

# Sub Rosa

An Ars Magica magazine

Issue 1, Sep 2007



A Pointless Mental Cruelty Production

[www.subrosamagazine.org](http://www.subrosamagazine.org)



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September 2007

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Sub Rosa



# Under the Rose

Well, it's been a long journey to get the first issue of **Sub Rosa** together since it was announced in March this year. I've been overwhelmed by the support shown by the Ars fan community, and am encouraged by the range of articles and subscriptions.

**Sub Rosa** was born from *Hermes Portal*, published by Eric Kouris. Several current Ars Magica authors started with articles in HP, and have since gone on to make significant contributions to ArM5. My own contributions to Ars Magica also started in *Hermes Portal*, first as an illustrator, and later as an article author. I hope that a new generation of Ars Magica authors gets their start with Sub Rosa. *Hermes Portal* lasted for 15 issues, with issues 14 and 15 the equivalent of a full-length sourcebook on the Isle of Man. Many of the ideas and systems that are now an integral part of ArM5 were first slated in *Hermes Portal*, including the spell mastery system, House mysteries and the growing cosmology of Mythic Europe.

Sub Rosa is a fan magazine for Ars Magica Fifth Edition, written and produced by Ars fans, for Ars fans. As much as possible, I want this fanzine to be collectively owned by the fans, with its content driven by fans and aspiring authors. With ArM books released only every few months, I hope Sub Rosa fills the gap between releases. I strongly encourage you to consider contributing to this fanzine (see our website for details).

Getting together Sub Rosa has been an eye opening challenge. In addition to my full time

work, I am studying a Masters of Public Policy. Fitting in Sub Rosa has been an organisational challenge, but I am glad that it has finally come together. I now more fully appreciate the hard work that Eric put into *Hermes Portal*, and am more able to time manage for future issues.

I am indebted to Mark Philp, the editor and my partner in crime. Many years ago, Mark introduced me to Ars Magica (fourth ed). The work he has done for this issue, and for the website (and many other things besides) is amazing. I know Mark is committed to high quality games and publications, and I highly recommend the *Pointless Mental Cruelty* website ([pointlessmentalcruelty.com](http://pointlessmentalcruelty.com)) to see some of the innovative and creative games that he is (in large part) responsible for.

It is gratifying to have received support from Atlas Games and specifically David Chart for this first issue, and the fanzine overall. Atlas is generally supportive of its fans, and is open about the direction and support for Ars Magica. I want to thank David

**Alex White**

Chart for his contribution to this first issue.

We have a range of articles in this first issue, from established Ars Magica Fifth Edition authors, to new and emerging talent. The diversity of the articles is excellent – from details on the medieval concept of courtly love, to Bjornaer extras, and Basque legends.

I specifically want to thank the contributors for their hard work. It has been a long journey to finally see this first issue, so thank you for your patience.

This publication would not be possible without your support and subscriptions. Please promote Sub Rosa to your friends and encourage them to buy a subscription. Check our website for details about troupe subscriptions.



# News from the Line Editor

Here it is, a new *Ars Magica* fanzine. This is the fourth in an illustrious line: *Redcap*, *Mythic Perspectives*, *Hermes Portal*, and now *Sub Rosa*. I'd like to welcome it, and thank all the readers for supporting it. The vitality of the fan community for *Ars Magica* is a very important part of its success, and we're very grateful for it.

I'll be using this column to tell people a bit more about upcoming releases, and my general thoughts about the game and where it is headed. I'll be trying to avoid simply reproducing PR material.

The next supplement for the game will be **The Lion and The Lily**, the Normandy Tribunal book. It's really taken us far too long to get around to doing the core areas of Mythic Europe, and what is now northern France is about as core as it gets, at least in mundane terms. In Hermetic terms, this is a problem. Guardians of the Forests was about the conflict between the wilderness and the advance of civilisation. In Normandy, the wilderness has lost. It isn't completely gone, but what remains is small, isolated fragments. Thus, the main theme of the book is the different ways in which covenants can accommodate themselves to the presence of mundane society.

This is something that has received little attention in the past. The Code of Hermes prohibits interference with the mundanes, but when there is a rapidly-growing mundane town less than an hours' walk from your covenant simply avoiding all interaction is impossible. The rulings of the Normandy Tribunal thus constantly come back to the question of what counts as interference, and what is simply permissible interaction. All covenants have found their own solutions to the problem, and only

time will tell which are sustainable in the long term.

In addition, Normandy is the heartland of chivalric ideology, and this is reflected in the structure of the Tribunal. Covenants are linked by oaths closely modelled on feudal ties, and resources, particularly vis harvesting rights, are distributed through a magical tournament held at the Tribunal. This scheme was, officially, supposed to reduce conflict after the Schism War, but as it was designed by a Tylalus, it is perhaps not surprising that it seems to have had the opposite effect.

The Normandy Tribunal, as portrayed in this book, is a place where magi are almost part of medieval society, and where Hermetic structures have been strongly influenced by those of the

## David Chart

mundanes all around. Other Tribunals might hark back to a lost, classical past, but the magi of Normandy are contemporary, up-to-the-minute, and on the cutting edge of social development. In short, the magi are almost as medieval as the mundanes.

The next two supplements in the pipeline are **Art & Academe**, and **Realms of Power: Magic**, but there isn't enough space to talk about them this time. Saving some material for future articles is a good policy in any case.

So, to wrap up, once again I would like to wish *Sub Rosa* all the best; I hope it will be the most successful *Ars* fanzine yet.



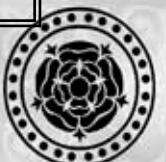
## First Issue Competition

### Win an *Ars Magica* Supplement

Subscribers that buy a four issue subscription from October 2007 will go into the running to win a copy of an *Ars Magica* supplement of your choice (current subscribers are automatically entered).

To subscribe, simply visit the *Sub Rosa* webpage ([www.subrosamagazine.org](http://www.subrosamagazine.org)) and follow the instructions.

The winner will be drawn on 1 November, and announced in the 2<sup>nd</sup> issue.



# Who's Who?

## Mark Shirley

Mark Shirley is a zoologist and epidemiologist from Kent. He's been interested in *Ars Magica* since the 1st edition, and it has been his RPG of choice for the last fifteen years. He lives in Newcastle upon Tyne with his two ferrets.

## Eric Vesbit

Eric Vesbit grew up in Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA, and has been playing *Ars Magica* since 4th

## Pointless Mental Cruelty

### Alex White

Alex works full time for one of Australia's largest trade unions, juggling extensive volunteer work and full-time studying a Masters of Public Policy. Alex has an honours degree in Classical and Medieval History; he is the co-author of *Realms of Power: the Divine and Ancient Magic*. He has been an *Ars Magica* fan for over ten years.

### Mark Philp

Mark Philp is currently one of those annoying Customer Service Supervisors who frustrates callers endlessly. He's a troubleshooter who's established a call centre in Indonesia, travelling over 100,000 kms on the company payroll all with a fear of flying! He's organised local conventions, was involved in several Gaming organizations in his home city of Adelaide in the 90's, and ran a host of Games at Australian conventions across four states. Mark now resides in Melbourne, Australia where he enjoys being a gourmand and writing role-playing events with the various members of his production group, "Pointless Mental Cruelty".

ed. After starring as "Toad" in the 1995 independent film, "the four corners of nowhere," (finally to be released on DVD next year), he moved to Los Angeles. He's been working ever since in the animation industry, currently serving as the Associate Producer of "The Spectacular Spider-man" for Sony Animation. In between meetings, you'll find him on the Atlas Ars Forum as "firth5", drumming up ideas for his two Iberian sagas. He dedicates his work in this issue to Chris Richmond, who taught him all he knows about telling a good story.

## Ben McFarland

Benjamin McFarland is a computer engineer who lives in upstate New York with his wife, son, two imperious cats and a black Labrador that insists on accompanying him to his weekly *Ars Magica* game. The Labrador. Not the cats. Or the son. The son's not talking yet, which would make joining the game tough, but that's another matter. Ben's working on that.

## Michael de Verteuil

Michael is an *Ars Magica* elder, author and veteran of the BerkList. He was co-author of *Ordo Nobilis*

and wrote *The Bishop's Staff*, for *Ars Magica* Fourth Edition.

## Jojo Aguilar

Jojo Aguilar grew up in southern California. He now lives in Santa Monica with his wife, Catherine. He works primarily in animation and that's where he met Eric Vesbit, (maybe around 12 years ago,) and has been friends ever since. "I love working with Eric because he will always organize a good role playing campaign sooner or later." Jojo has a book of collected sketches available at this website: <http://www.lulu.com/content/343182>.

## Angela Taylor

Angela Taylor is, frankly, a housewife, though she still likes to call herself an English Teacher and occasionally thinks of herself as a Mediaevalist. Since marrying Neil she has learnt more than she'd like to admit of RPGs, but *she doesn't play them*.



# The Art of Courtly Love

## An Open Letter to the Magi of the Alpine Tribunal

I write in hopes of beginning a discussion concerning a new elaboration upon Ovid's writings on Love. This book, entitled *De Arte Honeste Amandi*, combines advice first given by Ovid with traditions laid down in the songs of the troubadours of southern France in order to create a codified and socially conscious set of rules for 'Service in the army of Love.'

The author, Andreas Capellanus, has written the book under the direction of Countess Marie of Champagne, daughter of Eleanor of Aquitaine. In the scant decades since its publication, this treatise has moved across Europe, spreading the culture of Queen Eleanor's Court of Poitiers. It is therefore my belief that the question of the place of magi within the Courts of Love is an important one, of especial relevance to House Jerbiton, who have their esteemed *Domus magnus* within our Tribunal, as well as to the *Milites* of my own house who seek to follow the path of Chivalry. The answering of such a question is far beyond the capabilities of one of my little years and experience, and so I bring it to you, my *sodales*, in the hopes that we may find a suitable response to the conundrum.

*De Arte Honeste Amandi* is divided into three parts: Book I: Introduction to the Treatise on Love, Book II: How Love May be Retained, and Book III: The Rejection of Love. It is Book I — which deals with the definition of Love, the eligibility for Love and the procurement of Love — which has the most relevance to our discussion, as it is in these areas that the difference between a *magus* and other men is most significant.

Capellanus defines Love as:

*... a certain inborn suffering derived from the sight of and excessive meditation upon the beauty of the opposite sex, which causes each one to wish above all things the embraces of the other and by common desire to carry out all of Love's precepts in the other's embraces.*

He also lays down XXXI codified Rules of Love, which are the essence of guidelines given throughout the work, and which provide a structure for our debate. These are:

- I. Marriage is no real excuse for not Loving.
- II. He who is not jealous cannot Love.
- III. No one can be bound by a double Love.
- IV. It is well known that Love is always increasing or decreasing.

## By Danielle Nichols

V. That which a Lover takes against the will of his beloved has no relish.

VI. Boys do not Love until they arrive at the age of maturity.

VII. When one Lover dies, a widowhood of two years is required of the survivor.

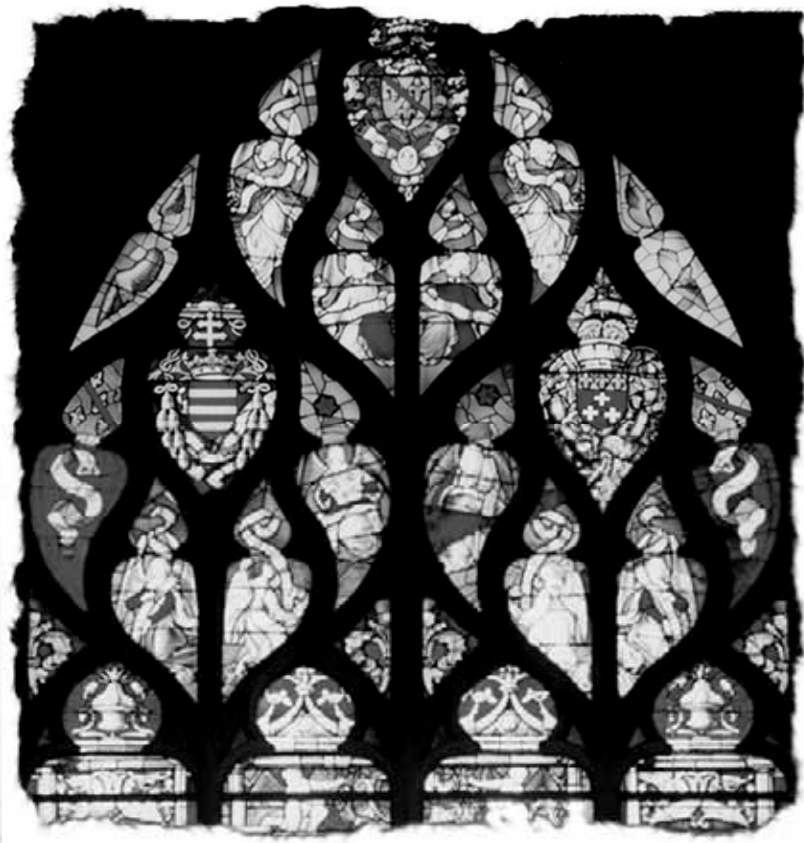
VIII. No one should be deprived of Love without the very best of reasons.

IX. No one can Love unless he is impelled by the persuasion of Love.

X. Love is always a stranger in the home of avarice.

XI. It is not proper to Love any woman whom one should be ashamed to seek to marry.

XII. A true Lover does not desire to embrace in Love anyone



except his beloved.

XIII. When made public Love rarely endures.

XIV. The easy attainment of Love makes it of little value; difficulty of attainment makes it prized.

XV. Every Lover regularly pale in the presence of his beloved.

XVI. When a Lover suddenly catches sight of his beloved his heart palpitates.

XVII. A new Love puts to flight an old one.

XVIII. Good character alone makes any man worthy of Love.

XIX. If Love diminishes, it quickly fails and rarely revives.

XX. A man in Love is always apprehensive.

XXI. Real jealousy always increases the feeling of Love.

XXII. Jealousy, and therefore Love, are increased when one suspects his beloved.

XXIII. He whom the thought of Love vexes, eats and sleeps very little.

XXIV. Every act of a Lover ends with in the thought of his beloved.

XXV. A true Lover considers nothing good except what he thinks will please his beloved.

XXVI. Love can deny nothing to Love.

XXVII. A Lover can never have enough of the solaces of his beloved.

XXVIII. A slight presumption causes a Lover to suspect his beloved.

XXIX. A man who is vexed by too much passion usually does not Love.

XXX. A true Lover is constantly and without intermission possessed by the

thought of his beloved.

XXXI. Nothing forbids one woman being Loved by two men or one man by two women.

There are three questions which I seek to answer with this letter: Are magi fit for Love? What place does the Art have in Love? and Where in the social order do magi fall with regard to Love?

## Are magi fit for Love?

Capellanus states that, *'Everyone of sound mind who is capable of doing the work of Venus may be wounded by one of Love's arrows unless prevented by age, or blindness, or excess of passion.'* He excludes from this two groups who though capable of Love should not practice it: nuns, who by engaging in acts of Love bring down the wrath of God upon their partners and are thus unfit, as well as peasants, who have neither the time nor the emotional capacity to practice Love well. It is possible that magi, like nuns and peasants, can feel Love but should not practice it, as there are many barriers between magi and Love.

The first barrier is the Gift, which stands as a bar between magi and others. It seems that the feelings of revulsion and suspicion engendered by the Gift are incompatible with the feelings of desire needed to foster Love. If the gift is a barrier, we must also consider those magi whose gift is Gentle or Blatant, and how the strictures put upon them differ.

The other barrier is the Art itself, which consumes so much of our time and devotion. The Treatise sates that:

*Every attempt of a Lover tends toward the enjoyment of the embraces of her whom he Loves. . . Therefore in the sight of a Lover nothing can be compared to the act of Love, and a true Lover would rather be deprived of. . . everything that the human mind can imagine as indispensable to*

*life rather than be without Love.*

What magus would be deprived of his Gift for Love? Or, in a less extreme case, how many magi would trade time spent within the laboratory for time spent in the embraces of a Lover? Even should a magus be so afflicted, should time be thus spent? Or do magi, like peasants to their plowing, have a duty to their study which makes Love an inappropriate hardship from which they should avoid? Perhaps one could even go so far as to suggest that magi have a tie to magic itself which eclipses any bond to another person?

If magi are to be counted among the armies of Love, then another question remains about when they may join its service. Andreas suggests that girls below 12 are not fit for Love by natural law, and that boys below 18 are too overcome with embarrassment and awkwardness to properly serve it. Is this true for magi as well? I personally believe that a case could be made that no magus still within apprenticeship is fit for Love, as they are not truly their own person and furthermore their time is not their own.

It is also stated that after the 50th year in a woman, and 60th in a man, Love can find no hold on account of humeral changes, the loss of heat and gain of moisture, which occur at this age. Do these rules also hold true for magi? The lifespan of a magus is much longer than that of a normal man or woman due to the longevity potions which we begin to consume in our third decade. However, these same longevity potions encourage infertility, which may be a sign of the same humeral changes. I look especially to those of House Jerbiton who have made such a study of longevity potions and their effects to enlighten us on this matter.

## What place has the Art in Love?

It is stated multiple times within the dialogues of the Treatise that



Love must be given of free will. This calls into question the place of magic in procuring Love. It can be seen quite clearly that spells of the school of Mentem which act directly upon the subject's mind abrogate free will, but what of the many Imaginem spells which act to make one seem more pleasant? Are these truly different from the careful application of rouge, or the purchase of finely tailored clothing? If some magic is permissible in the pursuit of Love and other spells are not, where should this line be drawn?

Andreas lists Character as the highest virtue when seeking a Lover, above concerns such as wealth or physical beauty. (A decision for which I commend him.) We must discuss how

possession of the Gift enters into this discussion. Is it part of one's character, or some other property of the person? In either case is it something to be taken into account, and if so, is it a desirable trait or a negative one? Lastly, is it more appropriate for magi to take other magi as Lovers than to take a mundane? This discussion, of course, is related to that concerning the social effects of Gift.

### Where in the social order do magi fall with regard to Love?

The Treatise lays out three social classes for women, and four for men. The ranks of Middle Class, Lesser Nobility, and Higher Nobility are shared by men and women, with a man taking the class of his birth and a woman the class of either her birth or husband. The fourth class listed for men is that of the Highest Nobility, the priesthood. However, as the status of priest comes from God (hence its exalted state) and the practice of Love is one of which God does not truly approve, priests must claim the status of their birth in affairs of Love.

It is a difficult thing to place magi within this order, for we hold ourselves apart from it. Is our state

more similar to that of a Lesser Noble? A Higher one? I would put forward that the status of a monk is most similar to that of the magus, but if this is so, it only complicates matters as, our status not coming from the service of God, we should not feel obligated to discount it in Love. Also, similar to the priest, a magus could be said to have two classes, that of his position in the Art, and that of his birth, which varies greatly among members of our Order. Therefore a case could be made, though I do not support it, that magi should be enlisted in Love's army by the class of their birth.

This question ultimately is one of relative position and approach when making a suit for a member of a certain class. Nobility in Love is only significant in so much as it affects the Character. Magi, as a learned and philosophical class, possessed of wealth, responsibility and cultural refinement, need not feel inferior in socializing with a count or a countess, and so I personally am inclined to place us at the level of the Higher Nobility in the affairs of Love.

I eagerly await the thoughts and ideas of my sodales on this matter and all others discussed here, and look to your expertise, both in answering these difficult questions, and putting forth others which need be asked that I may have passed over. It is my eager hope that our discussions may prove both diverting and enlightening.

-- Zephra boni --



Sub Rosa





# Covenant Locations: Masada

For many sagas, the choice of covenant location can set the tenor of more than just the first arc, it can define the whole game-- or, at the very least, determine its direction for a number of sessions. Sometimes it is the region itself that the Storyguide intends to hold the players' focus, and players might be provided a number of possible sites from which they will select their characters' new home. In an attempt to add variety to the old saw of 'a castle on a hill by a faerie wood,' the following location is presented. It isn't intended to be a full reference, but provide an overview for further research.

## Levant Tribunal:

## Covenant Location: Masada

The plateau is located at 31°18'58.32" North latitude, 35°21'13.30" East longitude. Google Earth can provide an excellent overview and local photos. It is about 35 miles from Jerusalem through the desert and about three and a half miles from the southern tip of the Dead Sea.

Depending on the timeframe of your saga, the fortress is within the Kingdom of Jerusalem (1099-1187), or the Sultanate of Egypt ruled by Saladin (1187-1218) or his brother, al-Kamil Muhammad al-Malik, who succeeded him. Between 1228 and 1244, Jerusalem was given by al-Kamil to the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II. The city fell in 1244 to the Khawarizmi Turks, who were later, in 1260, replaced by the Mamelukes. Given Masada's proximity to the city, it is reasonable to expect some mundane influence from the city's rulers.

## Short history of the Fortress

Originally the palace of Herod the Great in the south of Israel and situated atop of an isolated rock plateau, Masada is on the eastern edge of the Judean Desert overlooking the Dead Sea. Josephus, the Jewish-Roman historian of Vespasian claimed that Masada was the site of a siege against the Jewish Sicarii fugitives by the Roman Legion X Fretensis in the Great Jewish Revolt. They established eight camps at the base of the Masada rock and surrounded it with a high wall, leaving no escape for rebels. When defeat became imminent in 73 AD, the survivors chose mass suicide over slavery. A small group of women and children supposedly survived by hiding in a cistern and related the story to Josephus. Afterwards, Legionnaires continued to occupy the site for some time.

## Breakdown of the Fortress

The cliffs are roughly 1300 feet high on the eastern edge and 300 feet on the west. Natural paths to the cliff top are very difficult, the primary one was known as the "Snake Trail" from the east (from the Dead Sea), the "White Rock" from the west, and two approaches from north and south. The plateau has a surface area of 2130 feet (710 yards) by 984 feet (328 yards). There was a casemate wall around the top of the plateau totaling 4,300 feet long and 12 foot thick with many towers. Such a wall usually has an outer and an inner portion braced by transverse

By Ben McFarland



*This image is a copy of a portion of [http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/historical/europe\\_12thcentury\\_1884.jpg](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/historical/europe_12thcentury_1884.jpg), a map from the map collection of the Perry-Castañeda Library (PCL) of the University of Texas at Austin and is Public Domain.*

masonry partitions, which divide the space into a series of chambers for fill or storage.

The fortress included storehouses, barracks, an armory, the palace, and cisterns that were refilled by rainwater. Three narrow, winding paths led from below to fortified gates. The Roman siege ramp is 328 feet long from the valley floor to the walls on the western side, where the Romans breached them.



One lookout station was placed in the center of the community from which any area of the hilltop could be monitored.

The “Hanging Palace,” on the northern end of the summit, extended down the promontory of the mountain on three levels. The lowest level is 115 feet from the top. Winding staircases provided access to each level. It commanded a view of the surroundings as far as Ein-Gedi. It was built in three tiers, with only the upper tier containing the living quarters and the lower ones designed for pleasure. The walls and ceilings were decorated with frescoes.

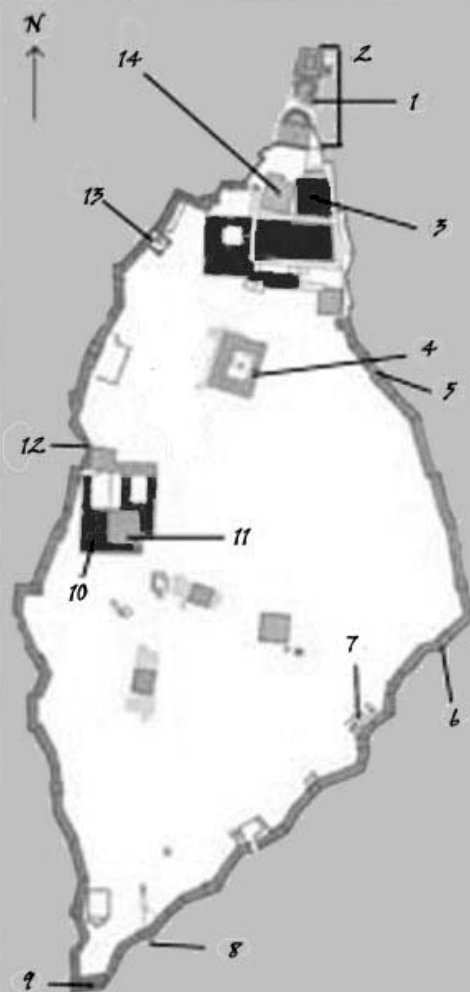
The second, larger palace was located on the western side of the mountain. It contained scores of rooms and installations. It was a self-sufficient unit, serving as the main administration center of the fortress, as well as the king’s ceremonial palace. The building consists of four wings: a vast royal apartment, a service and workshop section, storage rooms and an administrative unit. In the royal apartment, many rooms were built around a central courtyard. A large room with two Ionic columns supporting the roof over the wide opening into the courtyard occupied the southern side. Its walls were decorated with moulded panels of white stucco. Several rooms with colored

mosaic floors were located on the eastern side. The largest room has a particularly decorative mosaic floor with floral and geometric patterns within several concentric square bands that survived well into modern times. This room may have been King Herod’s throne room when he was in residence at Masada. The western palace is the largest building found on the site.

South of the Northern Palace was a large, traditional Roman-style bathhouse with four rooms and a court. The largest room, the caldarium, had a hypocaust beneath it and its floor stood on about 200 tiny brick columns. A furnace drove hot air through perforated clay pipes set in the walls. Herod the Great built a water system by installing dams in the nearby valleys to divert the winter rains into channels that directed the water into cisterns built in the northwest side of the cliff. From there, slaves carried the water to the

## Masada Map Key

1. Small bathhouse
2. Herod's palace-villa
3. Storerooms
4. Apartment building
5. Snake-path gate
6. Casemate wall
7. Rebels' living quarters
8. Underground cistern
9. Southern bastion
10. Western palace
11. Throne room
12. West gate
13. Synagogue
14. Large bathhouse



upper reservoir.

The public storerooms, situated east and south of the bathhouse, consisted of long narrow rooms built from large stone slabs. Most of these rooms had collapsed in the destruction of the supplies by the Jewish rebels.

The remains of a synagogue could be found in the north-western corner of Masada. It is a rectangular building oriented toward Jerusalem with four tiers of plastered benches along the walls and two rows of columns in the center. Ritual objects were kept in a corner room. Rebels constructed the temple on the base of an earlier Herodian temple. A pagan Roman garrison occupied Masada for some time after the defeat. Whether or not a Dominion aura exists on this site one thousand years later is a matter for the Storyguide.

It would be simple to place a Faerie/Janni Landlord Major Hook here, providing a covenant with three more minor boons. Any

number of minor Resource Hooks would also be appropriate — such as Contested Resource or Indiscreet Resource. Given the Religious/Political nature of the Levant, a Rival Relations Hook is also appropriate. This gives the players room for at least four to seven more points worth of Boons.

### Story Seed: Ghostly Siege

It is said that the Tenth Legion prepared to break down the gates on the 16th of April, and on the night of the 15th, the compound becomes alive with spirits reenacting portions of that siege and the subsequent mass suicide. These spirits can be interacted with to some extent, but are limited to an area that was their responsibility in life. This all culminates in the drawing of lots on shards of pottery and the mass suicide, followed by a spectral blaze and the storming of the fort by the ghosts of Roman Legionnaires. Should the ghosts of the two Jewish women and five

children be prevented from hiding in the cistern, the Magic aura of the site will drop by one and the Dominion aura will rise by one until the sequence plays out again next year. This year, a more devout member of the covenfolk, one that speaks Hebrew, attempts to convince the ghosts not to surrender, but face the Romans — that they should all die in defense of their beliefs rather than by their own hand, believing this might just free them! Will it work? What would be the result? What if a rival covenant insinuates a spy with an item that would allow the escapee ghosts to be destroyed? Can the spy be found before the aura is damaged?



#### Boons and hooks

**Minor Site Boon:**

- Difficult Access
- Hostile Environment

**Minor Site Hooks:**

- Flickering Aura
- Haunted

**Fortifications, Major Boons:**

- Curtain Walls and Mural Towers

**Fortifications, Major Hooks:**

- Castle

**Fortifications, Minor Boons:**

- Bedrock
- Edifices-- Palaces

**Fortifications, Minor Hooks:**

- Crumbling
- Resources, Minor Hooks:
- Dwindling Resources: Water

**Relations, Minor Hook:**

- Unsafe

**Surroundings, Minor Hook:**

- Massacre Site

**Net Total:** Two more minor Hooks than Boons.

#### Bibliography

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# Hermetic Vignettes

By Kurt Konegen

"MARCUS!! Get down here immediately," the well-dressed man shouted. Almost all of the caged birds and rodents screeched and chattered in startlement and protest.

Alexander Jerbitonis was in a truly high fury. He was looking at the remains the earthenware jar that used to reside at the terminal end of his vis extraction apparatus. The pieces, made from clay he had personally collected from 'a particularly beautiful section of the Blue Nile', and the formerly pure water that the jar had contained were cast all over the floor at the end of the lab table. To make matters worse, it was very late and he had just returned from an especially difficult Council meeting. Why, he thought, purchasing a casting tablet for an eighth magnitude Aegis should be a difficult decision HE'LL never know!

Bellatrix, his familiar, meowed a protest from his arms as the petting became too firm. He tisk-ed an apology to her, then took a deep breath. "NOW, Marcus!!" he roared again to a fresh round of screeches and chitters.

Just as his master finished shouting his name, the unfortunate lad, about fourteen summers in age and a bit on the gangly side, rounded the corner at a dead run. He appeared out of breath, a look



of worry mixed with confusion naked upon his face. "Your wish, Magister?" he blurted. Then he saw the remains of the jar. Marcus's look quickly changed to one of wide-eyed surprise and horror. "But Master Alexander, I..." he choked.

"Latin!" Alexander snapped, taking a step forward.

In his mind, Alexander heard in a gently chiding voice, "Carefully, now. Don't turn him to ash."

The boy stopped stammering, stood up straight, and took a deep breath. Marcus continued in a somewhat accented Latin. "Magister, I don't know how it was broken. I had left everything in good condition."

"I don't care! I leave you in charge of the lab so I can go try to talk some sense into a particularly mule-headed Rudolf Bonisagi only to see that you weren't up to the task. I had expected better from you at this stage!" Alexander punctuated each phrase with a large wave of his hand and finished his point by pointing right at the boy's chest. Marcus didn't dare move. Alexander gritted his teeth and growled, "Fix it. Now." Marcus looked pleadingly back at his teacher. Alexander just growled again and moved a little closer.

Marcus turned to the spill, quickly looked around, dashed to one of the shelves and hefted a large lidded tub from one of the lower shelves, bringing it over to the spill. Removing the lid, he grabbed a largish glob of slightly damp clay and pushed the pieces of the jar into it. Yelling Latin and almost desperately waving his arms, Marcus caused the pieces to join. With further shouting and very carefully gesturing with one hand while touching the assembled pieces with the other, he refashioned the clay jar into something like its old shape. A

final flourish and shout and the water gently crept back into the jar. The boy placed the jar back into its proper place in the apparatus, the sparkle endemic to his magic already beginning to fade.

"Huh," grunted Alexander.

The magus looked shrewdly at his apprentice, paused, and then with a flick of a finger Alexander sent the jar to the floor again. "Do it again," he waved. Marcus, with slightly less desperation but with obvious effort, did.

"Well done, lad," Alexander said grudgingly. With that, he turned to his bedchamber. Marcus overheard him say, "You're right Bellatrix, he does have talent in Rego. We'll have to push him harder."

As Alexander left, the cat crawled up on his shoulder and looked back at Marcus. That day Marcus leaned that cats could wink.



"First," said Bellatrix, in utterly flawless, calm, and pedantic Latin from her perch on the eave of the storage shed's roof, "you didn't study your prey properly. You're a smart lad, but for some reason known only to your God, you let your knowledge of that fact give you permission to be lazy. Your intellect allows and requires you to be more diligent, not less."

Marcus was trying to fit the parts of one of the barrels together so that he could fix it.

"Second, you must remember your magic theory. There are only so many things that any apprentice



can do unless one is very, VERY lucky, and counting on that luck is worse than foolish sometimes. Remember when your master tried to build that small bridge out of raw logs? And he is much more capable than you. Set your tasks within your capabilities, except in grave circumstances.”

Marcus had finished the barrel, and moved it back into position. He turned next to his clothing and began carefully wringing out the foul-smelling liquid.

“Third and finally, you need to remember that startled prey is desperate prey, and is therefore less predictable. Set your trap so as to channel their reactions and, more specifically, channel them away from you.”

The cat jumped down next to an amulet lying on the ground where it landed when Marcus got knocked off the stack of barrels.

“Now, for all of that, you did well. Picking Rudolf’s latest apprentice as your target does have the virtue of being bold and you certainly have her attention. Be warned, however, you will now have to live up to that. She’s a fine girl, as Alexander said earlier. But also, please remember that Rudolf Bonisagi is one of the best teachers in the Order. Further, judging by what she did to you today, his current apprentice is a very good student who is living up to the compliment of his tutelage. She’s not going to waste time with a mate of only mediocre ability – hunting ability or otherwise.”

“Now come along,” said the lady warrior as she pointed with her paw and lifted the amulet around Marcus’ neck. “That noisome smell will disappear shortly, and we have some planning to do if we are going to catch that one out again.”



It had been a beautiful day that was shaping up into a truly spectacular evening. Four old friends were sitting in a loose arc, open to the west, around the remains of a good dinner. The Sun had set a short while ago and stars were starting to appear in the crystal clear sky, even with the light of the gibbous moon high overhead. God is indeed a great artist, mused Alexander to himself.

“So, Alexander, it appears that young Marcus’ fancy for my Leila continues,” said the older magus, interrupting Alexander’s reverie. “His persistence is impressive, and I must say that his creativity impresses me also. But I’m beginning to think he’s being coached,” he continued, giving Bellatrix a very significant look. Bellatrix sniffed and looked at an obscure constellation.

Adolfus ruffled his feathers violently. “Come now, Rudolf! There’s no ‘think’ about it. Bellatrix is actively involved and you know it!” If owls could snort, Adolfus would have.

Bellatrix immediately gave up any pretense at indifference. “That’s just because YOU’VE been telling her that she should set her standards so high! Sweet mouse heads, Adolfus. A year and a half?! Oh, and for the record, his persistence is all his own. He truly is enthralled with her. I simply tell him to trust his own judgment. Repeatedly. And in detail.” She finished with a tone that acknowledged her complicity.

Rudolf chuckled. “Point to Adolfus,” he murmured as Adolfus carefully resettled an unusually fiddly pinfeather.

Alexander finally spoke. “Friends, if I may redirect your attention, I believe the moment

approaches.”

He indicated a small hill about 200 paces westward from their balcony, where a girl sat and a boy stood. The boy started to sing loudly and well. As he continued to sing, he started to move in a somewhat dance-like pattern around the young woman. After a few minutes the wildflowers that were still apparent under the clear night sky started to sparkle a bit and then began to move.

“Using his sigil to good effect, there,” opined Adolfus. Bellatrix managed to look smug and satisfied at the same time. “I’ll give it to you Jerbiton,” Adolfus continued, looking at Alexander, “you all certainly have style.”

The flowers moved in patterns of continuously increasing complexity. This continued for some minutes to the obvious delight of girl they danced for. The girl then slowly stood as the flowers continued to dance and then a breeze briefly ruffled the grass.

“Oh, now that was subtle! If I didn’t know her sigil, I would never have caught that. I wonder what she is going to do with the information.” Alexander turned to Rudolf and said, “You never told



me she was that subtle.”

Rudolf smiled. “Amicus, you don’t know all my secrets.” Alexander acknowledged the point and turned back. The girl was obviously thinking and the display was holding up very well.

Then the girl spoke in gentle but very penetrating tones as another slight breeze ruffled the hillside. The display widened from perhaps a 20-pace radius to the entire hillside and then as far as the eye could see. There were a couple of quiet gasps from the group and Bellatrix carefully stood. She walked over to her companion’s friend, nuzzled the old man’s cheek, and said, “She’s brilliant, Rudolf. Simply brilliant.” She then

She then turned and went to curl up in her companion’s lap.

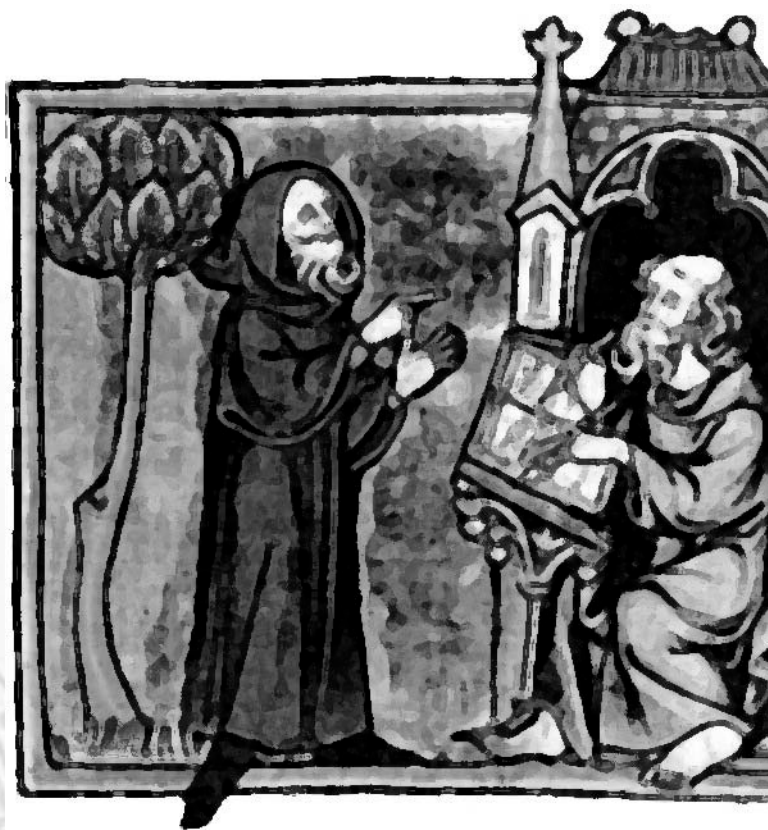
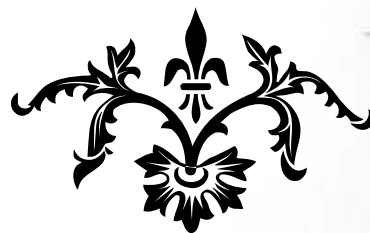
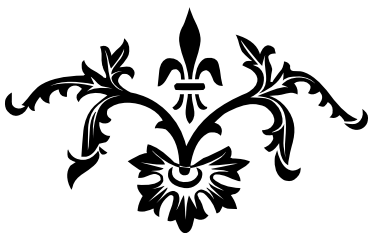
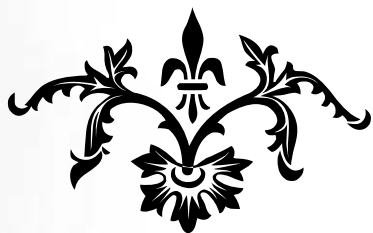
The friends continued to watch the display for a time and then Alexander spoke up again, this time brightly. “Well, that was some good effort on prepared and improvised spellwork in Imaginem, Vim, Rego, Intelligo, and Muto. It’s Midsummer’s Eve so what say we give them the night and then hammer them with Perdo over the next couple season...

“OW!” Bellatrix re-sheathed her claws while Rudolf laughed out loud at his friend. “Careful old friend, it appears that you haven’t entirely left your Tylalus heritage behind.”

Alexander chuckled while rubbing his leg. He waved at the hillside and offered, “Well, there are some games I can’t get tired of.” He winced at Bellatrix, who ignored him most thoroughly. “Perdo, for certain. And a bit about the Code.”

“Agreed.”

And the four left the balcony – two hunters, two old campaigners, and four very dedicated teachers.



# The Tartalo

## An Encounter with a Tartalo

Detailed below is an encounter with this Tartalo, set at an outpost along the main eastern pass of the Pyrenees. The outpost is on one of the highest points of the pass, where the old, narrow Roman road skirts along a white granite cliff. To the north of the road, the cliff rises hundreds of meters into the air, and to south, the cliff falls away into the mists below. The walls of the outpost completely cover the road, forcing travelers to pay a toll to pass. It is a desolate, if picturesque locale. The outpost is currently run by a small contingent of the Knights of Calatrava as a minor source of income. The Knights also serve to keep the peace between the fierce rivals on either side of the mountains: The Count of Foix to the east, and the Bishop of Andorra to the west. When not soldiering, the monks raise goats, tend a small garden in the courtyard, and hunt the wilds of the Pyrenees for isard. Recently, an historian for the Order of

Calatrava has paid a visit in order to gather stories from its members and put them to parchment.

## Backstory

An immature Tartalo was discovered by a hunting party from the outpost, and killed. The body was taken back to the outpost to show the curious historian. The beast's mother trailed the hunting party that night to the outpost, and staged a surprise attack. She climbed down the cliffside and dropped into the open courtyard. Sneaking from room to room, she slaughtered the sleeping inhabitants, until she was discovered. A pitched battle ensued, driving the beast into the courtyard. She entered a Berserker rage, and killed the rest of the soldiers. In her rage, she ripped the corpses apart, ate her fill, and flung the rest of the remains over the edge of the cliff. Spent, but still angry, she retreated into a small storage area in the rear of the stables, wrapped herself in supernatural darkness, and bed down for the day.

By Eric Vesbit

## Approaching the Outpost

The characters approach the outpost that evening, just as night falls. Play up the sense of foreboding as they come upon the scene of the empty keep, and the massacre. Carrion birds, such as griffon vultures, circle, and a lammergeier is seen dropping a femur from a great height, in order to crack it open and get to the sweet marrow within. The stench of blood and something earthier is in the air. Nothing can be heard above the wind but an occasional faint, heavy wooden "thock." (The sound of a door on the far side of the outpost swinging closed, hitting a fallen corpse, and rebounding.)

The heavy doors in front of the characters may or may not be locked, depending on the skill set and magic available to the PC's.



## The Outpost

Describe the massacre within in as much visual detail as the failing light allows. The entrance of the characters disturbs a few brave vultures. The smell of the Tartalo is everywhere, for she has marked her new territory, and her urine is seeped in rage. The spirits of any restless dead may whisper by. Blood and gore is strewn about. A half-eaten torso, still garbed in the black tabard of the Order, is carelessly flung in a corner. A dog has been ripped in half. Two spears and a shield can be found scattered amongst the remains. A stray helm contains the contents of its former wearer . . .

The outpost is a fairly typical construction of Roman origin, located underneath a great overhang of granite that shields it from falling rocks. It is a two-story affair, with rooms built along the interior wall, surrounding a wide courtyard. Two areas of note are described below.

## The Nest

At the rear of the stables, the characters will find a small storeroom. Across the threshold of the doorway is a sheet of impenetrable darkness. The smell of the Tartalo here is nearly overpowering.

As it is nightfall, the creature will waken shortly from its day of rest. If it is still asleep, a low slow breathing can be heard coming from within the void.

The creature will wake on an awareness roll of 9+, modified by the following chart:

- +3 Daytime
- 3 Characters have made loud noises
- 3 Characters are emitting stronger than average scents

Once wakened, the creature creeps to just inside the door, listening and sniffing the air. If a character approaches to within a



## The Tartalo

The Tartalo is similar to a Greco-Roman Cyclops, but nocturnal, and highly magical. Hermetic scholars theorize that the race may be descended from two cyclopean wards brought to Iberia by Hercules when he founded Barcelona. These beings were said to eventually guard his final resting place. Due to the existence of the Tartalo, scholars posit that this must be somewhere in the Pyrenees mountains.

A great hulk of a creature, the Tartalo is known for preying on children and sheep in the craggy regions of the Basque country. Its huge, perfectly black eye is the source of its magic. This particular Tartalo female is fond of stalking the mountain passes through the western Pyrenees, preying on travelers. Recently she has been driven from her homeland by the Order of Santiago, whose hospices along the pilgrimage pass to St. James of Compostela have made her hunting grounds much less safe. She and her brood have been traveling east through the Pyrenees, and have stumbled upon the main eastern route, between Foix to the east and Andorra to the west.

Only mature Tartalo have the Rego and Mentem powers (and vis) of their fully-formed eye. Immature Tartalo (age 1 through 15) do have 1 pawn of Perdo Vis, and can still use Nesting within the Void, but without the accompanying Mentem effects.





## Tartalo (Mature Female)

**Magic Might:** 15

**Char:** Int -2, Per 1, Pre 0, Com -3, Str +6, Sta +4, Dex 0, Qik 1

**Size:** +3

**Age:** 15 – 60

**Virtues and Flaws:** Nocturnal Hunter\*; Berserk; One Eye

\* The Tartalo can see in the dark as per the spell *Eyes of the Cat*. It is also extremely sensitive to light: constant bright light (e.g. sunlight) causes agitation, -1 to all attacks, and forces a Berserk check. Sudden light will dazzle for 1 round, if she fails a Sta 9+ stress die. The Tartalo has an excellent sense of smell, giving a +3 to Awareness rolls involving smell.

**Personality Traits:** Angry +5 (toward humans that killed her son), Bloodthirsty +3, Sneaky +1

**Reputations:** Infant and livestock eater 3 (Basques)

**Combat:**

*Large Claws:* Init +1, Atk +9, Dfn +8, Dam +10

*Cudgel:* Init +2, Atk +6, Dfn +4, Dam +13

**Soak:** Body +9, Eye +15

**Fatigue:** OK/0/0/-1/-1/-3/-5/Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-8), -3 (9-16), -5 (17-24), Incapacitated (25-32)

**Abilities:** Awareness 3 (food), Athletics 3 (climbing), Brawl 3 (claw), Concentration 1 (eye contact), Hunt 4 (travelers), Pyrenees Area Lore 2 (Mountain passes), Survival 3 (Pyrenees), Stealth 2 (mountains), Great Weapon 1 (cudgel)

**Equipment:** Ragged loin cloth, roughshod jewelry (bits of bone woven into braids, etc.) The Tartalo generally gathers shiny possessions of its victims within its nest. Some Tartalo have learned to carry a large, crude cudgel to avoid getting within reach of the sharp metal sticks of humans.

**Encumbrance:** 0 (Load 2, with cudgel)

**Powers:** (Note: The Tartalo cannot use its powers while berserk.)

**Nesting within the Void:** 3 points, Init -5, Mentem: As the spell *Well Without Light* with D: Room. The Tartalo casts this in any niche it finds amidst the mountains, when it beds down for the day. Any intelligent being unlucky enough to enter the Void must make a Brave check of 9+. Failure indicates an immediate loss of direction, and a -1 to all actions until he leaves the Void. A botch indicates the character has fainted.

**Trapped Within the Reaper's Gaze:** 0 points, Init +1, Mentem: When the Tartalo makes eye contact, the victim is overcome by the perfect, endless darkness swirling within the orb as per the description for the hermetic spell *Confusion of the Numbed Will*. The power only lasts as long as the Tartalo maintains eye contact and concentrates.

**Vis:** The Tartalo's eye consists of 1 pawn of Mentem, 1 pawn of perdo, and 1 pawn of rego. The Tartalo's eye is prized by Necromancers, Cramion theorists, and occult seers alike. It can be used as the base element of a scrying tool, or of a device to control ghosts.

**Appearance:** A hulking creature, with thick mottled grey skin and huge claws, the Tartalo's most dominating feature is the huge, perfectly black eye in the center of its brow. The Tartalo generally wears a ragged loin cloth, and weaves bits of bone into its hair. Some are known to wear the jewelry of their victims, and carry a large cudgel.

pace of the threshold, he will be startled as a clawed arm suddenly lashes out of the darkness, and attempts to pull him into the void.

If the characters do not approach the stable, the Tartalo will sneak out and attempt to surprise the characters. Her general modus operandi is to corner a character in a room, and cast Nesting within the Void. Alternatively, she attempts to make eye contact with a character, and use Trapped Within the Reaper's Gaze. If all else fails, her strong claws will inflict plenty of damage in a brawl.

She considers the characters more examples of the humans who killed her offspring, and easily leaps into a Berserker rage in an all-out battle. Note that she was probably wounded the night before, determine her current wound level based on the power level of the PC's. If you need more out of her, one of her other brood, or even her mate, may be nesting within the stable.

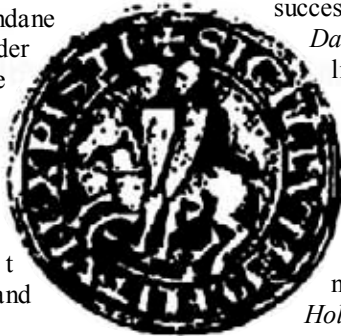
### The historian's Room

A second floor room housed the Order's Historian. Quills and other stationary can be found scattered by the recent melee, as well as his History. This serves as Tractatus on the Knights of Calatrava (Qual 10), Area Lore of New Castile (Qual 5), and a History of the Reconquista (Qual 5). This history, if returned, would be quite valuable to their Order. The last page of the journal tells of how the hunting party encountered the young Tartalo, which was later identified as such by "Señor Selatse de Navarre", of the Basque people.



# The Poor Knights of the Temple of Solomon

In Ars Magica canon, the Knights Templar — that enigmatic chivalric order that flourished from 1119 to 1312 — are little more than a mundane military monastic order that bore arms in the name of Christ, fought in the Holy Land during the Crusades, and acted as international bankers that bankrolled kings and lords alike.



The Order of the Temple is not accorded a mention in ArM5. They make a lacklustre appearance in *Mythic Tapestry*, after a history in ArM3 of being overshadowed by fictional orders, such as the Order of St. Mary (in *Pax Dei*). In *Blood and Sand*, a saga seed describes a few options for the Poor Knights: diabolists or powerful sorcerers. Another story seed on the same page presents the possibility of the Order of Hermes forming its own military wing to combat Islam. In *Realms of Power: The Divine*, the militant Knightly Orders are sketched, and a Knight Templar template is included; it is hinted here that they practice secret mysteries and have strange powers. Beyond these minor appearances, they rate no serious mention. Odd for such an important medieval organisation, whose reach and influence stretched across Europe and beyond.

The modern legacy of the Templars is as an order of occultists *par excellence*, as secret masters that manipulated kings and popes for their own ends, as heirs to the mysteries of heretical Cathars, and in their own day, as the guardians of that most magnificent legend: the Holy Grail. Rightly or wrongly, it is the

Freemasonic history that predominates in many other popular conceptions of the Poor Knights of the Temple. The recent success of books like *The Da Vinci Code* is a likely culprit, as well as the innumerable pseudo-historical books, which saturate the schlock history sections of all good bookstores, notably *Holy Blood*, *Holy Grail*.

Dismayed by Ars Magica's strict and dull adherence to the historical record, I desired a more legendary Order of the Temple. Given the modern proliferation of trashy historical 'exposés' of the Templars, and the wealth of contemporary accounts of the Templars, I felt that there was room enough for a mythic Order of the Temple in Ars Magica. This is the first of a series of five articles about the Knights Templar. The articles will present the Templars:

1. As nothing more than an Order of knights that were adept in the politics of money and war;
2. As the military wing of the Order of Hermes;
3. As a secret order of esoteric craftsmasons, heir to the secrets of ancient magical and hieratic traditions;
4. As pious soldiers in the Divine Military Order; and
5. As the diabolical heretics that saw their dissolution in 1312.

This project began in 2002, but has been delayed many years due to various other projects, an honours degree, a new job and the release of Ars Magica Fifth Edition.

By Alex White

Many thanks to Michaël de Verteuil for his advice, assistance and help. Acknowledgements also to my fellow *Realms of Power: The Divine* authors.

## Money and War: from the Temple to La Forbie

In the years following the bloody capture of Jerusalem in 1099 by the soldiers of the First Crusade, the victorious Crusaders divided their conquered lands into four territories. The pre-eminent kingdom was that of Jerusalem itself, ruled by Godfrey of Bouillon as 'Advocate of the Holy Sepulchre'. With Christians in command of the Christian holy places, the well-trodden pilgrim routes came under pressure from the surrounding Muslim powers. As the crusaders who had wrested the Holy Land from the hands of the Muslims returned to Europe in startling numbers, and with a precarious succession situation in the Kingdom of Jerusalem, a proposal was made by two knights.

### The Order Forms

Hugh of Payns and Godfrey of Saint-Omer, two knights who arrived in Jerusalem after the Crusade, suggested that a community of knights under a monastic rule be formed for the protection of the pilgrims en route to the Christian sacred sites. King Baldwin (I or II) and the Patriarch of Jerusalem approved. On Christmas Day, 1119, Hugh of Payns and his eight companions, among them Godfrey, Andrew of Montbard, Archambaud of Saint-Aignan, Payen of Montdidier,





degeneracy.

So great was the moral authority of Clairvaux and Bernard that for forty years the monastery was the spiritual centre of Europe, with men from the ends of the world journeying to the monastery for advice. Among the luminaries who emerged from Clairvaux were a pope, the archbishop of York and countless bishops and cardinals.

## Papal Endorsement

By 1127, with an official membership list of only the original founding members, Hugh of Payns journeyed to Europe to seek support for the Levantine kingdoms and to gain papal sanction for his order. His trip was stunningly successful. King Henry I generously donated 'great treasures', the other temporal lords all gave endowments to the Order. Among the prelates of the Church who heard Hugh's petition to gain Papal endorsement was Bernard of Clairvaux, a man deeply indebted to Hugh's liege, the Count of Champagne and nephew of Andrew of Montbard. At this meeting, the Templar Rule was presented, scrutinised and revised.

While the clergy at that meeting were concerned with a Rule designed to preserve the knights' souls, its result was to form a military unit under tight discipline that were unaffected by the shifting circumstances that were typical of feudal levies. Pope Honorius II duly confirmed the endorsement of the Templars, and upon his return to Clairvaux, Bernard composed his treatise 'In the Praise of the New Knighthood'.

With Papal endorsement, Hugh returned to Palestine to continue the Christian offensive against the Muslims. He left behind several of the Order's founders to continue recruiting knights and gaining support from Europe's great lords. Donations were made by all kinds of people from all walks of life, from a few coins, small parcels of land, a horse or armour, to tracks

19  
Geoffrey Bissot and Roland, took their vows of poverty, chastity and obedience in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

In order that they may be provided with sufficient means to accomplish their role, both King and Patriarch endowed the nascent Order with living quarters and generous benefices. They received a wing of the royal palace, the former al-Aqsa mosque on the southern edge of Temple Mount. This site was more commonly known as Templum Salomonis: the Temple of Solomon. From these prestigious living quarters came their name: The Poor Knights of Jesus Christ and the Temple of Solomon.

Although originally the Poor Knights wished to live under their priestly vows, King Baldwin, their patron, was well aware of his inability to police his kingdom

with the few remaining soldiers left him. In 1119, slavers massacred a party of pilgrims journeying to Jerusalem. Soon it was dangerous to leave the city unprotected.

## The Order Grows

The Poor Knights were soon to come under even more powerful patronage. By 1125 the Order was the recipient of boons and gifts from many European magnates. Hugh of Champagne gave his lands to his nephew and took on the Order's vows.

Count Hugh, the former liege-lord of Hugh of Payns, was also instrumental in the rise and rise of Bernard of Fontaines-les-Dijon, patriarch of the monastic order of the Cistercians, founded in 1098. Bernard, after the founding of Clairvaux, castigated the wealthy monks of Cluny for their moral



of land and holdings, and massive tax exemptions. As their lands and grants increased, a large proportion of their income became needed to support it. Much of their administration was based on that of the Hospitallers, the Knights of the Hospital of Saint John, who were coterminous with the Templars.

## Endowments and Authority

After 1134, lords and knights began donating their entire estates to the Order. This growing wealth saw the provincial masters of the Order to become highly respected; soon they were the trusted councillors of popes and kings. The hierarchy of the Order soon became comparable to that of the church, promising great power as the knight advanced in rank.

When Hugh died, Robert of Craon, the new Grand Master of the Order, obtained from Pope Innocent II a bull, known as the *Omne datum optimum*, declaring that the Order be exempt from all intermediary ecclesiastical jurisdiction. In short, the Templars were subject only to the authority of the pope. Even the Patriarch of Jerusalem lost his authority over the Order whose first vows had been said before him. The Templars were now permitted to have their own priests, and were completely independent of the authority of the bishops. They had their own cemeteries, could receive tithes, and take booty.

Innocent's largesse in 1139 to the Order can in large part be explained by the fact that he was a close follower of Bernard of Clairvaux. After Innocent, the policy of support for the Templars was confirmed: they were seen as the primary way in which the Holy Land could be retained.

## The Second Crusade

Edessa's capture in 1144 by the

Muslim Mosul Zengi galvanised Christendom. Bernard of Clairvaux was instructed by the pope to preach a new crusade. As the crusade mounted, it was the Templars that received and administered the proceeds of the one-twentieth tax on all church goods that paid for the venture. It was then that Pope Eugenius gave the Poor Knights the right to wear the crusading red cross over their hearts.

The leaders of the Second Crusade relied heavily on the advice of the Poor Knights, from local knowledge to tactics to diplomatic missions to the Byzantine emperor. By the time King Louis of France had reached Antioch, he had run out of money to pay for any further action. Turning to the Templars, he received the resources needed to continue the Crusade.

The Templars ensured that they were repaid in full, a sum equal to half the annual income of the royal domain. Eventually, the Second

### Cultural Adaptation

Steadily, the trickle of Middle Eastern luxuries and culture were ferried from the Latin Crusader States to Europe, and became a flood. The Latin lords embraced the civilisation of their conquered lands. A balance was found between the multitudinous faiths and churches in Palestine, and there was little missionary activity of attempts to convert Muslim or Jewish subjects to Christianity.

The Levantine barons' wealth relied upon the continued well being of their subjects. No less than the lords of the conquered territories, the Templars benefited from the prosperity of their fiefs. This wealth allowed the Templars to pursue a policy of building, not only great fortresses but also palaces and churches, and a new Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Crusade ended in a humiliating debacle. The crusaders withdrew in ignominy, requiring the Levantine barons to seek a compromise with their Islamic neighbours.

## Under Attack

By 1150 however, the Templars were coming under attack from within Christendom. Their critics accused them of greed and pride. Their attacks on poorly defended trade caravans, and of leaping into battle, were seen as base attempts to gain easy glory and booty. Nevertheless, the costs of running a military order were considerable; the Order required a large income merely to survive. Twenty years later the Hospitallers faced bankruptcy.

Greed was not the only vice of the Templars. With financial independence, the Templars soon acted in the Holy Land as free agents. From private treaties with Muslim leaders to financial deals with Italian merchants trading with Egypt, the Poor Knights were willing to wage war against Islam on their own terms, without interference or input from local lords.

## The Assassins

This situation was exemplified when in 1173 the Order's Grand Master entered into negotiations with the chief of the Assassin sect of Ismailis in Syria. The Templars arranged that they would be safe from Assassin attacks in Syria; every other temporal lord, Muslim or Christian, could not be sure of the same. This arrangement was reached when the Assassins realised that every Grand Master they killed would be quickly replaced with another, just as able and skilled.

This outrage exploded when the chief of the Syrian Assassins made it known that he wished to convert to Christianity. On his journey back from Jerusalem, a group of Templars killed the Assassin's envoy, thus ending any chance of



a conversion (and ensuring the safety of the huge annual tribute paid by the Assassins to the Poor Knights). The King of Jerusalem was so enraged that he petitioned the Pope and other European monarchs to dissolve the Order. His death saw the petition's failure.

For more information about the Assassins in *Ars Magica*, see *Realms of Power: The Divine*, p.113.

## Saladin and the Third Crusade

Saladin's ascendance saw the rapid and dramatic decline of the Poor Knights in the Levant, as well as the Christian kingdoms in general. Since 1180, no substantial military aid was forthcoming from

Europe, despite frantic appeals from the Christian princes of the Holy Land and the various military Orders.

The Battle of Hattin in 1187 saw the deaths of most of the Templars in the Holy Land: a ransom was put on their heads and only the Grand Master was left alive. It also saw the humiliating capture of some of Christendom's holiest relics, including the True Cross.

Saladin's triumphant entry into Jerusalem saw the Templars lose their headquarters. The Temple that had served as their home was purified and the cross was taken from the Dome of the Rock and beaten by jubilant Muslims. A slow war of attrition followed as Saladin's forces captured one Templar (and Hospitaller) fortress after another. The Poor Knights refused to give an inch, but eventually, only a few coastal towns remained in Christian hands.

## King's Crusade

Urban III, upon hearing of the loss of Jerusalem, promptly died of sorrow. Kings and Bishops despaired. There was general belief that God had forsaken the Crusaders because of their sins. Pope Gregory VIII, the successor, quickly preached a new crusade. The first of Europe's great princes to answer that call was Richard, the powerful Angevin king. As he gathered his resources to mount a new offensive in the Holy Land, the church imposed the 'Saladin tithe', a ten percent tax on all income in Christendom. Philip Augustus of France joined Richard, as did a host of other lesser princes. Even the Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick Barbarossa took up the Cross and headed towards Acre to help the besieging crusaders, although he died in 1190 while crossing through Asia Minor.

The Third Crusade would go down in legend. Upon arriving in the Holy Land in 1191, Richard's

friend and Angevin vassal, Robert of Sablé, was quickly elected as the Templar Grand Master. One of his first actions was to purchase the recently conquered Cyprus from Richard for 100,000 Saracen besants (the Poor Knights made a down payment of 40,000 besants, indicating the extent of their financial resources). The King took command of the Crusade; Acre fell shortly thereafter. After the execution of almost 3,000 prisoners after prisoner exchange negotiations with Saladin bogged down, Richard continued his march towards Jerusalem; Philip Augustus returned to France only three weeks after the capture of Acre.

The great column of troops was augmented by large contingents of Templars and Hospitallers. It was their tight discipline that allowed the Frankish success at the major battle of Arsuf against Saladin. As the crusade dragged on, it became clear that even if Jerusalem could be taken, it could not be held. Civil discord in his European domains prompted Richard's hasty departure from the Holy Land in 1192. Four Templar knights accompanied him on his covert journey through Europe. The Third Crusade was over, with the Templars ensconced in Acre.

## Rebukes and Resentment

Ambivalence towards the Templars worsened. Their great wealth and power in Europe and their exemption from temporal and ecclesiastic authority made them a prime target for resentment and contempt. The pope was increasingly flooded with complaints, from minor transgressions to full scale disputes with bishops. One of the more outrageous complaints was that the Templars were saying mass in churches under interdict, and that for a small fee, excommunicates could be assured of Christian burial in Templar cemeteries.

### Grand Masters of the Knights of the Temple of Solomon

Hugh of Payns (1119-1136)

Robert of Craon (1137-1149)

Everard of Barres (1149-1152)

Bernard of Trémelay (1152-1153)

Andrew of Montbard (1153-1156)

Bertrand of Blanquefort (1156-1169)

Philip of Nablus (1169-1171)

Odo of Saint-Amand (1171-1179)

Arnold of Torroja (1180-1184)

Gérard of Ridefort (1185-1189)

Robert of Sablé (1191-1193)

Gilbert Erail (1194-1200)

Philip of Plessiez (1201-1209)

William of Chartres (1210-1219)

Peter of Montai gu (1219-)

Suspicion was heightened by the secrecy of the Poor Knights. While acceptable in the Levant, in Europe their unwillingness to disclose their deliberations was frowned upon. Furthermore, the failure of the Crusades to maintain the Latin Kingdoms made people question whether the Templars were performing their duty adequately. Indeed, it was pointed out that only a small proportion of the knights actually journeyed to the Holy Land to fight: most staying in Europe in administrative work.

## The Templars' New Role

Since the time of Henry II, the Templars had been acting as bankers, lending money to all comers, kings, bishops and merchants. Their loans to kings in particular often staved off royal financial collapse. The Paris Temple became one of the principle financial centres of Europe, as did the Temple in London. In short time, the willingness or unwillingness of the Templars to lend someone money would assure or destroy someone's credit rating. In addition to banking, they provided annuities and pensions to the families of benefactors.

Long after they were unable to continue their role of policing the pilgrimage routes to Jerusalem, groups of Poor Knights would guard convoys of treasure from one Temple or court to another. Their skill in bureaucracy saw their use by the pope and the Western magnates as civil servants. Their vows of loyalty to their Grand Master and the Pope meant that they were less tied to the internecine conflicts between European princes.

Their role in the Middle East now largely defunct, they made themselves invaluable to the lords of Europe. Despite all of the disapproval and resentment directed at the Order, they continued to enjoy papal support,

which went so far as to excommunicate bishops whose dislike of the Order was too vociferous.

## The Fourth Crusade

The Templars were only marginally involved in the notorious Fourth Crusade, a crusade hijacked by the ambitions its leaders and of Venice. After the capture of Zara, a rival of Venice, the Crusader's turned to Constantinople with the ostensible goal of restoring a deposed Byzantine prince. This goal was quickly turned to conquest after the prince discovered he could not make the extortionate repayments to the Crusaders.

The Crusaders took the city on the 12th of April 1204, its inhabitants were put to slaughter and its treasures were pillaged. With the Queen of Cities ravished, the Templars took part in the subjugation of Greece that ended in 1210. They acquired many new territories in the new Latin princedoms of Greece, and owed nominal deference to the new Latin Empire of Constantinople.

## The Albigensian Crusade

In 1209, Pope Innocent III, flushed with the perceived success of the Fourth Crusade and outraged over the murder of his personal envoy two years earlier, preached a new crusade. The target of the Crusade was the heretical sect of dualists, the Cathars.

For many years, the Cathars had been in conflict with Rome. The heartland of the Cathars, the region of southern France known for its langue d'oc, was also the home of considerable holdings for the Templar Order. Languedoc was one of the most civilised areas of Europe, haven of the troubadours and of Courtly Love. The Cathars were a dualistic sect, believing that matter was intrinsically vile and abhorrent,

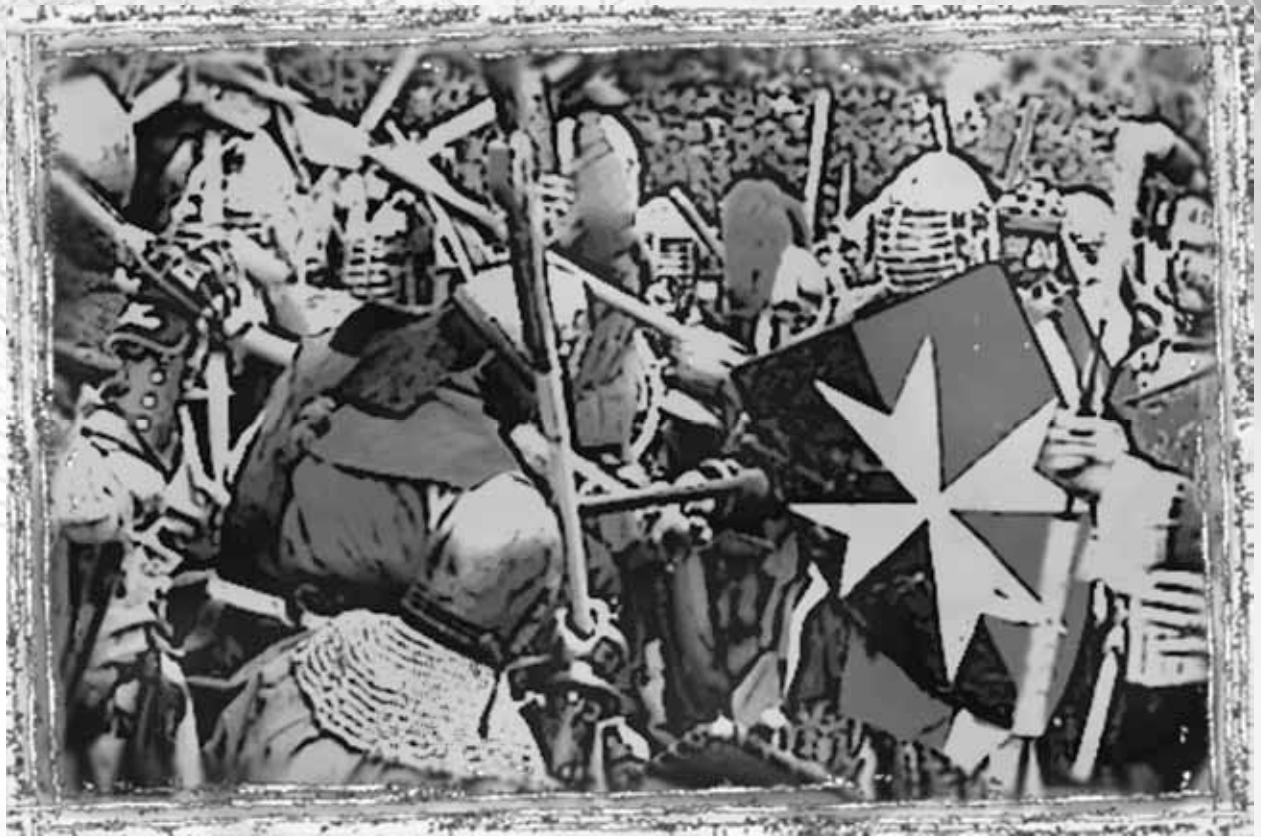


and glorifying the spiritual. A mixture of anti-clericalism, a reformist zeal and true piety saw the Cathars grow unchecked. In 1207, the Cathars ejected the Catholic bishop from Carcassone.

There were repeated attempts by the Pope and various local authorities to persuade the Cathars to give up their heresy. Failure upon failure saw Pope Innocent call upon the Count of Toulouse, Raymond VI to extirpate the heretics by force. In 1207, the pope's representative, Papal Legate Peter of Castelnau met with Raymond after two years of broken promises to take action against the Cathars. After a bitter argument with Raymond, Peter of Castelnau was murdered by one of the Count's followers, an outrage that prompted Pope Innocent to call a crusade.

Twenty years of war and fire would follow, as gradually the northern lords of France were convinced to pursue the crusade. At the time however, both Templars and Hospitallers (who also had considerable holdings in the area) were vigorously waging war in the Reconquista in Spain. Throughout the Crusade, the Templars maintained strict neutrality, while Cathars were hunted down and burned for their heresy.





Neither the Pope nor Simon of Montfort, the Crusade leader, petitioned the Poor Knights for assistance against the Cathars. Both Cathars and Crusaders at times were aided and shielded in Templar houses. For the inhabitants of Languedoc, Cathar or Catholic alike, the crusade was seen as an invasion by northerners, and a complex flux of loyalties saw heretic and orthodox fight with and against each other over the course of the crusade.

The Templars concentrated primarily on the war against Islam in Spain. Neither Simon de Montfort nor Pope Innocent attempted to enlist the Poor Knights in the Crusade. The fidelity of the Order to the Pope was undiminished however, and charges that they supported the Cathars are misdirected. It was ultimately the Hospitallers who sided with the Count of Toulouse, the main secular lord under attack by the Crusaders.

Many of the noble benefactors to the Hospitallers in Toulouse were Cathar lords, or had Cathar

sympathies. Their support for the Count of Toulouse would benefit the Order of Hospital. After Simon de Montfort's death at the siege of Toulouse, and the retreat of the Crusaders and their ecclesiastical supporters, the Hospitallers were the primary remaining Order in the area; even the Templars had abandoned their Champagne preceptory.

## A New Crusade

Innocent III's arrival to the papal throne in 1198 brought with it a desire to recapture the Christian holy places from the Muslims. His main target was Ayyubid Egypt, the seat of Muslim power in the Middle East. His attempt with the Fourth Crusade had gone horribly wrong, and resulted in the creation of the Latin states in Greece. Likewise, the 1212 outburst of enthusiasm in Germany and France, the 'Children's Crusade' failed to assist the effort in the Levant. It was not until after his death in 1216 that his constant planning resulted in the Fifth Crusade, a campaign targeting (as the Fourth

Crusade had meant to do) Egypt.

Honorius III directed the two Grand Masters of the Templars and Hospitallers to meet with the crusade leaders: Andrew of Hungary and Leopold of Austria. In 1218, the assembled armies sailed from Acre to Damietta. A year later, after the death of the Templar Grand Master, the crusaders captured the city, ignoring the sultan's offer of giving up Jerusalem in return for peace. The refusal was made on the advice of the Poor Knights, who held that Jerusalem would not be able to be held without possession of the lands south of the Holy City.

By 1220, the Crusade was in danger of falling apart, as pressure in the few remaining crusader strongholds in Palestine were under increasing pressure. Money was running low and German forces had not yet arrived to aid the Crusade at all.

## The Future

In 1228 Emperor Frederick



arrived in the East, and in typical autocratic style alienated himself from the other crusaders there, including the Grand Master. With pressure in the Papal States, the Emperor negotiated a ten-year treaty with the Egyptian sultan that included the restoration of Jerusalem under Christian control. This treaty however kept the Temple of Solomon under Muslim control and forbade the Templars and Hospitallers from improving the few fortresses they retained in the region. Furthermore, the Holy City itself was to remain unfortified.

The Templars and the crusader barons largely ignored the Emperor's treaty, ostensibly under the guise of warring with the sultan of Damascus. Relationships became so bad that the Templars were accused of plotting to murder the Emperor. When he returned to Italy, he seized their property and arrested many brothers, which in turn contributed to his excommunication. The Templars would continue to oppose the Holy Roman Emperor, in the East as well as in Germany.

## Decline and Decline

The arrival of the Mongols in the East led to the easing of pressure for the Templars, who continued to be involved in local conflicts involving tribute and trade. Only Acre, Antioch, Caesarea and Tyre remained as the main Latin domains in the East, as well as Cyprus and a string of fortresses. As the Crusader states had shrunk, an increasingly larger part of what remained belonged to the military orders, leading to inevitable discord.

Soon the conflicts between Hospitaller and Templar would lead to sharp criticism that the Templars had undermined the entire Crusading movement through their own selfish actions. Indeed, as the decades wore on, the Poor Knights became enmeshed in local politics and power plays, backing one sultan

*The Templars are most excellent soldiers. They wear white mantles with a red cross, and when they go to the wars a standard of two colours called balzaus is borne before them. They go in silence. Their first attack is most terrible. In going they are the first, in returning the last. They await the orders of their Master. When they think fit to make war and the trumpet has sounded, they sing in chorus the Psalm of David, 'Not unto us, O Lord', kneeling on the blood and necks of the enemy, unless they have forced the troops of the enemy to retire altogether, or utterly broken them to pieces. Should any of them for any reason turn his back to the enemy, or come forth alive [from defeat], or bear arms against the Christians, he is severely punished; the white mantle with the red cross, which is the sign of his knighthood, is taken away with ignominy, he is cast from the society of brethren, and eats his food on the floor without a napkin for the space of one year. ... But at the end of the year, if the Master and brethren think his penance to have been sufficient, they restore him the belt of his former knighthood. These Templars live under a strict religious code, obeying humbly, having no private property, eating sparingly, dressing meanly, and dwelling in tents.*

Anonymous pilgrim, 12th century

over another.

This interplay between rival sultans eventually led in 1244 the Templars into their second Hattin, where they again took the lead of a large crusader force. At La Forbie the Egyptian forces wiped out the Latin army; only thirty-three Templars and twenty-six Hospitallers survived. Over 260 knights perished, and in the years following, more territory was lost.

## Life in the Order of the Poor Knights

While most knights of the Order lived under the strict monastic Rule, the Master and other dignitaries were permitted to have luxurious living-suites and lavish entourages. The religiosity of the knights was as a monastic community. Their fortresses were designed internally as monasteries. Every aspect of the life of the knight was regulated and regimented. Discipline was strict and harsh, but no more so than those normally imposed upon monks. Particular emphasis was placed on conduct on the battlefield. While the Templar standard was aloft, no Templar was permitted to leave the battle. The vow of obedience proved

invaluable in battle; no Templar broke rank.

## The Rule

The Rule of the Knights Templar was a day-to-day guide for living within the strict discipline necessary for the Order. Based upon a monastic rule, it included vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. Written when the Poor Knights were little more than guardians of pilgrims to Jerusalem, the Rule was revised and expanded numerous times. Over two hundred additional clauses were added by the 1160s relating to military matters, hierarchy, responsibilities, duties and discipline. Additional monastic clauses were also added: 107 regulating conventual life, and 158 on the holding of a chapter and penances. All new members of the Knights Templar were read the Rule at their official Reception Ceremony.

## Structure

There were two levels to the Poor Knights, fighting brethren and non-fighting. Each was further divided into two ranks.

## Fighting Brethren

**The knights:** heavily armed





cavalry and the highest general level of membership, living under the strict Templar Rule. To become a knight, one had to be of noble birth, and only brother knights could wear the famed white robes of the Templars.

**The sergeants:** the light cavalry, commanding a specific house, fortress or lands of the Order, although without the ability to command full knights. Sergeants were exclusively not of the nobility, coming from the merchant or peasant classes. Sergeants wore a black tunic with a red cross on the front and back.

### Non-fighting Brethren

**The farmers:** the farmers were more properly the administrators of the Templars, providing and organising for the temporal needs of the entire Order. Farmers wore black or brown tunics with small red crosses.

**The chaplains:** alone invested with spiritual authority over all members of the Order of the Temple, the chaplains minister to needs of the brethren and are organised according to the Sacerdotal Orders, being priest, deacon, subdeacon, acolyte, exorcist, reader and doorkeeper.

### Organisation

The Knights Templar was organised according to regions, each with its own Commander, Deputy Commander, Marshal, Under-Marshal, Standard Bearer and Infirmarer. All of these men were drawn from the knightly brethren, except the Standard Bearer and Under-Marshal, whose tasks dealt with the Order's artisans, craftsmen and squires.

There were two poles of ultimate authority within the Knights Templar: the Grand Master and the Commander of Jerusalem, so as to ensure no single person held too much power. The 'high men' of the

Order were the Grand Master, the Seneschal, Grand Marshal, Commander of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, and the Draper.

The Order was formally divided into two regions: East and West. Each Crusader Kingdom had its own Commander, presided over by the Commander of the Kingdom of Jerusalem. The Commander of the Houses of the West presided over the European Commanders, and was often the Seneschal. Commanders typically presided over cities or large towns, particularly in the East. The purpose of this division was to have the Western Order constantly advocating and supplying the Eastern Order, with the Templars' entire purpose being to recapture the Holy Land.

### The Grand Master

The Order was primarily a military organisation. At its head was the Grand Master, an office of prestige and power by the 1160s. The Grand Master had considerable power within the Order. He could redistribute resources between the Order's preceptories, castles and houses. His only rival in authority was the Templar Commander of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, who officially held the keys to the covenant's Treasury. A decision by the Grand Master however could only be appealed to the Pope, although this avenue was only followed a few times in the Order's history.

Although prior to the 1160s the Grand Master had been a humble knight, afterwards he was the ruler of a grand Order, entitled to four horses, and an entourage which included two knights, a chaplain, a clerk, a sergeant, a shield-bearer, a scribe and translator, a cook and turcopolier (leader of the auxiliary troops). During war, he was permitted a bodyguard of between six and ten knights.

Despite this grandeur, the Grand Master was also expected to symbolise humility. Every Holy

Thursday (the commemoration of the Eucharist on the day before Good Friday) the Grand Master washed the feet of thirteen paupers, distributed them shirts, breeches and shows, as well as two loaves of bread and a small amount of money.

The Grand Master was chosen by an assembly of all provincial officers in the Holy Land, who assembled (if possible) in Jerusalem. Upon a Grand Master's death, these officers elected an interim Grand Commander. An electoral college of thirteen Templars, chosen by the officers, consisting of eight knights, four sergeants and a chaplain, reflecting the diverse countries and interests of membership was appointed. This electoral council then elects, by simple majority, the Grand Master who was then acclaimed by the assembled knights.

### The Seneschal, Grand Marshal, Commander and Draper

Below the Grand Master was the Seneschal, the deputy leader of the Knights Templar, who carried the Order's black and white banner. Like the Grand Master, the Seneschal had his own staff and horses. His responsibilities and powers were similar to the Grand Master's, with the Seneschal tending to preside over whatever region, East or West, that the Grand Master was not present (typically West).

The Grand Marshal was the Order's chief military officer, the on-the-ground officer responsible for individual commanders, the Order's war-resources and all military operations. Like the Grand Master and Seneschal, the position of Grand Marshal was very prestigious and came with its own guard, and staff.

Next to the Grand Master was the Commander of the Kingdom of Jerusalem. With Jerusalem not in Christian hands in 1220, the



Commander is effectively in exile, residing in Acre. Technically the Commander of the Kingdom of Jerusalem held the keys to the Order's treasury, once located in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. In 1220, the Commander oversees all non-military assets of the Order, such as its fleet, storage vaults in Acre, houses, villages and animals.

The Order's Draper was important for very practical reasons: he ensured that the brother knights and sergeants were properly clothed and housed. The famed white robes of the Templars, as well as bed-linen and anything once belonging personally to a member of the Poor Knights were all within the power of the Draper. Any gift made to the Order was distributed by the Draper. After the Grand Master and Grand Marshal, the Draper was the most superior of all brother knights.

## Chapters

Meetings of the Templars took place in the Order's regional head quarters, and functioned in a similar manner to secular ruler's courts. The leader of the chapter would preside over discussions of legal and business matters. Minor Chapter meetings took place weekly, beginning and ending with prayers, led by the chaplain and Master of the house.

Chapter meetings were held in strict secrecy, since discussions often involved sensitive military matters—the Templars were well aware of the axiom that 'loose lips sink ships'. No member of the Templars was permitted to distribute or talk about the proceedings of a Chapter meeting. This secrecy is one of the main causes for conspiracy speculation regarding the Poor Knights of the Temple.

## Daily Life

The life of a brother knight was one filled with prayer, and during

peace-time differed little to the life of a Benedictine monk. Primarily a monastic figure, the brother knight would wake before dawn and attend the Matins service in the house's chapel. This was followed by numerous prayers, including the Lord's Prayer and prayers to the Blessed Virgin Mary, then the hearing of Mass. By the time the knight was having breakfast just before midday, he would have said over five dozen prayers.

Meals consisted of primarily vegetables (such as beans, lentils and cabbage), cheese and bread, although unlike other monastic orders, they were required to eat meat and fish at least three times a week. Templars ate at least twice a day. All meals were held in complete silence.

After eating breakfast, prayers would resume, with an afternoon meal in the middle and a small meal in the evening of bread and diluted wine or water.

While not praying or eating, a brother knight would train for war, undertake any tasks or duties the house required, or would perform some form of humbling labour, such as tilling fields or craftwork. Since horses were so important to Templars, they also spent a great deal of time using and treating their horses.

The Templar Rule required that each brother knight be busy all the time, either praying or working. The life of a brother knight was chaste and gruelling.

During a time of war, prayers would be integrated into the necessities of battle. The Templars would pray while riding to or even during the battle, and would still rise before dawn.

## Women and the Order

The Templar Rule explicitly stated that brother knights were to have no contact with women, unless necessary for the treatment

of an illness or injury. Unlike the Hospitallers, which had separate houses for women, the wives of married Knights Templar were expected to become nuns in another order.

Despite this prohibition on contact with women, which included female relatives, there was considerable interest in the Templars amongst women, particularly in the thirteenth century, resulting in numerous donations. Despite prohibitions against contact with women, the realities of medieval life meant that women often worked for and in Temple houses.

## Faith

Greatest reverence was shown towards the Blessed Virgin Mary, who was honoured as the 'beginning of the Order' and 'the end of the Order, whenever God wishes it to be.' Reception into the Order involved solemn prayers and oaths to the Virgin Mary, as well as to God, and the oath of allegiance to the Grand Master was made in the name of God and the Holy Virgin.

It is significant to note that until 1307, not a single charge of heresy was ever prosecuted against the Templars (although many more mundane complaints were made against them). Their faith and theology was entirely orthodox, albeit it unusual because members were allowed to confess their sins only to the Order's own chaplains, rather than to the region's clergy.

## Templar Systems

This section introduces modified and new systems for Templar characters.

## Modified Templar Virtues

The following applies only to Templar characters, and are modified versions of those found



in *Realms of Power: The Divine*, p.92.

### Brother Chaplain

You are a priest of the Order of the Temple of Solomon, which functions as the Priest Minor Virtue (ArM5, p.47), except you are answerable only to your superiors within the Templars and to the Pope. This virtue is incompatible with the Wealthy Major Virtue, the Priest Minor Virtue, and the Poor Major Flaw. You wear the distinctive red cross of the Templar Order on your robes. This virtue is only available to male characters.

### Brother Knight

You are a brother knight in the Order of the Temple of Solomon, and have devoted your life to the re-conquest of Jerusalem, to God and to the Virgin Mary. You have sworn a lifelong vow of obedience, poverty, and chastity, and to obey the Templar Rule. You are answerable only to your superiors and the Pope and are from a noble family. All brother knights, upon their reception to their order, receive a standard set of clothing, armour and weapons, consisting of a helmet, templar mail, long sword, heater shield, lance, Turkish mace, and dagger. Brother knights are also given the use of three horses and are allocated their own squire. You may take Academic and Martial Abilities during character generation. Because of your vows of poverty, you may not take the Wealthy Major Virtue or the Poor Major Flaw; the Order takes care of all your worldly needs. You may not take the Knight or Priest Minor Virtue or the Landed Noble Major Virtue. You wear the famous symbol of the Templars, a red cross on pure white robes. This virtue is only available to male characters.

### Brother Sergeant

You are a member of the Order of the Temple of Solomon, but not

a knight or a nobleman. You have sworn a lifelong vow of obedience, poverty, and chastity, but this may not be enforced as strictly for you as it would be for a brother knight. You are answerable only to your superiors in the order and the Pope. You may have high quality weapons and armor, and two horses. You may also take Martial Abilities during character generation. This virtue is incompatible with the Wealthy Major Virtue, the Priest Minor Virtue, and the Poor Major Flaw. You wear the red cross of the Templars on a black tunic. This virtue is only available to male characters.

## New Virtues

### Templar Bureaucrat (Minor, Social Virtue)

You are technically a brother knight or brother sergeant for the Order of the Temple of Solomon, but are really an administrator for the Order's many holdings and activities. While you have sworn the Templar oath, your many duties means you are not required to uphold them as strictly. You are answerable only to your superiors in the order and the Pope. You have considerable influence and access to enormous resources, but no additional time. You may take Academic Abilities during character creation. This virtue is incompatible with the Wealthy Major Virtue, the Brother Knight and Brother Sergeant Minor Virtues, and the Poor Major Flaw. This virtue is only available to male characters.

### Commander (Major, Social Virtue)

You are a regional commander within the Templar Order and have authority over all aspects of the Order in a region. This includes the Temporal Influence Minor Virtue, as you have the ear of any important nobles or clergymen in the area. You also have access to the considerable

wealth of the Templars, including any funds, lands and resources, although you have no extra time; you may levy taxes and tithes over the lands you control as if you were a landed noble or bishop and charge 'rent' on monies you lend. Because of your high position, you are a well known figure and have a good Reputation of level 4 in your region. You are expected to support the Order's crusading efforts if you are in the West, and if you reside in the East, you will be expected to participate directly. Should the Grand Master die and you reside in the East, you will have the right to participate in choosing a new Grand Master. You may only take this virtue if you also have the Brother Knight Minor Virtue. This virtue is only available to male characters.

### High Rank (Minor, Social Virtue)

You hold an important position within the local Templar hierarchy, such as the Deputy Commander, Marshal or Infirmarer. You may give orders to brother knights in your region, are accorded considerable respect due to your position, and have the power to enforce the Rule and its various laws. Because of your high position, you are a well known figure and have a good Reputation of level 2 in your region. You may only take this virtue if you also have the Brother Knight Minor Virtue. This virtue is compatible with the Temporal Influence Minor Virtue. If you take this virtue with the Commander Major Virtue, then you hold one of the few exalted ranks within the Templar Order, such as Seneschal or Grand Marshal, or a rank that has authority over the Eastern or Western region of the Order, in which case you likely reside in Acre, Paris or London.

## Divine-Temple Interaction

In 1139, the Pope decreed that



## New Equipment

Ability	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam	Str	Load	Cost
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### Turkish Mace

Single	+1	+3	+1	+8	0	2	Exp.
			Partial		Full		Cost

Material	Prot	Load	Prot	Load
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<b>Templar Armour*:</b>	6	3	9	5	Exp.
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\* Available only to Brother Knights.

the Order of the Temple of Solomon was an exempt Order of the Church, answerable only to the Throne of St. Peter. Templars are immune to Episcopal interdict and jurisdiction. For this reason, Templars are unaffected by spiritual influence by any authority less than the Pope, although the Grand Master and Templar Chaplains have spiritual authority over the Order's members. Templars may ignore the effects of a tempered Dominion, unless it was tempered by the Pope or an authority within the Order itself. (For the effects of spiritual influence and tempering, see *Realms of Power: The Divine*, p.38-40.)

## The Balzaus

The balzaus is a long banner divided vertically in two, one half white, the other black. Each troop of Templars carries this before them in battle. While it stands, no Templar is permitted to flee from battle or turn their back on the enemy. So important was the balzaus, the Templars accord it a special ten-knight guard at all times while on the battlefield. These knights carry a second, folded banner to raise should something happen to the first. If the banner were captured or brought down, the Templars would be expected to rally to the Hospitaller banner, or failing that, any Christian banner. Only if all banners had fallen were the Templars allowed to retreat from the field of battle. Any brother

knight who fled before such a time faced the most severe of disciplinary punishments, the most horrific of which was expulsion from the Order.

The Balzaus is important to the Templars, because it mystically aids them in battle, a fact commented on with awe by their Muslim opponents. This works in a similar manner to Invoking God's Aid in Warfare (see *Realms of Power: The Divine*, p.41-42). The Templar Commander or Chaplain blesses or says a prayer over the standard before the battle, then rolls their Communication + Dominion Lore Ability + Stress Die, and may also add +1 if they have the Brother Chaplain Minor Virtue, or +3 if they have the Commander Major Virtue, in addition to any bonus from Pious Personality Flaws. The holy power Ceremony may be used to augment this total.

### Balzaus Blessing: Communication + Dominion Lore + Modifiers + Stress Die

All Templars who can see the balzaus gain the Holy War Bonus to all rolls during that combat, so long as the balzaus is raised.

Templars only benefit from the highest Holy War Bonus, so if they personally pray for aid, and get a higher total, then they get that total only; the Holy War Bonus does not stack with itself.

## Bibliography

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# The End of the Hohenstaufen

A couple of months ago, I volunteered to write some historical accounts of noble families and personalities of the thirteenth century and began with the death of William Clito. I'm a bit late with this next instalment on the end of the Hohenstaufen, but better late than never. So here goes.

## The End of the Hohenstaufen

Much to general surprise, and possibly his own, the "stupor mundi" Emperor Frederick II Hohenstaufen died on December 19th, 1250. Many refused to believe his death at the time. Franciscan Friar Salimbene of Parma, for example, only credited the news several days later upon hearing it confirmed *vive voce* by Pope Innocent IV who preached to the people in Ferrara on his way back to Rome from Lyons. Like many, Salimbene had come to see Frederick as the Antichrist whose reign was to foreshadow the Second Coming of Christ. He wrote that he "had expected and hoped that Frederick would do greater evil than had been done so far, although he had done a great deal." The good friar's disappointment lay not so much in delight in the Emperor's many sins, but in dashed prophetic hopes of an imminent appearance of the Messianic Age.

It is difficult to overstate the impact on the 13th century of Frederick's reign and, as we shall see shortly, his death marked one of those rare decisive turning points of history. Frederick had been a whirlwind—an unstoppable force of nature sweeping furiously across Europe and the Near East, collecting royal titles like candy (six at final count), and leaving enemies and more neutral observers alike agog and sputtering. Never down for long, he would rise up again like a

Hollywood villain, driving his foes to frustrated exhaustion and near despair of ever seeing the end of him.

The man was an extraordinary bundle of contradictions. Brilliantly rational, sceptical and with an unquenchable thirst for scientific knowledge, he spoke nine languages and was literate in seven. Yet he was also deeply superstitious, addicted to astrology, a scourge of heretics and capable of naive piety. A friend to his Muslim and Jewish subjects, he allegedly professed religious indifference (describing Moses, Jesus and Mohammed as "cunning impostors") yet, while excommunicated, he launched one of the few successful crusades (the 6th), retaking Jerusalem in 1229 with minimal forces and imposing a ten year truce on the Ayyubid sultan of Egypt (Jerusalem was to stay in Christian hands until 1244). Obsessed with the importance of family and dynastic succession, he managed to alienate most of his 6 (or more, depending how you count them) wives while maintaining a harem and numerous mistresses, and imprisoning and possibly driving his son and heir to suicide. A great lawgiver himself, he ran roughshod over constitutional rights and provisions when it suited his personal interests.

But this story is not about Frederick. I wouldn't have the space to do him justice anyway. As the title suggests, it's about the end of the Staufers, not their peak. As the subject of this series of historical vignettes is meant to be the great princely families that hovered just below the royal level, often slipping just below the radar of conventional national historical accounts most people have been exposed to, I mean to deal principally with the Staufers before they reached the throne,

## Michael de Verteuil

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and what happened to them after Frederick's death.

The origin of the Staufers is puzzlingly obscure. Unlike the Plantagenets, they don't even seem to have a Mythic back story with faeries or demons amongst their forebears. Possibly this reflects an unusually lowly parentage, or simply a paucity of literacy and historical records in a wild region, endowed as it nevertheless was with ancient and powerful abbeys well able to chronicle local events. The standard Hohenstaufen family history puff piece by Otto of Freising is sadly mundane on this point.

Be that as it may, the earliest Staufer I can find any record of is a Frederick of Büren (c. 998-1074). He married a daughter of the count of Filsgau, and his son, also called Frederick (there are a lot of Fredericks in this story, so pay attention) was styled count of Büren. It's unclear how this



second Frederick (c. 1020-1094) became a count. Possibly he was just a successful baron who, as was often the case in 10th and 11th century Germany, usurped the title. Unlike in France where counties had historically consisted of ancient Roman towns and their surrounding countryside, the relative lack of early urbanization in Germany had made "counties" there more plastic and spontaneous. The fact that his maternal grandfather had been a count probably facilitated matters.

This Count Frederick couldn't have been a complete nobody, however, as he married Hildegard, the daughter of his nominal lord, Duke Otto of Swabia and Bavaria, himself a grandson of Emperor Otto I. When Duke (not the Emperor) Otto died, he was replaced successively by members of the Conradin family and then the Babenburgs, and then various Salians, Ottonians, Schweinfurts and assorted Rheinfeldens and Zähringen dukes or claimants. This frequent flipping of ducal dynasties was due to the fact that German princely families died out very easily as the German crown and royal fiefs could not normally be inherited through the female line. Further complicating the story was that once becoming king/emperor, a duke was expected to hand off his duchy to someone else.

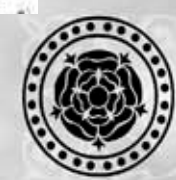
So when Emperor Henry IV was fishing around for a replacement duke of Swabia, he settled on the son of Count Frederick and Hildegard (also unsurprisingly called Frederick). And this is how the Hohenstaufen got their big start with the now Duke Frederick I (1050-1105) of Swabia who took the name Hohenstaufen from a castle he had built on the southern spur of a mountainous ridge of the same name in northern Swabia near Göppingen (in modern south-western Germany). The castle was sacked and burnt in the Peasant's War in 1525 and there's not that much left of it now, but it must

have been reasonably impressive at the time. It's not entirely clear why Henry picked Frederick as duke of Swabia, but the fact that Frederick had married Henry's daughter Agnes and been the grandson of the earlier Duke Otto probably had something to do with it. Duke Frederick I was succeeded by his son Duke Frederick II One-eyed (1090-1146), and he in turn by his son (you guessed it!) Frederick III Barberossa (1122-1190, our 5th Freddie if you are still keeping count). In 1152 Barberossa was elected king and so got renumbered King (later Emperor in 1154) Frederick I Barberossa, the first Hohenstaufen monarch.

Now our Frederick II

Hohenstaufen whose story, I remind you, is not the subject here, was not Barberossa's son but his nephew (Ha ha! Got you.) But what made him special and ultimately, to the Papacy, intolerable was that he was, through his mother, king of Sicily.

The Holy Roman Empire was by this time a vague quasi-federation consisting of four separate realms. The most powerful of these was Germany (or East Francia or, misleadingly, of the Romans) to which had been added Italy and then Burgundy. Bohemia was raised to a subject kingdom under Barberossa but was never directly in the Emperor's hands during our period. The imperial title was



technically attached to the kingdom of Italy, and the German king (after being crowned again as King of Italy in Pavia) was expected to make his way to Rome where, the Pope willing, he was crowned emperor.

Whether Rome itself was part of the "empire" was unclear and hotly contested. But as it lay on the far southern border of the kingdom of Italy, and was ruled separately by the Pope, it wasn't normally a practical issue. The German emperors had a hard enough time trying to impose their will on the essentially self ruling (and frequently "rebellious") Italian communes. The Popes could normally run their own affairs in relative peace, playing off the communes against the king, or rival royal claimants against each other. If things got too hot for him with an imperial army heading for Rome, the Pope usually retreated south to the lands of his nominal vassal, the Norman king of Sicily. The stropky would-be emperor would run out of money, have his supply lines cut off, or see his army succumb to malaria or dysentery in the hot Italian sun, and so would eventually have to retreat north.

With our Freddie, however, things were going to be different. The various Popes tried really hard to prevent the Hohenstaufen from

uniting the German and Sicilian crowns, experimenting unsuccessfully with various non Hohenstaufen successors to Barbarossa; but they all proved unsatisfactory in various ways. The last one, Otto IV, was downright threatening in his perfidious repudiation of sworn promises to leave Church property alone and butt out of episcopal elections. Most reluctantly, the Pope eventually agreed to back Frederick as emperor in an effort to see Otto off. Unfortunately, the operation was a success, but the patient died. As the wealthiest and most powerful ruler of Europe, with the bulk of his holdings in the Pope's former southern refuge of Sicily, and the Papal States held in a tight territorial vice, Frederick just couldn't be stopped from treating the Papal lands as if they were his own, handing out chunks to officials and cronies as fiefs. Excommunication, Frederick's tyrannical ways and his questionable morality helped spawn and support rebellion, but successive Popes, spending half their time in exile, just couldn't seem to get rid of him.

By the time Frederick died, his enemies, Pope Innocent IV included, had had enough. Never again were they going to put up with such a consolidation of feudal power. They systematically set about exterminating Frederick's

male descendants one after another, and effectively put an end to the imperial threat by freeing all the Staufer vassals and making sure no one could be confirmed as emperor for the next 61 years. How the Papacy went about doing this is the meat of our story.

Frederick's eldest legitimate son, uncharacteristically named Henry, was the one who might have committed suicide. Frederick had made king of Germany as Henry VII (while keeping the imperial title for himself) it a transparently dishonest effort to appear to live up to his promise to Pope Honorius III never to unite the German and Sicilian crowns. Henry had chafed under his father's heavy hand and domineering personality, and when he tried to assert himself by forming his own party, Frederick deposed him and had him locked up in various prisons in Apulia. Modern analysis of Henry's skeleton in 1998 showed him to have been a small man of about 164 cm (5' 4.5") and to have been in an advanced state of leprosy when he died of a fall from a great height (possibly a suicide) in 1235 at the age of 25.

Frederick's younger son (inexplicably also not called Frederick. Some people just have no sense of tradition.) and, after deposing Henry, Frederick had him appointed king as Conrad IV in 1237. Conrad was still alive when Frederick died so become the primary focus of efforts to bring down the Hohenstaufen clan. Pope Innocent after excommunicating Frederick for the last time, had backed two successive counter kings: Landgrave (Marquis) Henry Raspe of Thuringia who died in 1246, and then Count William II of Holland who was still around when Frederick kicked off in 1250. Conrad managed to defeat William in that year, limiting his influence for a time to William's power base in the Low Countries. He wasn't able to eliminate him entirely, however, and William



managed to drive him into Italy the following year. Conrad hoped to recoup his losses by joining up with Frederick's Sicilian kingdom, but the Pope's allies in northern Italy kept Conrad bottled up until 1252 when he finally managed to slip into the southern part of the peninsula by sea. Conrad was excommunicated by the frustrated Pope in 1254, and died a few months later of malaria.

There were now only two live male Stauffers left: Conrad's two year old son Conrad (called by the

diminutive "Conradin") for whom the title of Conrad V of Germany was claimed and, more importantly, Frederick's surviving illegitimate son Manfred. I say "illegitimate", but the matter was in some dispute. Manfred was born of Frederick's mistress Bianca (or Beatrice) Lancia (Lanzia, Lanza), that much is clear. Yet Frederick seems to have considered him legitimate, and some historians claim Frederick married Bianca on her deathbed in 1233, specifically to legitimize

their children. Manfred's enemies, of course, would have none of this and to them he remained a bastard. In any case, Manfred had been holding down the fort in Sicily for Frederick and then Conrad till the latter, suspicious, set him aside and later died. Manfred is probably the hero of this little tragedy, in my view, and deserves a little more attention.

## A Florilegium of house Bjornaer

When I was putting together House Bjornaer for Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults I was aware that I had more ideas than I had word count. For reasons of space, some of these ideas removed from the first draft to make room for a more focused house. With the kind permission of the guys at Atlas Games, I'm able to bring these sections (Lost Cubs, Additional Septs) to you in this article, along with some other concepts which never even made it as far as electronic paper (Feral Magi, Ulf Bjornaer). However, there was a second impetus for this article, which was to give an apology, so I'll get that out of the way first.

I realize from reactions on the various fora that some players of Ars Magica Fifth Edition may be unhappy with the direction I have taken with House Bjornaer. I

know that the concept of Bjornaer magi with multiple shapes is used in some sagas for this House. I cannot confess to suffering much guilt over specifically ruling out this option — in canon material for previous editions the concept appears just once: in The Bestiary for Second Edition Ars Magica as a single sentence, off-the-cuff mention. There is no suggestion of it in Third, Fourth, or Fifth Edition Ars Magica at all. However, I would like to apologize to those troupes, who, lacking a clear canon position, have decided to adopt the concept of multiple shapes to fill the gap in the Bjornaer Mysteries until the Houses of Hermes series reached this house. Be assured that I did not just make Bjornaer magi hate shapeshifters on a whim. What I hope to do here is to explain to you why I took this route in my write-up of the House; whilst you

still may be unable to forgive me for what I've done to the Bjornaer, I hope that you will at least understand why I did what I did.

It has always concerned me that House

By Mark Shirley

Bjornaer is too much of a stereotype. True, Birna came from a Germanic tribe, and was perhaps one of the most 'primitive' of the Founders, but it doesn't necessarily follow that her house follows suit. After all, Trianoma was a Thessalonian witch, yet her lineage is one of the most prestigious in the Order. It has been four hundred and fifty years since the Founding — at least eight Hermetic generations and probably more — and Mythic Europe is a very different place. There are no longer tribal people living anywhere in close proximity to the major nations of Europe, where the majority of sagas will be set. So why should a Bjornaer apprentice regress culturally and become a savage barbarian? The only remnants of his 'primitive' magic is his heartbeast, and whilst this is central to his identity as a member of the House, the magic he uses most often will be that of the Order of Hermes — wholly reliant on formal education, scholarly study, and other trappings of civilization. For those who wish to play the 'noble savage' archetype, then Clans Midusulf and Sirnas provide an outlet; it was my intent to make these clans a little more savage than the rest of the house and provide a home for pre-existing





characters who feel that they have been disenfranchised by the new look House Bjornaer.

OK, so scrap the stereotype. Bjornaer magi are no longer primitive magicians; their magic and schooling is every bit as sophisticated as a Jerbiton or a Tytalus. Of course, as a mystery cult, they have some surprising beliefs; in House Bjornaer's case, regarding the transmigration of animal souls. But this is not something that necessarily permeates their life. A true story from my own life: my grandfather was the very epitome of an ordinary (that is, boring), middle-classed gentleman; yet at the age of fourteen or so I discovered he was a druid. The culture-shock that I experienced is what I imagine most magi undergo when (or rather, if) they discover the heterodox views of their Bjornaer sodalis.

I wanted to keep the ancestral enemies of the House from previous editions, the original shapeshifting tradition, but needed a strong reason why they should still be enemies after so many years. Now that the Shapeshifter Ability is part of the Fifth Edition core rules, the difference between characters with this Virtue and the Bjornaer magi seemed obvious — the first can take multiple shapes, but the Bjornaer followers have just one shape. There is therefore a fundamental difference between the native tradition and the modern House. Furthermore, if Bjornaer magi consider the heartbeast to be part of their soul, their world view has no room for those who can take multiple shapes — you can't after all have multiple souls ... unless you steal them from elsewhere. This progressed naturally into the superstitious dread that the Bjornaer magi have for shapeshifters with multiple forms, and their general repugnance for shapeshifting magic.

So, I'm sorry if this disrupts your prior concept of Bjornaer

magi as experts in shapechanging, but I hope you can see the logic behind the change in the House. In an attempt to make amends, here are some bits and pieces which did not make it as far as Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults.

First, there are two character concepts for playing alternate members of House Bjornaer, the Lost Cubs and the Feral magi.

Second, there are some details of some more septs — I only had enough room for two in the final chapter.

Third, I present Ulf Bjornaer, the magus who is used in all the examples in the chapter. He is of a suitable age to be the master of a player character, or else he could serve as a story hook, protagonist or antagonist. Finally, I present an outline for a Bjornaer-oriented saga which was originally formulated when writing up the covenant of Crintera for Guardians of the Forests.

This article covers the first — Lost Cubs and Feral magi. The second and third pieces will be in future issues.

## Lost Cubs

Very rarely, a child without the Gift will have their heartbeast awakened by the Ritual of Twelve Years. This may be a result of a botched ritual, or the confusion of Supernatural Abilities with the true Gift. If using 'The Thousand Heartbeasts' story seed of the Bjornaer Chapter, these Lost Cubs may also be intentionally created by the rogue mystagogue. Such people cause problems to House Bjornaer: they are officially members of the House and have been adopted into the mystic family of the Bjornaer followers, and yet they are not magi and cannot officially join the Order. Further, they come about due to the negligence of a magus, a shameful thing in the opinion of the Bjornaer Council. As a result, their lack of The Gift is kept hidden from the Order, and they

are provided with magical items which allow them to simulate the process of spellcasting. These 'apprentices' are even brought before the Order to swear the Oath of Hermes as if they were proper magi.

Such a character ends up as a Companion character with the Lost Cub Social Virtue (see below). No-one outside of the House knows that some 'magi' of House Bjornaer have never cast a spell in their lives. If the Order were ever to discover that some of its members are masquerading as Gifted magicians, the repercussions to House Bjornaer could be severe. However, House Mercere sets the precedent for the existence of unGifted members of the Order, and the House could probably weather this storm.

## Lost Cub

### Major Virtue, Social Status (House Bjornaer only)

You have mistakenly undergone the Ritual of Twelve Years despite having no Gift. You masquerade as a member of the Order of Hermes despite being unable to use Hermetic Magic. You must buy this Virtue with the Dark Secret Major Flaw. Your social status is equivalent to Hermetic Magus unless your secret is discovered. You have the Heartbeast virtue for free, and you may change shape just like a magus of House Bjornaer. You must choose either a Supernatural Virtue (Minor or Major) or the Latent Magic Ability Virtue to represent the innate magic which caused the House to assume you were Gifted. Your Sept has provided you with enchanted devices with fifty levels of effect, including modifications to the level due to factors such as number of uses per day (see ArM5, page 95). These will be upgraded and replaced by your Sept to maintain your cover as a Gifted magus, on average an extra two levels per year. You are trained in a similar manner to



magi, and may take Academic, Arcane and Martial Abilities during character creation. You have spent fifteen years as an 'apprentice', and gained a total of 300 experience points in those fifteen years. If it is ever discovered that you do not have The Gift, your life may be in danger; and House Bjornaer will be severely embarrassed. The House will therefore deal with you favorably in fear of you revealing your secret (accidentally or 'accidentally'), but if you push this latitude too far, they may decide they are better off without you. This Virtue may only be taken by a Companion character.

## Feral Magi

At least one Bjornaer magus claims to have taken an animal as an apprentice; the Ritual of Twelve Years apparently awakening the human heartbeast of the creature. Many scoff at such tales, but such an individual might make an interesting character to play in a non-canon saga. The animal would have to have true Intelligence rather than Cunning, and would also have to be inherently magical — that is, be a Beast of Virtue. The process of Opening the Arts strips the Beast of Virtue of its Might score, and replaces it with a variant of The

Gift allowing the creature to learn Hermetic Magic (this assumes the unorthodox position that a magus is a Human of Virtue, or alternatively that a Beast of Virtue possesses an animal equivalent of The Gift).

One of the problems with this concept is that according to prevailing thought of the day, animals have no

souls, so neither will the feral magus. Troupes may wish to ignore this uncomfortable fact, or else provide for it with the Simple-Minded Flaw, which represents the lack of higher cognitive faculties without inhibiting the character's functioning as a magus. If this option is taken, the Flaw should be in addition to the character's normal allotment, and does not yield any points with which to buy Virtues.

To simulate a Feral magus, the character begins its life as a Beast of Virtue. Determine the base statistics of the animal form, and apply the normal allotment of experience points for a human character, buying the Abilities of the base creature before allocating experience points to other Abilities. You must buy the Feral Upbringing Flaw, and cannot spend experience points on language, social, or academic Abilities. Only once magical training begins can the character acquire the minimum scores in Latin and Artes Liberales required for a magus, so these Abilities must be bought using the allotment of experience from apprenticeship. To Open the Arts of a Beast of Virtue, the master must have a Intellego Vim Lab Total of at least 30 because the pupil has the equivalent of a Major Supernatural Virtue (ArM5 page

107), and during this process the Beast of Virtue loses its Might Score. The master must have some means to communicate freely with her unorthodox apprentice (such as a spell, or the Animal Ken Virtue) to teach him any magic. Whilst much of its innate magic is transformed by being Opened to the Arts, the player can purchase magical powers appropriate to the mythic potential of her character's natural form. These powers are designed like spells, but cost the character a fatigue level to activate. A Minor Virtue offers up to 25 levels of effects, with the stipulation that the power must affect the creature itself rather than any other target. A Major Virtue supplies 50 levels of effects, with no such restriction.

Once the character undergoes the Ritual of Twelve Years it gains the Heartbeast Ability and can now become human. The human form is neither sanguine, choleric, melancholic nor phlegmatic, but a perfect mix between all four; the temperament of any attending magus acts as a penalty to the performance of the ritual, partially explaining why feral magi are so rare.

The viewpoint of this magus will be severely twisted from the norm, and the player and storyguide should take pains to highlight the effects of this change in perception. Many human customs will prove puzzling to the magus, and he may frequently make errors in judgment regarding human behavior, similar to the Social Handicap Flaw. This unfamiliarity with humans will fade over the years, but never truly vanish. Feral magi can only ever achieve the Inner Mystery of the Epitome and regain a part of their virtuous form; they are so attuned to this mystery that they receive a permanent +3 to all initiation scripts to gain or refine the Inner Mystery of the House.



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