay it shifted its attentions to the artificers and the architects in particular. As time progressed it distanced itself more and more from the disruptive and destructive magics whose representatives sullied the reputation of magic as a whole. As the church expanded to represent all crafts, not just those achieved through magic, it became respected as a bastion of honest work, and it renovated the reputation of magic in the process.

The Cathedral's legitimacy in Orthlan was ensured in 1497, when it became the first church to be given an advisory seat to the monarchy.

Recent study has suggested that this church is probably related to a much earlier religion, which was at the height of its power in Lyonesse around 800 SR. Scholars now believe that the teachings of this religion were brought south into Orthlan by a small group of priests in 900 - 1000 SR.

Myths

This church has the most varied and contradictory set of religious writings in Calendor. Many are incomprehensible to the uninitiated, since they deal with complex scientific and magic theories. It would be impossible to give all of the major myths of the Great Architect (there are volumes of the stuff), but those stories which have had greatest effect on society as a whole are mentioned here.

The Macro and Microcosm. This rule or myth claims that all things mirror and reflect each other and so can be brought to influence each other. A miracle garden, built to just proportions and pattern will have its character mirrored in similar patterns.

The Word of Seshat - A principle of building that the Great Architect has hidden from Mankind. It allows building into the Aust - the fifth point of the compass and the gateway to all places.

Solomon de Claus (or Caus). A prophet of the Great Architect, responsible, it is said, for many of the decaying wonders in the Orthlan/Mandoris area - such as the sphinx of Orthlan. Tradition puts his birth at about -3500 SR. He was said to have lived 500 years.

The First Archemaster (magia). Some identify this with Solomon, others claim that he was much earlier. He was responsible for the building of a great tower - which later became known as Babel when the worker's language was confounded. The One Language that existed before this is meant to be highly magical. Many still seek it. Others claim that it has already been found - Latin.

The philosopher's stone. The search for perfection in self and the world.

Periodic Festivals: There are four Days of Harmony throughout the year: 1st Aprilis, 30th Iunius, 29th September, 29th December. Traditionally on these days aristocratic households would be re-arranged, contracts renewed, plans for the next three months made etc. In the churches of the religion, three services are held on these days, at midnight, noon and midnight again. There is also a carnival on the 30th Iunius celebration, with orderly dancing and music.

Artefacts

The Great Cathedral of Orthlandris

Given its highly magical nature, the cathedral itself is considered one of the religion's artefacts.

The Book of Solomon

This is a large tome (36" x 24" x 6") bound in deep brown leather and written in Latin. This book contains the entire script of the Ordo (the principle religious text of the church), plus the Laws of Reflection. Its last page appears to have been torn out. It is here that the word of Seshat was once written.

Reading the book enables anyone to assign up to twenty ranks in Religion (Great Architect) after hours reading equal to 500 - Reasoning stat.

The book is magically protected. It can only be destroyed if the true name of the Great Architect is recited backwards over it nine times by the same being.

The Hand of the Archemaster

This mummified left hand is supposedly that of the First Archemaster. It is kept, encased in a gold casket, in the Cathedral in Orthlandris.

If a donation is made to the hand, there is a 1% chance per 10% of the donators wealth given added to the next prayer chance to the Great Architect.

Clearly, not all relics of the first Archemaster are so genuine, or, if they are he must have looked pretty weird. At last count, churches in Northern Calendor claim to have three pelvis, four legs, seven feet, four left hands, six right hands and no less than eleven skulls.

The Church of Brigantia

Area of Influence; Orthlan (Mandoris, Karelia)

Worshipped God; Brigantia (Brigit).

Portfolio; Rivers, live-stock and rural life. Faerie.

Symbol; A stone footbridge (on a blue ground).

Representation of the God; Brigantia is depicted as a beautiful young woman dressed in functional country wear. She is usually shown half-submerged in a river, or surrounded by livestock.

Social Standing

Church's Character; This religion is organised around a network of rural churches. Brigantia, by her very nature does not appeal to urban-based populations, and the church has only one holding in urban areas - the holy sanctuary in Por Brigante. The clergy and lay members of this church virtually all live in rural areas, living on and working the land, raising live-stock or fishing.

The organisation is a friendly, supportive group, quite different in character to any other religion in Orthlan. It's clergy are often seen as a group of Samaritans trying to aid the rural community in any way that it can, and country folk will often turn to them in times of need. They are always treated with respect, and anyone mistreating a priest of Brigit can expect an angry response from the surrounding natives.

Typical Building; Brigantia's churches are typically simple, robust buildings. The church itself can be of stone or wood, with a peaked roof and a representation of the deity's symbol - a stone foot-bridge, set in the eaves. This church usually stands near a river and is always surrounded by a farm - complete with mill pond and livestock pens. The farm is worked by the clergy and by beggars, who receive board and food and usually a new set of clothes for their labours.

Church's Wealth; In cash terms, very little, and what it does have is spent on upkeep of the buildings and charitable causes. However, the church does own a fair acreage of farm land, in a country where good growing land is rare.

Political Power; On a country-wide scale, very little. However, the local clergy of Brigantia are often valued as advisors by landowners and so the church can have quite a major voice at local level.

Number of Followers; Clergy ~ 400. Lay members 40,000 - 50,000

Church Personnel

Current Head of the Church; The High Priest of Brigantia in Orthlan is currently Vivranous (29th lvl Animist), who is based in Por Brigante. Correct address is Your Holiness.

Lower Orders; All clergy in residence in churches are Priests and are correctly addressed "Your Reverence". Many, however, will dispense with such formalities. The few wandering clergy in the church are Warders and are correctly addressed as "Holy Father" or "Holy Mother".

Military Organisation; None

The Clergy in Detail

Typical Clergy; Animists, Clerics, Healers. Some Rangers and Channeling Beastmasters.

Minimum Requirements; Must have an Intuition of at least 90.

By third level all members of the clergy should have:

One rank of Religion

Animal Healing

Swimming

Typical Training Period; Two Years.

Special Abilities; Cleric Lore: Water Manipulation (as the Closed Mentalism list Liquid Manipulation).

Brigantia's Channels:

BC I Starvation Range: 50' RR Mod: -25

Target feels as if they haven't eaten for four days. -25 until they eat.

BC II Weakness Range: 50' RR Mod: -30
Target feels weak all over. -10 to Constitution and Strength Temporary stats.

BC III Brigit's Wrath Range: 75' RR Mod: -20
Muscles turn to water.

BC IV Life Leech Range: 50' RR Mod: None
All liquid is removed from the target's body. He is a dead husk. Takes 4 rounds.

At 20th level a clergyman of Brigantia can transform any liquid into pure water, by touch, up to 5x/day. Will remove all poisons etc.

At 30th level any clergyman of Brigantia can bless a field up to 1x/week (acts as *Enrich Soil True* from Enrichment – Druid Base, see Companion IV).

Starting Items; Clergy of this religion begin with robes, vestment (if applicable), iron holy symbol, one weapon, a spell book containing eight spell picks, 6 herbs (chosen by the GM), medical aid kit, sleeping bag, backpack, 1 week's food and £3.

Codes of Behaviour; Clergy of Brigantia will always aid a wounded or sick domestic animal, if possible. They will always aid those of honest living, if they have been disadvantaged through no fault of their own. They will always attempt to maintain the stability of their community.

History

The worship of Brigantia is very ancient and was brought to Orthlan by the settlers from Ierne. In her native lands she was one of the greatest figures in the pantheon, associated with the Faeries as well as rural life. This connection is still remembered in some areas, where faeries are still occasionally seen.

Recently however, these "pagan and superstitious" connections have lead some of the more modern churches to call for the outlawing of her church and the denouncement of Brigit herself as a devil. In 1568 the Holy Champion of the Church of Libriarna even put a motion before the Rainbow Court to this effect, but the monarchy used it's veto to overturn the bill, knowing full well how powerful the church could be if provoked.

Since then relations between the Church of Brigantia and many of the "urban" churches has been strained - at least as far as the latter are concerned. The followers of Brigantia tend to distance themselves from politics and are unconcerned about the matter. In the last two or three years the situation has worsened - with the Church of Libriarna claiming that the followers of Brigantia have been vandalising their churches.

Myths

There are two versions of the relationship between Brigantia and the river. One claims that Brigit is the daughter of the earth goddess and that the river is her child. The other claims that Brigantia was borne by the river (which river depends on where the tale is being told).

Another tale suggests that Brigantia is a river faerie of extraordinary power, who became concerned for the well being of humans after falling in love with a fisherman. Objectors to the religion use this version to suggest that Brigantia is some kind of malevolent spirit; a Kelpie or Kia Sidhe have both been suggested.

Whether goddess or faerie, all the myths seem to agree on the point of Brigantia falling in love with a human. In most cases he is a fisherman, but in some versions he is a farmer.

Periodic Festivals: There are two principle celebrations for Brigit. One, which falls on the first Primus of the year is to celebrate the end of winter and the birth of new livestock. The second, on the last Primus of November is a supplication to keep the village safe throughout winter. Both these festivals involve the dedication of a white cow to Brigantia. In some remote parts the cow is still slain, but most villages content themselves with sacrificing the cow's milk for a year.

Artefacts

None, although there are a number of Holy Places dedicated to the goddess. Most notable of these is the temple in the town of Por-Brigante.

Things to Come

During the night of the 31st October 1607 (Samhien), the city of Por Brigante is pulled into Faerie and sacked by an army of Kia Sidhe. Most of the population are killed or dragged into the Faerie Realms. When the city reappears in the mortal world less than 300 people have survived. Most of them found sanctuary in the High Temple of Brigantia, and they insist that the goddess herself lead them there.

Following this incident, worship of Brigantia sours, particularly among rural communities. Although the ruins of Por Brigante are left untouched as a monument to the thousands of people who died there, the survivors are given royal permission to build a monastery around the High Temple. It's reputation as a holy place escalates, and pilgrims head there on a regular basis.

The Church of Gallcia

Area of Influence; Galhea

Worshipped God; Gallcia, the All Mother. The Trinity.

Portfolio; Power, magic, mastery. Patron deity of Galhea.

Symbol; The three faces of Gallcia (maid, mother and crone). A triangle divided into three.

Representation of the God; Gallcia is usually shown as a group of three women; a maid, mother and crone. But she can appear in many aspects - as a provider of harvests, a bringer of Life and Death, a warrior, politician and priest, and as the weavers of fate. There are many other variants beyond these common ones.

Social Standing

Church's Character; This is a state religion in a totalitarian Theocracy. It is a strict, bureaucratic entity. Trying to describe the church's organisation is like trying to follow a single thread in a tapestry, for the church is woven in with the organisation of the country at every level. The government is just the most intimate of its connections.

In Galhea, this church's power is total, for it controls over 80% of government posts directly. It makes the laws, it collects the taxes, and, to the surprise of most outsiders, it has the support of the majority of the people. The population of Galhea have been brought up within the church; most of the people would not even conceive of questioning its teachings.

Besides the religious aspect of the church's control, it is undeniable that most Galheans live comfortably because of the church's administration. They may lack freedom, but they live well, by the standards of the time.

However, the upper reaches of the church's hierarchy are certainly doing a lot better than everyone else. At these levels the church is a dangerous political environment of alliances and power plays.

Typical Building; Two floorplans are used. The more common is a U shaped building around a courtyard. There are alters in all wings, though the high alter is always in the central wing.

The rarer version is three blocks forming a triangle. There is sometimes a tower rising from a central courtyard.

The main cathedral in the city of Gallcia has a huge dome over the central wing.

Church's Wealth; Huge, since it controls the national wealth of a highly competent trading nation. It is difficult to determine available wealth at any one time, due to the complexity of the accounts involved, but it certainly runs into the multiple millions.

Political Power; In Galhea, absolute. But what would shock many neighbouring governments is how much influence the Gallcia church has elsewhere.

Much of Galhea's trade is carried out by long term agents placed in other countries. These agents often hold a great deal of influence in their trading area. Galhea's hold is particularly strong in Mandoris and Karelia.

Number of Followers; ~ 7,000 clergy. Lay members ~3 million.

Church Personnel

Current Head of the Church; The Pontiff, or more usually, the High Priestess. Currently this is Zandress Bloodmoon.

Lower Orders; The Cardinals rule over Cardinates; divisions of the country similar to a county. They also sit on the Counsel of Cardinals to elect a new Pontiff from among their numbers. There are currently nine Cardinals.

Confessors are high ranking priests with the right to hear confessions. They preside over a single church, or very occasionally wander (a Wandering Confessor is most likely to be encountered moving with the Galhean army on campaign).

Wandering and lesser clergy are Priests.

Church of Gallcia has been moving it's assets and personnel for some time. It goes into exile in the Colonial Islands. Orthlan hasn't heard the last of it yet.

The Church of Libriarna

Area of Influence; Orthlan (Mandoris, Karsethra, Lyonesse – as the Libriam Church)

Worshipped God; Libriarna, Our Lady of Law

Portfolio; Justice and Law

Symbol; The scales, balanced on the point of a sword.

Representation of the God; Libriarna is shown as a classical woman, with dark hair. She wears ribbed plate and holds a pair of balanced scales in her left hand and a sword, held upright, in her right.

Social Standing

Church's Character; The church of Libriarna is the most bureaucratic church in Orthlan. It is designed around a complex tiered system of command, ranging from the lowly initiate to the Grand Mágister Lex himself. Any petitions to the church tend to pass up and down these tiers until it reaches someone who feels they are qualified to deal with it.

This church also has the biggest and most highly trained legion of paladins in all Orthlan.

Typical Building; The churches of Libriarna always stand in the administrative quarter of the city or town. The building is almost always of stone, and is a long, tall building, flanked by two spire - topped towers at it's west front. These two towers represent the balance inherent in Libriarna's justice. There will often be a stained glass window in the face between the towers. Within the chapel itself the design is usually perfectly symmetrical - the floor design, the placing of the pews and the statues etc. Beyond this there is no regulation to exact design. The towers are sometimes used to accommodate the clergy.

Church's Wealth; Good, although it cannot compare with the incomes of the Cathedral of the Great Architect or the Church of the Eternal Path. Most of its wealth comes from the fees gained from legal advice and donations.

Political Power; It is believed that the Church of Libriarna has almost total control of the outcome of practically any judicial case (religious and secular) if it wants to. However, it rarely uses this influence since it would be bad press for the church to be seen manipulating the justice system.

The church does not have a member in the High Court, since it is considered to be too interested. However, the Minister of Law (the monarchy's private law advisor and the highest-ranking judge in the country) is almost always a cleric or lay member of this church.

Number of Followers; (In Orthlan) Some 500 clergy, 200 paladins and 6 - 8 thousand lay members.

Church Personnel

Current Head of the Church; The current Grand Mágister Lex is Marcellin Silberer of Karsethra (34th level Cleric). The current Éques Lex and Holy Champion is Lady Shebinna, a native of Orthlan (42nd level Paladin). Both are addressed as "Your Righteousness".

Lower Orders; Immediately below the Grand Mágister Lex stand the clergy who head the church in a country. They are titled Mágister Lex and are addressed "Your Justice". The Magister Lex in Orthlan is Jahan (29th level Cleric) who is based in Orthlandris.

On the next tier down are those in charge of a town or city church. They are titled Dóminus Lex and are addressed as "Your Lordship".

Just below these are the clergy in charge of smaller holdings. These are titled Apparítor Lex and are also addressed as "Your Lordship".

Below these are the standard clergy, who either run the churches on a day by day basis or wander the countryside preaching. They are Fráter Lex or Sórór Lex and are addressed as Fráter or Sórer.

The Initiates of the church are referred to as Discipúlus Lex and have no address.

Just below the Eques Lex are the Victor Lex (paladins usually above 20th lvl). They are addressed as "Your Justice".

Below these are the Sacer Bellator Lex (paladins between 5th and 20th), who are addressed as "Holy Sire" or "Holy Mistress".

Below these are the Bellator Lex (paladins below 5th), who are addressed simply as "Messire" or "Mistress".

Military Organisation; The church (as a whole) has a full "legion" (1000) paladins. These are divided into ten Centum. Of these, two are comprised of Victor Lex; those paladins chosen to wear the Arma Sacre of the church. Each Centum is commanded by a "general", always a Victor Lex (so there are 208 in total). The whole force is under the direct command of the Eques Lex. There are two Centum based in Orthlan.

The Clergy in Detail

Typical Clergy; Clerics, Paladins.

Minimum Requirements; Must have an Intuition of at least 95. Paladins must have a Strength and Agility of at least 90.

By 3rd level Clerics must have: Latin 10/10, 2 ranks of Religion (Libriarna), 2 ranks of Crafting (Law).

By 3rd level a Paladin must have: Latin 6/6, 1 rank of Religion (Libriarna), 1 rank of Craft (Law), 4 ranks of sword (usually broadsword)

Paladins of Libriarna are not permitted to learn non - prosaic magic until 5th level.

Typical Training Period; Usually fifteen years commencing at age five. But paladins may be retained "in training" until there is place for them in the legion.

Special Abilities; Cleric Law list: Mind Visions (Seer)

Libriarna's Channels:

BC I Levitas Lex Range: 50' RR Mod: -10

Target's dominant hand seizes up. -50 to any activity using it.

BC II Silentium Lex Range: 50' RR Mod: -50

Target's tongue rots out.

BC III Mortus Lex Range: 50' RR Mod: -30

Target is magically (and silently) beheaded.

BC IV Damno Lex Range: 50' RR Mod: -20

Target's body is ripped to pieces by unseen foe.

High ranking Clerics in the church are allowed to have Holy Champions when their superiors decide they are ready for the responsibility. These Holy Champions are usually, but not always, paladins of the church.

At 25th level a Paladin of Libriarna gains an Immovable Will. He is immune to all fear and charm effects. Sleep effects only have half duration when used on him.

At 25th level a Cleric of Libriarna can, 1x/day, by touch, tell if an object or being was involved in a specific crime (and note this means the church's definition of crime).

Starting Items; Clerics begin with one weapon, travelling robes, a vestment, a iron holy symbol, weapons belt, a copy of The Lexum (the holy book of the church), five spell picks and 8F.

Paladins begin with one example of each weapon that they can use, travelling robes, AT 10 (+5 quality) inlaid with silver, an iron holy symbol, weapons belt, a copy of the Lexum, 2 prosaic spell picks and 8F.

Codes of Behaviour; Clergy of Libriarna will always uphold the cause of justice and law (in that order).

The clergy should only take personal responsibility for justice if it is impossible to return the defendant for trial.

The follower must not be afraid to defy a civil law that is clearly unjust (this one's made them really popular with the civil authorities).

The highest authority on justice is Libriarna herself, and her judgement is greater than that of any human agency, and must be upheld by her clergy.

History

The history of the Church of Libriarna runs parallel to the story of urbanised life. It was first recognised as a church by King Telcamus of Karsethra in 984 S.R., but was almost certainly in existence in an organised form before that.

The first clear record of the movement from which the church grew appears in a census taken by Telcamus' grandmother, Queen Sathera in 931. Within its pages are recorded the details of lands owned by an organisation called The Guards of Libra; a legion of fighting men very similar in organisation to the Legion of Libriarna. This group seems to have been a mercenary band; although of particular fairness and social-mindedness there is no indication of a religious motivation on this record. Clearly, the organisation gained a religious bent somewhere between these two dates. There is no historical record of the change, though there is a myth trying to explain it.

It is clear that King Telcamus gave the church his authority because he required its aid in forming and maintaining the laws of the new Karsethra. Five years before his recognition was granted, the country had come out of a civil war with the monarchy's position weakened. Telcamus needed the church to strengthen his credibility.

The Church of Librirana grew with Karsethra, and quickly became the biggest church in the country. It also spread out into the neighbouring countries, but in a somewhat milder form. It was officially recognised in Orthlan in 989.

Today, the different stances taken by the different branches of the church are shaking it. A mild symptom is that it is well known that the Grand Magister does not approve of his Holy Champion's "liberal" attitude. On a deeper level, this difference in opinion is causing serious cracks. The Lyonesse branch of the church has already started distancing itself by insisting on using the title the Libriam Church.

Another important historical event for those clergy in Orthlan is their church's backing of Azala during the civil war. Since the end of the war, the theocracy in Galhea has maintained that Libriarna is a demoness. Any of her clergy caught in Galhea are likely to be lynched.

Myths

The Lexum, the main religious text of the church, tells how a pious and righteous warrior, Janus of Swordgate, was instructed by a wandering beggar woman in the ways of justice. Janus was the captain of a group of mercenaries, who, having been wounded while defending the woman from a cruel noble, was tended back to health by her. She, clearly impressed by his sense of right, further instructed him in the name of a goddess that she called Justice, but who Janus later renamed Libriarna, Our Lady of Justice. Some claim that the beggar woman was Libriarna herself, but most see her only as a messenger.

Inspired by what he had heard, Janus passed the teaching of the beggar to his fellow warriors, and together they began a crusade against injustice that was later to be reorganised as the Church of Libriarna.

Beyond this there are no myths even suggesting the involvement of Libriarna herself. The Lexus is concerned mainly with tales of overcoming injustice, and of villains getting their "just deserts". Hence Libriarna remains ever a distant and aloof figure, watching her followers from a position of superiority and divinity.

Artefacts

Arma Sacra

There are a total of 50 suits of this plate in Orthlan. They are the badges of the high ranking paladins. They are of ribbed High steel, and are engraved in black enamel. The scales and sword symbol is prominent. The powers of the suits are: AT 20 high steel (+10 material) +10 quality +10 magic. Allows Channeling casting.

Arma Equa Lex

This single suit of plate is for the use of the Equa Lex - the Holy Champion. It is a finer version of the Arma Sacra, of a highly polished silver metal embellished with black enamel. The suit has the following properties:

AT 20 of Angil (star-iron) +45 (material) +10 quality +10 magic. Allows channeling casting. Casts *Alkar* 1x/day. Helm gives 15% chance of negating head crits. Gives the wearer +10 to all RRs (magic).

Retribution

Retribution is a heavy looking sword (which-ever form it takes) of a fine white metal. Its blade is covered with a number of blade runes. The weapon is wielded by the Equa Lex and is said to be the sword on the church's symbol. It has the following powers:

Of Angil +45 (material) + 10 quality +10 magic. The blade may assume the form of longsword, broadsword or bastard sword. It is Holy and delivers an additional Cold crit. same severity same roll.

The Law Sceptre

Actually a heavy staff, this is the symbol of the Grand Magister Lex, and it functions only for him.

The user casts as 3 levels higher. It is a +3 adder and x3 multiplier. 1x/day it will cast a "retribution strike". This is a +200 3x damage Lightning bolt that delivers Essence crits. This attack will only harm those who deserve it.

The Church of the Eternal Path

Area of Influence; Orthlan

Worshipped God; Sulis, the Warrior Queen. The Flame-haired

Portfolio; Birth, War, Protection. The circle of life. Wisdom.

Symbol; A red, horizontal infinity symbol. Often shown on a white kite shield.

Representation of the God; Sulis is always shown as a young, tall woman with red hair. She is shown in a number of attitudes: dressed in full silver plate; holding a child in her arms; or holding a staff and a sword. Sometimes these elements are combined in a single figure, or in a triple figure. A few modern art works now replace the lady knight with a modern cavalier, carrying a drawn broadsword.

Social Standing

Church's Character; The Church of the Eternal Path is one of the most popular in Orthlan, finding favour, for different reasons, in both rural and urban areas. The Church maintains a powerful public profile. It has an open political influence, a large network of temples and cathedrals, and an ongoing concern with humanitarian work - particularly in providing midwifery skills.

The Church works in two forms; either from its temples, which are always manned, or through wandering clergy. These wandering clergy are either on set tasks or quests, or just travelling the countryside preaching and offering assistance to expectant mothers, villages under attack etc.

Typical Building; The good quality of almost all the churches dedicated to Sulis says a lot about this church's wealth.

All churches in cities or towns are stone constructions. They tend to be robust and practical buildings and most are U shaped - enclosing three sides of a small courtyard. The left wing is the finest, and is the temple proper. The rear wing is the residence for the clergy and is usually quite plain. The right wing can best be described as the maternity wing, where the people of the town can be assured good care. The courtyard is used for the combat training that the church will provide for anyone who can afford their fees. All the churches tend to have peaked roofs and at least two representations of the goddess, one on each side wing.

Church's Wealth; This church is very rich - it has its fingers in lots of trade pies. It is probably the second wealthiest church in the country after The Great Architect and its earnings rival that of the throne.

Political Power; High. The church's military prowess has made it a valuable asset to the country, especially considering the on-going border dispute. The monarchy of Orthlan maintains a strong relationship with the church as it is clearly to their advantage. This has meant that the monarchy has bestowed a number of privileges on the Church of the Eternal Path; the church always has one seat in the Chamber of Counsel and on the Table of Marshals, the administrative board of Orthlan's army. In return for these positions the church must provide any military training that the army requests.

Through their merchantal interests this church can also manipulate Guilds. Their sway over some guilds is strong, though they would have trouble defeating the Cathedral of the Great Architect in this arena.

Number of Followers; (In Orthlan) There are some 1,500 clergy and perhaps 8 - 10 thousand loyal laymen. In addition, warriors, pregnant women and those needing advice will turn to the church at appropriate times.

Church Personnel

Current Head of the Church; The High Priest of the church is Pharamond Arland, a 32nd level Cleric. He is the leader of the Church in Orthlan and resides in the Cathedral in Londarium. He is correctly addressed as Your Holiness.

Lower Orders; Those in charge of an area served by a Cathedral are Priests. They are correctly addressed as Your Eminence. In Orthlan there is only one Priest, based in Londarium. This is currently Franklyn de Jodain (25th level Cleric).

Those clergy in charge of a church and the surrounding area are called Prelates and are addressed as Your Reverence. In Orthlandris this post is held by St. John Mortimer (27th level Cleric).

Wandering clerics and low-standing paladins are Messengers and are addressed as Brother or Sister.

High standing paladins are Holy Knights and are addressed as Reverend Lord or Lady.

Military Organisation; The church in Orthlan maintains a "March" of 100 paladins. At any one time ten of these will be in the Cathedral in Londarium. The other ninety will be wandering throughout the country and beyond.

In addition, all clergy of Sulis are expected to be reasonably proficient with at least one weapon, usually bladed.

This church also has strong connections in the army - something that should be kept in mind by any monarch planning to annoy them.

The Clergy in Detail

Typical Clergy; Clerics, Healers. 100 Paladins.

Minimum Requirements; Must have an Intuition of 90. Paladins must also have a Strength and Agility of at least 90.

At third level Clerics and Healers must have:

2 ranks of Religion (Sulis), either 2 ranks of Midwifery or the Midwifery list. Latin 6/6, at least 2 ranks of weapon skill.

By 3rd level a paladin must have:

1 rank of Religion (Sulis), Latin 6/6, at least 6 ranks in one weapon and four in another.

NB: Paladins of Sulis are not allowed to learn non-prosaic magic until 5th level.

Typical Training Period; Usually twelve years, commencing at age 5. Occasionally a child will be admitted later, but at no more than 10.

Special Abilities; No Cleric Lore list.

Sulis' Channels:

BC I Sulis' War Cry Range: 100' RR Mod: None
Blows out target's eardrums. -50 due to lack of balance.

BC II Shortest Journey Range: 50' RR Mod: None
Target sent into permanent coma. +10 hits.

BC III Warrior's Curse Range: 50' RR Mod: -30
Target's heart explodes.

BC IV Lance of Light Range: 25' RR Mod: -20
Target is immediately burnt to a crisp.

The High Priest, Priests and high level (usually 25th +) Messengers are allowed Holy Champions. These can be, but are not always, Paladins from the church.

At 25th level Clerics and Healers gain the ability to foretell the future of a child. This ability can only be used once a month and must be used within one week of the child's birth. The clergyman enters a trance while delivering the foretelling, which will usually be cryptic.

At 25th level Paladins of the church gain the ability to summon the Sword of Sulis. The paladin must concentrate for a full round to summon the sword. He can wield it using his highest melee OB. It strikes as a Two Handed sword delivering Electricity crits. (another variety of the GM's choosing if the target is immune). The sword will only harm those to whom Sulis is opposed. The sword lasts 3 minutes and can be summoned once a month. It is not an ability to use lightly - and misuse could result in the loss of the ability.

Starting Items; Clerics and Healers begin with an example of each weapon that they can use, travelling robes, a holy vestment, a iron holy symbol, weapons belt, backpack and bedroll, 10F cash and five spell picks.

Paladins begin with an example of each weapon they can use, travel clothes, and a fine set of AT 10 (+5Q), an iron holy symbol, weapons belt, backpack, bedroll and 10F.

Codes of Behaviour; A clergyman of Sulis should always attempt to protect those that are weaker than themselves.

They should never refuse to give advice when asked.

They must always give aid to a pregnant woman, either during the birth or at any time in the pregnancy that it is needed.

They must never knowingly or unwittingly kill or injure a child or a pregnant woman.

They should always approach battle in a calm and tactical manner. If retreat is necessary for success, then it must be taken.

They should never use violence as a simple way out of a situation.

History

The Church of the Eternal Path seems to be an amalgamation and development of two cults brought into the area by the two main invading cultures; the Narsurians and the men of Ierne.

It began as a very small group of cults worshipping a similar goddess under different names. It grew as Orthlan grew and was finally organised into one autonomous church by the first High Priest Felanda the Wise, some 200 years ago.

Much of the church's increase in power since that time has been thanks to the patronage of the monarchy, who supports the church in exchange for its military expertise. The monarchy put up half the funding for the building of the Cathedral in Londaium.

Myths

The Church of the Eternal Path hold that Sulis was not born or created; she has always been and will always be. There are many old and muddled myths concerning the goddess, but there are also two of more recent origin.

It is said that Felanda was inspired into unifying the church and instructed on how it should be done by Sulis herself, who visited him one day as he trained in weapon craft in a courtyard in Sulanis (a city in Mandoris). She appeared as a tall, red-haired lady knight, a great sword slung on her back. Sulanis is now the holy city of Sulis and a great Cathedral stands on the site of the court where Felanda met the goddess. His bones, now holy relics, are buried in the Cathedral.

The Church also tells of how a great war was waged in a primeval time, as man tried to wrestle the earth from grotesque giants, who claimed the land for their own. The War looked lost for the humans until a red-haired warrior woman appeared and claimed generalship of the massed armies of man. Her knowledge and inspired tactics won her the generalship and she rode into battle at the head of her army. As battle was joined the goddess Sulis (for it was she) cast off her mortal form. Many of the giants dropped dead in awe of her, and the rest were lost under the blades of the human warriors.

When the battle was over Sulis offered the lands to man as "A gift from myself and my divine kin", and she instructed them to build walled cities so that they might protect themselves in the future.

Periodic Festivals: The greatest date in the church's calendar is the 15th of Sextilis, the day on which Sulis appeared to Felanda in Sulanis. On this day great festivals and services are held in all the major towns of the area. Many towns take the day as a full holiday. There are tournaments and parades through the streets. Any child born on this date is said to be very lucky.

The churches of Sulis also hold services every Septimus

Artefacts

The Mark of the Paladin.

There are twenty of these suits in Orthlan. They are fine ribbed steel plate. They serve as the campaigning gear and ceremonial dress of the twenty highest ranking paladins in the country. They are of fine steel, engraved in gold. The infinity sign is prominent on the breastplate. The armour has the following qualities: AT20. High Steel (+10 material) +10 quality +10 magic, +10 design i.e. +40. Allows channeling casting with no penalty. Is a x3 paladin multiplier.

The Chalice of the Lady's Light.

This heavy gothic styled chalice is of solid gold. Its surface is heavily ornamented with celtic knots. Any water placed in the chalice become holy water. Any clergyman of Sulis who drinks from the cup before prayers gains the benefit of a High Prayer (if Sulis is willing).

The Font of the Path.

This plain stone font stands in the cathedral of Sulanis. When a child is baptised in the font, a series of fleeting images, suggesting future events in the child's life, appear on the water's surface.

Things to Come

In late 1605 things start going badly wrong for this church. It is discovered that the High Priest, Pharamond Arland, has tried to use his position to have one of the church's Paladins tried for blasphemy. Pharamond wants this Paladin gagged because he has uncovered evidence of deep-rooted corruption and hypocrisy in the church (the High Priest himself is implicated). Unfortunately for him, the Paladin concerned (Niccolo) is a true devout, and demands his right for trial by the goddess herself. He has enough support in the church to pull this off, and the goddess clearly comes out in Niccolo's favour. Within hours of this, Pharamond is found dead (it is assumed that he committed suicide).

He is replaced as High Priest by Raldolph the Giant, a well-liked conservative. He attempts to bolster confidence by starting reforms of the church. But the damage is done, and Randolph cannot reform fast enough or radically enough for some of his clergy. He called a counsel late in the year to try and heal the rift, but after several months of talking the two sides separated. The Knights of Sulis were formed in Martius 1606.

The Church of the Shadow Jester

Area of Influence; Orthlan (Karsethra – as the Court of the Shadow Jester)

Worshipped God; Falstaff, the Shadow Jester.

Portfolio; Thievery, luck and fate.

Symbol; A black jester's mask.

Representation of the God; The Shadow Jester is shown as a thin, short man, inevitably dressed in black. Often he is shown wearing the black jester's mask. Sometimes, however, he is shown carrying it, when he is shown as a thin-faced man with a sly smile, dark eyes and hair and a short moustache.

Social Standing

Church's Character; Many natives of Orthlan have not even heard of the Church of the Shadow Jester - let alone be able to tell you where one of its churches is (and if they did know they wouldn't tell you anyway). For this church is not only secretive, it is illegal. Any church that condones thievery is not going to be welcome in a civilised society.

The temples are hidden - sometimes in warehouse complexes, sometimes in private houses, and sometimes in sewer systems. His clerics keep their allegiance well hidden, for fear of arrest and probable execution. In many cities, this church is bound to the thief's guild, though the extent to their involvement varies a great deal from city to city.

All this may seem pretty damning, but, in fact, Falstaff and his priests are some of the most likeable beings you're likely to meet. Falstaff isn't just a thief - he's also a jester, and a lover of good living. He lives with humour and with enthusiasm. And his church is very like him. Treat it with respect, accept its jokes, and it will treat you as a friend.

Typical Building; The only common feature of temples to Falstaff is that they are hidden, and that they often appear to have rather temporary fittings. The altar is often a collapsible construction, and there are no heavy statues or ornaments. This is simply because the temple may have to be moved on short notice.

Church's Wealth; No estimate can be made since each city is run independently. Each city branch should be able to lay its hands on D4x 1000F on a day's notice.

Political Power; This varies from city to city. In some cities the church shares a major hold over the place with the Thief's guild. In others it can have virtually no influence at all. It depends on the ingenuity and ambition of the High Priest and priests.

Number of Followers; (Orthlan wide): Clergy ~ 40. Lay members ~4,000.

Church Personnel

Current Head of the Church; The Church of the Shadow Jester is organised on a city by city basis. There is a High Priest in each city that runs his branch pretty much as he sees fit. There is a meeting of all the High Priests in a country once a year, where they discuss policy, but they have never had an over-all leader to see that this policy is kept to. The Current High Priest of Orthlandris is Calmilla Vogre (27th level Cleric).

Lower Orders; All other clergy of Falstaff are Priests. There is no special term of address for any clergy of Falstaff.

Military Organisation; None. It's just not their style.

The Clergy in Detail

Typical Clergy; Clerics

Minimum Requirements; Must have an Intuition of at least 90.

By third level the cleric should have:

Latin 6/6, one rank of religion (Falstaff), at least one rank in one Subterfuge skill.

Typical Training Period; Five Years. From any age.

Special Abilities;

There are Holy Champions. Any priest can have one. The champion is usually a Rogue, or sometimes a Thief or Burglar etc.

There are no Falstaff Channels.

Starting Items; Work out PC starting items as if they were a non-clerical character. They also have a silver and black enamel or onyx symbol, and a vestment if appropriate.

Codes of Behaviour; Followers of Falstaff are, in general, the ultimate self-interest merchants. They help others only when it is to their advantage or, more commonly, because it makes them feel good to do so.

Followers of Falstaff believe that their fate has been pre-determined and they can do nothing to alter it - so why not enjoy it while you're here.

Thieves are considered to be the specially chosen of Falstaff - because they live for the moment. Clerics of Falstaff have no prejudice against thieves and they will often go out of their way to help a thief in trouble.

Clerics of Falstaff must be able to take a joke (if only because they are so frequently on the receiving end of them).

History

The Church of the Shadow Jester has existed, in various forms, for at least 1500 years, and a god of a very similar disposition has been worshipped for much longer. Falstaff is only the most recent version of an ancient trickster god who has fascinated man from his beginnings.

The church's current organisation is at least 500 years old. Its change at that time was precipitated by it being declared illegal. Up until then it had been tolerated, but it's increasing involvement with the Thieves' guilds was becoming difficult to ignore. The church finally pushed it's luck too far by trying to use it's religious privilege to shield a thief that had made off with the crown of Karsethra. The king of Karsethra immediately declared the church illegal, and his near neighbours, happy for the excuse, quickly followed suit.

Ever since then the church has been a secret and hunted organisation in Orthlan. Ironically in Karsethra, where it's persecution began, it is now one of the most powerful forces in the country.

Myths

Falstaff appears in many of the myths that belong to the trickster god complex. Most notably, he is said to have stolen fire for the benefit of mankind.

In a more modern view he is said to be the first being to question the laws of property (as set by Libriarna) and was hence the first thief. Falstaff himself does not believe that a thief can exist - because he does not accept either the wisdom or moral righteousness of the laws of property ownership.

Periodic Festivals: The Day of Misgiving is Falstaff's festival, and it falls on the last day of the year. On this day, people who have lost items during the year may find some of them returned.

Artefacts

None.

The Church of Valmira

Area of Influence; Orthlan (Lyonesse, Karsethra, Karelia, Tchaiurek, and very many other lands, sometimes under slightly different guises).

Worshipped God; Valmira the all knowing.

Portfolio; Knowledge

Symbol; An open book.

Representation of the God; Valmira is always shown in very modern dress and circumstance. She is a middle-aged woman, of classical appearance. She is usually holding an open book and a globe, telescope, alchemical apparatus, a skull, a compass, or a plain sphere. Occasionally she is shown holding other symbols of knowledge, and sometimes she will be shown in a scene surrounded by these things.

Social Standing

Church's Character; The Church of Valmira is a politically quiet group, being a purely academic group. Although urban based, the church has an extensive network of rural contacts. Many of these are wandering clergy, but there is also a faction of (usually) settled academics who owe allegiance to the church. The purpose of the network is to collect information and manuscripts of every variety.

The church is interested in any lore or manuscript, although it is particularly authoritative on history, natural history, natural science and anthropology.

The Church of Valmira is responsible for a collection of some of the largest, oldest and most organised libraries in the world. In some cases their collections are greater than those of the monarchy or the university of the country.

Typical Building; Most of the churches dedicated to Valmira are long two-story buildings, faced with colonnades. The temple itself occupies the bottom floor in the north, while the clergy live in the residential area in the south. Upstairs is the library and scriptorium.

Church's Wealth; Moderate. The church tends to spend most of its profit on manuscripts.

Political Power; Directly, little. Mainly because the organisation doesn't seem to desire it. Given its huge advantage in knowledge this church could surely influence the running of the state if it needed to. As it is, it seems content with its trusted place in providing the monarchy with advisers in many fields.

Number of Followers; (In Orthlan). Clergy ~ 400. Lay members ~4,000.

Church Personnel

Current Head of the Church; The current Master of Lore of Orthlan is Theodora Silview, (a 24th level Cleric) who is expert in Orthlan history both ancient and modern. She is fascinated by the very ancient ruins of Orthlan and the surrounding area. She is correctly addressed as "Your Reverence".

Lower Orders; Residential Clergy who are in charge of a church, and hence it's library, are known as Keepers of Lore and are addressed as "Holy Lord" or "Holy Lady". Other residential clergy are known as the Scribes of Valmira, and are addressed as "Reverend". Travelling clergy are known as Scholars of Valmira and are also addressed as "Reverend".

Military Organisation; None.

Any rumour concerning a connection between this church and the Invisible College is incorrect.

The Clergy in Detail

Typical Clergy; Clerics. A few Healers and Astrologers.

Minimum Requirements; Must have an Intuition of at least 90.

By third level all clergy should have:

Latin 10/10. Religion(Valmira) 3 ranks, two other lores at 2 ranks each.

Typical Training Period; Fifteen years from age 5.

Special Abilities; Cleric Lore:Lore.

There are no Holy Champions.

Valmira's Channels:

BC I Valmira's First Punishment Range:50' RR Mod: -30 Target loses a selection of "important" memories. They will be important to the target, who will henceforth know they experienced these things but won't be able to actually remember them.

BC II Valmira's Second Punishment Range: 50' RR Mod: -30
Target's temporary Memory and Reasoning stats. are dropped by 30. The Potentials drop by 1.

BC III Valmira's Third Punishment Range: 50' RR Mod: -30
Target forgets one rank from each skill that they know and the last two spell lists that they learnt.

BC IV Valmira's Fourth Punishment Range: 50' RR Mod: -10
Target forgets everything - all past memories and all skills etc. The character is now effectively 0 level and can begin to develop any class that he now wishes.

At 25th level all clergy of Valmira gain the ability to use *Study III* 1x/day.

Starting Items; All clergy begin with; one weapon, every day priest robes, a holy vestment (if appropriate) a iron holy symbol, a backpack, bedroll and leather case (12" x 8" x 3") for manuscripts. Six spell picks, enough reading material for one new academic skill and 7F.

Codes of Behaviour; A cleric of Valmira believes that the preservation of old knowledge is worth every risk.

A cleric of Valmira will always encourage the discovery of new knowledge (even in dubious arts).

The church as a whole believes in basic education for all. It has established a number of schools for the disadvantaged.

For this church knowledge is the greatest power.

History

Although it has its roots in very ancient history, the church of Valmira has existed in its current form for only 150 years.

It is believed that the church was originally a secular organisation of scholars, who, much like the current church, sought to gather knowledge and maintain it in great libraries.

This organisations transformation into a religious group seems to have happened gradually. It appears that a number of the scholars may have been followers of the god Thornos, who was, at that time, the sole guardian of both the written word and the knowledge that it contained. However, certain factions within this academic brotherhood began to expound the theory that a power as great as knowledge must have a divinity of it's own.

By the beginning of the fifteenth century this power had a name - the goddess Valmira, and the academic group began to call itself the Brotherhood of Valmira, and began to take on religious connotations. The organisation had reached it's current form, and had been recognised as a church by 1478.

Myths

There are very few myths associated with this goddess; since it is claimed that her knowledge resides in all the books of lore that the world has produced, and to read those is to be given Valmira's guidance.

There is, however, one story, an allegory, in which Valmira is seen giving an unnamed Master of Lore advice on running his church and his home. In it she tells him that church, home and self should be like a well-constructed book, where every word is in it's correct place and every sentence has weight and meaning.

It is believed that this story is also the earliest to suggest the practice of keeping a memory palace.

Periodic Festivals: None.

The church believes that new knowledge can be gained every day, and so every day is special to Valmira. Small services are held every day in Valmira's churches.

Artefacts

The Tome of Lore

This massive tome, 24"x16"x6", bound in a thick, white, drake's skin, is said to contain the answer to every question. Physically it contains enough information to learn five ranks each in: Demon Lore, Devil Lore, Angel Lore, Religion (general), Undead lore, Faerie Lore, Dragon Lore and Fauna Lore.

1 x/day it can cast High Prayer for any Lay member who prays for 2 hours and donates 10% of their wealth, and any clergy who pray for 2 hours and have obeyed the laws of Valmira's church for at least a year. This tome is kept in the Great Hall of Lore in Orthlandris.

The Court of Aldora

Area of Influence; Orthlan (native to Yaman)

Worshipped God; Aldora, Queen of Delight

Portfolio; Sensual pleasure, wine.

Symbol; A wine cup.

Representation of the God; Aldora is always shown as a very beautiful young woman, dressed either in the height of fashion or in nothing at all. She has dark, almost black hair and green eyes. She is usually reclining on a couch, surrounded by men, or holding good food or wine.

Social Standing

Church's Character; This is the most controversial legal church in Orthlan, but is also very popular; not surprising considering the area's main product is wine. But the connection between Orthlan and Aldora is more extensive than this: the goddess shares a number of qualities with the native Orthlandian character (among the nobility anyway); i.e. she is decadent, beautiful, vain, rather lazy and has an immense appetite for a number of sensual pleasures, mainly sex, alcohol, good food and generally being spoilt.

From the outside Aldora's clergy seem to be as idle and decadent as she is, but given the success of the church, some clergy must be working hard and efficiently.

This church has made a good job of integrating it's very foreign ideas with Orthlan culture, but this may just be because Orthlan is more in tune with Aldora's philosophies than is obvious on the surface.

Typical Building; Churches to Aldora are always of the finest quality. They are also usually faced in a particular rosy quartz which is imported at great expense. All of the churches are based around an open courtyard, set with a garden, but beyond that there is no regulation.

Church's Wealth; Good. This wealth is mainly due to the church's trading concerns and their ownership of a large number of bars, clubs and brothels. The church's mercantile arm specialises in importing exotic goods from the south.

Political Power; A lot more than "respectable" people would believe or like; and a lot of this power is as a result of blackmail made possible by certain prominent persons indiscretions with the clergy of this religion. It is believed that a certain young prince is very wary of annoying The Court of Aldora.

Number of Followers; (In Orthlan) Clergy ~230. Followers ~3,000 regular and considerably more when they feel like it. Average is about 7,000.

Church Personnel

Current Head of the Church; The current High Priestess of Aldora in the regions outside Yaman is Evalyna (29th level Cleric). In early 1606 she moves the central church from Mandoris to Orthlandris, and she is based there after that date. Evalyna is always accompanied by her Holy Champion, Karina (34th level Dervish). Both these women are natives of Yaman.

Lower Orders; All lesser clergy, save Dervishes, are simply Priests of Aldora and are addressed as "Master" or "Mistress". The Dervishes are known as the Holy Dancers of Aldora and are addressed as "Lady".

Military Organisation; The church has a varying number of Dervishes, who fight using a southern "dance" form, often favouring long, curve - bladed knives.

The Clergy in Detail

Typical Clergy; Clerics, Healers, Dervishes.

Minimum Requirements; Clerics and Healers must have an Intuition of 90 and by 3rd level:

Latin 6/6, 2 ranks of religion (Aldora), Pleasures to 10th.

Dervishes must have Intuition, Agility and Quickness of 90 and by 3rd:

Latin 6/6, 1 rank religion (Aldora), 2 ranks dancing, 5 ranks MAST I and 1 rank MAST IV, 2 ranks of weapon skill (probably dagger).

Typical Training Period; Clerics and Healers, 5 years from age 15. Dervishes 15 years from age 5.

Special Abilities; Cleric Lore: Alluring Ways (Houri).

Holy Champions are permitted to high level clergy and are always dervishes.

Aldora's Channels:

BC I Aldora's Helpless Laughter Range: 100' RR Mod: -25

The target laughs hysterically for 10 minutes flat. -75 to activity and aching muscles for half a day.

BC II Aldora's Wrath Range: 50' RR Mod: -20

Target is rendered impotent. This medical problem can be fixed with the 30th level spell from Midwifery.

BC III Pleasant Death Range: 50' RR Mod: -20

Target dies of sensory overload as all his pleasure centres are activated at once. Suffers from heart failure, muscle spasms and his nervous system is completely scrambled.

There is no BC IV on Aldora's Channels.

At 25th level, Clerics and Healers of Aldora gain the ability to freely use *Banquet Table* 1x/day. Also, 1 x/week, they can transform water into good quality wine (of their choice).

At 25th level, Dervishes of Aldora can freely use up to 20 PPs from Alluring Ways (Houri) to 10th.

Starting Items; Clothing, vestment (if appropriate), one example of each known weapon, sleeping bag, backpack, holy symbol, 5 spell picks and 8F.

Codes of Behaviour; To live life to the full and have as much fun as possible!

To promote an increasing standard of living to people of all social levels.

History

The Court's history in Orthlan is a short one. However, in its native lands to the south (Yaman, and, in a slightly modified form, Babylois) it is one of the oldest, and most popular religions. It seems to have arisen simultaneously with civilisation and has grown with each advancement in living standards, as man gets more used to and more dependent on, luxury.

The Court has grown rapidly in Orthlan. Although only recognised in 1567, and despite being regarded by many Orthlandians as being "improper", the church clearly appeals to the natural decadence of the country's people and is now one of the richest and most influential churches in the area.

Myths

The myth of Aldora most interesting to Orthlandians is that telling how she taught men to make wine from grapes.

While travelling in search of new experiences, Aldora discovered a land where the vine flourished. The people of that land knew that grapes were good to eat, but not that they could be fermented into alcohol. Aldora was so delighted by the carefree attitude of the people that she decided to share the secret with them.

Disguised as a traveller from the south she visited farms, looking for a place to rest, although she admitted that she had no money. She was turned away from nine farms.

Finally, at the tenth, she discovered a kind, generous couple who immediately invited her in when they heard her plight. They fed her generously and insisted that she slept on their soft bed while they slept on the hard floor.

The next morning the disguised goddess offered to pay them for their kindness by showing them how to turn grapes into a "rich potion that takes away care". True to her word she showed them how to ferment wine, the quietly went on her way.

At the next harvest, the couple turned half their crop into wine. The golden potion was so popular that they sold out in hours. They quickly became very rich, and wine became a precious commodity throughout the land.

Periodic festivals: At each vineyard the day of harvest will usually be celebrated as a festival to Aldora. Apart from that there are no special days of devotion.

Artefacts

The church has no artefacts but is famous for producing a particular range of items. The rings of Aldora are ladies rings in silver, gold, white gold or platinum. These rings cast a permanent *Fertility Control* spell (set to nonfertile, of course).

The Court of the Shadow Jester

Area of Influence; Karsethra

Worshipped God; Falstaff, the Shadow Jester.

Portfolio; Thievery, luck and fate.

Symbol; A black jester's mask.

Representation of the God; The Shadow Jester is shown as a thin, short man, inevitably dressed in black. Often he is shown wearing the black jester's mask. Sometimes, however, he is shown carrying it, when he is shown as a thin-faced man with a sly smile, dark eyes and hair and a short moustache.

Social Standing

Church's Character; Although the beliefs of this church are very similar to its counterpart in Orthlan (The Church of the Shadow Jester), its social standing is quite different, giving it a very different character (hence its separate entry). The church is technically illegal in Karsethra, but it is so well supported by the Thief Tribes that in most parts of the country it operates openly. It's partnership with the Tribes, who have more real power than the government, has made it rich and powerful.

But it has also worked hard to propagate a good public image. By playing down Falstaff's role as a thief, and emphasising the church's dominion over fate and luck, the church now has a solid support base among common Karsethrans. The priests have ensured that any move against them, although legally correct, would be political suicide.

Typical Building; The churches of Falstaff in Karsethra are in various styles, though they are usually quite richly ornamented. They also have a habit of holding "visual jokes" of various levels of sophistication. It is not unusual to find politicians and other well-known people parodied in the artworks of a church of the Shadow Jester.

Church's Wealth; Considerable. Its intimate links with the Thief Tribes ensures a very nice balance sheet (if not a particularly neat one).

Political Power; Potentially very powerful, given their links with the Tribes. However, this is also a cause of division in the church, since different branches ally themselves with different families. It is therefore rare for the entire church to work together, particularly when there is a conflict between families involved.

Number of Followers; Clergy; ~ 5,000. Lay Members, at least 12,000 and many more on an informal basis.

Church Personnel

Current Head of the Church; The head in Karsethra is the High Priest Gerardo Pallavicino, who is based in the Urlino church.

Lower Orders; All other clergy of Falstaff are Priests. There is no special term of address for any clergy of Falstaff.

Military Organisation; None, though most branches have protection arrangements with their local Tribes.

The Clergy in Detail

Typical Clergy; Clerics

Minimum Requirements; Must have an Intuition of at least 90.

By third level the cleric should have:

Latin 6/6, one rank of religion (Falstaff), at least one rank in one Subterfuge skill.

Typical Training Period; Five Years. From any age.

Special Abilities;

There are Holy Champions. Any priest can have one. The champion is usually a Rogue, or sometimes a Thief or Burglar etc.

There are no Falstaff Channels.

Starting Items; Work out PC starting items as if they were a non-clerical character. They also have a silver and black enamel or onyx symbol, and a vestment if appropriate.

Codes of Behaviour; Followers of Falstaff are, in general, the ultimate self-interest merchants. They help others only when it is to their advantage or, more commonly, because it makes them feel good to do so.

Followers of Falstaff believe that their fate has been pre-determined and they can do nothing to alter it - so why not enjoy it while you're here.

Thieves are considered to be the specially chosen of Falstaff - because they live for the moment. Clerics of Falstaff have no prejudice against thieves and they will often go out of their way to help a thief in trouble.

Clerics of Falstaff must be able to take a joke (if only because they are so frequently on the receiving end of them).

History

The Church of the Shadow Jester has existed, in various forms, for at least 1500 years, and a god of a very similar disposition has been worshipped for much longer. Falstaff is only the most recent version of an ancient trickster god who has fascinated man from his beginnings.

Ironically, it is in Karsethra, where the hounding of the church began, that it has had least effect. By the time the church was declared illegal, it's alliance with the Tribes was already centuries old. The Tribes sprang to its defence, and there was considerable bloodshed before the government took the hint and left the church alone.

Now the church is simply not discussed in "polite and political" society. The government behaves as if it isn't there (except for the occasional attempt to get it to pay some taxes).

Myths

Falstaff appears in many of the myths that belong to the trickster god complex. Most notably, he is said to have stolen fire for the benefit of mankind.

In a more modern view he is said to be the first being to question the laws of property (as set by Libriarna) and was hence the first thief. Falstaff himself does not believe that a thief can exist - because he does not accept either the wisdom or moral righteousness of the laws of property ownership.

Periodic Festivals: The Day of Misgiving is Falstaff's festival, and it falls on the last day of the year. On this day, people who have lost items during the year may find some of them returned.

Artefacts

The Mask of the Shadow Jester (see Treasures of Gaiah).

The Coven of Demosus

Area of Influence; Orthlan

Worshipped God; Demosus

Portfolio; Power, Demonology and Necromancy.

Symbol; A golden sphere.

Representation of the God; Demosus is shown in one of three forms: as a finely dressed man in robes, as a demon with three horns, ebony skin and a handsome, smiling face, or as a liche.

Social Standing

Church's Character; Not surprisingly, this is a secretive church. It has no permanent temple and no fixed hierarchy. Members tend to be respected in proportion with their magical, material or political power.

There are no fixed services or dedications to Demosus; instead membership of the church is used by most of its members as a road to greater power; since they can gain magic and information through it.

Occasionally the church will set out, in an organised way, to meet a goal, which will aid the general good of Demosus and his followers. It is more usual however, for an individual member to use the aid of the church for his own ends. As might be expected this makes the Coven the most explosive church in Orthlan. Inter-rank warfare is not uncommon.

Typical Building; None

Church's Wealth; Collectively it has little or none, but it can call upon some of the richest men in the kingdom, either because they are members or because they are being blackmailed.

Political Power; Considerable, though it is, of course, all brought to bear secretly. A number of very high ranking civil servants are members, and they can move things very quickly if necessary. In addition, many members have the money, information or magical power to make things happen.

Number of Followers; The Orthlan Coven has ~80 clergy and ~500 lay members.

Church Personnel

Current Head of the Church; None

Lower Orders; All members of the Coven are referred to as Knights of the Gold Orb. There is no term of address.

Military Organisation; Directly, none. But many of the Coven's members hire and support sizeable bands of mercenaries.

The Clergy in Detail

Typical Clergy; Clerics, Sorcerers, Warlocks, Black Witches. A few Necromancers, Geomancers and Adepts.

Minimum Requirements; An Intuition of at least 90. Proof that you have, or can acquire political, material or magical power. By 3rd level all clergy must have:
Latin 6/6, Religion (Demosus) 2 ranks.

Typical Training Period; Most tend to be converted after being trained elsewhere. In which case they must learn Religion as a soon as possible.

Special Abilities; Cleric Lore: Black Arts (Adept).

There are Holy Champions, but no regulations as to how they're used.

Most "evil" lists are available through this church.

There is no Channels specifically for this church - members use the standard Black Channels.

Starting Items; Clergy of this church are equipped as non-clerical characters.

Codes of Behaviour; The follower's aims should be to increase his personal power, regardless of the required method.

At the call of the oracle, no personal interest must conflict with the desire of Demosus.

History

No one knows quite how this church, or any of its closely related neighbours, came about. The answer may well lie with a badly controlled summoned demon. References have been found in the journal of a magician called Faust by tradition, to information given to him by a summoned demon about "our king, lord of all power and might".

It is quite possible that this, and other demons have been detailed by their diabolical lords to establish such churches so that the lord may manipulate weak willed humans to an even greater effect.

Myths

There are none, save the maxim " Each man makes his own myths".

Artefacts

None

The Faerie Wood Coven

Area of Influence; Orthlan (Por-Brigante in particular)

Worshipped God; The forces of nature (Mother Nature?)

Portfolio; The natural order, preserving the natural order.

Symbol; None

Representation of the God; None

Social Standing

Church's Character; This organisation isn't really a church - it is a small coven of witches based in the Faerie Woods by Por-Brigante (it is offered as an example of the covens that meet over the area).

The organisation is quite informal, though it does insist on certain areas of discipline in the interests of everyone's safety. Members are not allowed to mention the coven to non-members, and new members are only allowed in after rigorous testing, for instance.

The coven isn't exactly illegal, but it would not be viewed favourably by the general populace, so it tends to keep a low profile. It is vaguely recognised by the people in some portions of Por-Brigante, but there is a unspoken law which means they don't spread word of it to "outsiders". In return, the Witches have carried out favours for these folk for years - minor healing and enchantments mostly.

Typical Building; None. The Coven performs its ceremonies in a clearing in the Faerie Wood. This is a moderately powered Regio, that will open all the way to Faerie at appropriate times of the year.

Church's Wealth; Minor, in comparison with the state-wide churches, but actually quite considerable, given it's size. It makes quite a profit on selling potions and such things. (It expects 5% of its member's income).

Political Power; Very little, although some of it's members are in positions of minor influence (due to marriage or State office).

Number of Followers; About 25.

Church Personnel

Current Head of the Church; The current High Priestess is Danielle Boulagaire. Her husband runs a large inn in the town.

Lower Orders; There is no other formal hierarchy in the coven. All other members are referred to simply as "Sister".

Military Organisation; None

The Clergy in Detail

Typical Clergy; Witches, Sorcerers and a few Animists.

Minimum Requirements; Must be female.

Must have an Intuition of at least 90.

The coven places no absolute restrictions on what kind of skills it's members should learn, but it prefers it if every member knows at least one Magical Ritual skill.

Typical Training Period; One year until full membership is extended.

Special Abilities; None.

However, members of the Coven can be full members of either the Church of Brigantia or the Sisters of the Moon and gain the benefits given to members of those religions.

Starting Items; Character is prepared as a non-clerical PC.

Codes of Behaviour; The central rule of the coven is that no member should betray it, or any other member. If the coven discovers any of it's members behaving in this way, their reaction is swift, and very permanent.

Members of the coven are also expected to respect the natural order of things, and try to maintain it to the best of their abilities.

History

The coven has been in existence at least as long as there has been a town at Por-Brigante; it may even be older. At one time there were many groups of this kind in the area, but they have all died out over the years, while this one has endured. The secret of its endurance is to do with territory - basically this coven has managed to gain and keep control of a minor earthnode, which enables them to access a greater variety of enchantment powers. However, the part that bloody-mindedness and persistence has played in their survival should not be underestimated.

Myths

Not so much myths as faerie stories, a number of which are probably true. This organisation is only really a semi-religious movement, and this is notable in their attitude to stories. The tales they tell are of the cleverness of witches or of the danger of messing around with faeries. They are cautionary, learning tales rather than symbols.

Artefacts

None

Things to Come

Obviously, the Coven takes a severe battering during the loss of Por Brigante in 1607. However, a high proportion (well over 70% of them) do survive. This is largely because most of them are out in the woods when the Faerie attack hits. Also some of the membership deliberately leave the town because they just know that something awful is going to happen.

After the town's ruin the Coven continues to meet at its glade. Some members leave, refusing to stay in the area. The Coven is weaker than it has ever been, and it will take years for it to recover.

The Initiates of Azuth

Area of Influence; Orthlan

Worshipped God; Azuth

Portfolio; Magic (Essence in particular).

Symbol; Six overlaid staves, forming a hexagon.

Representation of the God; Azuth is seen in many forms. He often appears as a middle aged bearded man in robes, but he also takes the shape of a dragon, a sphinx or a griffin. In all forms he can be distinguished from the colour of his eyes; the left is blue and the right is dark brown.

Social Standing

Church's Character; This is a small but astute church, dedicated to learning. It has only three churches in Orthlan; in Orthlandris, Londarium and Sleubourne. It is generally a very quiet church, but occasionally it has sudden outbursts of rhetoric and even violence - usually caused by some new policy announced by the University of Magii.

This church does not get on well with the university. This is mainly due to opposition in aims. The university can not condone any group that supports the practice of both Essence and Channeling purely for academic reasons, since they do not accept the view that Essence can learn anything from Channeling. They support The Cathedral of the Great Architect because it is economic sense to do so, but they do not accept (comfortably) their connection to Channeling. In addition, the Initiates of Azuth completely reject the university's preoccupation with economic uses of magic, and it's use as a tool to gain power. To the Initiates of Azuth, magic is a gift which we should use to find out more about our world and ourselves.

Typical Building; All three churches to Azuth contain some fantastic feature. The dome of the main church in Sleubourne has a permanent illusion of an apparently endless misty landscape, with stairs winding in all directions and at all angles. The church in Orthlandris features a Miracle garden with a full compliment of automata guards. That in Londarium is patrolled by elementals. Also each church contains a teleport pad to each of the other churches. The only other similarity between the buildings is that they all feature domes.

Church's Wealth; Moderate. Monetary gain isn't high on their list of priorities.

Political Power; Very little. Many in the church believe that the powers that be in the university have sabotaged their attempts to have one of their number elected as an advisor to the crown. Note that the monarchy does keep a good eye on this church, being well aware of the amount of magical power they could be potentially packing.

Number of Followers; Clergy ~50. Lay Members ~1500.

Church Personnel

Current Head of the Church; The current Messenger of Azuth is Inloth Oengus (34th level Cleric). He is based in Sleubourne, in the religion's main church. He is correctly addressed as "Lord Seer".

Lower Orders; The clergy in charge of a church are Guardians of Azuth and are addressed as "Lord Keeper". Those engaged in stationary research are referred to as scholars of Azuth and are addressed as "Lord Scholar". Those engaged in journeying research are Knights of Azuth and are addressed as "Lord Traveller". Clergy who attend the church are Initiates and are addressed as "Master Keeper".

Military Organisation; None

The Clergy in Detail

Typical Clergy; Clerics. Some Healers, Sorcerers, Witches, Adepts and Geomancers.

Minimum Requirements; Must have an Intuition of at least 90.

By 3rd level clergy should have:

Latin 6/6, 1 rank religion (Azuth), 2 ranks Essence lore, 2 ranks Channeling lore.

Typical Training Period; Cleric etc. 10 years. Hybrids go through 6 months training following their professional apprenticeship.

Special Abilities; Cleric Lore:Spell Reins

There are no Holy Champions.

Azuth's Channels:

BC I Azuth's First Wrath Range: 50' RR Mod: -20

Target's Magic RR drops by 10 for 1 day.

BC II Azuth's Second Wrath Range: 50' RR Mod: -20

Target loses all his power points for a day.

BC III Azuth's Third Wrath Range: 50' RR Mod: 0

If the target is an Essence user, he forgets all of his essence spells (does not include hybrid spells). If the target is not an essence user, he gains a -50 to all Essence RRs. These effects last for 1 month.

BC IV Azuth's Final Wrath Range: 50' RR Mod: -20

The target explodes in a massive burst of essence. Target is vaporised. All magic items with an essence competent on the target must also make an RR or suffer the same fate.

At 25th level all clergy of Azuth gain the ability to employ a "Essence Lance" 1x/week. This attack spell appears similar to a Channels spell. Its victim must make an RR vs. channeling at -20 or suffer three E Essence crits. The lance's range is 50'. Like all special abilities, it should be used only when appropriate, or it may be lost.

Starting Items; Clergy of this church begin with standard non-clerical equipment but with 8 spell picks, and 10F. Plus a silver holy symbol.

Codes of Behaviour; A follower of Azuth will use his magical powers to learn about his environment.

He will not abuse his power i.e. use it to destroy or modify his environment, to pressurise, influence or eliminate other people.

A follower of Azuth will dedicate himself to extending his own learning and that of the world.

A follower of Azuth will always use all methods available to him to prevent what he sees as an abuse of magical power.

History

No one in Orthlan knows where this church came from. This isn't surprising, considering that it has been "imported" from Faerun on Toril.

The religion has been in Orthlan less than 70 years and was recognised in 1559. It seems to have been organised from the beginning by followers of the original church, who took pains to ensure that the church remained an academic organisation.

The church appears to be all quiet and innocent, but it does have one side that some would find disturbing. The church has a few experts on extra planar travel (from arcane magics) and it sends travellers out on occasional "fact-finding" missions. They have actually attracted the attention of several Traveller Colleges, and although these parties have not caused any damage yet, the Colleges clearly believe that it is only a matter of time.

Myths

The writings of this church insist that the worlds and even the peoples were created by magic - a magic that man could come to understand if he is dedicated enough. Most cynics will point out that if a man had such power the thing he would be most likely to do with it is destroy. They will further question man's right to such things anyway. Most of Azuth followers are deaf to such arguments and can only see as far as their next discovery. They have no care, or perhaps no understanding of the consequences. They are, in some ways, like modern day scientists.

All of Azuth's myths are creation myths at root. Each puts forward theories about how certain things were created. This has actually lead to multiple myths on some subjects, most notably man, beasts and the plants. Many followers present their "discoveries" as such myths, thus expanding Azuth's religious writings on a yearly basis.

Artefacts

Azuth's Staff

This is a slim staff, 5ft 8 inches in length. It is crafted of an unidentified wood, which is heavily carved, and is topped with an orb of crystal, 2 inches in diameter. It is usually carried by the most senior planar expert in the church and has the following powers:

+4 Essence. It projects a constant *Protection V* on the wielder. 1x/day the wielder can use *Ethereal Vision* (duration concentration). 3x/day the staff fires a *lightning bolt* that is considered Slaying against any creature native to the Lower Planes.

The Knights of Sulis

Area of Influence; Orthlan

Worshipped God; Sulis, the Warrior Queen.

Portfolio; Protection, the Circle of life, Wisdom.

Symbol; A blue or white infinity symbol - usually on a black ground.

Representation of the God; The splinter group favour depictions of Sulis carrying the sword and staff.

Social Standing

Church's Character; This young splinter group from the Church of the Eternal Path exudes enthusiasm, determination, and considerable political naiveté.

Beyond that it is difficult to pin down - given that it's such a new institution still trying to find its feet.

Typical Building; This church currently has only one finished church, and that stands in Orthlandris. Another, in Londarium, is half-finished. Both notably feature a dome.

Church's Wealth; As yet undermined, but they seem to be attracting a lot of monetary support. No one seems quite sure where it's coming from.

Political Power; Currently unknown. It should be low, but given that this group emerged on the moral high ground after the Church of the Eternal Path scandal they could turn out to have considerable push.

Number of Followers; There are known to be 12 paladins (4 of Knight status) and at least 27 clerics involved. More may join over time. There is currently no indication of the level of Lay member support.

Church Personnel

Current Head of the Church; Following the pattern of the Eternal Path, the head of the church is the High Priest or Priestess. This is currently Gaynor de Melaarte (29th level Paladin).

Lower Orders; So far the only relevant titles are Brother, Sister and Reverend Lord or Lady. But the intention is to adopt the structure of the Eternal Path pretty much as is.

Military Organisation; Still working on it.

The Clergy in Detail

Typical Clergy; Clerics, Healers, Paladins.

Minimum Requirements; Intuition of at least 90.

Paladins must also have Strength and Agility of 90.

Paladins are not permitted to learn non-prosaic magic until they are 5th level.

Typical Training Period; Not yet determined.

Special Abilities; No Cleric Lore list.

Sulis' Channels:

BC I Sulis' War Cry Range: 100' RR Mod: None

Blows out target's eardrums. -50 due to lack of balance.

BC II Shortest Journey Range: 50' RR Mod: None

Target sent into permanent coma. +10 hits.

BC III Warrior's Curse Range: 50' RR Mod: -30

Target's heart explodes.

BC IV Lance of Light Range: 25' RR Mod: -20

Target is immediately burnt to a crisp.

At 25th level Clerics, Healers etc. gain the ability to foretell the future of a child. This ability can only be used once a month and must be used within one week of the child's birth. The clergyman enters a trance while delivering the foretelling, which will usually be cryptic.

At 25th level Paladins of the church gain the ability to summon the Sword of Sulis. The paladin must concentrate for a full round to summon the sword. He can wield it using his highest melee OB. It strikes as a Two Handed sword delivering Electricity crits. (another variety of the GM's choosing if the target is immune). The sword will only harm those to whom Sulis is opposed. The sword lasts 3 minutes and can be summoned once a month. It is not an ability to use lightly - and misuse could result in the loss of the ability.

It is very notable that the Knights have been granted exactly the same abilities as the followers of the Church of the Eternal Path. Clearly Sulis is giving them her backing.

Starting Items; Not yet determined.

Codes of Behaviour; A Knight should always protect those weaker than themselves.

They should never use violence as a simple way out of a situation.

They should put their faith beyond all else, and should seek to advance their faith, not themselves.

History

The Knights of Sulis are a recent off-shoot of the Church of the Eternal Path. Following the scandal involving the former High Priest Pharamond Arland, a number of church members, some quite influential, begin to complain of the church's political standing and scheming. They demanded a return to "true faith" and began preaching this within the Church of the Eternal Path. They inevitably started criticising the hierarchy.

Arland's successor, Raldolph, fearing a prolonged struggle within the church, called a counsel in Londarium, late in 1605. By mid-Martius 1606 it had become clear that a number of members had become completely disillusioned and were demanding either a complete over-haul or the chance to break away.

On 12th Martius 1606, Raldolph declared that The Knights of Sulis had split from the mother church, and were seeking recognition as a new religion. A number of the break-away priests immediately set off on a pilgrimage to Sulanis to seek guidance.

Myths

The Knights maintain the same holy stories as the original church, although some new moralising is already detectable in their re-tellings.

Periodic Festivals: The greatest date in the church's calendar is the 15th of Sextilis, the day on which Sulis appeared to Felanda in Sulanis.

The churches of Sulis also hold services every Septimus.

Artefacts

None

The Poets of Thornos

Area of Influence; Orthlan (Lyonesse, Karsethra)

Worshipped God; Thornos

Portfolio; The written word and literature.

Symbol; A quill pen.

Representation of the God; Thornos is usually shown as a rather dignified rake, in bright colours and in the height of fashion. He always wears a white feather in his hat. He is sometimes shown reading from a scroll.

Social Standing

Church's Character; Thornos' church is a small, rather informal organisation. Like the church of Falstaff it has a relaxed, friendly attitude. It is dedicated to the enjoyment of writing and literature. But it also has its more astute (and snobbish) side; a faction that insists upon the art of literature, it's standing as a craft and an intellectual study.

The church has a number of small, unfussy temples scattered around. Most of the clergy are residential, but there are a few wanderers.

It is a church refreshingly free of bureaucracy. There are only two levels of clergy and most of the clergy seem willing to help a supplicant themselves, rather than passing them on to someone else.

Typical Building; There is no such thing. Many of Thornos' temples are converted houses; very few are purpose built. Consequently, its temples are as diverse as residences can be.

Church's Wealth; Moderate. It is a small church with little popular appeal.

Political Power; Very little. What it does have is simply the result of someone of influence being a member.

Number of Followers; (In Orthlan); Clergy ~ 40, Lay members ~ 2,000.

Church Personnel

Current Head of the Church; he current Master Poet is Roderic Wyatt, a native of Lyonesse (26th level cleric). Based in London, he is addressed simply as "Messire".

Lower Orders; All clergy below the Master Poet are called simply poets and are addressed "Messire" or "Mistress".

Military Organisation; None

The Clergy in Detail

Typical Clergy; Cleric

Minimum Requirements; Must have an intuition of 90.

By 3rd level all clergy should have:

Latin 6/6, religion (Thornos) 2 ranks, Poetic Improvisation 2 ranks. Poetry 2 ranks.

Typical Training Period; 2 years (assuming literacy).

Special Abilities; Cleric Lore: None

There are no Holy Champions, and no specialist Thornos' Channels.

At 25th level, clergy gain the ability to use 20 PPs a day from Weave Tale to 10th.

Starting Items; Clergy of this church are equipped as a non-clerical character, with the addition of a holy symbol.

Codes of Behaviour; There isn't much of one at all. Clergy and followers can be of any alignment. The only requirement is that they enjoy or insist upon the importance of literature and the written word.

History

The history of this church is interwoven with that of Valmira. Thornos is an old god, first recognised in 1397, although widely worshipped before then. His was the power in the written sign and the written word. He suggested both knowledge and magic.

His church was at its height in the 1450's, which was the time when the written word was first being mass-produced. The church had wealth and political power, and, despite the fact that the rift between the "literature for enjoyment" and "literature as art" factions was already apparent, it seemed that it was destined for a long history. That was until the Church of Valmira appeared.

The Church of Thornos had never claimed knowledge as a sphere, and so the new church was not breaking any law of the Rainbow Court. However, many of Thornos' followers had taken him as a god of knowledge, as was clear when the membership of his church plummeted in the following thirty years. This decline was not helped by the increasing friction caused by the art/enjoyment argument. Then in 1567 - absolute disaster. The Master Poet of the time, who was a man of the enjoyment faction tried to reform the church - he announced that Thornos had appeared to him and declared that comedy was a higher form than tragedy. Henceforth the church would embrace comedy as a legitimate form (formally not the case). Half the church left in protest over-night, and it has simply never recovered.

Myths

Thornos probably holds the distinction of being the most written about god of all time; there are poems, epics, dramas and masques produced about him every year (most of them terrible). There are, however, very few true myths, and most of these predate the decline of the religion.

The myths all describe him as a powerful being whose command over the written word gives him many powers.

The only myth of him as a poet is in a tale very similar to that of Orpheus. The poet Thornos charms his way into Hell to recover his lover (usually called Commedia, but sometimes Poetica or Muse), and returns with her safely to the earthly world.

Artefacts

The Rune Stones of Thornos.

Each of these pale, flat rectangular stones is 3"x2" and has a single black rune inscribed on one side. All the stones can only be destroyed by burning them while wrapped in a page of tragedy. Many of the stones have been lost over the years, and although the Master Poet holds about half of them, the others are scattered all over the world.

Each stone has a different ability (most cast spells).

The Priesthood of Gwena

Area of Influence; Orthlan (Karsethra, Karelia, Mandoris)

Worshipped God; Gwena, the provider. The dark goddess.

Portfolio; Agriculture and weather

Symbol; A yellow sheaf of corn on a blue disc. Or a cloud.

Representation of the God; Gwena is shown as a tall, rather masculine woman. She always wears a robe of deep green, and is adorned with a silver collar, belt and bracelets. She is blond and blue-eyed. She is often shown carrying either a scythe or corn sheaf and a pitcher of water.

Social Standing

Church's Character; The Priesthood of Gwena is purely rural based. Most of its temples stand in farming villages, although a few can be found on the suburban border of towns.

The religion is quite different in character to its closest ally - the church of Brigantia. Given Gwena's more unpredictable character; how she can stifle the crops or flood them out etc. her church tends to be more severe than that of the sustaining Brigantia. This church has a strong sense of sin and punishment; a farmer who does not revere Gwena, shows no respect for her gifts or has no caution of her violent side can expect a bad crop - or even a direct lightning strike.

Gwena's priests are all resident in a church or, at least, remain in a single village. Hierarchy in the church is loosely based on the size and success of the village in which the priest resides, and on a pecking order within each temple.

Typical Building; Churches to Gwena are always constructed of wood. They are long, low buildings, with a peaked roof and a T-shaped floor-plan. The top of the T is the priests' residence, while the temple proper is found in the longer (usually west-facing) wing. There is usually a carving of a wheat sheaf over the temple door.

All the furnishings of the church are in various coloured woods - statues, pews, alters etc. A well maintained church of Gwena will smell strongly of polish and wax - as well as fresh-baked bread - a sacrifice of which is laid on the alter every day. The sacrifice is usually given to the poor in the evening.

Church's Wealth; Little. Most of the priest live in a hand - to - mouth fashion, and use what they have left to feed the poor. A rich priest of Gwena is a dishonest or unpius one.

Political Power; The church has a very loyal following of peasants. This, however, gives them very little influence. Although they could use mob rule as an influence at a local level they would have to be very distressed and very organised to exert any larger scale power.

Number of Followers; (In Orthlan); Clergy; ~300. Lay members 12-15,000 (many of these also follow Brigantia).

Church Personnel

Current Head of the Church; The current head of the entire church is the Archbishop of Gwelino in Karsethra. He is Munremur Id, a 34th level Animist/Cleric. He is addressed as "Your Holiness".

Lower Orders; The leader of the religion in a country is a Archbishop. In Orthlan this is currently Aelfredia, a 26th level Animist/Cleric.

A clergy in charge of a church or temple regardless of its size is a bishop, and is addressed as "Your Reverence". Any other clergyman is a Priest and is addressed as "Father" or "Mistress".

Military Organisation; None

The Clergy in Detail

Typical Clergy; Clerics, Animists. A few Rangers and Channeling Beastmasters (new class, see the Red Companion).

Minimum Requirements; Must have an Intuition of at least 90.

By third level all clergy should have:

2 ranks of religion (Gwena), 1 rank weather watching, 1 rank horticulture.

Typical Training Period; 2 years.

Special Abilities; Cleric Lore: Enrichment.
There are no Holy Champions.

Gwena's Channels:

BC I Famine Range:50' RR Mod: -20

Target feels as if he hasn't eaten for four days. He is at -20 due to feebleness until he eats.

BC II Draught Range: 50' RR Mod: -20

Target rapidly dehydrates. His skin shrivels up and his muscles collapse. Target will die in 12 inactive rounds unless he is healed (organ repair for the skin and some muscle repairs).

BC III Lightning Range:25' RR Mod: -30

Target is struck by a massive lightning strike from the sky. His nervous system is completely scrambled and he is instantly killed.

BC IV Flood Range: 25' RR Mod:-20

Target's body dissolves in one round. Only a puddle remains.

Starting Items; Clergy of Gwena do not make suitable PCs, due to their immobile nature. Therefore no starting items are given.

Codes of Behaviour; A cleric of Gwena will never harm a crop.

A cleric of Gwena will never foul water.

A cleric of Gwena will never enter a town or city, unless on a Archbishops orders.

A cleric of Gwena will always live in the simplest way possible and will ensure that any surplus is passed on to the poor.

History

The Priesthood appears to be an amalgamation of two, or maybe more, very ancient religions. The name Gwena appears as an object of worship in writings going back to about -500 S.R. and it is generally accepted that she is the development of another, earlier goddess.

At the time of those early writings Gwena is always mentioned with a god, Ogmar, assumed to be her husband. In these writings, Gwena is clearly the earth from which the grain grows, while, Ogmar is the fertilising rain. Some time in history, Ogmar disappears, Gwena loses her womanly nature and picks up his attributes in addition to her own. Just how, or why this modification in the story arose is unknown, although there is a mythical version of what happened (see below).

Whatever happened, it is clear that by -96 S.R, Gwena was a solo deity. And so she has remained ever since. For much of the time, the church has reigned quietly in the rural community with little fuss. Over the last hundred years of so, however, it has found itself under increasing attack by the urban religions. Most of these attacks are aimed at its stiff moral values and it's insistence on the value of the faeries. Both attitudes are very alien to the urban churches, and have been interpreted as a threat by many of them.

Myths

Most of the myths surrounding Gwena tell of her endless, hopeless battle with a demon named Tropolis (city). Among these myths is that of how, after many years of struggle, Tropolis finally destroyed Ogmar, Gwena's husband and the lord of weather, by defending himself in a stone house and then attacking the older god with "mock thunder" (some kind of siege weapon?). Many followers of Gwena associate Tropolis with the Great Architect, but he's more likely to be a more general representation of the city.

The next story in the cycle tells how the grieving Gwena retrieved her husband's crown, and thus acquired his powers. She challenged Tropolis in her husband's place and was mocked for her efforts. She rebuked the younger god: "Think before you try to destroy me. To lose the weather is one thing to you - for perhaps he was nothing but a nuisance to you. Destroy me and destroy yourself, for there is no one to stand in my place."

Tropolis retreated after hearing these words, and ever since the conflict has remained non-violent. But how long can this situation last?

Artefacts

Gwena's Garden

This brass pot is kept in the religious "capital" in Gwelino. It is quite plain and is always kept full of earth and planted with herbs. The earth in the pot is rich and black. When a fistful of this earth is scattered on cleared ground the earth is immediately affected as an Enrich Soil True. For ten years after the treatment the area will supply 200% of the usual yield of the area. The garden is always full of soil, however much is used.

The Staff of the Skies

This plain staff is of yew wood. 3x/day it has the following spell like powers (all from Weather Mastery): Control Weather (but with a 1 mile radius), Call Precipitation, Stop Precipitation, Call Storms, Dismiss Storms. It can also Call Lightning III with a +50 OB 1 x/day.

Things to Come

Around the middle of 1606, all clergy of Gwena start losing their magic. By the end of that year they are receiving no power points from the goddess and no clerical power that would require her direct influence (*Lifegiving*, *Commune* etc.) will work, even when cast using spell items.

The clergy will not admit this, of course, and most go on trying to carry out their routine functions. But the higher ranking members of the church do investigate the matter. They have to assume that their goddess has gone – that she has abandoned them, or has met with some major calamity.

The Priesthood of the Trees

Area of Influence; Orthlan (Mandoris, Karsethra, Lyonesse, Karelia)

Worshipped God; None?

Portfolio; Trees, health.

Symbol; A Tree

Representation of the God; The Priests of Trees do not worship a god, they worship a metaphysical principle of health and psyche that is best symbolised by the tree.

Social Standing

Church's Character; The Priesthood of the Trees is mainly a rural based church, although it does have a few holdings in other areas. It is a small church but is well-loved in its village holdings. To the rural community the Priesthood of the Trees is considered a benevolent, courageous group standing up to the increasing dominance of the city. To the villagers, this church has become an extension of their own condition - struggling against the city.

To the city dwellers the Priesthood of the Trees is also a symbol of rural life; for which it is mocked, insulted and even attacked. City dwellers seem to feel threatened by the Priests' passivity and self-contentment, and perhaps, by the old ways they represent. Therefore the Priesthood's holdings in cities are mainly charities or kept on principle - they are largely prevented from acting effectively as a temple by the prejudices of city-dwellers.

Typical Building; The temples are usually simple, sturdy, wood or rough stone buildings. Low arches are popular in most areas. Pillars, in the form of tree trunks are also a popular motif. Temple furniture and ornamentation is almost always wood.

Church's Wealth; The church usually manages to just break even. Any profit it does make it uses for charity work.

Political Power; In urban areas and in national matters practically none. However, at a local level they are so popular among the peasantry that they must be listened to. Although usually pacifist, the church is not above using peaceful but disruptive protest to upset things.

Number of Followers; (In Orthlan) Clergy ~ 300. Lay members ~ 14,000.

Church Personnel

Current Head of the Church; The current Archbishop of Orthlan is Joldeen (32nd level Healer/Cleric). There are also Archbishops in Mandoris, Karsethra, Lyonesse and Karelia.

Lower Orders; The clergy in charge of a district is a bishop, while one in charge of a single church is an abbot. Both are addressed as "Father" or "Mother", as are all other clergy, who are just referred to as Priests.

Military Organisation; None

The Clergy in Detail

Typical Clergy; Clerics, Healers. Some Animists and Rangers.

Minimum Requirements; Must have an Intuition of at least 90.

By 3rd level the clergy should have:

Two ranks of religion (Trees), two healing skills.

Typical Training Period; Five years.

Special Abilities; Cleric Lore: Tree Mastery (Druid)

There are no Holy Champions.

This church has no specialist channels.

At 25th level all clergy of this church gain a regeneration ability. Once a week they can rejuvenate a depleted piece of land (2,500 sq'), or a dying tree. Or they can regenerate one limb (no recovery time). A

limb can even be regenerated if the victim was born without one. Alternatively, they can purge one victim of a disease. Notably, these latter healing abilities cannot be used on themselves.

Starting Items; Robes, vestment (if appropriate), iron holy symbol, one weapon, six spell picks, sleeping bag, pack, medical kit, 4F.

Codes of Behaviour; A Priest of the Trees will never injure any being knowingly. They are pacifists and will never become physically involved in a confrontation (this includes answering jeers etc.)

A Priest of the Trees should always help anyone asking for healing or advice.

Quiet resistance is the Priesthood's only form of "aggression".

History

This is actually a recent religion. It was only recognised in 1548.

However, the church is clearly based on the very ancient beliefs of the peoples of the north of Calendor, particularly the Isles of Ierne. It is believed that the religion emerged after the Lyonesse scholar Caitlen of Scuthmore translated the ancient writings of these peoples; which revealed their complex faith in the symbolic power of trees. These translations were distributed in limited numbers in Lyonesse and within a decade the Priesthood had emerged. No one is quite sure who began the cult, although a few sources quote Caitlen herself. This rumour was only further propagated when the writer asked to be buried in classic Ierne style.

(NB: These rumours on the beginnings of the cult are true.)

Myths

The religious writings of this church are curiously "unmythical". They read far more like modern philosophy writings than myths. This is hardly surprising considering that this faith is, by its own admission, an attempt to resolve the problems of modern society by appealing to the ancient's faith in symbols.

This church does not use convoluted myths to explain its rituals - because it is such a new church it remembers what its rituals mean. This also explains why the church does not worship a god, but a principle that is represented by a tree.

Periodic Festivals: Decking the Tree. Falls on 20th Martius. In this festival the largest tree in the village is decked with paper flowers. This is a rite to encourage the tree (and its mates) to bring forth new growth of its own.

Artefacts

None

Sisters of the Moon

Area of Influence; Orthlan (Karsehra, Mandoris, Karelia, Lyonesse)

Worshipped God; Alcina, the Witch Moon.

Portfolio; Female magic, the changing moon, night, women, cats.

Symbol; The silhouette of a black cat on a silver disk, or the silhouette of a woman's profile on a silver disk.

Representation of the God; Alcina is shown as a young pale woman, with dark hair, and an unnerving sardonic smile; or as a black cat; or a woman with three heads, one pale with silver hair and blue eyes, one of medium complexion with blond hair and hazel eyes, and one with dark skin and black hair and eyes.

Social Standing

Church's Character; This church has two branches of operation, both of which are secretive. The Wandering Sisters live within the community, rarely revealing their religious alliance and converting women with subtlety and secrecy (one of Alcina's major qualities). At least once a year, Wandering Sisters try and attend a moot, known as the Conjunction, in which all the sisters in the area meet, discuss developments, are given new tasks, and where new sisters are initiated.

The church's other branch, the Moon Circles, are covens; groups of female casters who form associations for safety, information exchange and for purposes of worship. About 70% of all Covens in Orthlan worship Alcina in some form - fully 45% are true Moon Circles.

Typical Building; There is no typical building for this church. They usually organise themselves around an inn or festhall. In Orthlan the central point of the religion is The Jade Dancer festhall in Orthlandris, although there are other "safehouses" in other cities.

The Moon Circles usually maintain groves, a few of which stand on earthnodes (one such is maintained by the circle in Orthlandris).

Church's Wealth; Unknown. Most Wandering Sisters are self-sustaining. They live up to the necessary standard and then donate the rest. Moon Circles take 50% of the proceeds from their members' sales of potions etc. The church is probably quite wealthy, all told.

Political Power; None directly. But with their extensive membership drawn from the nobility (including the Orthlan royal family) they can exert a heavy influence on Orthlan's political life. Moreover, considering that manipulation is one of Alcina's chosen weapons, and that so many members are well placed to use that skill to best advantage, it's influence should not be underestimated. This church has direct paths into royalty, high nobility, all houses of parliament, the courts, guilds and the army.

The church has never openly declared it's intentions, it always works underground, so it's a little difficult to determine how good they are at it. In all likelihood a vast majority of the people who serve this church's ends don't even know it exists.

Number of Followers; (In Orthlan) ~150 Moon Circle members in seven circles. About 300 Wandering Sisters and 1200 lay members.

Church Personnel

Current Head of the Church; The High Lady of Alcina. The current High Lady of Orthlan, Mandoris, Karsehra and Karelia is Clymestra (37th level Grey Moon Mage). She is Karelian, but moves around all the areas she influences.

Lower Orders; Below the High Lady are five First Ladies, the heads of the five constellations of the church. In Clymestra's organisation, the current First Ladies are:

Almora, First Lady of the Moon Circles (29th level White Witch)

Janona, First Lady of the Dark Moon (26th level Dark Moon Mage)

Finella, First Lady of the Grey Moon (27th level Grey Moon Mage)

Laodamia, First Lady of the Bright Moon (29th level Light Moon Mage)

Catherine (currently Queen of Orthlan, by marriage), First Lady of the Full Moon (29th level Full Moon Mage)

All other members of the church are just referred to as "Lady".

Military Organisation; No formal military arm, but almost all the wandering sisters are competent fighters.

The Clergy in Detail

Typical Clergy; In the Moon Circles: White Witches, Black Witches, Clerics, Sorcerers. A few Healers, Astrologers and Moon Mages. In the Wandering Sisters; Moon Mages, Clerics. A few Healers, Witches and Sorcerers.

Minimum Requirements; Must be female. Must have an Intuition of at least 90 and a Presence of at least 80.

Typical Training Period; For Moon Circles; 3 years after usual education, 12 years including basic education. For Wandering Sisters, 5 years assuming basic education, 14 years including basic education. Training can begin at any age.

Special Abilities; Cleric Lore List: Moon Mastery (sphere specific).

Any Moon Mage from the religion can take Ceremonies as a base, but it must replace one of the basic Moon Mage bases, not one of the sphere lists.

Moon Mages of Alcina can also elect to be Full Moon Mages. These characters take the three basic Moon Mage bases (one possibly replaced by Ceremonies) and one list from each of the moon spheres. A Full Moon Mage's base lists always operate at 0.75 x since they are attuned to all phases of the moon.

There are no Holy Champions.

There is no specific Alcina's Channels. However, clergy with access to the Dark Moon sphere can use standard Black Channels.

At 25th level Moon Mages of this religion gain the ability to take the form of "were-creatures" during their moon phase (Full Moon mages can use the ability any time). Most clergy gain a "were-wolf" or "were-cat" form. Note that these forms are not true lycanthropes, and they can't pass the ability on. The clergyman has total control of the change, and can change as many times a night as she likes. However, the change can only take place at night, and when the moon is in the right phase.

At 25th level, all other casters of the religion gain a Guardian, a creature (usually a large wolf), that seeks to protect and serve the clergyman. This animal remains essentially wild, but as an understanding grows between it and its bound clergymen, they come to work together efficiently.

Starting Items; Members of the Moon Circles are not really appropriate as PCs (since they tend to be non-mobile).

Wandering Sisters are equipped as non-clerical PCs, but with at least 7F starting money.

Codes of Behaviour; A Sister of the Moon should always try to aid a woman being victimised by a man, or by society in general. A Sister should convert at least two women per six months to Alcina.

A Sister must keep her religious beliefs secret from men or women who are likely to reveal the secret.

A Sister must never harm a cat.

When choosing a familiar, a Sister should always choose a cat, preferably a black one, and, if she's really lucky, one of those known as Alcina's children.

History

A very ancient cult, it seems to have come out of Narsurios with the invaders. For much of that time it has remained quietly in the background. However, one point in its history still continues to haunt the church, and many other users of the magic art. Seventy years ago, Orthlan stretched south to the river Tagus. The monarch of that time, King Osterlan, named his second child - his daughter Azala, his heir. This outraged his spoilt and obnoxious first child, a son named Owen. It is likely that nothing would have happened, and that Owen would have sulked away his life in some holding - had it not been for his mistress Gliadrachan.

Gliadrachan was a Sorcerer of the Sisters of the Moon. She craved power, and had grown tired of acting quietly. And so she pushed Owen into challenging his father's declaration, and gave him fuel for his claim by revealing that Azala practised "black arts". Azala, like many of her female ancestors and most of her descendants, was also a Sister of the Moon. She was, in fact, a very rare caster - a true White Witch, capable to communicating with the Seelie naturally. But the distinction is a fine one, and unperceivable to most people.

Gliadrachan planned well; she quietly built a support base, then personally arranged the death of King Osterlan. She then encouraged Owen to disrupt Azala's coronation with proof of her magic. The coronation became a bloodbath, which became a civil war. Many remained loyal to Azala, but the peasantry were particularly moved by stories of Azala's use of magic and rallied to Owen's banner.

The war ended with the division of the country into the modern day Orthlan and the Theocracy of Galhea, ruled by Gliadrachan and an elite group of supporters (she had Owen done away with as soon as possible). The conflict has never really ceased, although it is now concentrated as a border dispute in the western Tholus peaks. And Gliadrachan still lives, her life extended by magic, and her vision of conquest ever expanding.

Myths

The stories of the Sisters claim that Alcina is the youngest of the Earth Mother's children. Gaiah bore Alcina alone. The stories give two reasons for the old goddess' reasons for bearing this last child. In the first it is said that Alcina was intended by her mother to redress the balance that was being stolen from nature (and women) by civilisation. All the early stories of this cult insist that the early period of civilisation were terrible for women. Alcina either became, or created the orb that bears her name to remind those in cities of the wilderness beyond - not only by her presence, but by the madness she inspires in her phases. In this version, Alcina came to protect woman only as a second cause - since they reflect her character.

Another reason claims that Alcina's first interest was in women. But after a few years the havoc she'd caused among men was so extreme that a male god (called only The Blind One) cast her into the sky, as the moon. In doing so he only succeeded in restricting womanly wile to part of the time (i.e. night) and making their powers greater at certain times of the month, depending on where the moon was.

Another story tells of how Alcina preserved three sisters, who were all her faithful followers. When each had refused to marry the man of their father's choice they were murdered. But Alcina took pity on her faithful vassals and resurrected them - as the first cats. The eldest, who was pregnant when killed (by her true love), soon gave birth to kittens. In some versions, the two younger sisters then help this lover to send the father mad under the moon's influence.

Periodic Festival: Sisters hold private prayers on every new moon - the rebirth of the goddess. Their greatest celebration takes place as part of the Conjunction, usually on the first new moon in the new year. The main feature of this festival is the private ritual in which the High Lady and First Ladies baptise a kitten born on the night of the new moon in a pool baring the reflection of the moon. Then when Alcina eclipses the White Moon the Sister's hold a similar ritual - bathing their own bodies.

Following an eclipse of Alcina the Sisters go into mourning for a year (i.e. they wear scarlet).

Artefacts

The Moon Staff

This short staff (about 4 ½ feet long) is carved of a smooth grey stone, and is set with a clear moon crystal and shod in silver. This staff was first made for the High Lady Alestra (Azala's mother) and has been carried by every High Lady since.

While carrying the staff the wielder has +20 to all magic RRs, +20 to directed *Moonbeam* and *Moon Lightning* and +20 to DB. The staff increases the user's chance of summoning a Moon Maiden to 1% per level. The staff will cast *Mass Summons* 1x/day. It always summons cats. When handled by a man, all the positives associated with the staff become negatives.

The Temple of Disks

Area of Influence; Orthlan

Worshipped God; Argaton, King of Disks, King of Coins.

Portfolio; Merchants, material wealth.

Symbol; A plain gold disk.

Representation of the God; The king of disks is usually shown dressed in fine clothes (usually red and purple). He is well groomed, with a carefully trimmed black beard. He holds a money pouch in one hand and a long, unwound scroll in the other.

Social Standing

Church's Character; The Temple of Disks is a very recent religion; so much so that it is still organising itself. At the current time it has only a few churches; in Orthlandris, Londarium, Silverview, and most recently Massalia, although there are shrines to the King of Disks in other towns. Its interest in rural areas is so insignificant that people who do not live in a town have probably not even heard of the church.

Most people view the church with undisguised wariness; even fear. They find it difficult to accept a god whose providence seems so close to greed. In fact, many of the church's priests and lay members suffer from this fault, but there are also those who do not. These generous people have made the Temple of Disks a major donator to worthy causes.

Typical Building; All three churches are stone and perfectly square. They look more like mercantile houses than a place of worship. The temple proper is also square and richly adorned. Most of the furnishings are elaborately finished with gold gilding.

Church's Wealth; Moderate. The church gains a sizeable amount from donations, but it is also rumoured to be closely linked to a chain of money lenders and changers known as Griffin Enterprises.

Political Power; Little. The church's only grip on politics at the moment is the link between them and the merchant guilds.

Number of Followers; Clergy ~ 40, lay members ~1200.

Church Personnel

Current Head of the Church; The church is currently ruled by a board of Bishops. They are Valentina Uther (27th level cleric), the bishop of Orthlandris, Felick (24th level cleric), bishop of Londarium and Theogenus (25th level cleric), bishop of Silverview.

Lower Orders; All lower members of the church are known as priests. Unkind slang refers to them as "Thieves" of Disks.

Military Organisation; None

The Clergy in Detail

Typical Clergy; Clerics, some Healers.

Minimum Requirements; Must have an Intuition of 90.

By 3rd level the clergyman should have:

Latin 6/6, 2 ranks of religion (Disks), and hopefully Trading or Trading Lore, but not necessary.

Typical Training Period; 2 years, on top of a reasonable education.

Special Abilities; Cleric Lore: None.

There are no Holy Champions and no specialist channels.

At 25th level a clergyman of this church can determine the value of a given product in any market he is familiar with, and the actual profit involved. This ability takes into account all relevant details - market slump, weather etc. even though the clergyman is not aware of them.

Starting Items; These are calculated as for a non-clerical PC, however, they will always start with at least 8F.

Codes of Behaviour; Beyond all else the followers of the King of Disks believe that wealth is the greatest type of power. What you do with that power once you have it is your responsibility. Wealth is good, because it improves the standard of living. The official line is that wealth should be used for the good of all society.

History

This church was born very recently. It was recognised in 1592. In fact, the church is a plot by the monarchy to gain control of the mercantile population. Only Valantina Uther, the bishop of Orthlandris, is fully aware of the monarchy's involvement. She controls the church from her power base, following orders passed on to her by intermediates. Theogenus has doubts about Valatina but has not shared them.

This church does face one major question - who is supplying the power points?

Myths

This church is unusually free of theological writings. Most elaboration is left up to the individual priest.

Periodic Festival: From 1604 the church claimed 1st Aprilis as a holy day. On this day quiet ceremonies were held in church for the god. However, plans are now afoot to change the date to the first Primus in Aprilis, since the 1st Aprilis is also a holy day for the Cathedral of the Great Architect.

Artefacts

None

The Temple of the Sun

Area of Influence; Incahudsis

Worshipped God; The Sun, and the gods of his pantheon.

Portfolio; The Sun, and it's life-giving energy. The spheres of the minor gods.

Symbol; The Sun

Representation of the God; The god is shown as the Sun or represented by gold.

Social Standing

Church's Character; The Temple of the Sun is the basic religion followed by all the peoples of the city states of Incahudsis. The exact details of it vary between the cities, but there are more similarities than differences.

The Sun is the head of a pantheon of numerous minor deities. These include:

Huitzilopochtli, the god of war and the patron of Sacsahuaman

Quetzalcoatl, the god of air and wisdom, and the patron of Cajamarca

Mictlantecuhtli, the god of the underworld

Chalchihuitlicue, the goddess of love, children and flowing water.

But these are only the most popular of the minor gods. There are literally dozens of them, covering anything from the spear, to maize and beer.

The Temple of the Sun is a severe, demanding church, with many primitive elements. Many of its ceremonies are reminiscent of sympathetic magic. For instances, the sacrifice of prisoners of war is common - their strength and honour are supposed to pass on the god and the dedicating warrior.

Sacrifice of all sorts is common - part of the harvest is always given up, as is a portion of a person's labours. Some families, particularly in Cuzco Huacas, still give up one of their children to act as Temple Guardians.

Typical Building; Temples of this church always take the form of a step pyramid. They will usually be all gathered together in a Temple complex, with the largest pyramid devoted to the sun itself. They will almost inevitably be the largest and finest of the buildings in the city, and will usually stand at it's centre.

Church's Wealth; The church is intimately connected to the state so, inevitably, it can command a considerable amount of money (15% of all tax goes straight to the church - 45% in Cuzco Huacas).

Political Power; Extreme, and in Cuzco Huacas total.

Number of Followers; Virtually the entire population of the city states, so about 100,000 people.

Church Personnel

Current Head of the Church; In theory the over-all head of the church is the Priest King of Cuzco Huacas, but the separate city kings usually act as the direct authority in their city.

Lower Orders; The highest ranking priests are the Ministers of the Sun - those with the authority to carry out human sacrifice. Below those are the Stewards of the Sun, who can make any other sacrifices. All others are simply the priests of the Sun.

Military Organisation; Strictly speaking all of the armies of the five cities are religious entities. But most obviously that of Cuzco Huacas, that is under the direct command of the Priest King, is devoted to this church.

The Clergy in Detail

Typical Clergy; Virtually any variety of Channeler (Pure, Semi or Hybrid). However, Paladins and Dervishes are very, very rare. True clergy exist only in Cuzco Huacas.

Minimum Requirements; An Intuition bonus of at least 10. A Presence of at least 80.

By 3rd level clergy should have 2 ranks of religion, 1 rank weapon skill, 1 rank public speaking.

Typical Training Period; Ten years, usually from age five, but clergy can be accepted at any age.

Special Abilities; Cleric Lore: Fire Law

There are Holy Champions. The only condition is that they should be devout.

The Sun's Channels:

BC I Fiery Gaze Range: 25' RR Mod: -25

The caster's gaze locks with the target. The intensity of the gaze blinds the target for 1 - 4 hours. (This is a medical blindness - it can be healed).

BC II Sun Lance Range: 25' RR Mod: -25

A lance of fire leaps from the cleric's hands, inflicting severe burns which bleed at 10 hits/rnd.

BC III Raze Range: 25' RR Mod: -25

The target is burnt to a crisp.

Starting Items; A cleric of this church is equipped as a non-clerical character, though they also start with a gold symbol and a vestment (if applicable).

Codes of Behaviour; Clergy of this church are supposed to represent the ideal in Incahudsis character - particularly with regards to honour, manners and courage.

Beyond this exact guidelines for behaviour tend to depend on the city - since the clergy are inevitably wound up in the political events of the time.

History

This church is older than the nation that now follows it, for it goes back to the time when Sacsahuaman was the only city in the Inxoria basin. Clearly, the fragmented population of that city took the religion with them into their exile, and it continued to evolve, along separate lines, for the time that the five cities were unaware of each other.

Most of the differences now to be seen between the cities derive from this time - most notably that only the church in Cuzco Huacas has true Channelers.

Another important element to keep in mind is that when the Incas incorporate a new tribe into their population, they have a habit of absorbing that tribe's religion too. This explains the immense size of the pantheon.

Myths

The central myth to the religion is the creation myth. The Incas believe that the world exists on a circle of time, and that it is being repeatedly created, destroyed, and then created again from its own ruins. They believe that the world will only continue to be recreated if there is enough prime material to do so - so everything must be properly preserved and despised off. This belief explains both their use of sacrifice (the ritual is intended to retain the victim's "quality" in the world) and their elaborate burial ceremonies and monuments.

Artefacts

The Crystal Skulls

These five, life-sized crystal skulls are each in the possession of one of the kings of the city states. It is believed that they enable the user to speak to the spirits of their predecessors. Also, each of the skulls is meant to have a unique ability. That of the priest king acts as a x3 Channeling multiplier and can be used once a week to bless a person, place or event. This gives a +25 bonus to a relevant skill or roll, as determined by the GM. Once a decade, the skull can be used to summon an avatar of the Sun god.

The Wild Hunters

Area of Influence; Orthlan

Worshipped God; The Master of the Wild Hunt

Portfolio; The Wild Hunt

Symbol; Black stag antlers

Representation of the God; The Master is shown as a muscled, bearded man with the antlers of a stag. He is usually shown wearing typical hunter's dress - leathers and dull neutral colours.

Social Standing

Church's Character; The Wild Hunters is a very small cult, restricted to the rural areas of Orthlan, and to the woodland in particular. All its members are wandering foresters who live off the land and shun towns and political life. The cult is opposed to such things as politics, trade and towns, believing such things to be responsible for the increase in instances of corruption and other human decay.

The cult does not even possess a recognised leader. The only point of organisation it does have is a meeting point - a small clearing in the woods south of Londarium.

Typical Building; None

Church's Wealth; None, all the members are self-sustaining and live off the land.

Political Power; None.

Number of Followers; (In Orthlan) ~60 clergy and 200 lay members.

Church Personnel

Current Head of the Church; None

Lower Orders; There is no hierarchy and no titles in the cult.

Military Organisation; None. Although most members are competent fighters and will fight to protect the countryside.

The Clergy in Detail

Typical Clergy; Animists and Rangers. A few Clerics, Witches and Channeling Beastmasters.

Minimum Requirements; None

Typical Training Period; 3 years.

Special Abilities; None

Starting Items; The starting items of members are calculated as non-clerical PCs.

Codes of Behaviour; There are no set rules, but members of this cult live off the land as hunters. They shun civilisation and any trappings of wealth. They usually get on well with any local faeries.

History

This cult is probably the descendent of a very ancient belief system, with its origins long lost in the past. It probably came into being in response to the appearances of the Wild Hunt itself and was originally an attempt to understand the motivations of this obviously mystical force.

Over the years the cult has gradually come to see itself in direct opposition to society; the force that seems to stand against all that the Wild Hunt tries to uphold. The fact that the Hunt is now appearing more regularly than ever before suggests that view may be correct. But up to now the Hunt has never been seen in a town - perhaps it does not possess the power to penetrate an area so contrary to itself.

Myths

The cultists believe that the Master of the Hunt is the son of the Mother goddess and that he has been charged with punishing those who wound the earth. They believe that each outing of the Hunt increases the Master's power, and that he will finally be able to challenge the trespass of the towns and cities.

Artefacts

None