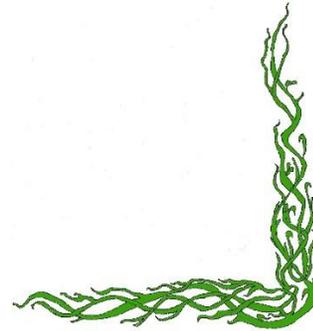
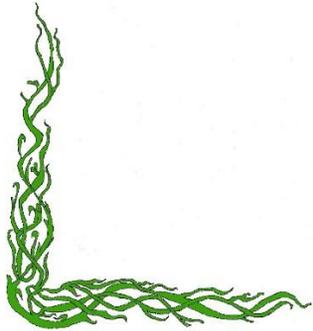


The Avatars We Know

*A Treatise on Various Religions, As Recounted by
Hanoldo Tython, Keeper of the Enclave*



The spiritual realm can seem complex and contradictory, and even at times fickle. If a minotaur priest prays to his god for aid and an elf prays to his god for aid, who answers, what are its effects, and if there are contradictory requests who wins out? This puzzle has led some to grow jaded toward religion, and it is to combat this mindset that I write this book.

Over the past two centuries I have served as a Keeper for the Enclave, and during that time I have interviewed many wise and learned persons regarding the tenets of their religion and how their gods act and interact.

My findings form the foundation of this work. Here you will learn the hierarchy of beings in the supernatural realm, as well as some information on the pantheons of gods that I have learned of during my investigations. I hope that through this study you will have greater clarity on how the laws of this realm affect the natural realm, who the great persons are within this realm, and how to best interact with them.

Nodlotyhton

Chapter I: Hierarchy of Beings

All spiritual beings can be placed into three hierarchical sets, with each set greater and more powerful than the one before it. The religions of the world tend to turn to one or more of these sets of beings for guidance and aid.

The Beyonder: The Great Creator

Above all other beings in the universe sits The Beyonder, the One who created all things and brought the universe into existence in the Elder Days. Worship of the Beyonder is known across the world, and is done with different names by different people based on race (the wulvern use the name, “Lohi,” the elves use the name “Eru,” etc.), but the end goal is the same: it is a recognition of the Great Creator by Whose hand the universe was made.

Religious groups that serve the Beyonder solely include the Order of the Sacred Grove (a religious order who defend the weak and innocent in times of war), and the Doric Order (a religious order devoted to personal poverty and giving to the poor).

The Primal Forces

Beneath the Beyonder we have the beings that were created to govern the elements of the created order. There are five forces, each tasked with their own glorious purpose, and religions have formed around these forces. They only visit the natural realm with images of their true selves (which we call “avatars” of that being).

Order is the avatar of creating and sustaining life. Order is one of the two most well-known of the avatars, and many races affiliate with her power of sustaining and creating life. The most notable

of these religions (which we will discuss in a future chapter), is the Order of Light, but there are others including the Upostirizo Brotherhood started by a conclave of faun clerics, and the Terempt alopen religious order.

Fury is the avatar of death, governing the ending of life and the fulfillment of one’s work. The Cult of Fury teach that there is a great peace that comes over those as they prepare for death when they understand that Fury is not the enemy of life, but the natural ender of life. This gives purpose to the actions of a person, because one has only a finite amount of time to live and act. Other revering groups include the Dark Cult (which reveres his power displayed in the Dark Lore of magic he designed) and the Khludraugar, a dark elf military order tied to the Khludalag clan of Callun.

It is also worth noting that there is one religion that worships both Order and Fury, and this is known as the Hydric Order. The predominate religion for undersea clans (especially cephalopod, cnidarian, and tugos clans), the Hydric Order teaches a balance between the wills of Order and Fury, as shown in their religious convictions, rituals, and ceremonial feasts. Like the tide that flows in and out each day, the actions of its acolytes should reflect both the will of Order and that of Fury.

Kurnonus is the avatar of chaos. Known to destroy towns and fortresses because they are against the natural order of nature, this avatar is the defender of woods, fields, mountains, and seas from the avarice of creatures. Notable religions that follow him include The Marked (a religious order devoted to Kurnonus and enforcing his will on the earth), the Na’Dali Brotherhood (a more pacifistic religious order that desires less worldly wealth and a life lived closer to nature), and Primal Rising (a fanatical group that stands against ordered society but still believes in the existence of towns and castles, ruled by the law of the wild rather than by established and codified law).

Elenta is the avatar of the cosmos. She directs the stars in their dance and songs, and from their motions and voices come the

visions and dreams of the seers. There are not many who revere her specifically, but several magic-centric religions (especially those who love the Lore of Light or the Arcane Lore) tend to revere her. The only one I have discovered that reveres her specifically is the Asteri Sisterhood of the nymphs, a religious order of prophetesses who are highly respected amongst courts of kings across the world.

Molog is the avatar of destruction. An avatar who rebelled against the Beyonder at the dawn of time, it is said that Molog was banished to the lower side of the world in the Elder Days. Yet there are some who revere his strength, most notably the Servants of Molog. They have a strong following among the War Herd of the minotaurs, as well as a sizable following among the priests of the giants of Morgheim.

The Gods of the Pantheons

There are many pantheons of gods in the world, and each is comprised of lesser spiritual beings that aid groups of creatures in the world. Their might and power is less than that of the Beyonder and the avatars, but they are still far stronger and more powerful than mortal creatures, so they are revered.

Some say that they were created to provide governance and care over specific regions or aspects of the world, and thus we have forest guardians, pantheons that preserve a specific civilization or race, and so forth. This seems consistent with the patterns I have seen, and they seem to hold power much akin to a baron ruling a domain in subservience to his lord.

Magic and Religion

There are some who do not worship a particular entity at the core of their religion, but instead revere a magic lore. Just as some

worship the gods of a pantheon because of their greater strength than a mortal being, so also some revere magic lores with their vast might and potency.

We shall examine these in turn following the discussion on the pantheons, as there are many magical cults that have arisen over the centuries. In some cases magic cults will tie their love of the lore to a specific entity, so inasmuch as that appears we will discuss them in conjunction with the pantheon or avatar they revere.

A Brief Note on Demonology and Spiritology

There are other beings, of course, in the supernatural realm, and we will briefly discuss these as well following our discussion on the various religions leanings in our vast world. A full work on the subject has been written by Sean Curadh, the High Druid of the Eternal Watch, but I will include a short discussion in my book here for your benefit. I recommend you read Sean's work, though, for a more full discussion on demonology.

There are also other creatures in the spiritual realm, including the avatars of stars, ethereal spirits and wraiths that still walk the earth, and angels and other heavenly creatures. These we will also discuss in brief.

Conclusion

The spiritual realm is a fascinating place, one that we will only ever understand in part this side of death. But it can be known, and to that end we pass along what we have so that you might work in the natural realm with knowledge of what you may expect from the supernatural realm.

Chapter II: The Pantheons

As noted in Chapter I, the pantheons that exist are lesser rulers in the spiritual realm that govern and care for the regions of the world. Their greater power than that of mortals has led to their reverence, and it is these pantheons that we seek to understand so that you will be prepared to engage with cultures you meet across the land.

There are naturally more that exist than are presented here, but these are the largest ones that I have discovered in my travels.

The Minotaur Pantheon

A pantheon of five deities that watch over the roaming War Herd of the minotaurs, these deities are well-known if for no other reason than how many wars the War Herd has been involved in across the highland and lowland regions.

Their practitioners are known for their devotion, and rarely has a sect seen converts from this religion due to its ingrained worship across their culture. There was even a time when the shamans of the War Herd made it punishable by death to leave the religion, and several hundred minotaurs who had converted to the Na'Dali faith were put to death within a matter of hours.

- **Rohash:** The god of wisdom and leader of the gods, Rohash is heavily worshipped by the shamans, and gives them the wisdom to advise the Leader of the War Herd. It is said that Rohash had a hundred wives and concubines in the Elder Days, and from his seed descends all the minotaur clans that exist today.

- **Ulog:** The god of war for the War Herd, Ulog is the most revered of all the gods, even though he is the son of Rohash. A bull with broad shoulders and longhorns going out even farther than his shoulders, the visage of Ulog is often painted on shields, banners, and tents, and has come to be known as the symbol of the War Herd due to its predominance across iconography in War Herd culture.
- **Muraga:** The goddess of healing and protection, the heifer Muraga is invoked at childbirth to preserve the child and keep him/her safe as they grow and mature, and is also invoked when diseases and maladies afflict a person. Her worship is unique among the pantheon in that male priests are forbidden: she is served by priestesses exclusively.
- **Bracchi:** The goddess of trickery and consort of Rohash, her wisdom comes in the form of cunning, and she is worshipped heavily among the War Herd if for no other reason than to assuage her jealousy and vengeance. But she is also sought in her own right by those who desire to evade the law, usurp power, or ambush an enemy, and thus her temples never fail to be filled with gifts and sacrifices. Among the pantheon her temples are the only ones that are required to be built underground, providing secrecy and privacy for those who beseech her aid.
- **Grarala:** Maiden goddess of the hunt, livestock, and navigation, Grarala is the patroness of sailors, hunters, and tenders of fields and animals. She is the youngest sister of the pantheon, and is generally treated with the least respect as minotaurs tend to view these trades

with less respect. Still, she is a helpful goddess, aiding craftsmen in their respective trade, resulting in some taurens of great skill amongst the Herd.

The Satyr Pantheon

I met a satyr mystic once who was lucid enough to tell me the details of the satyr pantheon, and that was a rare find. He was a wizened old shaman, and from him I learned that they have only four deities, considered to be the first satyrs that roamed the earth in the Elder Days.

- **Bacchus:** The lord of revelry, and the most revered of their gods. He is sometimes called The Ever Dancing One, and festivals in his honor begin with dancing and end with everyone collapsed on the floor when they can dance no longer.¹ Unlike the other satyr gods, he is quite rotund, and is a picture to them of what fullness and satisfaction look like. I prefer not to see this picture if I can avoid it, having seen an effigy once.
- **Silenus:** The blesser of the bud and vine, Silenus is a revered god in all satyr colonies. Beloved by the farmer and the hunter alike, Silenus is blessed for all food and drink that come to the village. Casually referred to as, “The Founder of the Feast” when blessing food for a festival, Silenus is jolly in revelry, and a curmudgeon in the presence of those who refuse to dance. Legend says that when he came across Braghadun, the Father of the

¹ I have been told that there was one such revelry where the festival began in the morning and lasted for six whole days. During that time they never stopped dancing: they ate and lived while moving in a massive circle for six days until the last of them collapsed. At least three of them died from exhaustion in the service.

Dwarves, hard at work in his mine and not to be disturbed, Silenus placed a curse upon Braghadun and his descendants that they might not enjoy the vine with the same vigor as other races. This is why dwarves have a high tolerance for alcohol but also take less pleasure in it: the curse of Silenus.

- **Pan:** The god of mischief and wisdom, Pan is both the trickster and the one from whom satyrs learn cunning and readiness against trickery. In most satyr villages there is almost always an altar for Pan, and any stolen item placed on the altar is consecrated to Pan: the one who places it there now owns the item, and thus theft and dedication for the sake of owning an item is very common.² The altar is commonly blessed by the priest with wine, and the priests of Pan are well loved across satyr society.
- **Jezerus:** The goddess of war and violence, she is said to be ever drunk on blood and wrath. Libations of the blood of enemies or animals are the only gifts she will accept, and in some clans (I am told), these gifts must be continual: if the blood ever dries, her fury will grow against that clan. I questioned why anyone would serve such a goddess except perhaps from an intense fear, and he noted that there are great advantages to serving such a goddess. It is said that when touched by her a mortal feels no pain or fear, and legends speak of satyr warriors surviving more than a dozen grievous cuts from swords and axes without falling to the ground.

² In general this is a harmless prank, but in the case of a satyr king who once found his crown stolen by a peasant...the results were very painful. The king took the head off the peasant and then took the crown and dedicated it on the altar. He was reinstated as king that evening and threw a feast for the town.

The Arcane Elf Pantheon

The arcane elves have proselytized their pantheon of seven deities for thousands of years, tying the existence of all that is seen to the work of the gods. Some say that the myths have been revised over the years, with the gods and goddesses having less conflict amongst each other as struggles and trials came to the clans. If this is true, the current iteration of the pantheon and their myths has been the leading interpretation for decades, and thus I write it here.

The seven deities are tied to the seven elements: the sun, moon, darkness, fire, air, earth, and water. Each of these domains governs all that is in the universe, as well as the various needs, actions, and professions of the earth. Thus the elven deities are tied to both the forms and the particulars, the vast and the small.

- **Uranar:** The god of the sun who is sought for light, learning, illumination of the mind, and strategy, Uranar is the leader of the gods. Often portrayed with images of the sun, Uranar is invoked by students learning new subjects, kings seeking wisdom in ruling, and parents instilling fear in children (“Uranar sees all”).
- **Isil:** The goddess of the moon and sister of Duathiel, Isil is sought for prophecy and visions of the future. In this respect she also “illuminates” like Uranar, though she tells what will be instead of what is or was. She serves as his consort, and together they watch over the elves by day and night.
- **Duathiel:** The goddess of darkness and the sister of Isil, Duathiel serves many roles in the elven pantheon,

being the goddess of trickery as well as a goddess of protection and defense. Since elven clans often rely on darkness to travel silently from one place to another to avoid wary eyes, Duathiel has become known as a defender goddess among their people, shielding them from sight in the folds of her raiment. Among the deities she is unmarried, roaming the earth alone as she laughs with her sister.

- **Naur:** The god of fire, the forge, and war, Naur and his mighty hammer serve as a shield and sword for the elves. Just as fire consumes and the sword brings men low, so also does Naur bring his people victory as they consume their enemies. And just as fire warms a man on long, cold nights, so also Naur is the defender and guardian of the elves. Smithing, carving, forestry, and other trades are governed by Naur, with the foremost being the craft of war. He is the husband of Vilya, the goddess of the air, and together the higher natural elements work in unison upon the earth.³
- **Vilya:** The goddess of air and the wife of Naur, Vilya serves many purposes in the elven pantheon. She is the goddess of the air, and thus clouds, winds, and storms are part of her domain, making her a favorite patroness of seamen and seers alike. She also brings snow and ice resulting in her being seen as a defensive goddess when a village is besieged by an enemy and the weather turns foul, sapping the fighting vigor from their enemies.

³ The elves teach that a bellows is the ideal tool to aid in feeding a fire because it allows Naur and Vilya to work in unison together. There are similar examples

across cultures that they also point to, including wind guiding or deflecting arrows and fresh breezes reinvigorating craftsmen.

- **Hailah:** The goddess of the earth, living things, and the dead, Hailah is the preserver of earth, rocks, plants, creatures, and the one that welcomes the living into her embrace when they die. This makes Hailah unique among the pantheons as she is both the goddess of life and of death. The wife of Uinen, there are similarities in elven culture of water and earth working in unison, including the growing of crops, the shaping of ravines, and the presence of dew on plants in the morning. Hailah's domain is arguably the largest, and is often portrayed with an image of a tree stretching up and out, covering all that is.
- **Uinen:** The water god and consort of Hailah, Uinen is portrayed as dark and mysterious like the sea, but also abiding and kind like a shallow stream. Uinen's domain of water makes him beloved among fishermen and mariners, naturally, but he is also invoked by knights and other cavalrymen as they call for his aid in rolling over their enemies like a mighty tide. This has led to an invocation of Uinen alongside Naur when going to battle, as the former aids them in attacking, while the latter is invoked both on offense and on defense.

The Wild Pantheon

A pantheon found in The Wilds and commonly worshipped by Wild Men tribes of that region, The Wild Pantheon is perhaps the most well-known of the pantheons purely because it has spread across such a vast tract of land. Centered around war and a pending prophecy of the destruction of all that is, the gods of this pantheon are rumored to wage war against a world-destroying power in the

Final Days, and their trials and calamities in the current days are a mere foreshadowing of the final doom that is to come.

- **Fargeig:** Fargeig is the chief god of this pantheon, and is the god of foresight, portends, learning, and the sun, moon, and stars in the firmament. He is also a god of war, often invoked for his wisdom in strategy on the field of battle. Fargeig is married to Hervis, and the two lead the rest of the gods and goddesses.
- **Firga:** The goddess of industry and the forge, Firga is the patron goddess of craftsmen and workmen. She is also a goddess of war, making weapons for the rest of the gods and guiding the hands of smiths and tanners.
- **Tundir:** The god of thunder, lightning, and the natural elements, Tundir's wrath is his most salient quality in the songs of the priests. Portended by the coming storm, Tundir is the great warrior of the gods, and is a god of war invoked to bring great victory and strength to those who follow him.
- **Hervis:** The goddess of the harvest, art, and culture, she is the chieftainess of the gods and wife of Fargeig. Together they bring about culture: learning, farming, art, and strategy. Hervis is also a goddess of war (are you picking up a trend? They are all invoked for war), as she is beseeched by the priests to withhold the rain from their enemies and dry up the streams of their foes.
- **Katl:** The god of husbandry and livestock, Katl is an interesting god in that he is the only god I have come across in a pantheon who is male and the god of childbearing. The legends tell that this was his domain

due to his assistance in the birth of the great War Wolf that guards their halls, as he helped it in its birth and taught the pup to stand. So when a mother is in labor, they invoke Katl to assist and he helps to guide the development of the child. It's very interesting: I wish more study was done on this legend, as it is unique among the pantheons. He is also a war god, invoked to bless the horses, griffons, and other mounts that ride to battle, and prayers that he will provide livestock for his followers to consume during a siege or raid.

- **Kurpaz:** The goddess of navigation and seafaring, she is also a war goddess invoked during coastal raids (or "vikings," as they are called). She is the daughter of Fargeig and Hervis, and is said to have learned some of her father's skill in portending, and thus guides the ships and boats of the faithful to their desired port.

Dwarf Pantheon of the Highland Halls

The dwarves descend from Dror, Father of the Dwarves, who is said to still watch over his people to this day from Alfdornat (or "Heaven," where ale runs freely and smithcraft comes easily). The rest of the dwarf pantheon consists of his initial offspring, the fathers and mothers of the great dwarven clans.

Unlike the other pantheons, dwarves do not tie members of the pantheon with specific crafts, domains, or professions, but rather beseech their ancestors for the virtues they admire in them.

- **Dror, Father of the Dwarves:** The first dwarf and the father of all, Dror ruled the dwarves from his ancient throne in the highlands for centuries, aiding the dwarf clans in creating more halls so that upon his passing on

to Alfdornat. He also ruled wisely and fairly, and thus is invoked when one desires to see justice done. It is said that one day he will return to unite the clans in a war that will end their struggle with the goblin clans, but when that day will come no one knows.

- **Marli, Mother of the Dwarves:** The wife of Dror and often affectionately called, "The Happy Mother," Marli is associated with love and charity, giving freely to all like a mother hen. Like all dwarf women she has no beard, and her hair is thick and often braided in her iconography. When Dror passed on to Alfdornat, it was Marli who insured that all of the clans received their hall, and gave the ancient hall of Dror to Balor, his second son and father of the longbeards. When Dror returns, it is said that it shall be hailed by a deep, guttural laugh from Marli at his side.
- **Zorin, Father of the Forkbeards:** The oldest of the sons of Dror, Zorin longed for a chance to build a hall as vast and powerful as his father's, and he succeeded. The hall of the forkbeards is massive, with deep mines, wide courtyards, and spacious rooms. His throne room could accommodate giants and dragons easily for the ceiling is so high, and the ale they brew is among the finest in quality. Those seeking ambition to excel turn to Zorin, for he never lacked in accomplishment and success when he set to work on an endeavor.
- **Gelra, Mother of the Forkbeards:** The wife of Zorin who stood by his side as he blazed a path through the earth, Gelra is associated with courage and valor. The myths say that while the hall of the forkbeards was being hewn from the rock they encountered fire drakes

that lived within the mountain, and the heat of their breath almost killed Zorin and Dror as they attempted to drive them from the mountain. But Gelra slipped behind the drakes and took a stout blade under their bellies, killing the drakes where they stood. One turned on her, attempting to consume her with his fire, but as the smoke cleared Gelra still stood, burned by alive, the beast dead at her feet. She would later recover from her wounds, though her face would be forever scarred, a mark she bears in all of her later iconography.

- **Balor, Father of the Longbeards:** The father of the longbeards and Dror's second son, Balor was steady and measured in all he did. Whether fighting, smithing, or organizing merchant traders, Balor had a certain wisdom about him that avoided unnecessary risk while still achieving victory. Toward this end he was given the Hall of Dror, and has been the ancestral hall of the longbeards ever since. Balor is invoked for temperance, lending wisdom through patience and avoiding excess.
- **Turno, Mother of the Longbeards:** The wife of Balor and the oldest of the children of Dror and Marli, Turno was originally pledged to Zorin but made a plea to her parents to instead let her marry Balor. Her words were so well measured and wise that they assented, and the two were married. Over the centuries she aided him in his thinking, and together they met with success side by side. Turno is sought when one desires prudence, and gives a measure of her practical wisdom to the one who will take time to learn it.
- **Dwar, Father of the Vastbeards:** Dwar's chin hairs never grew as long as that of Zorin or Balor, but his

sideburns were far greater than any other, resulting in a whole clan of dwarves with shorter, wider beards. This is the clan we call the vastbeards, and Dwar took great pride in the fact that his beard was as wide as he was. Often greased before going into battle to cause axes and blades to glance off of his armor, Dwar was known among the dwarves as the warrior, stalwart in battle, holding the line for hours against their foes. To those who require tenacity, Dwar is the one they turn to, desiring his willingness to endure hardship with an iron will and a clear mind.

- **Laki, Mother of the Vastbeards:** The wife of Dwar and the last of the dwarves to give birth, the seers were afraid that Laki was barren, for it took many years for her and Dwar to have children. But Laki continued to hope that a family would be given to them, and in the fullness of time not only did they bear children, she bore more children than any of the other clans. This time of barrenness also granted Laki a chance to fight alongside Dwar as a shieldmaiden, and together they stood against the foe, combining his stalwart tenacity with her unrelenting optimism in the face of darkness. Laki is sought by those looking for hope, be it personal or global in scope.
- **Kuzi, Father of the Manchu:** The fourth son of Dror who had a moustache but no beard, Kuzi and his kin are mocked for their lack of "chin warmers," but those of the manchu clan know that the growing of their long moustaches requires skill that surpasses all other clans and is quite a thing of beauty to behold when it is done. This they inherit from their father Kuzi, who dared to brave more adversity than any of his brothers. His

exploits took him across the world, building shrines and felling beasts across the earth alongside his wife, Relfa with an unshakable will. Kuzi is sought by those looking for greater faith, both in the divine and in the seeking of one's destiny and fate.

- **Relfa, Mother of the Manchu:** The wife of Kuzi and an accomplished fire mage, Relfa was slimmer than your average dwarf woman and was said to move with exceptional grace. Sometimes mistaken for a small human rather than a dwarf, Relfa was fair and nimble, dancing to aid her as she cast her spells. Relfa is sought by those looking for greater grace, both in movement and in treatment of another. Thus it is common for dwarves before a social encounter to bless the name of Relfa with the phrase, "May Relfa dance above us."
- **Dunbur, Father of the Barren:** The dwarf father with no beard, Dunbur is the father of the dwarves known as The Barren, as they do not grow facial hair. This has led to some of them being mistreated in the past, but it has also led to a certain stoic virtue in his offspring that he also modeled. Dunbur is sought by those in need of fortitude, bearing what they must in this world.
- **Meervi, Mother of the Barren:** The youngest and quietest of the children of Dror, in all the sagas Meervi says perhaps forty words total, split between a half dozen lines. A quiet soul who fortifies and strengthens from the shadows, Meervi is the faithful wife of Dunbur, and attributed by him as the source of his endurance in the song, *The Halls of Tethys*. Meervi is sought when one desires humility, granting her steady strength of quietness and gentleness.

Giant Pantheon

A pantheon of deities worshipped by the giants of Starkeberg in the highland region, these deities display the pride and strength of their people, with all of them having stories of them crushing hundreds of warriors with ease (mostly humans from the Kingdom of Arden or satyrs from the Kingdom of Ghalish, as they have an alliance with the Bajrakdor goblin clans that share the mountain with them).

- **Zerstorer:** The king of the gods of Starkeberg, the giants believe that he set the mountain range in place, and in its heart he gave them great stores of iron and gold so that they would flourish. He is the "providing destroyer" in their culture, blessing them and crushing their enemies before them. Portrayed as a mighty giant engulfed in a black mist, it is claimed that those who look upon his face will die, and thus in iconography his face is always portrayed as a silhouette with no detail. He is known for his use of the war hammer, and thus it is customary for the kings of Starkeberg to wield a war hammer in reverence for Zerstorer.
- **Erstellen:** The smith of the gods and the patron of all craftsmen, Erstellen is portrayed as forever young, with a short, blonde beard and a youthful face. Said to have fashioned the walls of Starkeberg with his own hands, Erstellen is the crafting god of an industrial town, and thus among the priests of Starkeberg his servants tend to be the wealthiest. His temples are also intricately carved, and are among the most beautiful temples in all of Zurn.

- **Leistod:** The goddess of death and calamity, Leistod bears a pair of long daggers that she uses to slit throats and plunge deep into those whose time has come. The most feared among the pantheon due to her capricious nature, Leistod priestesses are also a guild of highly skilled giant assassins, surprisingly nimble and silent considering their stature. In their mythology Leistod once decapitated Zerstoror himself, requiring Erstellen to forge a neck brace to hold his head onto his body. Surprisingly, Leistod made no attempt to seize the throne of the gods after this move: she did it just to see if she could succeed.
- **Jagerin:** The goddess of the hunt and livestock, Jagerin is portrayed with a set of short javelins and very long legs (which, considering the fact that she's a giant, makes them even longer than you'd originally think). This gives her a bit of a spindly look in iconography, but her reputation is anything but. Strong limbed and capable of jumping over a mile at a time, Jagerin is the lady of the hunt, bringing down dragons with her darts. She is also a goddess associated with justice and the law in Starkeberg, invoked upon the pronouncement of guilt so that if the accused escapes they will be hunted down by her.
- **Wissen:** The god of wisdom and learning, Wissen is not considered a powerful god in the pantheon, but is regarded as necessary for thriving so he has temples throughout the city. A small sect of the city, though, is highly devoted to him because of his gift of prophecy, aiding his followers in foreseeing calamities and danger in advance. Thus, before campaigns, kings and warriors will search the face of Wissen, but otherwise most tend

to make their own way. It has been discovered that Wissen will predict a favorable outcome for the right price, as determined by his priests.

- **Gipfuli:** The goddess of childbearing and healing, she is the youngest deity of the pantheon and thus has the lowest station, relegated to the realm of healing and raising the weak of the clan. Despite her low position, though, she is a lively goddess, and is the only goddess in iconography depicted smiling. All others are shown with the stoic resolve befitting of giants that live in a vast fortress made of stone.

The Goblins of Bajrakdor

The goblins of Bajrakdor live in the Griffon Mountains in the Wilds. A hardy folk broken into various tribal families that live all along the vast mountain range, the goblins serve a pantheon of eleven deities that are all considered of equal power, with each deity watching over and being worshipped by a different tribe.

This makes them unique: there is no hierarchy among their gods, and that also means there is a great deviation of practice as regards their worship. Some are bloodthirsty and unforgiving, others tenderhearted, and still others fickle as the wind.

- **Zidoram:** A god of darkness who shields his people from the eyes of their enemies and gives them victory through subterfuge and ambush, Zidoram is taught to be hard to seek, hard to follow, and fierce in his hatred of those that oppose his people. This gives his shamans a great amount of leeway both as regards doctrine (“for who can know the ways of Zidoram?”) and cover if they make a mistake (by the same reasoning). Often

pictured with a large mantle of black shadows, he is said to hate the moon and stars, and some stories say that someday he will blot them out of the sky, casting the night into deep darkness.

- **Kokan:** A mighty warrior god with a great hammer, Kokan is only satisfied by blood. His followers are known to cut themselves every morning and every evening to appease him, and in return the enemies of his clan have been driven into madness during battle, losing countless men to a crazed delirium just as the fighting closes. Depicted with a two-handed hammer, some say that the later development of the war hammer was inspired by Kokan's likeness. We cannot confirm or deny this, though the paintings of Kokan with a long hammer predate the invention of the weapon, so it is possible that the war hammer was derived from his legend.
- **Hungragi:** The goddess known as the Hunger of the Hills, she is viewed as an insatiable goddess who feeds on the emotions of her people. She loves merriment but will also feed on sorrow, and thus her clan shamans tend to use emotional appeals to draw out more feeling for the goddess's delight. Pictured as a female goblin with an expansive mouth and gullet, Hungrari is among the more gruesome depictions of the Bajrakdor deities, which is impressive among their iconography.
- **Muzug:** The fatalist goddess with a reed flute, Muzug is said to play the dirge of all living things. Worshipped

for her foresight and portending, the shamans of Muzug have many vibrant visions, aided by her as they attempt to see the future. Few goblin leaders request her shamans to prophesy, though, because they always return with grim tidings of a looming fate. This has led many who would have power to seek out tidings, as they learn the coming doom of another and then seek to take that person's place, only to receive an ill omen themselves as time passes and the wheel of fate turns.

- **Vagunkapul:** Also called The Great Goblin, this deity is the jolliest and most dangerous of their gods. In one hand he is often depicted with a sling that he uses to bring down great beasts (and thus is sometimes treated much akin to a hunting god), and in the other hand he holds a fat toad, representing the love of the feast that he inspires in his people.⁴ He is a god sought for times of feasting and for war, though the visions the priests receive are often mixed. Perhaps that is just his way.
- **Mangeth:** A ghastly apparition, the goddess Mangeth is commonly depicted as a ghost: a fell spirit haunting caves, rivers, mountain passes, or swamps, looking for those who harmed her children (her worshippers). She is invoked as both a defender and avenger, to bring about swift justice and great agony on those who harm her followers. This has led to secret cults following her among the other clans, as she is very much a goddess of action, and those who feel harmed will find her practices and doctrines alluring.

⁴ I hear that goblins find fat toads to be a specific delicacy, as the meat is tender and has a jelly-like substance to it. I myself have not tried it, nor do I intend to.

- **Fhabal:** A god often portrayed as a massive flame in the form of a goblin that consumes its enemies, the shamans of Fhabal are often Fire mages, and see fire as the sign of the work of the god in bringing about his will on earth. This has led them to never develop processes for putting out fires, and if a person, animal, or possession catches on fire they will not snuff it out for fear of hindering the will of Fhabal. This has led to greater intrigue in the clan, as setting fire to someone's house, effects, or body is seen as a moral judgment from Fhabal so long as the instigator is not discovered. It has also reinforced the clan's decision to live in caves which cannot be burned down so easily.
- **Satug:** An elemental deity often portrayed as a massive goblin who controls the wind by passing gas, Satug is perhaps the grossest of the deities on this list and by far the least refined goddess among the pantheons. All of the stories of her are crude to the refined ear, and while I would love to tell you that all of this is fake, it is not only taught in earnest by her shamans, but is recorded to be at least partially true in the chronicles of the Woodland Kingdom, as it is noted in the battle that before the elf army was attacked by the goblins they heard a strange chant of "Satug" from above them, and a massive wind carrying a foul odor swept through the army, causing men to grow nauseous and faint before the goblins fell on them, butchering their force. So I am in doubt: there may be some veracity to this cult.
- **Tanfukamab:** Literally a massive foot personified in a cult, Tanfukamab, "The Destroyer of Worlds" as they sometimes call him, is invoked by his shamans when they desire their enemies to be destroyed under his

great feet. The rest of the time his tribe literally lives in fear that they will be next, and so they hide away in caves, do not venture out into the sun, and are driven mad during thunderstorms. There is a great imprint in the plains near the mountains that one could make out to be a large goblin foot, and they claim that this is where Tanfukamab first touched the earth.

- **Shatarpi:** A reptilian goddess said to consume whole villages who angered her worshippers, Shatarpi is the only non-goblinesque deity in the pantheon, literally looking like a velociraptor and a bear had an ill-favored daughter. Her worshippers carve her disgusting image into everything, and it is not uncommon to find even the most mundane items with her visage present on it. In battle her servants call upon her to aid them in their hunt, and some say that scales begin to grow over the skin of her people.
- **Samund:** Samund the Plaguebearer is said to make his enemies suffer from various maladies, so his shamans are trained in herbology and Earth magic more so than others. One's devotion to bringing wellness is seen as close to godliness in this clan, but by the same token the shamans of Samund are also gifted poisoners and cultivators of disease for when Samund's will must be exercised against its enemies. It is a fascinating cult, as you see both wellness and fatal illness being sought by the most devout practitioners at the same time, and within a perfectly consistent worldview.

The Chakogu Gremlins

A clan of gremlins living near The Shining Lake, the Chakogu have a fascinating pantheon that is named with the sounds made in the throat to used to summon them, not necessarily the “name” of the deity.⁵ Since these are only the deities that they know how to invoke and summon the aid of, it has also been theorized by theologians that there are more members of the pantheon than we know, as the gremlins have just not found how to invoke them.

- **Wagag:** The smallest of the gods and the instigator of trouble, Wagag is the most invoked god of the gremlin pantheon as he is involved in trickery, ambushing, stealing, trespassing, espionage, illusions, hunting, and strangely enough, cooking. While not as powerful as the others, his little size gets him into a lot of places (and predicaments) the others cannot find, and since these are gremlins we are talking about, it is appealing to them. So Wagag is a crowd favorite, and receives sacrifices almost every moment of the day.
- **WAGAG:** The father of the gods, his name is said just like Wagag except one must scream his name to invoke him because he is so much larger than Wagag. A god of war and “justice” (though I have yet to find a legal code among any gremlin tribe), WAGAG is often portrayed as just a massive hand, reaching down to take away evildoers or forming a fist to crush his foes. It is said that gremlins favor slings and other blunt objects because it is evocative of the fist of WAGAG, but I have not found conclusive evidence of this.

- **Rococococo:** Also known as the Wayfinder for his gift of retrieving what has been lost, Rococococo in the myths is the foil of Wagag, cleaning up the messes he makes and being the butt end of many jokes because of his love of order. Rococococo does play a central part, though, in the pantheon, as he is the finder of the gremlin people. The gremlins say that their gods used to rule over a different civilization, but when their people were destroyed they fled, looking for a new home and people to call their own. Rococococo found the gremlins, and after bringing the gods to them the gremlins grew numerous and spread across the world. Trackers and treasure seekers commonly revere him, as do messengers and bounty hunters looking to bring their business safely and swiftly to their quarries.
- **Haloota:** The wife of Wagag and his closest confidant, Haloota is the Holder of Secrets, entrusted with both juicy and stale intrigue. In a culture that depends so heavily on trickery and deception, Haloota holds the power of a goddess unlike any other because she sees and knows all. With enough placation she will share (because for the right price any secret is too juicy to keep to oneself), making the priests and priestesses of the Haloota shrines very wealthy.
- **Screeeee:** The sound of a diving eagle, Screeeee (there are five “E”s I’ve been told: no more, no less) is the goddess of death and wisdom. While not a common pairing of virtues among pantheons, the gremlins

⁵ It should be noted that “The Shining Lake” is really just a small lake near a community of humans; it’s special to the fey clans that live near it, but otherwise

you could pass by and never know you saw it. So if you have never heard of it before, that’s probably why.

explain it as the virtues of the eagle (which is how Screeeee is always portrayed): eyes that see all, proper timing, and fatal blows. The priests of Screeeee also serve as executioners, bringing the will of the chieftain down upon the accused like a hawk or eagle.

- **Thbtbtbt:** The goddess of plenty who brings about the growth of the raspberries and other fruits in its time (which the gremlins are very fond of), Thbtbtbt is also associated with partying, childbearing, love – basically all of the good things. While all of the gremlin deities are pictured as smiling in all of their images, Thbtbtbt has the largest grin, and brings the greatest happiness to her acolytes. The priestesses of Thbtbtbt actually paint their faces with a smile so that they are always smiling whenever people see them, often using the juice of a raspberry for the paint.

The Fey Spirits

A group of spirits worshipped by sprite clans across the globe, some say that they are the souls of the first sprites that still walk among the clans of the fey to guide them and direct them in their interactions with the Big Folk. While not large in number, they are the only beings I have heard of that take on different forms – both animal and spritely visages – when they appear to others.

- **Spiorad the Wise:** The eldest of the spirits, Spiorad the Wise comes to those who seek counsel on large and weighty matters of state. He is most commonly sought by those in power or their clerical advisers, and is said to always speak in rhyme. The stories also indicate that the term “the wise” should be seen as both a moral and

a knowledge indicator: he is wise, meaning that he is good and perceives the good, not just that he gives good advice and counsel. From this anecdote comes the sprite saying that someone who is doing evil is “unwise,” even if they are cunning and intelligent.

- **Slea the Wild:** The warrior spirit who appears to warriors to aid them in battle, Slea wields a spear and is mantled in a great badger cloak, said to preserve her from all slingstones, arrows, and bolts. Known from her terrifying scream, some say that she is the mother of the banshees, though her hair is often depicted as being braided, which banshees do not tend to do.
- **Cear dai the Mighty:** The forgesmith and craftsman of the spirits, Cear dai the Mighty comes to those who make things, both great and small. He is invoked when a blacksmith begins his work, a tanner starts to stretch the hide, or when the orator begins his argument. So he is much more than just a spirit of craftsmen: he is also the spirit invoked by priests, doctors, judges – any person performing their vocation. Coblynaureu clans have large shrines to Cear dai, and some say that this is why they are blessed with such excellent handiwork.
- **Gheala the Sorrowful:** The spirit who comes to those who suffer, weep, and those in childbirth, Gheala is said to wail as she flits through the open air, causing the sad sound we associate with the wind. She is a great comforter who suffers with those who face hardship and works to set things right to bring relief and peace. None of the tales have her working through conflict or intrigue, though: all of her stories show her imploring powers to rise up and solve the matter, working from

behind the scenes to bring about peace. Her persuasive power draws heavily on emotion, as you can imagine for a wailing girl wan with distress.

- **Abhainn the Gentle:** The spirit who comes to those who care for the land and the guardian of animals both wild and domestic, Abhainn is the tender woman you would hire to take care of your cows while you are away on your journey. A spirit who cares deeply about caring for nature and the non-sentient world, Abhainn has had several eco-friendly cults spring up in her name, acting to preserve the world around them from careless persons and groups. Her long hair is said to create flowers and green grass wherever they touch, and so she lets them stream behind her as she leaps across the landscape, adding to the beauty of the world wherever she lands.
- **Bas the Jolly:** A spirit that appears more rotund and corpulent than the rest (or really almost any spirit that anyone has ever met), Bas is called when souls must be taken to the Shroud, insuring that they make it there safely. The spirit of the underworld who welcomes them to the dance of the dead, Bas is always portrayed with a smile and a jig in his step. Some say he is painted as fat and jolly because he eats the souls of the dead, but I find to justification in the tales I have read. It seems that he is truly carefree now that life is over and all that remains is rest from labor and the promise of life beyond the Shroud.

Conclusion

Pantheons like these are derived from the regional spirits that aid the avatars in governing the world. Some are kindly, some are vicious. Some are just, some capricious. But the critical nature of them is the same: they use power from the supernatural realm to aid their followers.

In some cases their wills come up against the wills of other deities, and when that happens you have a supernatural struggle. But more on that in a future chapter.

In the next chapter we will turn to the question of religious sects centered around a lore or philosophy of magic. These are perhaps the most common of all religions, as magic is very visual and thus easy to respect for its power and strength.

Chapter III: Magic Religions

Magic is powerful, far more powerful than mortals, and so it is no surprise that religious cults have sprung up over the centuries. While pantheons worship gods – spiritual beings that aid the Beyonder and the avatars in administrating the world – the servants of magic cults are more varied, as some worship the magic of their element itself while others worship a deity tied to their practice of the element.

We will begin by looking at the elemental magic lore – Fire, Air, Earth, Desert, Water, and Life – before moving on to the non-elemental lores. We will then wrap up the chapter by discussing synergy cults, or cults that fold multiple lores into their worship.

Elemental Lore Followings

Element-based lores come in various forms, though they agree on one trait in the main: their lore is the greatest. The reasoning changes based on the cult, but the reasoning essentially boils down to this: our lore is fundamentally more powerful than the others, and that is why we are devoted to this magical tradition.

- **The Cult of Fire:** Perhaps the most prevalent magic cult with the most “dialects” of beliefs, the Cult of Fire is present in almost every major town and is very prevalent across mountainous regions, in no small part due to the practicality and power of the lore. Centered around the Lore of Fire – a lore known for its powerful attacks and utility shielding of its practitioners – the Cult of Fire emphasizes both the preserving nature of the lore and the destructive element of its power. And

since Fire spells tend to be easier to cast, it is relatively easy to pick up and practice, even by a layman who has no formal magic training. The Cult of Fire seeks to be a preserving and refining element of the locality, with practitioners doing what they can to make their town and/or kingdom stronger and better by burning away the decay and fostering room for new things to grow. This has led them to internal reforms, joining the local militia, and violently overthrowing governments across the world.

- **The Windswept Nomads:** The Windswept Nomads is a wandering cult of Air mages that do not believe in the maintaining of monasteries or temples. Instead the mages and their acolytes meet on hills, mountains, large trees, and other high areas in the region, letting the air created by their incantations wash over them. It is a cult built around passion and *pathos* as the fauns say, with emotion and the “spirit” of the element guiding their decisions and actions. But don’t assume that this is an unbridled, “unthinking” cult: the Lore of Air and the Lore of Heavens are known for their foresight and awareness, and the decisions made by the archmages, though at times seemingly chaotic like the movements of the wind, are often guided by an underlying wisdom. They attribute this wisdom to the element.
- **The Arid Cult:** A cult highly practiced among the Eastern clans, the Arid Cult centers around the Desert Lore and is full of mystery (as can be expected from a lore that involves illusions and mirages). Central to the Arid Cult is the understanding that the combination of heat and earth (be that sand, dirt, or stone) is all that lasts, with water, life, and even light being engulfed in

these two things. So the Arid Cultists teach that one should embrace that which is permanent, and that means the beating heat and the whirling sand.

- **The Forest Fellowship:** A cult devoted to the growth and vitality of forests, orchards, and vineyards, the Fellowship relies on the Lore of Earth (and specifically the use of the *Life Growth* and *Healing Rain* spells, which all members of the cult learn) to fill the world with beauty and goodness. Their goal is to cover every inch of the world with foliage and creatures, for, if the whole world was filled with creatures and animals so that there was no room to move, people would not be able to wage war. So you will commonly find them aiding farmers and herdsman, growing their crops and helping with births to keep the population of flora and fauna increasing.
- **Daughters of the Depths:** A Water cult that only admits females, the Daughters of the Depths aspire to learn the secrets of the world and of the future. With heavy instruction on the art of scrying with extensive time devoted to study and learning, it has been embraced primarily by the upper classes that have time for leisure and study, though it is not uncommon for lords and ladies to take commoners into their retinue for the expressed purpose of serving the court through the teachings of the cult. They have aided kings and queens in waging war, judging the people, matters of state, diplomacy, and choice of suitors for their heirs, and are widely respected across the land.
- **Mystics of the Mist:** A cult centered on the Lore of Life that tracks the presence of “the Mist” to determine

how they should act in a given situation, the Mystics of the Mist are less seers (which is what people typically associate with predicting the future) and more fanatics, allowing the Mist to lead them wherever it goes, rather than trying to find “the best path” or “the wisest path.” The result is a cult that can have wide swings in its dogma and methodology, appealing to those with a more whimsical or chaotic bent.

Non-Elemental Lore Followings

The non-elemental lores tend to have more fanatical bases (if that is possible), as their motivations are often driven from moral and polarized positions beyond just a connection with the world. They also tend to garner more clout and power in larger cities, as the removal of the people from the natural elements and toward social order moves their allegiances as well.

- **The Order of Light:** Perhaps the most well known religion tied to a magic lore, the Order of Light is a sect of Beyonder worshippers that use the Lore of Light to pursue the will of the Beyonder. This ranges from the art of healing (as the Lore of Light is very good at that), driving out evil spirits and the undead, prophecy, wise counsel, and defending persons and villages from an attacking force. They are best known for their cadres of paladins that track down and destroy necromancers and vampires, often from the backs of griffons and hippogriffs (though the region dictates which mounts they use; it is not mandated by the order, and thus you will sometimes see them on tyrannosaurus or eagles).

- **The Dark Cult:** A Dark Lore cult with several splinter sects, the “orthodox” Dark cultists believe in using the lore for subversion: they seek to overthrow the powers that be as well as shadow organizations like Arcane Ascending and the Eyes of Asharak. Less orthodox factions believe that there are remedial and supporting elements of the faith, articulating the ability of darkness to shield and hide as the basis for their tenets of belief. All sects, however, agree on a reliance on the Dark Lore and darkness generally to accomplish their goals. Unlike other cults, they also do not have iconography or symbols of any kind, as to display a sign of the sect would be to “bring it to light,” and that is anathema.
- **The Time Turners:** A Time Lore cult that centers around archmages of the Lore of Time (*a Tier 5 or higher initiate adjective*) who use their knowledge of time magic to change the fate and direction of the world. A troop of seers and mages, they use their prophetic abilities to foresee what will happen, and then use portals to arrive at the location to change the direction of the future to their desired outcome. I spoke once to a Time Turner about their tenets of faith and what guides them in their decisions, and they said that they were guided by the Helix of Hierarchs, the top clerics among the Time Turners, who commune with the sprite deities for guidance.
- **Followers of the Faerie Queen:** A cult of fanatics that love the Faerie Queen and wish to see her will done across the world, initiates are vague on who this

mysterious queen is, though they all agree that she is a sundancer sprite.⁶ The clerics of the Faerie Queen are fickle, with commands to the faithful followers to rise up against a ruler and then to be obedient to his/her rule days later, “for this is the will of the Faerie Queen.” Some have questioned whether this is a real religion, and while it is possible that it is merely a ruse, I treat it as a real cult as it has real power behind it (even if only political), and since there have been many tales of a follower receiving power from an archfey of some sort, I am willing to treat it as a real religion, even if details on the specific entity they follow is hidden. The use of fey magic (especially haunting songs and strange lights) is common among the priests of the cult, as evidence of the blessing of the Faerie Queen upon their words.

Synergy Lore Sects

Synergy sects combine two or more magic lores in their cultic practices, and thus are not easily grouped into the two divisions above. There are many synergy followings, so we will only present some of the more well-known sects here.

- **The Gleaming Phoenix:** A sect started by Sir Aedan Solas of the Island of Callun, the sect combines the Lore of Light with the Lore of Fire to both purge evil and defend small villages from raiders. The sect first began in a small village with Sir Aedan training a single apprentice, and from there it became one of the largest sects among the human kingdoms. It did not catch on

⁶ I attempted to seek out various sprite scholars to explain this to me, but when I mentioned it to them all they did was giggle and tell me that they could not say anything on the subject. So the mystery must endure.

far beyond the reach of Callun and Arden, but where it did catch on the chapter houses grew in number and in political power. Members of the Gleaming Phoenix that serve as advisors use their power to insure that frontier towns are safe and that .

- **The Na'Dali Brotherhood:** The Brotherhood is an order established by monks who desire to travel across the world and bring peace to an otherwise chaotic world. Their desire for tranquility and serenity between all peoples does not make them pacifists, though many are. They adamantly stand opposed to those who threaten the stability of the societal and political fabric of Zurn, and practice the Lore of Earth and Lore of Water to aid in preserving the life and vitality of localities. Because they are devoted to preserving the social order (regardless of what it is), they have become known as the “primal peace cult,” as they truly value peace and stability, not a set of ideals.
- **The Path of Shadows:** A cult that practices both the Dark Lore and the Lore of Shadows, the Path of Shadows is a strange cult in that it intentionally does not teach its practitioners anything about its tenets. The theory behind this cult is that the Way of Life (the teaching on how one ought to live) is obscured on purpose by the god Sotetseg, and thus one must follow the path to learn the truths of the world. Because the path is obscured it is called the Path of Shadows, and only by walking the Path of Shadows can we learn the Way of Life. It thus tends to be a “School of Hard Knocks” in practice, with practitioners learning truths through experience instead of through doctrine.

- **The Prosperity Gospel:** A Lore of Earth and Lore of Life cult set on growing and filling the earth with living things, Prosperity Gospelers center their teachings on a single tenet: if you are doing well financially that is because you are doing all the right things. If you are not prospering you need to mend your ways. The mend is not clearly articulated in any of their teachings, but as best I can make it out, you must accept the “five-fold blessing” on your life: good health, good shelter, good food, good friendships, and good self-image. If one accepts these five things, you will be blessed. They use spells like *Healing Rain* and *Magic Mist* to bring these things about, and it tends to have a stronger following in urban settings.
- **The Lava Lamp:** A Lore of Fire and Lore of Earth cult that uses the grounding of the earth and the light of the flame to guide their tenets, Lava Lamp initiates (commonly called “Lampstands”) use the lores to illuminate the minds and ground the souls of those around them. With a mix of *Stoke the Fires* and *Life Growth* they attempt to cheer, heal, and assist persons in their work to make their labor more enjoyable or easy, winning them converts. Unlike some of the other “heal and aid the downtrodden” cults, the Lampstands are favorable to violence if it will bring about stability. As one Lampstand apologist told me, “Earthquakes destroy the old order to bring about a new and better order. Volcanoes bury the old under ash that makes for fertile soil. This is the way of things, and we seek to join the world in its creative work.”

Conclusion

Magic lore religions are sometimes dismissed as mere worship of a magic lore or incantation. I hope that from this study you realize that it is far more than that: often there is an entity that is worshipped *through* the lore, and thus the religion is centered on the magic lore, but as a means of reaching someone or something. There is also a lot of nuance in the various religious tenets, making for engaging dialogue about what is and what ought to be.

In the next chapter we will discuss the religions that are called “animist” by many: nature and animal worship, with a small side of nature spirit worship which also appears in some societies.

Chapter IV: Nature and Animist Sects

Some of the religious sects in the world center on worshipping the world around us, be that the world itself, the creatures that roam it, or the spirits of the earth that live in the rocks, trees, lakes, streams, and mountains of the world.

While magical sects revere the power of the magical realm and religious sects worship the avatars and lesser spirits of the earth, nature and animist sects stem from a gratitude for the world they live in, and while they may lack the strength of the pantheons and avatars we discussed in past chapters, they represent profoundly close and personal forces, and that proximity provides intimacy that leads to their worship.

We will begin with the nature worship sects, and then examine the animal and spirit worship (or “animist”) sects next.

Nature Worship

The nature cults center around natural phenomena and terrain: forests, mountains, comets, and various other natural things. These may be natural defenses for their followers, wondrous and amazing phenomena that astound the eyes and confound the mind, or are just beautiful and thus revered by the locals.

The critical thing to remember about these nature cults is that care for the land is a matter of religious devotion and fervor: walking on a sacred fern, drinking from a sacred pool, or picking the berries from a sacred grove could be seen as not just against the rules but as sacrilege, and the penalties could be dire.

- **Lumiset Cult:** The lumiset worship the aura known as the Northern Lights, admiring its beauty and searching

its patterns for meaning. They are commonly found in the highland regions where the Northern Lights are easy to see, but you do find proselytizing colonies in other regions. Some of their seers practice the Lore of Light and the Arcane Lore, drawing on the ancient power of the light to fuel their prophecies.

- **The Searchers of the Stars:** A nature cult that traces and worships comets and shooting stars, the Searchers (as they call themselves) spend a lot of time searching the stars for movements in the heavens. Searchers are well-respected due to their grasp of constellology, and are commonly sought by druid conclaves, kings, and magic schools alike.
- **The Aguugol Cult:** An aquatic colony of serpents that worship the Zurn River, which protects their home, has easy access to fish, and turns their waterwheels to grind their grain. So the water meets most of their needs: shelter, food, and of course fresh water. As one of the largest rivers in the world, the Aguugol worship the power and provision of the river, thanking it for its food and favor.
- **The Holmokala Cult:** A cult that formed in a swamp goblin clan that worships the marsh that keeps them safe, provides them with food, and gives them the poisons that they use for defense. They are known for both the use of high-end poisons and the recreational use of poisons, increasing their natural immunity to poisons. Some fatalities have occurred from this.
- **The Yanardag Cult:** A cult of wild men who worship the volcano that guards and provides for them. They

use the Lore of Fire, as you can expect, but they don't worship it (which is why it's a nature cult, not a magic cult). The volcano also only erupts at night, so it sheds light to guard against would-be sneaks, provides fertile soil for crops, and expands the island that they live on (albeit very slowly).

- **The Faithful Forest Cult:** A cult that began in a dryad colony that worships their local forest, the Faithful are known for starting colonies in forests that thrum with magical energy. The magic of the forests refresh and rejuvenate them, like a mother caring for them, and thus they worship the forests that house them. They commonly practice Earth, Water, and druidic magic, though the Lore of Fire is also very common, and is used commonly to defend the forest against those that would harm it and the people within it.
- **The Seekers of Stiprus:** A cult that started in a small felmaran coastal colony of raiders, the Seekers worship the sea, as its power is insatiable and its waves cannot be held back. It gives them food, fish bones and coral for tools and dyes, and brings merchants from several underwater clans offshore. Every year their religious fervor takes them on voyages to discover, trade with, and in some cases raid places that they find. The cult recommends using the raiding period as a time for soul searching and reflection: as they discover new lands they will also discover themselves.
- **The Midbar:** A nachash clan that reveres (herein defined as "fears") the local desert, as it dries up and consumes everything around it. They make constant libations to the desert in the hopes that it will be

satisfied with the blood and bile that they give it, so that it will not consume them and their water as well. You tend to see a decent number of Desert Lore mages among the cult followers, but Earth Lore, Fire Lore, and in rare cases Water Lore can also be found there.

Animal Worship

Animal worshipping cults respect the spirits and physical traits of animals, often resulting in the heavy use of totems, marks, and runic tattoos as part of their ritualistic devotion. Whether they live in concert with the creatures that center heavily on their religion or live in fear of them, animals are perceived with increased value and importance in those cultures, so be careful how you treat your mount, pet, and familiar when among their people.

- **Servants of Squalor:** A cult that fears rats due to the diseases they carry (including typhoid, weresickness, and necrosis), and thus make sacrifices to the local rat colony to satiate them. They also ban the presence of druids and healing priests so as to prevent raising the ire of the local rat colony, not wanting to lessen the diseases in the region lest the rats punish the villages for their defiance.
- **The Kanoha Foresters:** A forest cult that worships the animals there, the Kanoha are most well-known for thanking the spirit of the animal when they kill it for its provision for their families. They also invoke the spirits of former animals upon their children when they are born, hoping that its strengths and talents in life will transfer to the child as they grow. They live a rustic and simple life, much like the animals that they hunt and

revere, and while they do not have large settlements, they are very sustainable, not lacking in food, shelter, water, or the production of tools.

- **The Priests of the Boars:** A cult of trolls that worship pigs. They do not eat them, don't let other people eat them, and they let them meander literally anywhere they wish (including into bedrooms and outhouses). Mistreatment or harm of a pig is a capital punishment offense: you will be executed if you harm a pig. In return the pigs fertilize the soil, root out poisonous herbs, and fill the area with a stench that most creatures do not like, though the trolls also have a poor sense of smell, so it does not bother them.
- **Children of the Dragon:** A cult that worships dragons of various kinds, ranging from the garden dragon that is only a few feet long to the massive feral dragons that rule the sky. You tend to see a number of mages who practice lores tied to the local dragon's abilities, with Dark mages being prevalent in regions where Children of the Dragon live near midnight dragons, Air mages being prevalent where coast dragons live nearby, and Fire mages being common everywhere.

Nature Spirit Worship

We will briefly examine some of these spirits in a future chapter but for now, know that these nature spirits (commonly referred to as "earth spirits") differ from angels, demons, gods, and avatars. They are often tied to specific localities (so their power is limited to a specific forest, stream, marsh, etc.), and thus their religious followings are very localized, with almost no proselytization in the

larger world (unless they invite their hearers to relocate to that region, as is the case of some of the sects below).

- **The Children of the Leshy:** A cult that worships the local leshy of their region, offering gifts of livestock to the leshy and banning the presence of axes and fire from their villages. The colony of fauns live in a more temperate climate, so it does not get particularly cold during the year, so the lack of fire is not as painful as it would be in other areas where leshy dwell. None of this was demanded by the leshy: it was brought to the table by the elders, and the leshy agreed to not to harm their people if they keep to their agreement.
- **Feeders of the Dead:** A multi-racial mistwraith cult with a central tenet of handing over men who are “treacherous” to the miswraiths to satisfy them and bring them to lasting peace. What is strange about this cult is that a “treacherous” person is not defined, and as best as I can make out, it is mostly comprised of people who are suspicious of the cult or people that they don’t like. Common adopters of the cult are sailors who have lived through a mistwraith attack, and some see it as a reaction of fear to the traumatic events of the attack.
- **Servants of the Dawnbringers:** A cult that worships dawnwraiths, seeing them as quasi-angelic beings and paying them great respect and homage. The Servants of the Dawnbringers pay special attention to singers and musicians, with skilled singers being treated almost as nobility and royalty.

Conclusion

While these are not as plentiful as the pantheons or magical sects of the world, where they reside they often carry a lot of weight in the local demesne, and thus are worth studying. Should you come across a culture that is naturalistic or animistic, it is wise to be careful in how one interacts with the world around them to avoid giving offense.

Chapter V: Religious Orders

Religious orders come in various forms, but they ultimately fall into two general categories: religious military orders and religious care orders. The former appear more often in the history books as they have been involved in many wars, but the latter tend to be more well known as they are visible in their effects in serving the poor and destitute.

We will look at the most well-known religious military orders first, and then look at the religious care orders.

Religious Military Orders

Military orders invite young men and women to join their ranks for one purpose: the train in the use of arms, armor, and magic to defeat the enemies of the order. Taking a sacred oath to uphold the dictates and virtues of the order, religious military orders take many forms as they are formed to counter specific threats.

- **The Order of the Sacred Grove:** The Order of the Sacred Grove is a military order dedicated to protecting the lives of the innocent and the helpless across Zurn. Their creed is to level the playing field between the strong and the powerful who would prey upon the weak and the helpless by lending strength and training to aid those who have no defense. They have a strong warrior tradition, with their agents participating in battles, civil wars, riotous conflicts, and baron disputes over the centuries. Knights of the Order use a variety of weapons, though staves are quite common (as they have both peaceful and battle utility), as are swords,

axes, and shields. Mounts are not necessary for a knight of the Order, though if a knight possesses a mount it is considered disgraceful for a mount to die in any way other than in battle or from old age.

- **The Druid Conclaves:** Practitioners of the Lore of Life that use their skill to fight demons and creatures from the depths, the druids combine heavy martial prowess with the magic of the Lore of Life (along with other magic lores). Magical warriors who use prophecy to find the location of portals appearing across the land, druids are commonly found on the front lines of wars against demons, undead armies, and aberrations. The druids fight with great fervor and train for decades to counter the forces of evil, wherever they appear.
- **The Battle Sisters Hospitaller:** An order of nuns trained in the art of war and medicine, the Battle Sisters establish chapter houses in villages and towns to give medical care and healing to the local populace during times of peace, and take up arms to aid the locality in times of war. Most commonly armed with swords, spears, halberds, and shields, troops of Battle Sisters have taken the field in many conflicts, providing protection for women and children in the midst of war.
- **The Rising Torrent:** An undersea military order that protects the creatures and civilizations of the waters from the Land Folk, The Rising Torrent doubles as an assassin network and a military order, conducting most of their warfare against their enemies through stealth and subterfuge. Relying heavily on ranged weaponry and knives, Rising Torrent members (known as Gales) leave a tell-tale mark of four slashes where they strike,

which they say is supposed to represent falling rain. Chapter houses for The Rising Torrent are generally beloved among water races, and are seen as patriots and freedom fighters against the encroachments of the Land Folk.

- **The Order of the Blue Lily:** An order of warriors and mages that covenant to protect the world from magical orders and sects, the Order of the Blue Lily often move incognito in almost every culture on the planet, but when the order calls they don the white tunics with green trim with the blue lily emblazoned on its chest and back. Their members hail from the elites of the culture, while commoners sing tales of their might and valor against powerful mages.

Religious Care Orders

Some orders are designed to protect persons from martial fears and others are started to give relief from no less valorous evils: sickness, hunger, poverty, and misfortune. Religious care orders are started for such means, to provide relief and security for those who have none, fighting to make the world a better place through prayers and porridge rather than strength of arms. Though there are those among these orders who are capable warriors, and have shown great valor in their time.

- **The Doric Order:** The friars of the Doric Order are devoted to mending the wounds of this world, and setting an example of the good and virtuous life that comes from selfless sacrifice and humble hearts. The friars live an ascetic life, moving from town to town, accepting only what is necessary to live, and refraining

from the carrying of traditional weapons (though their prayer icons in the form of a pine tree can double as a weapon in a pinch). Doric Friars usually dress simply, though they tend to be highly skilled in scribing and magical knowledge. The Dorics are one of the gender-exclusive orders in Zurn: only men may join the Doric Order. Women who share these views join the Order of St. Marcellus (which is examined below).

- **The Order of St. Marcellus:** A nunastic order with similar to the Doric Order, it was first established by St. Marcellus, a well-known kyrie monk who saved a village from a dragon and died from his wounds weeks later. The women of the town cared for him, and his last words were an instruction to them to continue to heal the wounds of the world as best they could. The result was the formation of the Sisters of St. Marcellus, an order of ascetic nuns that heal the sick (and are best known for their healing arts), give relief to the poor (and are very good hunters for this purpose), and in the case of a village under attack, preserve the poor from danger. In this regard they differ from the Doric Order in that all sisters are trained for battle in case of bandits, raiders, or armies threatening those in their care.
- **The Asteri Sisterhood:** A nymph order of seers and augurers who provide insight and counsel for kings and rulers across the world, the Asteri Sisterhood serve Elenta, the avatar of the stars, and seek her aid and the chorus of the constellations in advising whether to go to war, make peace, open trade, or expand territory. Since their patrons are some of the wealthiest persons in the world, they are the wealthiest religious order.

- **The Doctori Invictus:** An order of healers trained in the use of magical, supernatural, and medicinal healing, the Doctori Invictus set out to heal epidemic diseases where they appear. They have fought against both natural and unnatural diseases, and are said in legends to have cured a colony of werewolves of advanced weresickness – the only doctors to have succeeded in this if the stories are true. Known for their black garments with gold trim and doctor masks (even if they do not practice the medicinal arts), the Doctori Invictus do not charge for their services, though they levy taxes from rulers that wish to establish a chapter house in their kingdom.

Conclusion

Religious orders, like the magical and natural orders, have a mixed history. But on the whole they tend to be the most well received because of their clear and relatively benign creeds. Since their codes are widely publicized it is easy to tell when a religious order member has acted heretically against their creed, and take all cases of heresy very seriously. As a member of the Order of Light and a religious order, I cannot tell you how many times I have been consulted regarding the expulsion of a member due to conduct that did not fit the creed of our order, and the self-policing of our ranks makes me proud. When one joins an order to preserve the world, it is critical that those goals remain untarnished.

Now that we have looked at the various religious orders, we will take a brief look at some of the supernatural powers that live in the world: angels, demons, and earth spirits.

Chapter VI: Demons and Spirits

While rarely worshipped (though some cults do exist, so we will mention them here as appropriate), angels, demons, and other spirits are common players in the spiritual realm, and thus we will cover them in brief in this work.

It is worth noting upfront that not all spirits are good or evil. There are a few spirits that exist to aid the world in its cycle of growth and aging. But when it comes to angels and demons, there is a divide: angels act as servants of the Beyonder, while demons do whatever they please, wreaking havoc on the world.

If you are looking for an in-depth look at angelology or demonology, I recommend Sean Curadh's *The Spirit World* for a full discussion on their qualities and a druid's take on how to face them.

Angels

Angels are servants of the Beyonder. While the avatars aid in governing the world, angels are messengers and warriors sent to deal with a specific threat. Powerful and nearly immortal like other spirits, angels instill fear and wonder when they appear.

- **Cherubim:** Guardians of the Great Hall of Glory in heaven where the Beyonder resides, cherubim are rarely seen as they are the most powerful angels of the Beyonder. With mighty wings, hefty weapons, and powerful magics, the cherubim bring holy judgment through fire, water, and might upon those who defy the will of the Beyonder. They foresee threats with keen awareness, and melt hills and mountains purely by the fury of their passing.

- **Lauderim:** Worshipers of the Beyonder that fill the Great Hall with singing and music, the lauderim rarely leave heaven, but when they do they form a chorus like nothing else ever heard. To mortals that hear their refrain they bring tidings, both of what is and what is to come. So he who has an ear, let him hear what the lauderim proclaim.
- **Seraphim:** Servants sent by the Beyonder to do His bidding armed with less power than a cherubim, the seraphim fill many roles among the angels. Their most common task is as messenger, relaying the will of the Beyonder in a given matter. But seraphim also serve as warriors, guardians, rescuers, and findsmen of missing friends and family, bringing about the Beyonder's will as ordained.

These are the hosts of heaven that we have documented. There are not very many, as heaven has an order and unity that does not require great specialization among its inhabitants.

Demons

Demons (sometimes called “Daemons” depending on your race) are fallen angels who, over the millennia, have fought against the will of the Beyonder and His servants. Consumed with a desire to satisfy their desires and build their own kingdoms, demons were banished to the Abyss in the Elder Days, and some have escaped from the Abyss to bring havoc upon the earth.

This led to the creation of organizations of demon hunters, the most well-known being the conclaves of the druids. Driving the demons back into the Abyss, closing rifts, or slaying the creatures

with blessed and/or consecrated weapons, demon hunters are the front line of defense against marauding demonic forces.

Demons also fight amongst each other, leading to a host of specialization and adaptations in the Abyss. Some have grown large and mighty to protect them from the powerful, while others have grown smaller and more innocuous, satisfying their desires through thralldom to more powerful demons.

Again, we will not go highly into depth on each of these, as Sean has done a phenomenal job in cataloguing them. But I will take some time to discuss the demons known as the **Seven Deadly Sins**, as their wars are well known among the nations. Following their descriptions, I will give a brief account of the various kinds of demons in the world.

- **Femiburr, the Lion Sin of Pride:** Leader of the Seven Deadly Sins, Femiburr is an abyssal demon known to hurl hills and large boulders at his foes, presenting feats of strength to terrify them. With exceeding might that grows as others fail to challenge him, Femiburr is as strong as a siege weapon and far more cunning.
- **Zeranaum, the Dragon Sin of Wrath:** Zeranaum is an abyssal dragon of great size who gains in strength as destruction and ire grows around him. The druids say he was bound and defeated early in the final battle, as the longer a battle raged the stronger he became. The right hand of Femiburr, Zeranaum is a torrent of rage unleashed against the mortals of the earth, known to destroy whole cities with his fiery breath and swift claws in a matter of hours.
- **Miquemau, the Goat Sin of Lust:** A succubus with great allure, Miquemau is considered one of the most dangerous of the Sins because of her ability to turn a

host of warriors against their allies through her power of suggestion. In the final battle she was among the last of the Sins to be bound and cast into the Abyss, only captured by a troop of Amazon battle nuns who were immune to her wiles.

- **Palalakim, the Fox Sin of Greed:** A tripeccar with an array of whips, swords, axes, and spears, Palalakim has five bodies instead of the standard three, taking on the visages of a snake, lion, frog, ape, and of course a fox. While possessing a desire fitting of one of the Sins, the Fox Sin of Greed is known for his discretion, biding his time to attain his desires and engaging in long-game intrigue and deception to insure that he gets what he wants. Instilling this desire in those near him, Palalakim is most dangerous when near people of power, as the natural draw of power makes resisting his influence still harder to resist.
- **Storu, the Boar Sin of Gluttony:** An abyssal baloth with an insatiable appetite, Storu tears through man and beast, targeting only the largest cities with his ferocity. He is also said to have a peculiar appetite for magic-wielding persons, and thus has been known to strike small settlements that serve as conclaves for magical arts. Around him he inspires persons to pursue their desires with less restraint, a dangerous trait when a warrior desires honor or glory by defeating him in battle, abandoning a good plan or position to face him.
- **Gajumat, the Bear Sin of Sloth:** A slag daemon that is larger than a small settlement and as tall as a castle tower, Gajumat does not “fight” like a normal demon: he is said to merely roll over his enemies, enveloping

them in the burning gelatinous acids of his vast body. Known for shriveling streams and withering woods as he passes, Gajumat destroys the world slowly, burning away its elements and seeping a drowsy lethargy into creatures near it.

- **Dhaub, the Dog Sin of Envy:** A hellhound who is always sniffing for more power, Dhaub is an excessive destroyer, never satisfied with his exploits. While likely the weakest of the Sins (which perhaps explains his constant desire for power), he is still dangerous and ferocious, wielding abyssal fire and tearing after his enemies with incredible speed and strength. He is also known for inspiring dissent and envy among those near him, turning even old friends against each other.

These are the Seven Deadly Sins, who have leveled cities and destroyed the Wild Man Alemi Kingdom in the Elder Days.

There are also other types of demons, ranging in power and danger, with lesser demons serving as servants of greater, more powerful demons. We present them here, roughly in ascending order of danger. For more on this topic and a more critical analysis, we recommend you to the tomes of the druids.

- **Daemonette:** The weakest demon in druidic texts, daemonettes stand about the height of a human with fragile ethereal bodies, making them more likely to attempt to possess a host rather than fight them. On their own a daemonette can torment a person, and their long claws and sharp teeth (not to mention proficiency with arms and armor) can be devastating if they are not killed or banished before they reach you. This is why daemonettes tend to run in large groups, preferring the advantage of numbers when they are not

inhabiting a host. Daemonettes have a natural affinity for Fire, Dark, and Harrow spells and may not take Light/Holy spells. Daemonette warlocks are also very common, hiding in the shadows as they pronounce curses on victims, then inhabiting the host after the creature is enfeebled by the curse.

- **Hellhound:** The watchdog of the Shroud and the Abyss, hellhounds are employed by demonic armies as scouts and flankers. Dogs that burn with a hot fire, hellhounds come in a variety of forms, but often look like large mastiffs with fire flaring off their backs. It is also common to see hellhounds of the argus (two-headed dog) and cerberus (three-headed dog) variety. They are not particularly bright though, and can be baited into traps with little effort. They are used in demon armies to disrupt enemy lines for the arrival of a greater daemon, and thus has gained a reputation as the harbinger of a demon army's arrival. Hellhounds are not trained in the art of magic, do not cast spells, and lack the mental faculties to dispel magic spells. The hide of a hellhound has greater resilience to magical and elemental fire damage, and is thick enough to stop a spear that has not been consecrated by a priest.
- **Gheral:** A tormentor about 6-7 inches tall, used by larger demons to hunt down practitioners of the Lore of Time to break their minds and share their secrets. A demon with the power of the Lore of Time would be immensely hard to stop, and thus many demons employ the small, fragile gheral as covert operatives. The druids of the fey have spent millennia fighting off gheral incursions into their kingdoms, providing an

immense service to the Big Folk that most are blissfully unaware of.

- **Fangling:** A demonic beast resembling a wolf with a scorpion-like stinger for a tail, the fangling is a servant of more powerful demons that can hold its own against a man or two, though they are weak against spear and pike formations due to range. Fanglings have also been known to spread diseases, most commonly *Trichinosis*, *Influenza*, and *Measles*, contaminating whole towns after a single townsman gets a small scratch.
- **Efreet:** The efreet is a two-foot tall demon married to the Lore of Fire, and within its ethereal heart there only burns the desire to consume and destroy. Efreets are known to capture fey maidens, destroy sprite villages, and destroy armies when they are strong enough. It is said that it drinks the blood of the dead it kills, and as the blood courses through it the efreet grows stronger. Efreets can also be summoned: such a ritual requires the gruesome killing of a person, but when done the efreet's passion will burn with vengeance against the person named by the summoner. Thus it is not uncommon to find efreets summoned by powerful kings to act as assassins, warriors, and "judges" for their will. They all practice the Lore of Fire, and some of them also pursue the Lore of Aether.
- **Edimmu:** A tormenting spirit from the Abyss, the edimmu are like proto-daemons, too weak to be grouped with demons in druidic texts, but share some similar characteristics. Edimmu are extremely fragile, inflicting discomfort on the body through fevers and chills, but nothing fatal. Edimmu use magic to hide

themselves from danger and conducting mischief on mortals (though they do not use Light/Holy magic, and have an aversion to Earth magic).

- **Tripeccar:** A demon with a serpentine-like body with three torsos sprouting from it: one serpentine form complete with a head and arms, and two other forms that may vary from creatures to golems in appearance. So a tripeccar is like a chimera in that it is a mixture of different creatures, though unlike a chimera a tripeccar has full autonomy on its different bodies, allowing it to strike in many directions, often with the use of weapons. Some tripeccars are larger, adding other bodies to their form, with as many as seven bodies branching out while maintaining perfect unity. These septeccars are dangerous, easily able to handle attacks from a dozen men at once.
- **Slag Daemon:** A demon that lacks bones and is just a conglomeration of flesh and ooze, slag demons fight differently from other demons in that they don't attempt to dodge, parry, or strike enemies: they just *roll over them* and consume them in their acidic bile, assimilating the flesh into themselves. Virtually all attacks against them will hit (as they are not hard to hit even from far away, and they have limited ability to avoid attacks), but doing lasting damage to this mound of flesh is hard. The most tried and true solution to facing a daemon involves water, as the slag daemon lacks bones to give rigidity and staying power against the torrent. Those who lack a good river or sea have also used pits to slow their approach.

- **Daemon:** A lesser demon, often appearing outside of the Abyss in a more corporeal form than the edimmu or the daemonette, daemons are combat-capable and very dangerous. They are exceptional in melee combat, gifted casters, and have been known to use ranged weapons on occasion (the only demonic forces known for this), with javelins and bows being favored choices. The smiles above their black, twisted beards are filled with sharp fangs, encouraged by their resilience against physical attacks (it is said that their skin is naturally resilient to the physical weaponry of mortal beings) and agile movements. The laugh of a daemon chills the hearts of mortal warriors, and they laugh often in battle. Daemons have an affinity for Dark/Death magic, is averse to using Arcane/Earth magic, and may not take Light/Holy spells.
- **Greater Daemon:** A massive, giant-like daemon that stands between twenty and thirty feet tall, greater daemons serve as generals and captains in demonic armies, and are terrifying to behold. Not only are they skilled in melee and magical combat, but they also serve at times as the "siege weapons" of a demonic army, tearing walls apart with either superior magic or large hands. Greater daemons have an affinity for Fire, Aether, Dark, and Death spells (as they love the power of those spells), and have an aversion to all other lores. They are also known for their unwavering devotion to the cause, and do not listen to mortal words (which is why they are put in command of demonic armies).
- **Abyssal Baloth:** A baloth that dwells in the Abyss, this massive undead creature is terrifying to behold and hard to stop when it gets in motion. At the beck and

call of the daemon it serves, the baloth still sports the strong reptilian scales, forty feet of height, vicious jaws and claws, and honed sense of smell of its overworld cousin, but adds the unbreakable will and slaved desires of a demon.

- **Abyssal Daemon:** There are no demons larger than the abyssal daemon: all demons above thirty feet tall are considered abyssal daemons, and their presence is nothing short of soul-shattering. Powerful demons the size of giants, physical damage from non-blessed weapons is virtually useless against them. Armed with glowing bodies that burn with an otherworldly fire, abyssal demons are resistant to most forms of damage. They are hard to take down, difficult to hex (as they are resistant to magic), and have a terrifying presence (so persons with low willpower will not stand against them). Only the most brave and stalwart druids will stand in the gap against an abyssal demon, and many of them will lose their lives in the endeavor. They are proficient in the use of magic (and commonly use Fire, Aether, Death, and Dark magic), but are averse to the use of non-fire elemental magic lores and arcane magic, and may not take Light/Holy spells.
- **Abyssal Dragon:** A massive dragon of the Abyss, the abyssal dragon combines the fire-breathing, chomping, swooping, crushing elements of its cousins above with the ethereal nature and magical resilience of a demon. Abyssal dragons are among the most dangerous of all demons, though they rarely take the lead of armies as they focus so heavily on satisfying their own desires. When an abyssal daemon brings an abyssal dragon to a fight, the defenders will be hard-pressed.

Other Spirits

As noted before, there are other spirits in the world that are not morally aligned in the universe. These most commonly are the river and forest spirits of the world that govern the care of those terrains in the world, but there are also some traveling spirits that wander the world, performing their assigned tasks.

- **Dawnwraith:** A spiritual being first created to greet the morning sun with song, dawnwraiths are beautiful, flitting beings with a natural charisma beyond most creatures. Over the years they have used their silent movements and graceful features to aid them in many enterprises, some upstanding and some ill. Among the dawnwraith colonies you will find music and dancing far beyond most cultures, still holding to their ancient tasks for which they were made.
- **Leshy:** A forest spirit said to be a guardian of trees, the leshy have a humanesque shape between four and nine feet tall. Woodsmen fear and respect leshy because of their deep love for the forest and their quick wrath on those who harm the trees where they live. The anger of a leshy tends to escalate in predictable patterns. They despise axes, and if a woodsman is traveling in the forest or cuts down a tree his axe head may fly off its haft – a sign that a leshy has seen him at work and is displeased. If the cutting continues, the leshy may blow him over with a sudden gust of wind or cause a minor earthquake to knock him down. But if the presence of the axe continues, the leshy will attack the woodsman and any who may be with him. The leshy are not “evil creatures,” though many cultures paint them in a poor

light because of their unwillingness to be persuaded by mortals. They love the trees that grow in the forest, and as you would protect an old friend, so will a leshy protect the trees around them.

- **Mistwraith:** The spirit of a seaman that was lost at sea and is still seeking final rest and burial, mistwraiths are dangerous foes, attacking seamen and fishermen to bring their bodies to the depths to join their own. Hiding among the mists and crests of the waves and having no scent, mistwraiths do bring with them a cold chill, numbing the mind and senses of the living before they close to strike.
- **Shade:** A spirit sentenced to wander the earth until it completes a task left undone, shades differ from ghosts and wraiths in that they are not created by natural or necromantic means. Instead they are prevented from entering the Shroud due to a promise left unfulfilled and must complete the task to find rest.
- **Spectre:** A spirit that has returned from the Shroud but has not entered a body, ethereal spectres flit about to pursue their own desires. Unlike the shade that sets about to fulfill its duty or the dawnwraith who seeks to bring beauty to the world, spectres live in accordance with their own code, resulting in them raiding towns, protecting friends, and avenging old wrongs.

Conclusion

Spiritual beings come in many forms, and I hope that from this quick treatise you can see the beauty that comes from their variety.

Imagine a world with only a few spiritual beings, or even none at all: so much would be lost in the world. And as more regions of the world are discovered, who knows if still more spirits will be found among the vast reaches of the earth.

Chapter VII: Religion and Warfare

A common question asked by skeptics is, “If the supernatural are so powerful, what happens when their people or domains are under attack by another people who also serve a higher power?” It is a good question, and one that, while worth asking, is hard for mortals to understand as the aims of mortals tends to be toward the material – land, wealth, “power” among other nations – and thus the aims and goals of a deity or pantheon are often wholly foreign to the aims and goals of the questioner.

So in this chapter I will attempt to present a short introduction to the use of prayer and invocation in the art of war.

Invocation in War

Virtually all cultures invoke a deity (or more than one) before going to war, whether that is at the start of the campaign or before a battle. And naturally, every deity or spirit has a desire to see their tribe succeed, as it will mean greater sacrifices and power to them. So this raises the question: how do the competing forces of the supernatural realm engage with each other and the natural realm when fighting occurs?

The truth is we don’t know all of what happens, but from what we can tell from the wisdom imparted to us by the Beyonder, this is what we know about the supernatural element of war.

First, there is a **clash** in the supernatural realm that also mirrors the clash in the natural realm. Deities and spirits actually do battle in the supernatural realm while mortals wage war. Not every being brings their full power to bear (Naur may be willing to aid the elves in a struggle, but may not want to oppose the will of Fury and thus may not unleash his full power in a struggle), but the strength of

the invoked being plays a factor in their ability to help their clan effectively in the battle.

Second, as a general rule spiritual beings **don’t die** in these conflicts: when they suffer a grievous wound they flee to their halls, leaving their people to fend for themselves, but it is rare that the being himself/herself actually dies.

Third, supernatural beings can **physically engage in battle**, and have been documented to have done so in many instances in the past. So if you find yourself fighting against someone who seems inordinately skilled, it’s possible you’re fighting an immortal.

So there is great advantage to invoking higher powers before going to war. There is even greater value in stronger invocations, as the being is likely to respond with greater power to your entreaties. This is why priests and priestesses work so tirelessly to grow their power of invocation through prayers.

Spiritual Warfare

Spiritual warfare can take many forms. Sometimes it comes in the form of a guardian or defender, protecting you from known or unknown terrors. Sometimes it comes in the form of a warrior or champion, conquering your foes. And sometimes it comes in the form of an assassin or thief, disrupting an enemy in an asymmetric way not tied to the field of combat.

- **Shield Allies:** Priests can ask their deity to intervene to shield their allies from danger. This most commonly comes in the form of a **prayer** or **blessing** upon the people, but it could also stem from **consecrating** a weapon or armor to be more effective against, say, a demon or undead spirit. This is the most common way that supernatural power is invoked: aiding allies.

- **Weaken Enemies:** Priests can also seek divine aid in weakening opponents. This is most often takes the form of **curse**s by warlocks or words of power used to **smite** enemies, but it could also be done in other ways. In some conflicts gods have poisoned water supplies, brought on sudden storms to sink ships, and caused longstanding political opponents to suddenly incite revolt. So there are many ways to do this, but the main theme is the same: supernatural entities step in to cause harm to your foes instead of aiding your allies.
- **Sever the Tie:** The priest can attempt to sever the tie of the opposing priest from their deity, imposing their deity between them to keep the enemy priest from wielding the power of their god(s). This is hard to do but it can be done if the interposing god is strong enough and willing to block the power of the other priest. Mechanically this is done through a Prayer roll (which is a Lore roll) higher than the Prayer roll of the target. If the roll is higher, the targeted priest performs a Willpower roll (with a LOR-XD penalty, where X = the multiples of 10 that the priest lost the roll by) on a Difficulty: 10+. If the targeted priest passes the roll, the tie is not severed. If they fail, the tie is severed and the prayer effect that was targeted is cancelled.

So spiritual warfare is more than just raising your hands and saying, “Okay Mightier-Power-Than-I, do my bidding” as if it was some sort of magical item that could be wielded to do your every whim. There is a need to invoke the right deity at the right time to aid you in a way that is strong enough to stand against opposition. And over the centuries priests have discovered that this is best done when the will of the cleric is aligned with the will of the deity.

Conclusion

Spiritual warfare is not a hoax: struggles in the supernatural realm exist, and often coincide with struggles here in the natural realm. For us who participate in the natural realm, then, there is greater meaning to our trials: if we are victorious, the victory may ring with greater significance than we could ever know.

Chapter VIII: Priesthood: Vocational Specialties in a Religious Sect

For many, terms like “bishop” and “abbot” are synonymous terms. And as they are all “priests,” this makes sense: what does it matter if a priest is a “pope” or a “missionary” if they both teach?

But there is a difference between the types of priests, and these differences will signal the wise student in how to interact with them (or, in some cases, to avoid them). This chapter will introduce you to the various types of priests, and what duties are typically entailed with their calling.

It is also worth noting that there is some overlap between priestly specialties: chapter house leaders typically share another role, and it is not uncommon for many priests to fill many roles because of the needs of the monastery, church, etc., especially in poorer, smaller villages. So do not see the specialties as a limiter: a priest can pursue multiple specialties in accordance with the needs of the chapter house.

Leadership

A leading member of the religion, most cults have hierarchies to provide oversight over various congregations across the world, with those nearer to the top deciding on doctrinal issues and then passing those along to the leaders below them for dissemination. Leaders may also fill other roles below, but we present it here as there are some positions that require excessive time and thus do not leave the person free to pursue other callings.

- **Pastor:** A local leader who is responsible for a congregation, group of monks, etc., the pastor is the

lowest level of leadership but an essential one, as they are the “face” of the order or sect to practitioners and unbelievers alike. Their work is compared to shepherds (hence the term “pastor”), as they lead and care for the congregation much like a shepherd does a flock.

A sample pastor adjective is given below:

Pastor of [Name of the Order] (Tier 1 Church Leader Adjective): Bearer is CRM+1D to Persuade rolls, CRM+1D to resist Charm rolls, and LOR+1D to recite prayers/blessings.

- **Chapter House Leader:** The leader of a chapter house differs from a pastor in that they typically plant congregations in the local region that report to the local chapter house. Chapter house leaders handle social and administrative roles, though religious military order chapter houses also require martial leadership and training involvement as well.

A sample chapter house leader adjective is given below:

Chapter House Leader of [Name of the Order] (Tier 2 Church Leader Adjective): Bearer is CRM+2D to Persuade rolls, CRM+2D to resist Charm rolls, and LOR+2D to recite prayers/blessings. The bearer may exchange the bonus to recite prayers/blessings for a LOR+2D bonus to Scribing rolls or Tactics rolls depending on the nature of the chapter house order.

- **Bishop:** A priest governing multiple congregations, bishops are the workhorses of the hierarchy, providing information to those below them for dissemination

and bringing news of developments for those above them to consider. Many say that the real power in a cult is held by the bishop-level priests, as they direct the attention and information that goes to those at the highest levels. I am in agreement with this assessment.

A sample bishop adjective is given below:

Bishop of [Name of the Order] (Tier 3 Church Leader Adjective): Bearer is CRM+3D to Persuade rolls, CRM+3D to resist Charm rolls, LOR+3D to recite prayers/blessings, and may reroll the Wild Dice on one of the three rolls (selected by the bearer upon taking the adjective). The bearer may exchange the bonus to recite prayers/blessings for a LOR+3D bonus to Scribing rolls or Tactics rolls depending on the nature of the order.

- **Archbishop:** Higher ranking bishops who have proven masterful in caring for the members of the order, archbishops are often the highest level of sect leadership that a priest will meet during their lifetime. Chosen for their skill (and at times political clout), an archbishop commands great respect within the order due to years of collaboration with other church leaders.

A sample archbishop adjective is given below:

Archbishop of [Name of the Order] (Tier 4 Church Leader Adjective): Bearer is CRM+4D to Persuade rolls, CRM+4D to resist Charm rolls, LOR+4D to recite prayers/blessings, and may reroll the Wild Dice on one of the three rolls (selected by the bearer upon taking the adjective) and gains a +1 to the Wild Die on that

roll. The bearer may exchange the bonus to recite prayers/blessings for a LOR+4D bonus to Scribing rolls or Tactics rolls depending on the nature of the order.

- **Pope:** The head of a religious sect that goes by many names, the pope is the ultimate doctrinal and visionary leader of a sect. Their decisions are often considered binding without exception, and disagreement with an interpretation or decision of a pope is grounds for heresy and a denouncement of unorthodox teaching. It is rare to see someone stand up to a pope on a matter of doctrine or sectarian direction, but when it happens it often has political and martial consequences.

A sample pope adjective is given below:

Pope of [Name of the Order] (Tier 5 Church Leader Adjective): Bearer is CRM+5D to Persuade rolls, CRM+5D to resist Charm rolls, LOR+5D to recite prayers/blessings, and may reroll the Wild Dice on one of the three rolls (selected by the bearer upon taking the adjective) and gains a +2 to the Wild Die on that roll. The bearer may exchange the bonus to recite prayers/blessings for a LOR+5D bonus to Scribing rolls or Tactics rolls depending on the nature of the order.

- **Inquisitor:** A mantle given to one who roots out heresy among the ranks, inquisitors investigate reports of unorthodox teaching and then root it out through various means determined by the cult. Their goal is simple: maintain the purity of the tenets of the cult and enforce the will of the papal level of authority. Often

holding a rank at the same level as a bishop, inquisitors often fall outside of the established hierarchy for sect advancement as they are hand-selected for their fervor in maintaining the veracity and purity of the teachings of the order.

A sample inquisitor adjective is given below:

Inquisitor of [Name of the Order] (Tier 3 Church Leader Adjective): Bearer is CRM+3D to Intimidate rolls, CRM+3D to resist Charm rolls, LOR+3D to Tactics rolls, and gains a +1 to the Wild Dice on one of the three rolls (selected by the bearer upon taking the adjective). The bearer may exchange the bonus to Tactics rolls for a LOR+3D bonus to Willpower rolls or to recite words of power depending on the nature of the order.

Instructor

Instructors range in rank and calling, with some living among the people, others managing doctrine and weighing disputes over dogma, and still others living itinerant lives to spread the word of their religion. But the end goal is the same: they insure that the tenets of the religion are propagated and passed on, serving in less glamorous positions than others, perhaps, but necessary ones for the religion to endure and not just become a political entity.

- **Abbot:** Abbots are local teachers who teach doctrine at a church or monastery to those who come. They may give sermons, hold counseling sessions, lead persons in confessing sins, and give life advice in-line with the tenets of the faith. If a chapter house, church, or shrine

does not have an abbot of some sort, they are likely in decline and will fold within a matter of years at most, as the abbot is the backbone of the church to the local populace, making in-roads and caring for the flock.

A sample abbot adjective is given below:

Abbot of [Name of the Order] (Tier 1 Church Teacher Adjective): Bearer is CRM+1D to Teaching rolls, CRM+1D to Persuade rolls, and LOR+1D to Remembrance rolls. The bearer may exchange the Remembrance bonus for a LOR+1D to Prediction or Prophecy rolls depending on the nature of the order.

- **Tutor:** Tutors are priests who instruct a specific patron or patrons, often done at their abodes or in a school set apart for religious instruction. Tutors tend to get more financial compensation than abbots, and thus tend to move in higher levels of society, sometimes even starting their own chapter houses if their patrons are wealthy enough.

A sample tutor adjective is given below:

Tutor of [Name of the Order] (Tier 1 Church Teacher Adjective): Bearer is CRM+1D to Teaching rolls, CRM+1D to Persuade rolls, and LOR+1D to History rolls. The bearer may exchange the Culture bonus for a LOR+1D to Culture or Languages rolls depending on the nature of the order.

- **Missionary:** Missionaries are itinerant ministers who travel to other towns to start new congregations. They spread their doctrines in various ways (determined by

the tenets of the faith), some more peaceful and some more forceful. Missionaries tend to either be respected or feared for this reason, and carry a mixed reputation.

A sample missionary adjective is given below:

Missionary of [Name of the Order] (Tier 1 *Church Teacher Adjective*): Bearer is CRM+1D to Teaching rolls, CRM+1D to Persuade rolls, and LOR+1D to Culture rolls. The bearer may exchange the Culture bonus for a LOR+1D to Languages or Remembrance rolls depending on the nature of the order.

Chronicler

A priest who spends their time copying written works, adding images and calligraphy to tomes, thereby passing on knowledge to future generations. This is a slow, methodical, and often thankless task, but a necessary one for sects to proceed without dramatic changes in doctrine (and sometimes violent changes in doctrine).

- **Monk:** Monks are sequestered priests who live among other monks in a self-sufficient commune devoted to study and the maintaining of the monastery. Monks are studious writers, typically governed by rigorous time and place regulations that foster an atmosphere of constant activity, reflection, and of course writing.

A sample monk adjective is given below:

Monk of [Name of the Order] (Tier 1 *Church Chronicler Adjective*): Bearer is STR+1D to farming rolls, LOR+1D to Scribing rolls, and LOR+1D to

Willpower rolls. The bearer may exchange the Farming bonus for a CRM+1D bonus to Persuade rolls or STAT+1D to an appropriate crafting roll depending on the nature of the order.

- **Scribe:** Scribes are priests who live among the upper class to copy down and propagate religious texts for their patron and his/her friends. If a patron wants access to books any time of the day, they may contact a scribe to furnish them with books. Scribes, much like tutors, tend to make more money than tutors, and this has led some to become scribes who are less doctrinally devoted and more geared toward acumen.

A sample scribe adjective is given below:

Scribe of [Name of the Order] (Tier 1 *Church Chronicler Adjective*): Bearer is LOR+1D to Scribing rolls, LOR+1D to Remembrance rolls, and LOR+1D to Culture rolls.

- **Proclaimer:** A priest sent out to tell of the exploits and victories of the order (especially among military and magical orders), proclaimers are picked for their natural charisma and strong voices for spreading the word of the achievements of the order to commoners and new realms. While the monk and the scribe spend most of their time at home, proclaimers spend most of their time on the road, going from village to village to spread the fame (and recruiting) of the order far and wide.

A sample proclaimer adjective is given below:

Proclaimer of [Name of the Order] (Tier 1 *Church Chronicler* Adjective): Bearer is STR+1D to Volume rolls, CRM+1D to Perform rolls, and CRM+1D to Persuade rolls.

Warrior

A priest who is also trained as a warrior in accordance with the dictates of the religion, warrior priests take various forms, often in light of their martial and magical aptitude, as not all creatures are created equal. War priests may not be the most commonly seen priests in the world, but they are among the most famous. Those who have seen action have inspired awe in onlookers, resulting in many tales of warriors wielding the might of their deity to change the tide of battle and attain victory.

- **Battle Priest:** A priest dispatched with an army to pray over them, seek guidance for military strategy, and fight beside the men (though they often fill a healing or other support role along with a martial role), battle priests are the least warlike of the warriors, but serve a critical role in the directing and success of an army. Whether fighting in the front ranks, firing or hurling missiles at the enemy, or serving in an honorguard, a battle priest has the martial prowess of a fighter armed with the power of prayer.

A sample battle priest adjective is given below:

Battle Priest of [Name of the Order] (Tier 2 *Church Warrior* Adjective): Bearer is STR+2D with [*choose two weapons*], FIN+2D with [*choose two weapons*], and LOR+2D to recite prayers/blessings.

- **Paladin:** A priest that uses words of power to smite foes in battle, paladins combine martial prowess with arms and armor with powerful prayers to guard their allies and harm their enemies. Often arranged in their own companies in battle, paladins are trained to work as a unit, invoking the aid of supernatural forces as they perform maneuvers they have practiced for years.

A sample paladin adjective is given below:

Paladin of [Name of the Order] (Tier 2 *Church Warrior* Adjective): Bearer is STR+2D with [*choose two weapons*], FIN+2D with [*choose two weapons*], and LOR+2D to recite words of power.

- **Purger:** A priest that uses magic to aid them in battle, purgers go by many names depending on the religion, but the end goal is the same: a battle mage who is aided by the power of prayer, words of power, or curses to cripple the enemy. Whether these are the griffon battle teams of House Tython of the Elven Enclave or the Dark Cult Darkrunners, purgers wield magic with near the same skill as a dedicated mage but with the added power of prayer, making them dangerous assailants.

A sample purger adjective is given below:

Purger of [Name of the Order] (Tier 2 *Church Warrior* Adjective): Bearer is LOR+2D to recite words of power, recite prayers/blessings, and to cast spells. The bearer may exchange the bonus to recite prayers for a LOR+2D bonus to recite curses depending on the nature of the order.

Seer

A priest who uses their connection to the supernatural to gain insight into the affairs of the future, seers take on many forms in a religion depending on the religion's views on foretelling the future. It is worth noting that some of the specific names (seer, augur, prophet, etc.) are often used interchangeably in different cultures, so do not look at these terms and assume that "all cultures view an augur as a person who uses magic to aid them in seeing the future." We use the term here as that is how some cultures refer to their seers who use magic, but it is not indicative of all cultures.

- **Prophet/Prophetess:** A seer that uses the art of prayer to receive visions and interpretations of visions about the past, present, or future, prophets embrace the supernatural as a way to give guidance and advice to others. The prophet/prophetess may drop into a trance, see the visions while dreaming, fall to their knees to pray for a vision – many ways – but the result is the same: a person who foresees something with clarity and shares it with others, be it for good or ill.

A sample prophet adjective is given below:

Prophet of [Name of the Order] (Tier 1 Church Seer Adjective): Bearer is CRM+1D to Persuade rolls, CRM+1D to resist Charm rolls, and LOR+1D to prophecy rolls. The bearer may exchange the Persuade bonus for a CRM+1D bonus to Intimidate or Con rolls depending on the nature of the order.

- **Battle Seer:** A seer that uses his/her ability to foresee the future to predict the movements of an opponent in battle, aiding the seer in martial prowess. The battle seer uses this ability to guide their blade or arrow, and also makes them more likely to evade sudden and dangerous strikes that would otherwise hit the seer.

A sample battle seer adjective is given below:

Battle Seer of [Name of the Order] (Tier 3 Church Seer Adjective): Bearer is STR+3D with [*choose two weapons*], FIN+3D with [*choose two weapons*], and LOR+3D to prophecy rolls. At Tier 3 the bearer gains the ability to perform a free Prophecy roll each beat, and at the start of the combat may add FIN+XD to their to-hit, parry, and dodge rolls where X = the multiples of 10 from the first Prophecy roll.

- **Augur:** A seer who uses magic to aid them in seeing the future, often tied to the lore associated with the religion in the case of magical religions. Augurs most commonly use the Lore of Light, Lore of Water, Lore of Life, Arcane Lore, and Lore of Time, though you also see augurs in other lores on rare occasions.⁷ But for all of them the goal is the same: harness the power of the magical realm to aid in portending events in the natural realm. This can be augmented by prayer, but the spells tend to be the core of an augur's power.

A sample augur adjective is given below:

⁷ I once met a fire mage that was part of the Order of the Gleaming Phoenix who told me of a spell that his order designed called *Flickering Futures*, where the

augur looks into a magically created fire to see images of the future in the fire, albeit in the flickering flames, so the vision is not complete.

Augur of [Name of the Order] (Tier 1 Church Seer Adjective): Bearer is CRM+1D to Persuade rolls, LOR+1D to prophecy rolls, and LOR+1D to cast spells. The bearer may exchange the Persuade bonus for a CRM+1D bonus to Intimidate or Con rolls depending on the nature of the order.

Healer

Priests who devote themselves to the healing arts to aid those who are in the order or under their care, healers are among the most beloved clerics in the world, and for good reason: they save the lives of loved ones. While some doctors and mages are better healers than your local priestly healer, priestly healers tend to be cheaper and are competent in their work.

- **Cleric:** A priest (or priestess) who harnesses the power of prayer to heal someone, clerics are some of the most well-recognized priests in an order, as they spend most of their time among the people. Whether removing diseases, curses, or awakening the unconscious, clerics also tend to travel with adventurers, spreading their gifts and the name of the order on their journeys.

A sample cleric adjective is given below:

Cleric of [Name of the Order] (Tier 1 Church Healer Adjective): Bearer is STR+1D to resist the elements,

⁸ The fire mage ogres of Ossenstadt developed the spell *Cauterize* centuries ago that heals the target in a unique way. The theory was first crafted by looking at the natural process of cauterization: burning away old flesh so that new flesh can take its place. The target apparently suffers damage from the spell, but in

CRM+1D to Impression rolls, and LOR+1D to recite prayers/blessings.

- **Shaman:** A priest who uses magic combined with prayer or herbal remedies to heal persons, shamans use the Lore of Earth, Lore of Water, Lore of Life, and Lore of Light most commonly, though practitioners of other lores have also been found.⁸ The shaman of a tribe is well revered, as their knowledge of healing has often led to raised status in the village and a healthy fear of those who know which herbs are poisonous.

A sample shaman adjective is given below:

Shaman of [Name of the Order] (Tier 1 Church Healer Adjective): Bearer is CRM+1D to Impression rolls, LOR+1D to recite prayers/blessings, and LOR+1D to cast spells. The bearer may exchange the bonus to recite prayers/blessings for a bonus to medicine rolls.

- **Herbalist:** A priest who works in gardens to make herbs, flowers, and other plants that are used in the art of healing. They also tend to provide food for the local village, chapter house, and sometimes serves as a point of sale to make money for the order, often used to fund improvements, repairs, and other church activities.

A sample herbalist adjective is given below:

return recovers from the wound and is reawakened if incapacitated. I have seen it done, and while it seems dangerous to more fragile races, the hulking bodies of ogres seem to be quite resilient to the fire's touch. It's a fascinating use of the Lore of Fire, and I would not have thought to use it in this way.

Herbalist of [Name of the Order] (Tier 1 *Church Healer* Adjective): Bearer is STR+1D to farming rolls, LOR+1D to recite prayers/blessings, and LOR+1D to medicine rolls.

Consecrator

A priestly craftsman who spends his days blessing items to consecrate them for a specific task, consecrators are common among religious military orders specifically as their trade aids in the fighting of the undead, demons, and more. Consecrators are likely the smallest class of priests, but the work they do is immensely useful in effectively fighting the foes of the order.

- **Sage Consecrator:** A priest who spends most of their days at the chapter house blessing weapons, armor, and persons for specific tasks, consecrating them (meaning “to set apart”) for the journey they are preparing to embark on. Sage consecrators tend to be the best at performing rites, as they are less likely to split their time and training between performing rites and other tasks.

A sample sage consecrator adjective is given below:

Sage Consecrator of [Name of the Order] (Tier 1 *Consecrator* Adjective): Bearer is LOR+1D to identification rolls, LOR+1D to recite prayers/blessings, and LOR+1D to perform rites.

- **Battle Consecrator:** A priest who travels with an army or battle team, fights alongside them, and consecrates weapons, armor, and persons to enhance their skill in battle. Battle consecrators are typically not as skilled as a battle priest, but still receive some training in martial

combat (be that with a weapon or magic) while also spending hours of their time consecrating arms and armor to fend off specific threats. You tend to see a lot of battle consecrators among the druids, as they tend to fight against specific threats (demons, undead, etc.) more commonly than others, and thus perform those rites constantly to give them an edge in combat.

A sample battle consecrator adjective is given below:

Battle Consecrator of [Name of the Order] (Tier 1 *Consecrator* Adjective): Bearer is STR+1D with [*choose two weapons*], FIN+1D with [*choose two weapons*], and LOR+1D to perform rites. The bearer may exchange the STR and FIN bonuses with weapons for a LOR+1D to cast spells and a +1D to spell damage.

- **Field Consecrator:** An itinerant priest who travels to villages and performs rites (most commonly marriage rites, last rites, child dedication rites, and rites for the dead) to bless the people there. Whether they perform rites on a graveyard to keep the dead from being raised by a necromancer, uniting two hearts in the bonds of marriage, or commissioning a local hero for their great task, field consecrators are the hands and feet of an order to care for a village’s consecration needs.

A sample field consecrator adjective is given below:

Field Consecrator of [Name of the Order] (Tier 1 *Consecrator* Adjective): Bearer is CRM+1D to Impression rolls, LOR+1D to recite prayers/blessings, and LOR+1D to perform rites. The bearer may exchange the bonus to

recite prayers/blessings for a bonus to cast spells depending on the nature of the order.

Conclusion

Like many things in the world, there is a lot of diversity in skill in a religious order. And this makes sense: religious orders often act as autonomous units and self-sufficient villages, so they must meet many needs for the conclave, monastery, etc.

And this is a fitting place to end this work. You have a wider knowledge of the types of religious beliefs, orders, and beings in the world, and it is my hope that you will use this knowledge to aid you in appreciating the supernatural world, act with wisdom in the magical world, and understand more of the natural world through this knowledge.

About the Author

Lord Hanoldo Tython has been a member of the Order of Light for 249 years, and will celebrate his 250th year as a member of the Order in the month of Serctul. A father of four (and husband of one), his wife, Haimdriel Tython, is a well-known culinary master, known best for her puddings and teas. Together they live in a villa in The Enclave within the Tython section of the city. All of their children have left the house, with two of them becoming druids, one of them joining the honorguard of Lady Maradel Tython, Heir to House Tython, and their youngest serving as a pastor in a rural elven village near the coast.

Noldotython is also a member of a religious order, though he has not disclosed to us which order he serves (he even refused to comment on whether the order is included in his work). His interests include cultural studies, painting, and language studies. Lady Haimdriel confirmed for us that he has more, but refused to share details.



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