

Ars Magica

Sanctuary of Ice

The Greater Alps Tribunal

by Timothy Ferguson

Sanctuary of Ice

C R E D I T S

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Dedication

For my family

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The Greater Alpine covenants are models that some Hermetic magi view enviously. If peace is the measure of success, the Greater Alps is the most successful Hermetic tribunal. Since the formation of the first regional tribunals, these covenants, strung along the mountainous spine of Europe, have avoided pitched magical battles. Without the disruptions of war, the seven Alpine covenants have been able to focus on the development of not only the art, but also the culture of magic.

Saga Guide

Alpine Hermetic society is designed by powerful magi, for powerful magi, but sagas for just-gauntled magi are supported throughout this book. This section contains ideas that can be used to link new player characters into any of the covenants given in the later chapters. Each of the covenant chapters has an insert that contains ways of incorporating groups of young magi into that particular covenant. The geography chapter describes several places where a band of brave and cunning young magi could found a settlement.

Adding Covenants

This supplement assumes that there are seven publicly known covenants in the Alps, each of which can be made up of chapter houses. Chapter houses — “chapters” for short — are geographically separated settlements that are bound together in law, but negotiate their relationships much as independent covenants do in other Tribunals. If you want to use the Alpine culture, but want to leave it at the door of your covenant, use one of the blank covenants. If you want the space to design your own settlement, but want elder magi hovering in the background to generate stories, then design a chapter house.

Two of the seven official covenants haven’t been described in this book — they’ve been left for you to design. The number of chapters isn’t fixed. The regions of Carinthia and Savoy are particularly suitable for Hermetic settlement, but if you want a site that one of the current covenants occupies, then just move the sample covenant to somewhere with the same land type.

Close Family Ties

Some of the chapters in the Alps draw all of their members from a single Hermetic lineage. The Close Family Ties virtue could be applied to this situation, and gives the characters a reason to work together and a

cluster of supportive non-player characters with whom to interact. If you use this method, the 'family' will be an ongoing source of stories in the saga: magi trained by your parents' parents will ask for little favors, their filii will need to be extricated from difficult situations, and enemies of the senior members of the lineage may target their younger filii. This style of saga works best for those Houses whose members have a broad variety of talents.

The Patron Virtue

This virtue, when selected for a new magus, implies that he has the support of a powerful figure. In negotiation with your troupe, your character's patron can be defined as one of the leading magi described in the covenant chapters. The character's place in the Alps has been secured through nepotism. You have a place, but you need to work hard to earn the respect of your peers.

The Heir Virtue

The rulership of some chapters, or even one of the blank covenants, might be passed along a Hermetic line of descent. Characters with the Heir virtue might negotiate with the troupe so that they will, one day, have a free hand in the running of an Alpine chapter house. In this style of saga the player characters may live elsewhere until the heir comes into his inheritance, usually after the first story arc in the saga.

Older magi in the lineage can shamelessly manipulate heirs with threats to designate someone else. Many stories can be linked by demands that they prove their worth, learn how to govern their ancestral covenant, or ingratiate themselves with neighboring covenants. Ancestors can throw together unlikely groups of heirs and servants, then insist they stay together, giving a rationale for diverse player-character groups to cohere.





Public Vis Source: a New Virtue

This virtue is suitable for those magi whose right to harvest from a vis source has been acknowledged in the Peripheral Code. It is a variant of “Secret vis source”. It differs in three ways: it is more expensive (+2), it provides more vis (12 pawns) and everyone who can read the Code knows precisely where you get the vis from. Magi with this virtue can’t be charged with Hermetic vagrancy — the Greater Alpine crime of having no vis supply — because they are independently wealthy. They automatically have a chair at tribunal, as discussed on page 9. Discuss with your troupe the placement and type of your vis source.

Start with Older Magi

An option is to start the saga with magi who are substantially older than usual. This style of saga is usually suitable only for experienced players.

Warning: This is a Work of Fiction

This book is filled with obfuscations, oversimplifications and anachronistic inventions. It tries to give you the sense that the places and people in it are really as described, but everything in this book has been reworked for the purposes of storytelling. Inconvenient historical realities have been ignored, if there’s a story to be told, or if accuracy would require lengthy explanations. For example Langue d’Oc, German and Italian are used as shorthand to identify local dialects. Customs have been jumbled in from adjoining centuries. Local myths have been given a Hermetic twist, and some have been so distorted that they are unrecognizable.

No Swiss, but Many Romans

In this supplement “the Alps” is often used as a collective noun for those territories in the Greater Alpine Tribunal. There simply is no historical term for these lands. This is not a supplement about the Swiss. In 1220, Switzerland does not exist in the modern sense. The people who might one day become the Swiss speak four languages and are loyal only to their home village or city — although some cities cooperate in mutual defense agreements.

Alpine members of the Order see themselves as the heirs of the Roman culture. The Greater Alpine Tribunal’s magi cherish Roman, or believed-Roman, traditions, and use Roman symbols to communicate and display status. They prefer symbols of the Imperial period, when the Order of Mercury was at its height, and give innovative practices weight by borrowing Roman names or symbols for them. The Alpine magi wear their unusually strict adherence to ‘Roman’ traditions as a badge of pride.

Degree of Mystery

In *The Mysteries*, options were given for including mystery cults in *Ars Magica*. This book assumes a low mystery setting. For high mystery settings you should increase the number and size of the covenants in the Alps. The Mysteries also presented secretive organizations, which characters could join, that taught new styles of magic. The magi presented here are suitable for a low-mystery saga. In a high-mystery saga, the statistics given here reflect only their public façades. Although the book is low-mystery, hints of secret groups that could flower into *mystae* are scattered throughout the text.

You May Ignore This Book

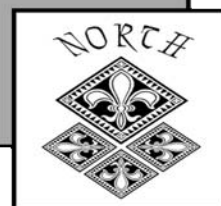
This book has been filled with new ideas that you might want to incorporate into your saga. Discuss with your troupe which bits you like, and which ones you don't. When designing new characters, discuss your concept with the other players, the same way you would if you were selecting conventional flaws that might seriously affect the tone of the story (like Plagued by Supernatural Entity).

In general, the tone of *Sanctuary of Ice* is less realistic than the previous tribunal books. It assumes that the tribunal's population of magi has been capped at a level that makes vis less scarce than in other Tribunals. It assumes that the elder magi who control this Tribunal have done what they can to ensure that interesting books are relatively plentiful. The elder magi who run the Alpine covenants are the survivors — the ones who were a little smarter, a little stronger, a little luckier. Finally it assumes that the Code is enforced to a degree found nowhere else in the Order.

Take the bits that suit your style and make your stories richer. Ignore the rest.



Tribunal of the Greater Alps





Chapter 2

Hermetic Culture in the Greater Alps

One of the main factors underlying the Hermetic peace in the Alps is trade in services. The covenants here have become economically interdependent: it is less bother to trade than not to. This alters how Alpine magi think about war, because they need to factor in the irritation of disrupted supply, and difficulties of arranging new trade relationships, when considering hostilities.

The interconnections between Alpine covenants are made tighter by two factors not shared by mundane nobles — travel magic and differentiation of the uppermost class of producer. Magi can gather and trade with little expense, and magi, unlike nobles, have a broad variety of different aptitudes. This encourages a brisk trade in services, which develops more slowly between mundane cities, paralleling advances in transport. A magus's time is a tradable commodi-

Jacinta filia Romana to her apprentice Ash, now the maga Noire

...it makes no sense to destroy yourself, except if this gives you the opportunity to rebuild yourself stronger. It makes no sense to burn your possessions, except if they are making you weak. Destruction creates the absences in which the novel flourishes, but is the novel good, or bad? Much as the Verdi craft an object, my dear, you must learn to craft each absence. What shape would the absences created by War take here? They talk of virtue, and civility and so on, but that's not really why there is peace in the Alps, it's because the peace allows them to be more eccentric than war would.

Our Tower of Ashes is a lot like covenants in the rest of the world. It is designed on the manorial model and is self-sufficient. The community about it grows our food, we make our luxuries, and we trade our surplus for exotic materials that we can't make ourselves. This is how the mundane nobility live, and how we live, because I prefer it thus. It slows my studies, yes, but there is a rigor in manorial life in which I find charm. Tell no one your mater is a rustic!

The other Alpine covenants have grown too large to be as we are. Although not sited badly when they had small populations, none is now suited for manorial independence. Each provides services to its fellows, and each is therefore dependent on the others. This means that the loss of a covenant is a blow to all covenants. Less traffic pours through the Fair, and each is forced to divert time from the simple production of materials, which they have in abundance, to the complicated production of luxuries for which they'd prefer to trade. This forces them to be sensible and move back toward the manorial system, and that's a little too pragmatic for many an old magus.

This is why, yes, although Yselt and Andru dislike each other intensely, neither can afford a war. Even though they don't need each other, each of them desires prosperity for third parties who desire prosperity for their foe. When you go toward the Sea, as you will and must, you will find that this is not always true, and that is why our sodales in the Peripheral lands are always at war.

There, to get another's resources, they create, then fill, an absence. Since virtually all manorial covenants are similar, this is easy. I owned one field and now I own three. My vineyard grew a dozen pawns of Herbam, and now I have my vineyard and also a wishing well that froths with Intéllego. Where is the loss, beyond manpower? There is none.

Here, destroying your foe may limit your own prospects. Were Sinews of

Knowledge to be swept away, were I to clasp the Cadaver in my left hand, how would I fill all that absence? How would those who feel the sharp knife of age respond to the absence, and to me, its crafter? Were I to cast down La and her mystics would I make life better for my descendants or worse? Well, she may be a bad example...



ty, which encourages specialization and leads to the development of covenants where customers ensure that a service continues to be available across the generations by making specialization in a certain service lucrative.

Alpine Hermetic Law

Each tribunal has developed a pattern of judgments that are not followed in the other tribunals. This pattern of judgments, along with social pressures and historic events, create traditions which make each tribunal's culture unique. The Alpine Hermetic culture deliberately holds itself aloof from the general Hermetic culture, so it has developed many unique features.

Vis Sources and Voting Rights

Vis is relatively abundant in the Alps, because the covenants here have limited their populations to those that their resources can support. In practice, new covenants are forbidden, and the current covenants are required to live within their

means. Each has a strong interest in maintaining the peace, so each avoids infrugality. To increase in size, a covenant needs to declare ownership of a permanent vis source, have it assessed by the Quaesitores, and then pledge ten pawns of vis to the upkeep of a new magus. This process is called "buying a chair," since it allows a new magus to have a seat at the tribunal meeting, and vote. Despite the name, the covenant doesn't pay the vis to anyone, it just demonstrates that it exists. A magus without this sort of support is called a vagrant, and vagrancy is a low crime. New chairs need to be "purchased" at least one year before tribunal if the magus wishes to exercise a vote, but a chair registered at any time protects a magus from the punishments assigned for vagrancy.

A covenant that registers vis for a magus's upkeep — to buy their chair — doesn't need to give the magus that vis for personal use. Pledging vis for each magus is a legal nicety, a demonstration that the covenant will not need to poach from its neighbors to support its members. Although covenants assign vis sources to magi for the purpose of allowing them to vote at Tribunal most, in practice, pool their vis and trade with outsiders for kinds which they lack. Magi who leave a covenant do not take their right to pledged income with them. The council of the covenant selects a replacement for the vacant chair, using whatever method of recruitment their covenant mandates.

Each covenant pays a pawn per year to the senior representatives of the Houses of Guernicus and Mercere. This tradition has entered Tribunal law. Many covenants also



Peculiarities of Tribunal Law

— as outlined by Archmage Pietro to his filia Anastasia, returning to join the Covenant of the Icy North.

First, remember that the Jerbitons are conservative and like to think of themselves as Roman nobility. Once you understand that, their decisions make a lot more sense.

To have the right to vote at Tribunal meetings you have to be wealthy, just like in the Roman Senate. Well, not exactly like in the Senate, because you don't need land, you need vis. To be allowed to vote you must demonstrate that you have a renewable source of vis that can support you in the manner befitting the lofty station of a magus. Not having a vis supply is vagrancy: that's a low crime...

Ten pawns per year. Yes, it's a lot, but it's traditional. It factors in study, buying a longevity potion from a Corpus specialist, binding a familiar, certámen and combat. In some respects, it's a bargain. The Quaesitores have a register of the renewable vis sources of each covenant, and a covenant pledges your support...Yes, the redcaps too...No, you aren't allowed to distil any of it out of the aura. How would that prove you have enough wealth to support yourself? They call that 'farming' here, and they mean that in a nasty way.

That's one of the reasons there have been no new covenants here, officially, for hundreds of years. You need to show that your new covenant, after set-up and maintenance costs, can spend 10 pawns per year, every year, on each magus, from sources no one else has claimed. Oh, and you need a pawn for the Quaesitores and Redcaps... Yes, that's official. They've even tried to get it through the Grand Tribunal a couple of times. It used to be a pawn a magus. Largesse is also an attribute of nobility, some covenants give more...

Yes, noblemen go to war; that's a sound point. Any metaphor will fail if pressed with words of sufficient weight. As to war, it's not unknown here, but you really need to shed the mindset of the wild lands you've come from. The Alps aren't frontier territory. A desperate scramble for resources doesn't occur here, because it's considered a sign of poverty and of weakness. Using vis in certámen is rare, because it's seen as inconclusive, and expensive too. You'll make a poor reputation for yourself, as a spendthrift, if you go about using vis that way. Certainly the Code allows it, but when that went up for the vote at the Grand Tribunal, all the delegates from the Alps were against...Yes, it's allowed, but it's foreign and therefore odd, likely childish and possibly stupid...Arrogance? Oh yes. Common as snow, child, common as snow.

exchange gifts of vis. These are traditional trades which have occurred so often that each side has found it convenient to guarantee supply by ratifying the process in a treaty, which enters the Peripheral Code. The income from these treaties can be used to pledge upkeep for a magus, but the vis to be traded away cannot.

Chapters

Taking advantage of Hermetic peace, many of the covenants in the Greater Alps have lesser properties, usually near important resources, which lie at some distance from the covenant's main site. These are called "properties" if no magus lives there, and "chapters" if they do. Magi dwell in chapters for a variety of reasons. The commonest is that the area has an extremely high aura and is used for study.

Alternatively, an area may provide useful materials that need to be protected from faeries and mundanes. Some magi simply like the chapter house more than the central fortification, and have their covenant's permission to reside there.

The chapter system allows the Greater Alps Tribunal to develop resources while not sanctioning new covenants. In other tribunals, each chapter site would quickly become a new covenant, as the members of the chapter, resenting the fact that the resources they produced were being used elsewhere, agitated for political power. In the Alps, new covenants simply do not occur, which forces compromise between rival chapters within a single covenant. Sometimes these rivalries are intense, and some covenants have shifted their political center, called the motherhouse, to a chapter.

Aware of the destabilization that can arise from attachment to chapters, many covenants take measures to prevent friction. Some make living at a chapter less comfortable and enjoyable than living at the motherhouse, or even use it as a form of punishment, an internal exile. Others only allow members to live in a chapter for a short period of time, a useful safety measure for those chapters located in dangerously high auras. Finally, most covenants, when they discover new resources, consider how they can trade their chapters with other covenants. These trades usually finish with most covenants

controlling geographically contiguous territories. Magi living in chapters are aware that their home might be traded away.

Family Law

Roman fathers had the right to kill children who displeased them, and the shadow of this ancient practice lies across Alpine Hermetic culture. No magus has ever been Marched for murdering his filius in this Tribunal. There is no specific alteration in the Code that allows magi to kill those they have trained, but no mortal judgment has ever been given, and no case has ever been appealed to the Grand Tribunal. It is expected that if a magus is breaking the Code, his former master will be the first to attempt to strike him down. A judgment by the Tribunal that a March is necessary is seen a failure on the part of the master, if he is from a militant house.

The unwritten right of a magus to kill his progeny has a converse duty in the Alps. Some ancient magi, desperate for the vis to allow them to brew increasingly-ineffective longevity potions, attack their sodales. This is considered one of the forms of degradation and infamy that a dutiful filius should protect his parens from — generally by calling the other filii together and simultaneously



Pietro continues...

Ostracism's not a Roman thing originally, but yes, each tribunal there's a secret ballot and the one with the most votes against him has to leave the Greater Alps for twenty-one years or be Marched. No Primus of Criamon's ever been ostracized, but the Jerbitons go, because they designed the system. You are allowed to just drop a blank sherd in the pot though. Sometimes no-one goes. Exile ends the day before Tribunal, so some magi are ostracized a second time...

Well of course we export troublemakers to other tribunals. That's what other tribunals are for! You notice that the large covenants send their younger

magi out to the wilds to blow off their steam, then bring them home once they've trained an apprentice, or had a Twilight experience, or proved their maturity in some other way? That's a deliberate policy of exporting trouble. Anyway, what covenant wants some child around when they could have someone worth vouching for instead? There are only so many rooks of vis, and if you are pledging one, then why pledge it on someone's acne-riddled whelp? A bit of sea salt clears that acne up, by the way. That's why we send them toward the coast. Any coast will do.



declaring war on their addled teacher. This keeps the unpleasantness within the family.

Ostracism

Every seven years, as the first order of business at a Tribunal meeting, each Alpine magus is given a small slate, called a “sherd”. Secretly, each writes the name of the magus they most despise on the sherd, and places it in an urn. They may leave the slate blank, if they wish. The Quaesitores then empty the urn and publicly count the votes. Provided at least one magus in four voted against the magus with the largest pile of slates, that magus must leave the Greater Alps before the rise of the second subsequent full moon, or be Marched.

The ostracized magus usually strikes out for one of the frontier tribunals and founds a covenant there. Their covenmates often pro-

vide material aid, and other Alpine covenants may support the scheme, materially, and by suggesting that newly gauntleted magi travel with the ostracized magus. Few attempt to return, since they are unwanted and develop a new base of power elsewhere. Those who do are sometimes ostracized again.

The Tribunal’s traditions have adapted to the possibility that an office-bearer might suffer ostracism. If the Praeco is ostracized, the Tribunal begins anew, under the next eldest magus. No new ostracism vote is taken, and the old Praeco cannot speak or vote at the tribunal. If the chief Quaesitor is ostracized, their deputy, who is always prepared for this possibility, steps into their place. Ostracized magi can give the sigils they carry, apart from their own, to another magus, so all covenants send at least two representatives to the tribunal.

Ostrakons traveling to a distant tribunal are vulnerable. They lack the regular protection of an Aegis of the Hearth, and need to carefully preserve their store of vis. It’s not



unknown for an ostracized magus's enemies to declare Wizard's War on the outcast before that magus can establish a new covenant. This is called Hunting, and isn't usually popular, but certain personality types attract enmity. Since the magus is likely to be transporting most of his valuable possessions, there is a certain tension in Hunting parties, between cooperating to capture the quarry, and wanting to be the only magus able to walk away from the kill.

Alpine Hoplites

Hoplites are magi who regularly assist the Quaesitores with military force. Volunteers, the role of hoplite is not defined in the Code: they have no special rights or responsibilities. In practice most Alpine hoplites serve out of a desire to harm others while in the Order's service, because it places them in a situation of legal ambiguity, and because the Quaesitores reward long or excellent service.

Alpine magi who crave the challenge of Hermetic combat find hoplitemism occasionally rewarding. Although the Code does not provide the quaesitores with the right to summarily execute criminals, if a magus is committing or has committed a High Crime, few subsequent tribunals will convict the quaesitor of murder if he uses deadly force to prevent the criminal escaping, or to defend other magi. The hoplite standing at the quaesitor's shoulder has the privileged position of striking down this newly discovered enemy of the Order, under the aegis of moral ambiguity that shrouds the position.

The moral ambiguity in the position of the hoplite comes from being under the direction of a quaesitor, who takes some share of the blame if they act illegally. For example, if a quaesitor requests the hoplite kill a suspected diabolist, then that hoplite has some degree of moral protection when a tribunal later reviews the process. Even if it turns out that the victim was not a diabolist, it's unlikely that the hoplite would be pun-

ished with death, since magi usually take the view that he should have been able to trust the interpretation of the quaesitor.

This isn't immunity from prosecution, or a license to kill. The role of hoplite arose during the Order's early years when it was vital that magi who had learned the *Parma Magica*, but refused to follow the Code, were murdered before they had the opportunity to found rival schools. A quaesitor would assure a group of volunteers that a certain person was an enemy of the Order and that simple banishment was insufficient for the safety of their *sodales*. These sanctioned killers would then hunt down their victim. Honor and *plaudits* aside, the band of hoplites would be rewarded with the goods of the outcast. This system worked well, with the obvious exception of the *Pralix* incident, which led to the brief existence of the rival Order of *Miscellany*.

Since many thirteenth century hoplites serve as guardians, rather than as troopers, they have limited opportunities to loot the bodies of the fallen. The Quaesitores in the Alps arrange other rewards for extended service. The most important of these are access to the library of the Covenant of the Icy North, a chair at Tribunal, longevity potions, and access to magical items. Although the exact terms of exchange vary over time, most Greater Alpine magi expect 'dedicated hoplites', those who enter full-time service, to work seven-year stints.

Dedicated hoplites' magical development slows during their first stint. Between missions, they spend their first year learning Hermetic Law and Order of Hermes Lore. If necessary, they are then taught basic survival skills, the essentials of weapon use, and the fundamentals of magical strategy. Following this the hoplite is encouraged to learn Wizards' Communion, an invisibility spell, and basic detection spells. For the rest of their service, they can study whatever they wish, but are always on call and frequently lose seasons of study as they wander the tribunal, shielding a quaesitor.

Longevity potions are usually given at the end of 21 years of service. In cases of hoplites with weak potions, the Quaesitores





sign a contract with the hoplite, allowing them to promise the service. This contract is called an indenture and can be completed by labor, or negated by refunding the proportion of the vis spent making the potion equivalent to the number of years yet to be served. Other indentures are possible, and the term is used in the tribunal for other promises of future service.

Especially when shielding a magus, dedicated hoplites often wear red cloaks. They do this either in mimicry of the ancient Spartans or because they are Flambeau magi, who wear the color anyway. On formal occasions hoplites wear sashes of different patterns of color that identify in which covenant they are based. The sash for the Covenant of the Icy North, for example, is sky-blue speckled with flakes of silver.

If your saga is using the Legion of Mithras, a group described in *The Mysteries* supplement, their relationship to the hoplites is similar to that of the Cult of Mithras's relationship to the Roman legions. The Legion exists within the larger body, sometimes in favor, when ranking hoplites are legionnaires, sometimes out of favor, when it is suspected that legionnaires are showing each other incorrect preferment. As a general rule, the longer a magus has been a hoplite, the more they know about the Legion, but their membership is dependent on their personality.

The Greater Alpine Tribunal selects an experienced hoplite who coordinates Wizards' Marches. This officer is sometimes simply an Archmage skilled in combat who has agreed to fulfill the role as it becomes necessary. This figure is called the lictor, named for the servants who carried the symbols of office for the judges of ancient Rome, a ceremonial function he performs at Tribunal. Lictors often wear a sash edged in leopard skin, a variation of the badge of standard-bearers of the Roman legions. It is traditional for the lictor to hunt the leopard personally. Being in charge of a Wizards' March also gives the lictor the right to determine the order of battle, and make the first assault upon the enemy, but this isn't a requirement. The current lictor is the

Archmage Pietro, from the Spire of Juno Chapter of the Covenant of the Icy North.

Amaranth

The Virtuous amaranth is a rare, purple flower that grows in faerie regiones. If picked it never withers, because each blossom contains a pawn of Creo vis. Humans who eat an amaranth do not appear to age for the next year. In game terms, their Age increases, but their Apparent Age does not. Amaranth does not protect against the ravages of age: its magic is cosmetic. It also gives the user an added Confidence point and 10 points of magic resistance, enough to protect from minor faerie charms. These bonuses fade a year and a day after the last flower was eaten.

Any Hermetic alchemist can reduce amaranth flowers into a purple dust that, if mixed with white wine, powerfully affects the Gifted. For half an hour after taking amaranth its user can see the underlying mystical forces that are expressed through the material world. This makes the world a more structured and comprehensible place. It makes the magus feel more perceptive, more intelligent and far happier. Those who take amaranth on a monthly basis have an added point of Confidence, a bonus of +3 on all perception rolls, and a bonus of +3 on Parma Magica scores. Users also don't appear to age.

Amaranth eating has many disadvantages. Ever year that a magus takes amaranth, they need to make a Sta roll of 9+ to avoid developing the personality trait "amaranth addict" which opposes any action which doesn't lead directly to procuring more of the drug. The roll is made when the first dose is taken, then for the first dose each year after winter aging rolls. For every year of use, addicts gain an experience point in their addiction. Amaranth users also have less control over twilight experiences; their addiction score is a modifier that makes twilight both more likely and more dangerous.

Amaranth is invisible to Hermetic magic, which cannot detect the flowers, or the fact that a magus is a user. Magic cannot be used to assist magi in avoiding amaranth addiction, nor can it prevent the craving for amaranth in those already addicted. The Quaesitores believe that amaranth is created in Arcadia specifically for the purpose of making magi addicts. They believe that certain faerie nobles then command the addicted to perform acts that are to the detriment of the Order, like attacking churches. Other magi doubt this story, noting that it has been extracted from the minds of those driven to violent senility by their addiction to the purple wine.

The tribunal has ruled that all amaranth is to be destroyed. Nonetheless traffic in the flower continues. It can be found in Arcadia, and occasionally appears in faerie places. The area surrounding the village of Ingolstadt is particularly notorious for the emergence of amaranth plants. The amaranth has not been declared illegal in all of the tribunals that surround the Alps, and the matter has never been brought before the Grand Tribunal.

If your saga uses the supplement, *The Mysteries*, Hermetic magi who can concentrate vis into material objects, giving it flavors, have the ability to create drugs similar to amaranth, and these are also, usually, illegal.

Disorder

The frequency of inter-covenant warfare in the Alps is so low that the idea of resorting to it is almost alien. The Alpine Peripheral Code refers to inter-covenant warfare, where all members of a covenant declare war on those of another covenant, as disorder. Disorder is technically legal, but, as its name implies, it is that thing which the Order was founded to prevent. It is that thing which, in a moral sense, the Order most directly opposes. Although the Code explicitly allows war, most magi in the Alps only support that minimum level of violence that

they see as necessary to support the etiquette that allows magi and covenants to cooperate. Disorderliness is seen as a form of immorality that undermines the spirit of the Code, far more seriously than some of the non-interference provisions — although which provisions these are varies by covenant.

None of the current covenants believe they would grow in the chaos created by disorder. Criamon magi believe that all mundane distractions, including disorder, lead away from the Enigma. Jerbiton magi have a parable about Caesar accidentally destroying the library of Alexandria that demonstrates, they believe, that disorderliness is rarely good for civilization. They remember the Hermetic expansion into Greece, and the Latin sack of Constantinople, and are revolted by the idea of copying either. The council of the Covenant Where Journeys End knows that the first stage in any disorder is the pillaging of faerie courts for vis, particularly the Corpus vis that keeps damaged fighters in the field for longer. The magi at Sinews of Knowledge need peaceful trade to continue, since it is their covenant's lifeblood. None want to participate in disorder, nor do they want their allies to be caught up in it.

There is a myth in the Alps that says the mountains lie across the spine of a dragon so large it eats other dragons. Some magi believe that widespread disorder would wake the dragon. Criamon magi say that violence makes the dragon itchy, while many magi, half seriously, say that Imáginem spells give it pleasant dreams. There are very few magi who wholeheartedly believe in the dragon, but the rumor continues to spread.

Interference with the Church

Certain places under the influence of the Church have been noted in the Alpine Peripheral Code as sites where even minor violence will be adjudged interference. The





most important of these are the city of Constance and the monasteries in the Passes of Saint Bernard, each vital to the redcaps and favored to some degree by House Jerbiton. Some magi, particularly members of House Criamon, prefer to rest in chapters during journeys, so that they do not accidentally alarm churchmen with their appearance, Blatant Gift or unusual beliefs.

Emigration: Exporting Trouble

It is very difficult for a young magus to be his own master in the Alps. Alpine culture, at its most basic, is designed so that powerful magi leave each other alone and, in exchange, are free to do as they wish. A younger magus is only welcome within this system if he is useful to the older magi who rule the covenants, and determine who is vouched for. To earn a chair, a young magus needs to be more valuable than the magi of middle age who want access to his covenant's resources, and most do this by being absolutely biddable, little more than servants of their covenant's leaders.

Emigration is popular. This isn't simply because young magi, like wealthy adolescents everywhere, desire to see the world. The frontier tribunals have looser legal and cultural ties, so magi there can experiment with alternative styles of living. The most attractive, to many young magi, is the equitable democratic style, which is almost practiced at Valnastium, but nowhere else in the Alps.

Covenants bound by council votes of equal value are not found in the Alps. Democracy is rule by a vote of equal members of a political body, and in the Alps, there are very few people who, in their innermost hearts, acknowledge that a newly

gauntleted magus is their equal. The charters of the Alpine covenants make this bias toward age, experience, or skill, explicit. The only way a magus can become an equal member of a covenant's council is to found a new covenant, join a covenant which is strictly democratic, or serve an Alpine covenant for so long, and so well, that they are accorded status by the thinning ranks of their elders.

The tendency toward emigration, like every other element of alpine Hermetic culture, exists because powerful magi find it valuable. It exports extra magi into other Tribunals, and therefore exports friction over resources. It allows the future leaders of Alpine covenants to make their mistakes somewhere else, before being offered important responsibilities. It allows potential recruits to age sufficiently that they feel superior to newly gauntleted magi, so that they see the need for population control. It lets them see how much worse things could be, if the magi of the Alps behaved like magi everywhere else.

Emigration is also claimed to be good for the Order. The Alpine system regularly seeds new covenants at the edges of Hermetic influence, in Hibernia, the Levant, Africa and the steppes of Russia. It encourages young magi to put their lives on the line in border skirmishes in Iberia and Palestine. Even if these covenants fall, as many do, these sites become valuable foundations for the next wave of Hermetic colonizers. The Alps also acts as a sink for powerful self-absorbed magi, drawing them out of the geopolitics of the frontier tribunals. This acts as a brake on conflict there. Finally, the Alpine covenants have the most experience in, and least cultural resistance against, euthanizing powerful magi whose need for vis makes them dangerous to their sodales.

Preparation for Sending a Filius Away

Most parentes do not simply abandon their filius after the Gauntlet. In the two or three years prior to their presentation, the

parens communicates with members of their House in other tribunals, and attempts to place the young magus with a suitable covenant. Should this prove impossible, they contact other magi with apprentices of similar age, and suggest that they informally sponsor the formation of a new covenant. They then consult libraries and members of House Mercere to determine a suitable site, and sometimes arrange for one of the parentes to inspect possible locales. On rare occasions, a parens's covenant agrees to assist the new foundation, in exchange for a seasonal payment of vis.

Sometimes this process is curtailed. It's uncommon, but far from unknown, for a group of apprentices to be thrown together at the Midsummer Fair. They are given a certain amount of money, and a quantity of vis — which they need to spend wisely before the Fair ends — and then they have to leave for another Tribunal. The behavior of these groups is unpredictable, but many head east, to uncertain futures in the

Levant. Some disperse immediately, sending magical vagrants wandering about Europe, seeking a place for themselves. A lot of these vanish in faerie forests.

Post-Gauntlet Expeditions

Younger magi are encouraged to leave, but aren't sent away empty-handed. Most covenants allow an apprentice in their later years to copy lesser works in their library, and some give them a small quantity of vis to assist them in their travels. Since many apprentices have led sheltered lives, it is usual for them to be sent away in groups in which at least one member has a dose of common sense. This is usually the one who handles the money. Young magi usually travel with a shield grog, and some have a guide.





When influential masters have selected a site for the group to settle, their guide is often a non-magical Redcap. If an earnest attempt is being made to found a new covenant, experienced mundane personnel will accompany this expedition, or follow on immediately after letters confirm that the site has been secured. At minimum, these include an autocrat and a skilled soldier to serve as turb captain.

When They are Called Back

Each Alpine covenant can offer membership to magi, although they have different criteria for assessing candidates. The formal requirements for the membership of each covenant are given in a later chapter, but there are certain unspoken rules which are observed by all covenants. Magi who are publicly known, or strongly rumored, to have the following qualities attract special interest, either positive or negative.

Positive qualities

- Has bound a familiar
- Has purchased a powerful longevity potion from a skilled specialist
- Has trained an apprentice who is inoffensive
- Exudes vis, or has inherited a public vis source
- Owns powerful magic items
- Is a prolific author of prestigious works
- Is a skilled negotiator
- Has served as a hoplite
- Has Hermetic Prestige

Negative qualities

- Has declared Wizard's War unnecessarily
- Spends vis in study at too young an age (in preference to researching from books)
- Is Plagued by Supernatural Entities
- Is a radical opponent of the Church, powerful nobles or any House

- Has a conviction for breaching the Peripheral Code
- Is insane in a non-congenial way
- Is of Discredited Lineage
- Wastes (uses) vis in certámen

Relations with Surrounding Tribunals

Covenants surrounding the Greater Alps sometimes raid unguarded vis sources, but rarely attempt to force the approval of new settlements. This is because the surrounding tribunals are filled with vicious intrigue, which the Alpine magi manipulate to their advantage, if necessary. Spring and summer covenants don't, individually, have the resources to challenge the Alpine Tribunal, and autumn covenants in the Rhineland and Italy have too many local enemies to pick fights in the Alps.

Incursions from Transylvania, and raiding of vis sources in the Bavarian Common, are concerns taken seriously by the autumn Alpine covenants. Ill will toward the Tremere is an unofficial but ancient Alpine custom, dating from the Sundering and refreshed by the vampiric Corruption. The Greater Alps was one of the first Tribunals to fall under House Tremere's dominance in the ninth century. Leodontina, filia of Tremere, became unhinged just before Tribunal, and was ostracized. During the Hunt that followed, most of her filii were killed, and their covenant, Highest Aspiration, looted. During this exercise, a technique was pioneered that has stood the Greater Alps in good stead ever since: dividing the enemy.

Dividing the enemy is the policy of offering great rewards to a single party in exchange for betraying their allies in the

Formal Clothing for Magi in the Alps

Toga Virilis

The toga virilis is unornamented and white. It is presented to a magus directly after his acceptance into the Order, along with his sigil, but has no mystical function. It is a symbol of adulthood, and membership of the Order's decision-making body. Any ornamentation or ostentation is considered gauche. Unlike early Romans, almost all Alpine magi wear tunics under their togas; short sleeved for men, long-sleeved for women. Togas are worn with shoes or boots. Romans wore sandals about the home, not to public events, and magi tend to follow this practice because snow makes sandals uncomfortably cold and sticky.

Praetexta

A seamless toga with a purple stripe, this is worn by apprentices on extremely formal occasions. These include examinations, ceremonies of Welcome and the annual raising of their covenant's Aegis. Roman children had *bullae*, small gold charms, circular and marked with crescent moons, which were thought to bring luck. Most apprentices have a *bullula*, which is inscribed with the name and covenant of their master. A few of these trinkets have been enchanted with useful effects. The toga praetexta is also worn by magistrates, and is worn by the Quaesitores on formal occasions. Many change into it just before the event, and then change out directly afterward, since the garment is slightly more restrictive than many magi like.

Pulla

The pulla is a brown or black toga, worn, in ancient times, by the poor. Among Hermetic magi, it is worn as a sign of mourning. Certain aggressive magi don the pulla when dispatching the Tokens of War, and continue wearing it until the third new moon.

Trabea

The ancient Roman emperors wore the purple toga, the trabea. No Alpine magus will wear a purple toga, because to do so would be to declare oneself superior to one's sodales — their ruler. Abuses of good taste appear in other tribunals occasionally.

Stolae

The classic Roman dress for adult women was the stola, which all but covered the body. Female mages in the Alps wear it, often covered by a robe called a palla, because it is so much warmer than a toga. When in a stola, women can wear sandals, because their feet are invisible, but most wear ankle-boots. The stola is traditionally worn with a veil that covers the lower face. Female mages, for whom the strict Latin term is *sagae*, sometimes wear togas. Roman women only wore togas on the night before marriage, but some *sagae* from militaristic Houses find the stola a bit fiddly, even for the limited business of Tribunal, and so have adopted masculine dress.



coalition forming against the Alps. In the Sundering Hunt, one of the Tremere betrayed her housemates, since the death of her parens and parens's parens allowed her to claim her sigil. On those occasions when simply murdering every magus who comes

over the border has proven ill-advised, the usual technique has been to offer great rewards to senior members of the enemy coalition, on condition that they betray their allies. Assistance is channeled to the enemies of the supporters of the invasion.



For example, the Greater Alpine Tribunal has been a strong supporter of the Novgorod Tribunal since its inception, because it counters the expansionist tendencies of House Tremere. In turn, Novgorod has adopted the Alpine regulation that forbids new covenants forming.

Alpine Redcaps

Mythic Companion
Template: Redcaps

Instead of designing a redcap as either a companion or an artless Hermetic magus, troupes might instead allow redcaps to be designed as mythic companions. A mythic companion, as described in *Hedge Magic*, takes the player's magus slot, but has abilities beyond those of a standard companion. The following description is a baseline: many mythic redcaps will stray from it. It is correct

The Red Cap

The red cap of office, worn by members of the House of Mercere, is the pellus. This is a Latin cap of liberty. Magi desiring to parley wore it, during the period between the fall of the Cult of Mercury and the founding of the Order of Hermes, much as soldiers raise a white flag. Mercere changed his House's symbol to the pellus after his final transformation, to suit its new direction.

The triangular badge on the red cap is the original symbol of House Mercere. It is notably similar to the Bjornaer cone. The copper triangle is presented at gauntlet, as the sigil of each Mercere. The triangles of wizards of Mercere are each engraved with a device representing the individual magus, so that they are clearly different when presented at Tribunal. The triangles of non-magical redcaps are engraved on the inside with the redcap's name and home covenant.

for redcaps trained at Rorschach, but redcaps from other tribunals will have different abil-

A note in the diary of Esperance, follower of Verditius

The Whitlam, to which I earlier found reference, was a magus two generations descended from the Founder Mercere, and of his magical lineage. Although others had held this opinion previously, he was the first to enunciate a doctrine that has given his name to many of the magic items of House Mercere.

The early wizards of Mercere designed many items which would only work for a user designated at construction, or which were of single use. They did this in the belief that it made their sodales less attractive targets for other members of the Order. As the Order became more disciplined, however, and the deaths of redcaps less frequent, a change of thinking occurred and, following the example of this Whitlam, magic items were designed to be inheritable.

Whitlam believed, and I think time bears him out, that as items accumulated across the generations the

House could either increase in size more quickly, or focus on developing new effects that increased the safety of redcaps still further. The Whitlams are, for the Mercere, venerated objects — physical links with those whose labors they now continue. They are mementos of their ancestors, symbols of their successes and care for their descendants.

The least conspicuous Whitlams are called lickstones; small metal or opal plates that fasten magically to the palate, and hide beneath a layer of illusion. Initially designed for dealing with faeries, which can see magical objects and are sometimes attracted to them, the stones are also used in situations where it is possible the redcap will be imprisoned. The only serious defect with lickstones is that they become inactive on holy ground. This design feature was included to ensure that no redcap forgets he is wearing one, and takes Communion with it still in his mouth. Since this accident is yet to occur, no one is sure what the result would be.

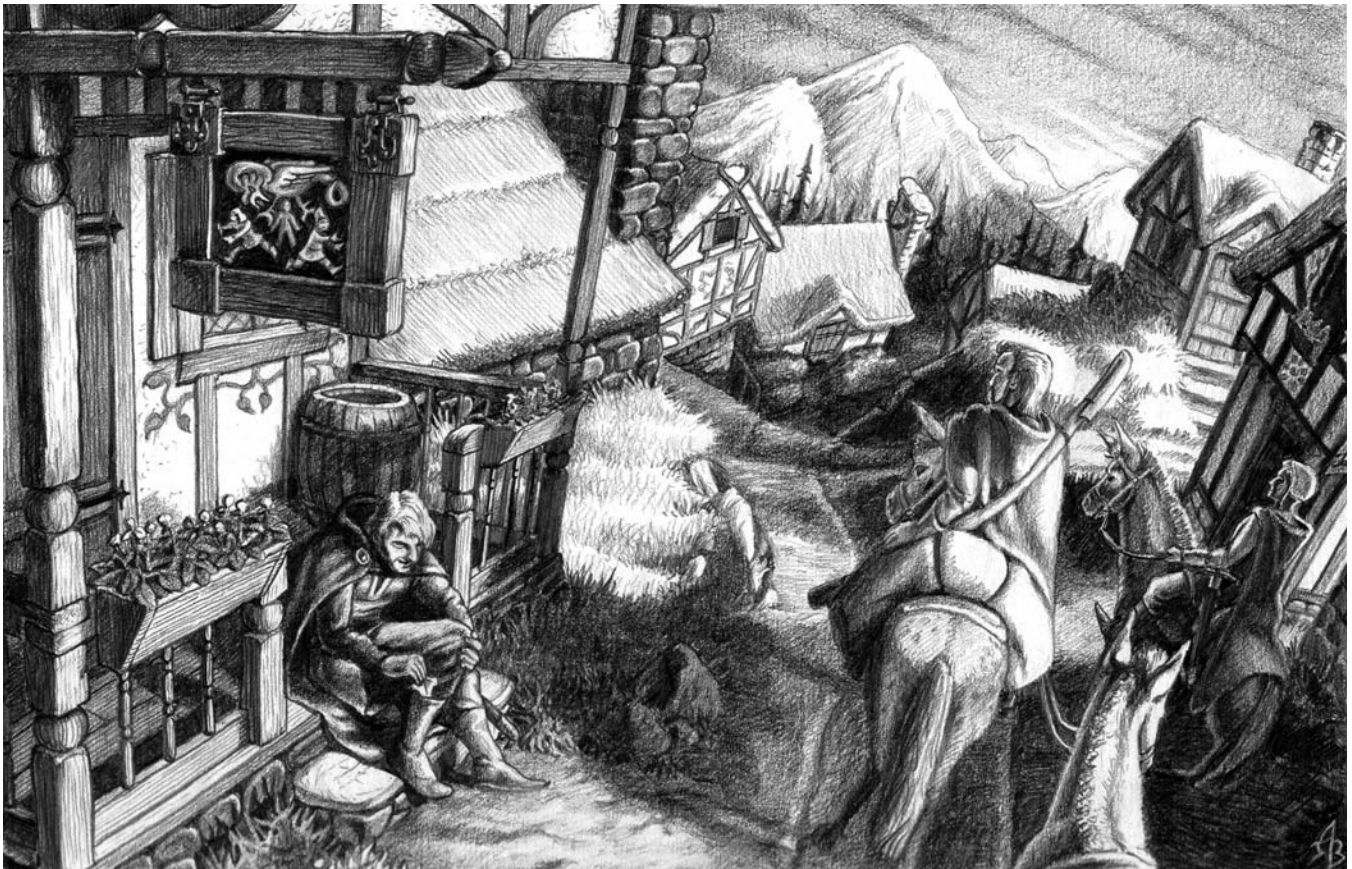
ities — for example redcaps in the Alps need basic fluency in all five of the languages they will encounter; Latin, Langue d'Oc, German, Italian and Rhaetian. Rhaetian is close enough to Latin that those with a score of 4 in Latin effectively have a score of 1 in Rhaetian, but redcaps who will spend a lot of time at Valnastium develop added skill in the local language.

Redcaps travel by magic, boat, mule or foot and need appropriate skills. Virtually all Alpine redcaps have Athletics (hiking) as skis, skates and snowshoes are unknown in the Alps. Riding Alpine mules takes courage and skill. Many Alpine paths are narrow, with a cliff-face on one side and a crevasse on the other. The mules know that if their cargoes hit the cliff wall they will stumble in the opposite direction — into the crevasse. The mules give themselves as much clearance as possible — by walking along the very edge of the crevasse.

Starting Abilities for Mythic Redcaps Trained at Rorschach or Basel

Athletics (hiking) 1, Greater Alpine Tribunal Lore (safe traveling between covenants) 1, Hermes Lore (personalities of magi) 3, Ride (mule) 1, Scribe Latin (concise letters) 3, Speak Latin 5 (with magi), Speak (own language) (peasants) 4 Speak (second Alpine language) (peasants) 3, Speak (third Alpine language) (peasants) 3, Survival (Alpine environment) 2, Bow (wild animals) 2.

The player should spend an extra age + 7 points. Popular choices include Bargain, Boating, Craft (various), Brawling (Alpine wrestling — see page 97), Climb, Faerie Lore (avoidance), Folk Ken, and Great Weapon (alpenstock — as quarterstaff). An alpenstock is a walking stick, usually a wooden shaft with an iron spike at the base,



The Copper Rooster Inn, Basel



A briefing by Mary, wizard of Mercere, to Gunther, a newly Gauntleted redcap.

This is your cap. See this pin? It'll keep you warm. Guard that pin with your life. If you want to be a good redcap, first you need to learn not to die. Here in the Alps, being warm is the first step in not being dead. These pins are passed down from redcap to redcap. Determined, dedicated people have worn yours. People who knew how to keep warm.

Don't forget other people don't have your pin, and don't use it conspicuously, or people will think you are fae. Never let a mortal know what your pin is for. A man who can walk through the snows without dying is a man who needs no fuel in winter, a man who can hunt while others stay huddled out of the wind. People will kill for that pin. Don't tell your mistress, because she will tell her father. Trust me on that.

The ice is dangerous for another reason: it acts like a mirror. It'll burn your skin and eyes if you stay out on it too long. Take

precautions, because snow-blind redcaps may not freeze, but they starve like other people, and they're easy prey for wolves. You may be good enough with that knife to bluff peasants, but it won't impress a wolf. If you can't use a bow, learn. Tie a veil of green gauze about your eyes when on reflective snow. Understanding the world around you with a cloth tied over your face takes a little practice. Do it before you leave.

People are dangerous, and not just because your pin is valuable. In the winters, they are huddled in tiny villages, with no news from outside. Utter boredom drums on their heads for week after brain-numbing week. They feel cold and hungry, and all they can do is wait for the weather to break. This makes some of them act oddly, especially if you just walk in out of the weather and pretend all you need is a fleecy coat and a stout set of boots and you could walk to Geneva. At best they'll think you're fae. At worst some young blood with a sweetheart in the next valley will try to copy you and die. Then you can expect to be lynched next spring...

capped by an ornamental handle of bone, horn or wood.

Mandatory Virtues

Redcap (free) — described in *Ars Magica* Fourth Edition on page 24.

Indenture (free) — In exchange for a lifetime of service, your House will provide you with the necessities of life. This includes a longevity potion on your thirty-fifth birthday, a comfortable place to retire once you are too old, or too badly injured, to deliver mail and magically-assisted attempts to find you if you are lost in the wilderness.

Whitlams (free) — Whitlams are magic items that you hold on behalf of House Mercere. These usually assist travel, provide camouflage or aid secrecy. Lickstones which allow an improved "Leap of Homecoming" and hatpins which contain survival magic aren't mandatory, but

many Alpine redcaps have them. Enchanted message bags, boots and sleds are also common. Redcaps cannot sell their Whitlams, cannot loan them to others without censure, and are deeply shamed if they lose a Whitlam. As a guide for troupes designing these characters, the Whitlams of a beginning character never have a combined total greater than 90 levels of spell effects invested in them.

Other Virtues and Flaws:

Players may select up to ten additional points of virtues, provided flaws balance them.

Cymena, described on page 76, is an example of a Mythic Redcap.

The Alpine Hermetic Year

February: Days of Trembling

Since most Alpine apprentices are welcomed into Hermetic society in March, February is the month in which they are tested. See *Houses of Hermes* for details of apprentices' gauntlets. Alpine archmages usually declare which challenger they will receive for the year in this month. The two sets of events became tangled together because of a pun in the tenth century, which has been sanctified by time.

March: Liberalia

In the Alps, a Ceremony of Welcome is held each March, during the Calends, when Roman boys were given their togas. Apprentices are sworn in, and a little business is transacted. The Liberalia, as this ceremony and the feasting which surrounds it are called, is traditionally hosted by the covenant of Tarragon Vale, except in those years when a Tribunal is due, when it is forgone.

Tarragon Vale's members vanished over a decade ago. In their absence, the Covenant of Valnastium has sponsored the Liberalia. Usually they prefer to host it at Tarragon Vale, because, frankly, they dislike some of their neighbors and don't want to invite them home. The Quaesitores are finding this increasingly difficult to supervise, as the heirs to Tarragon Vale's resources take the opportunity to press their case (see page 75) Valnastium and the Icy North motherhouse both hope an Icy North chapter can be convinced to take over as hosts.

Somewhere filled with young, enthusiastic, energetic people...

April: Frustration Week

Hermetic magi have noticed that declarations of wizard's war, in the Alps, are more common in March than any other month. They attribute this to a sort of cabin fever suffered by magi who spend winter brooding over some perceived slight, then make declarations of war when the weather breaks. Since declarations take a month to come into effect, a disproportionate number of Wizard's Wars begin in late April — called the Frustration Week. Hermetic magi traditionally give each other gifts in Frustration Week. Those covenants which have trades of vis written as treaties into the Peripheral Code usually deliver to each other during Frustration Week, which makes it a busy time for redcaps.



Fetiales

Although the covenants of the Alps have never been to war, individual wizards sometimes come to blows. The task of carrying their declarations falls to redcaps from Rorschach. When delivering these messages, redcaps always travel in threes, with a wizard of Mercere as the group's spokesman. In this role, the messengers are called fetiales, after the priests who would travel from Rome to another country so as to declare war upon it. It is traditional for one of the fetiales to carry a bag of salt, another a bag of coal, and the third — the leader — a complaint, which is the letter declaring and usually justifying the declaration of war.

The fetiales wait until the message has been read, because they are usually requested to carry a reply. If the recipient welcomes the war, this is a counter-complaint. It is usual for a complaint to contain a clause of redress, for example "unless you pay me 25 pawns of vis in compensation then...". If the



receiver caves in, called accepting the complaint, then the fetiales carry the compensation to the sender and leave the salt and coal behind. If the fetiales can't find the person they are to deliver the complaint to, it lapses.

May Day Eve (30th)

Hermetic magi tend to retreat behind their Aegises on May Day Eve. Some of the alpine peasants engage in fiery purification festivals on this night. Many of these rituals are designed to cast out and harm witches, and some are capable of Hexing nearby Hermetic magi.

May

Bean-Spitting Day (varies, often the 13th)

Ancient Roman patriarchs would prevent ghosts from harming their families by spitting beans during a ceremony in the month of May and some symbolic bean spitting goes on at most covenants. Valnastium, for example, has a bean feast, for which apprentices develop humorous names. Bean spitting is considered incredibly rude at the Cave of Twisting Shadows.

June

The Midsummer Fair (3rd-10th officially, but spreads a few days either side)

Long ago, a covenant fell in Bavaria and, to prevent war over its resources, the quaesitores volunteered to collect the vis from its lands and distribute it annually to the remaining covenants in the tribunal. This annual vis distribution has grown into

a week-long fair, held at the Motherhouse of the Covenant of the Icy North. All of the Alpine covenants, and most of the chapters, send a party to the annual fair, to buy those goods that the redcaps have procured from distant cities, to trade with their sodales, and to catch up on gossip.

No tribunal's resources perfectly match the needs of its magi. This Tribunal produces more Intéllego, Auram, Terram and Vim vis than it uses, the remnants of which are shipped south, to the desperately vis-poor Roman tribunal. The tribunal's Perdo surplus eventually finds its way east, where it fuels the intermittent clashes between the Crusading magi and Moorish wizards. Its unused Imáginem vis trickles north to Normandy, where it is used to hide Hermetic activity from the mundanes. The tribunal also exports magical animals, lab texts, tractatus, new spells, magic items and young magi.

Like magi everywhere, the covenants of the Alps want more Corpus and Creo vis than they have. The tribunal has few sources of Ignem vis, and Herbam vis, although still one of the commonest forms, is rarer here than elsewhere, and valued, since it can be used to produce food, reducing the need for interaction with mundanes. The tribunal also imports potential familiars, Gifted children, extraordinary forms for enchantment, spell foci and tractatus. Since there are about 100 magi in the Alps, and since most live to about 150, experienced magi are invited to join an alpine covenant at a rate of about 3 every two years. Sometimes clumps of magi are recruited, for example when new vis sources are found and covenants expand, or when several magi die together in an accident and replacements are recruited.

Many of these transactions occur at the Midsummer Fair. Although magi from other Tribunals sometimes travel to the Fair, many send orders to the Mercere of Rorschach Chapter, who act as purchasing and shipping agents. Vis is sold and bartered, but the Quaesitores also arrange for it to be auctioned inversely.



An inverse auction is one where the value of bids starts high and descends. This forces the buyer to pay as much as they feel they can afford. If vis is oversubscribed at a price, then the auction price begins to ascend again. For example, if a rook of Corpus vis were being auctioned, the price would start extremely high and then fall until bids had been made for all ten pawns. If there is more than one buyer willing to pay the price for the final pawn, the price begins to rise again, until a maximum bid is found.

Bids are taken in Vim vis, which can be problematic, since it allows magi to spend time creating money before the Fair. This means no-one is quite sure of the value of their currency until they see how much other people have to spend, which makes setting prices something of an art. This is why extremely valuable items are bartered. It also means there's a healthy surplus of Vim vis in some fairs, which is eventually soaked up by magi who want to create longevity potions, Aegises, or magic items.

Hermetic magi have a decimal currency system for vis. The basic unit is the pawn, ten of which make a rook. Ten rooks make a queen, but this is usually only a unit of account. There is an older system, based on Roman currency, in which four quarters make a circle, and 25 circles make an aureus. A circle, then, is four pawns of vis, which have usually been infused into a finger-ring or a flat metal disc about the width of a human palm. Contracts are written in circles and quarters in the Alps, because the Tremere invented the chess system, and the Alpine magi resent them. Younger magi, from other Tribunals, consider using circles slightly pretentious.

Midsummer's Eve (13th)

On Midsummer Eve most Alpine chapters renew their Aegises, since it is so much more pleasant than Midwinter's Eve. This is also a night for gathering fern seeds (see page 100).





August

Boot Burning (19th)

Jerbiton rejoined his mortal family on this day, hundreds of years ago. To demonstrate that his roaming was over, he burned his shoes in the small courtyard before the villa at Valnastium. Magi from House Jerbiton send gifts to their filii on this day, have some sort of feast, and burn worn-out shoes. This practice is slowly spreading to other houses, through the multi-house covenants. Jerbiton artists depicting the boot-burning often title their works to make reference to the return of the Biblical prodigal. This confuses churchmen and suggests that the young Jerbiton may not have been of sober, studious disposition.

September

Baker's Day (5th)

Hermetic marriages usually take place soon after the fifth day of September. The fifth day of autumn was Jerbiton's wedding anniversary. He wrote a lengthy poem, considered a masterpiece, extolling the virtues of the day, as a metaphor for the virtues of his lovely wife. Jerbiton's wife is one of those puzzling figures from the Order's early history. Her name, Miriam, is one of the few points about her on which later scholars, and artists, agree — another is that Bonisagus loved her honey cakes and that Jerbiton took a basket of them to the first tribunal.

Imperial Roman marriage took three forms, of which only two continue in the Hermetic Order, supplemented with the rites of the Church in some cases. These methods are called custom, coemption and confarreation, in order of complexity. The first and last are still practiced. Coemption, a form of mutual slavery

where each spouse buys the body of the other, then emancipates the other, is considered demeaning for mages, who feel even ceremonial slavery to be beneath their station.

Customary marriage is the simplest form, and the one most practiced by covenfolk. If a woman lives in a man's home for a year, never being away for three or more sequential nights, then the two are married. The man doesn't gain the terrifying rights of fatherly majesty described earlier. Divorce was simply a matter of the man asking the woman to leave, or the woman finding another man in whose house to reside.

Confarreation is a marriage by contract, signed in the presence of ten witnesses. If one of these is a quaesitor, this paper, called a dotal contract, is binding under Hermetic law. The ceremony takes its name from the *far*, or sacred cake, which the bridal couple ate together under the supervision of a priest; although nothing save the contract is necessary for the marriage to be binding. Hermetic couples usually devise their own ceremonies, although a cake is usual.

October

Rauhnachte

In Austria there is a festival late in October called Rauhnachte. On Rauhnachte some animals gain the ability to speak, and other magical powers. Rauhnachte is a traditional day of celebration for the familiars throughout the Tribunal. It is celebrated in a variety of ways at different covenants, for example the cats of Valnastium play a complicated scavenger hunt through the covenant's network of Hermes Portals. Bjornaer magi also have an affinity for Rauhnachte and withdraw from society on the day, but as with much of their House's tradition, what they do is not discussed.

November

Games

Each year, in the period between the beginning of winter and the spring equinox, the Roman people celebrated sixty-seven days of games, in honor of various gods. Additionally, they held games every five, ten and hundred years. Alpine magi continue their tradition, with two minor changes: there are usually only four days of games at any covenant in the season and grogs are not deliberately killed.

Annual games are local events, held on a covenant-by-covenant basis. The sports included are usually martial, so as to encourage the grogs to hone their skills for the rest of the year. Promotions within the turb, and to the lucrative if dangerous role of shield grog, sometimes follow an excellent showing. Covenants select different days for their games, spacing them as widely as possible. This encourages skilled contenders to travel a circuit within the tribunal, allowing each turb to challenge outsiders, working as a unit.

The Quinquennial (“five yearly”) Games are tribunal-wide events, and are usually held in the days following a tribunal if one is due that year. These are made particularly interesting by the participation of turbs whose chapters refuse to act as circuit-hosts. None of the other teams can be sure of the training regimen of these teams, for example the grogs of the Covenant Where Journeys End. Unlike annual games, outsiders are not officially allowed to participate in the Quinquennial, but spectators are encouraged, and it’s not uncommon for private matches to be arranged between a tribunal champion and the grog of a spectator. Events change every meeting, but tend to favor those styles of athletics and weapon

use in which the host covenant’s turb is skilled. The Quinquennials culminate at sunset of the final day in a distance race where the runners wear a helmet and carry a heavy round shield. Other than these martial accoutrements, this race is traditionally run nude.

The Romans had two other sets of games, the Decennials (each decade) and Seculars (each century). The Decennials are really just every second Quinquennial, but turbs from surrounding Tribunals are welcome. The Seculars are celebrated with a little extra pomp, but are really just every tenth Decennial. Wizard’s War is not technically illegal during games, but enormous social pressure protects the Decennials and Seculars from declarations. Those in transit to or from the Games are protected by this unofficial amnesty, while they are within the Alpine tribunal.



December

Midwinter

Most Hermetic covenants in other tribunals renew their Aegis in the depths of winter. This has never seemed a sensible policy in the Alps, because the most dangerous faeries and elementals are active in the winter, and at midwinter are at their height of influence. Not to mention that it is very cold.

Childermas (28th)

Ghosts of dead apprentices are said to haunt heir masters on Childermas, so its usual to cast “Lay to Rest the Haunting Spirit” on dead apprentices.



Chapter 3

The Covenant of the Cave of Twisting Shadows

Physical Appearance

Carved into a mountainside, this covenant is a complicated series of looping tunnels, which are duplicated in nine levels of regio. At the covenant's center is a natural cave, which exists on all regio levels, and emerges into the realm of Magic. On the mundane level of the regio there is no sign of permanent habitation.

Customs

As the center of House Criamon, the customs of the Cave of Twisting Shadows are elaborate and bizarre. Since they occasionally request the assistance of a magus from another house, their rituals are well documented, if ill understood, by the other Houses. This may be deliberate, since the frequency of requests for observers increased markedly slightly before the Schism War. Books about Enigmatic Wisdom and House Criamon Lore also proliferated at that time.

Emigration and Riddle Pilgrimage

Although the Cave is the center of Criamon cosmology, the House sends its youngest members away from it. They hope these young, vigorous, open-minded magi will be able to bring new insights back to the House, when they periodically return for new riddles. Emigration also protects magi from complex mystical experiences that they are unable to integrate into their world-view without greater life experience.

Visitors

The Criamon are hospitable to visitors, and will allow other magi to come to their covenant and learn the secrets of the Enigma, but no visitor is permitted to travel above the first level of the regio unless they have been invited to assist in a ritual. The first level of the regio is where the servants dwell, stores are kept, and the central cave is used as a mess hall.

The magus who agrees to act as the visitor's tutor sometimes requests favors in exchange, but rarely seeks commodities as usual as money or vis. The visitor must be vouched for, financially, by another covenant, so that the Criamon do not

The Cave of Twisting Shadows

Symbol: A stylized human eye, with the symbol for infinity as its pupil.

Season: Winter

Founded: Unknown. Predates the Christian era.

Members: In theory this covenant has 22 members, but in practice the Central Clutch has 15 members. They are:

- La, Primus and Praeco, filia Giselbertine, follower of Criamon
- Circum Perfico filia Johannes, follower of Criamon
- Darius filius Yannes, follower of Criamon
- Echo filia Gribbinus, follower of Criamon
- Fortuito filius Circum Perfico, follower of Criamon
- Gunther filius Frederico, follower of Criamon
- Hagen filius Flauberto the Difficult, follower of Criamon
- Latrunculus filius Aurelia, follower of Criamon
- Muscaria filia Darius, follower of Criamon
- Pellam filius Cato, follower of Criamon
- Phalene filia Innocu, follower of Criamon
- Regina filia (Dexter follower of Bonisagus et) Gribbinus, follower of Criamon
- Siobhan filia Vespasian the Avaricious, follower of Criamon
- Viscus filius Circum Perfico, follower of Criamon
- Esther filia Gribbinus, follower of Criamon is arguably also a member...no one is sure.

Site -3

Access Quality: 0

Access Distances: 60/0/20/0/20 (+2, -2)

Seclusion: -6. Note that the things which turn up here tend to be minor spirits rather than people.

Environment:

- Non-magi who live in the covenant never see the light of day or breathe fresh air, and are increasingly distorted by the covenant's aura as they age. Many die young. (-3)
- Magic items kept in the upper levels of this regio degrade, which makes it impossible to create labs with enhancements beyond +1 (-5)
- All Enigmatic Wisdom rolls in the regio gain a +2 bonus. (+5)

Buildings +3

Size: +8. The covenant could house 18 magi and 40 specialists immediately. When Criamon magi gather from throughout Europe, they live as specialists, that is, they don't have labs and private rooms. Temporary facilities are required for this influx.

Impressive Structures: Cave complex

Quality: Average

Repair: Average

Defenses -3

Site: All but unreachable from the mundane world but extremely easy to approach or assail from all "directions" from the land of magic (-8)

Elaborate Structure: Mind-traps (a series of enchanted tunnels on the highest level of the regio which act as a maze, and containment area, for airy spirits and similar abstractions.)

Extent: Inside a mountain, which most of its enemies can walk through (0)

Repair: Average (0)





Stores -2

Vis: 100 pawns (0)

Supplies: average (0)

Reputations: Full of dead, insane or dead and insane people (-3), the Order of Hermes (-6)

Relations 0

Allies: The Cave lies at the center of the spiritual life of Criamon magi. Were it to be seriously threatened with destruction, many would rally to save it, or at least rebuild it afterwards. This does not, however, lead them to assist the Cave in less desperate times. (0)

Enemies:

- Malign spiritual forces from the Places of Magic beyond mortal ken (6 x -3, intensity -1)
- Cult of Dyssynergy (may be non-existent) -3†

Contacts: Various Criamon magi, but these are contacts of the magi of the Central Clutch, through links between parens and filius (0).

Improvement

Income: nil (0)

Vis supply: 160 pawns, but it needs to be hunted down and killed much of the time. (+10)

Inhabitants: (+9) Most of the covenant's inhabitants are technically dead.

Library

The ghostly population of the covenant serves in lieu of a library, although some books are kept for trade.

Spells: Equivalent to about 2100 levels of spells, remembering that magi need to get the ghost to agree to teach them. (+2)

Hermetic Books: 450 points Magi here study from vis, or by going into the Realm of Magic.

Mundane Books: 60 points (-5) Mostly tractatus on Enigmatic Wisdom. 36/-56

Mystical Attributes

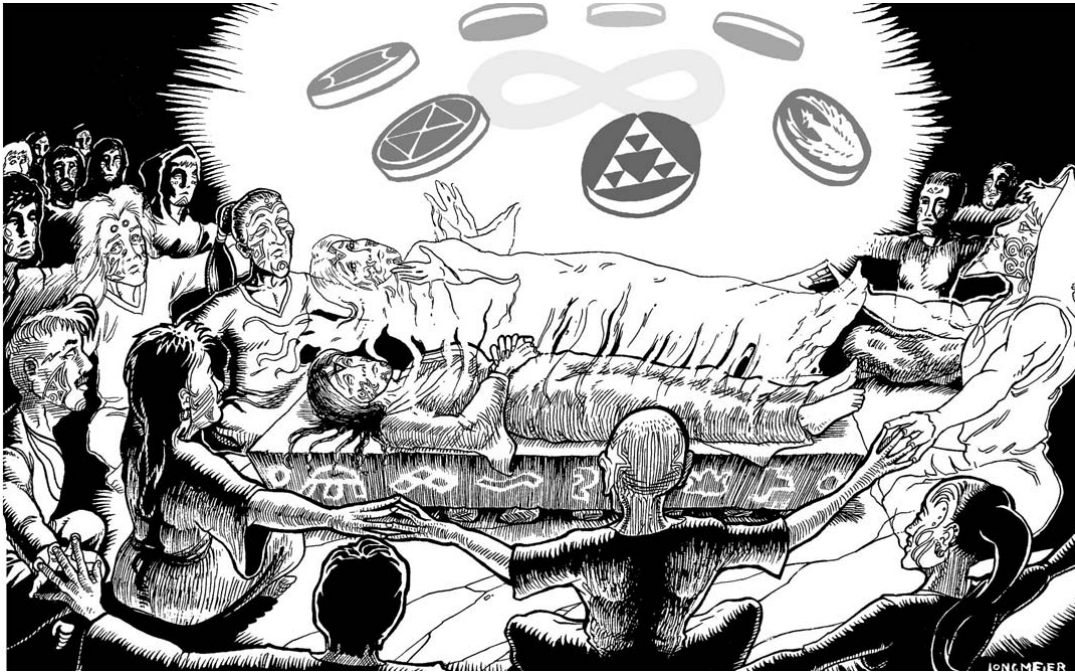
Aura: a continuous series of regiones linking the mortal and magical realms, but for practical purposes no laboratory can be used in the ninth level of the regio. (+15)

Magic Items: Magic items kept long enough in the upper levels of the regio bleed their power into the Axis. This prevents the covenant from having magic items, and from using magic items in laboratory work. (0)

Totals: +51 -63

† The Cult of Dyssynergy is the House Criamon bugbear. Its members are believed to oppose the acceleration of humanity into Twilight for reasons that change as the teller of the story changes. They are feared and loathed rather like diabolists are in other Houses. If you use the Cult of Twilight in your campaign, the Cave of Twisting Shadows is one of the cult's centers, and the Dyssnergists would like to subvert it for their own purposes.

The domus magna of Criamon, magic has been practiced in the Cave of Twisting Shadows since ancient times. Considered a unique spiritual space by members of House Criamon, many return here as their lives draw to a close. Criamon magi believe the regio that ascends through the center of this mountain is the Axis Magica, the pivot around which the world's tides of magical energy wash. It is their world navel, and their stairway to a finer state of existence. It is irreplaceable, irremovable and central to the quest for the Enigma.



breach the Alpine additions to the Peripheral Code. The tutor comes to the magus for each lesson, and brings any books required from the covenant's library, since it is in the cave on the sixth level of the regio. These tutors insist on marking the student with a tattoo each time he comprehends a pivotal concept, but will place the marks on skin usually covered by clothes if their student thinks to ask.

Visitors may be alarmed by the food provided to the covenfolk, much of which is grown on yet another level of the regio. These fungi are slightly nutty in flavor, and take the place of both meat and milled grains in the diet of this community. This reduces the covenant's dependence on outside sources of food, but they purchase greenstuff and fruit from a distant village.

Slaying the Primus

Primacy is an onerous duty. The selectee agrees to delay their ascension into Twilight, to help others comprehend the Enigma. As each primus nears Twilight, the Criamon gather, and then move in proces-

sion, through the labyrinthine halls of Twisting Shadows, to the eighth level of the regio. After a brief ceremony, which summons the ghosts of the previous primi, a magus from another House ritually murders the current primus. Why they ask an outsider to perform this function is unclear, but the Criamon consider the offer of this role a mark of deep respect.

Election

The Criamon, the ghosts of the Primi, and ritual witnesses from other Houses proceed to the ninth level of the Cave. The Criamon, past and present, then enter a communal trance. When a magus interprets their vision as marking them for Primushood, they stand and announce the conclusion of the process. All Criamon who have an Enigmatic Wisdom score of 7 or more are expected to be present for the selection ritual. They are considered useful contributors to the communal vision, and, if willing, may be selected as the Primus. Primi never wish to resign; the desire to serve beyond the limit of life is necessary for selection to this position.



On two occasions a magus skilled in Enigmatic Wisdom, initially invited as a ritual witness, has been selected as Primus of Criamon. Players whose characters are present should be aware that characters never ask for Primacy out of a desire for self-aggrandizement. If the storyguide feels that the player character is unsuited to be Primus, they may veto this interpretation of the communal vision. The Criamon believe that, on a couple of occasions, an unsuitable person has tried to become Primus. The forces of the vision, which the hoaxer has invited in by volunteering to be primus, alter the victim's destiny — forcing them toward an unpleasant task that assists House Criamon, and is sometimes fatal.

Council

This covenant isn't ruled by votes, but by consensus amongst its members. In the forming of consensus, the thoughts of the wisest magi hold the greatest weight. The covenant, in practice, is ruled through the

How Do I Join This Covenant?

Unless you are interested in dedicating your life to the study of the Enigma, you shouldn't join this covenant. If you are willing to become a sort of monk for the Enigma, and have a point of view that is both illuminating and infectious, the Council will probably seek you out. This covenant's members tend to be more Twilight prone than those of other covenants, so a steady stream of vacancies arises.

Sagas set in single-house covenants require a great deal more preparation and time than those set in multi-house covenants. Character design also needs to be additionally thorough, and differentiating the characters can demand greater skill from players than in games where the magus's house provides their basic framework. These problems are all exacerbated when playing in a domus magna. For these reasons, this covenant is not recommended for large groups of new players.

charisma of its senior members. Sometimes, magi who have come to The Cave seeking Enigmatic Wisdom are asked to participate in Council.

Magi

This covenant has 22 members. Most Criamon return here periodically, as part of their riddle quests, or to join the Central Clutch. Eight of these members live in the mundane area surrounding the Cave, members purely in a legal sense. Criamon magi given here fit the House's archetype only loosely. This is to provide variety, allowing storyguides to remove those they dislike.

Prima La

The Prima, La, is an elderly woman who moves only by magic. She has been Primus for four years. She feels the Order will soon be destroyed, but like most other primi, her prognostications of doom are tinged with hope. She sees the Order as an egg that will die when the chick within hatches. For La, the solution to the Enigma will come as inevitably as the seasons. This passivity makes her an all-but ineffectual Prima. Her political influence is limited, but she occasionally sends extremely convincing letters to other Criamon magi, asking them to perform obscure tasks for her. La specializes in Rego magic, but rarely uses it anymore, except to move. It may be necessary to sacrifice her in the near future.

When still an apprentice La, then called Lucia, became involved with a society called the Black Mark — a splinter Criamon group. The Black Mark believes the Dominion will destroy all magic on Earth unless stopped, but do not believe the Dominion comes from an omnipotent God. Following the precepts of this deluded, and possibly

Infernally inspired, sect La murdered a priest on his own altar, and has been cursed by God ever since. Long cogitation on her actions have led her to the opinion that it is too late, and that although killing priests is not, of itself, a bad strategy, it needed to be started earlier. She takes great hope in the mutability of the nature of magic and trusts that it will find a way to co-exist with the Dominion, or subsume it, one day.

Darius filius Yannes, follower of Criamon

A popular magus with grog turbs across Europe, Darius specializes in the alchemical creation of substances with mind-altering effects, especially alcohol. He attends a meeting every nine years at which magical brewers from across Europe gather to trade alchemical formulae, and has volunteered to be the next host, in 1226. He is a Muto Mentem specialist, with strong Intéllego and Herbam scores.

Darius feels his wisdom is unappreciated at the Cave of Twisting Shadows. Most other Criamon value their ability to concentrate above wisdom gained from ecstatic experience, or use other methods of achieving altered states of consciousness. Many of the covenfolk are dead. He's popular with the grogs, though.

Inebriated much of the time, he's not allowed to simultaneously incapacitate too many of the covenfolk. This is slowing his current line of research, which examines the social dynamics of drunken mobs. Since he's not allowed to annoy the Church or nobility, he sometimes finds obscure mountain villages and spikes their wells. On other occasions, he asks visiting magi for permission to test a batch of his latest poteen on their turbs.

The Quaesitores dislike Darius. They see him as ultimately responsible for a lot of the petty trouble that mars the Midsummer Fair. That's not entirely accurate, since

Verditius and Merinita magi are sometimes brewers, and most covenants produce an alcohol surplus. His latest batch made a diagonal cross — a saltire — appear on the forehead of everyone who had drunk his wares, so he could defend himself against claims of responsibility. He had to leave the Fair in a hurry anyway, because the crosses didn't disappear at dusk, giving them an initial appearance of permanence.

A minor movement of Criamon magi believes that ecstatic experience clarifies the Enigma. The majority, more ascetic in disposition, disagrees, and sees ecstasy as embracing distraction. Darius, at his most philosophical, believes that the solution to the Enigma will result in the adoption of the mundanes into the Twilight lineage. If they are the beneficiaries of the process then they must be studied. Ecstasy is the only philosophy the mundanes seem likely to accede to and co-operate with.



Echo and Esther filiae Gribbinus

A pleasant but bland maga in her sixties, Echo is a Mentem specialist with an affinity toward ghosts. She's not developing a great deal of Wisdom, because she's too preoccupied with an illicit affair. Most Criamon think sex is basically a practical joke, something that the dignified don't do to other people. Echo's an exception.

A problem with having a community of multi-centennial, quasi-solid ghosts dwelling together with humans is that eventually, some young mortal is going to be dazzled by the maturity, wisdom, looks and patience of one of the dead. If this is just a companion, the Criamon don't much care. The trivialities of people having romantic relationships are just distractions, regardless of if they are breathing or not. One prohibition that the Criamon rigidly enforce is that anyone committing suicide to dwell forever with his or her beloved is Laid To Rest



immediately. That aside, covenfolk wanting to embrace the intellectual passions of the dead are ignored.

For magi, the conventions are far tighter. Members of the House are expected to seek new sources of wisdom. Echo is in love with a Criamon three centuries dead, so she's probably heading down an intellectual cul-de-sac. If her relationship is discovered, she can expect to be sent away from the Central Clutch, because her covenmates will feel that it is for her own good. Falling in love with anyone is a bit juvenile. Falling in love for someone who will cripple your quest for the Enigma is one of the few activities that most Criamon agree indicates mental illness.

Initially an Imáginem specialist, Esther has developed an embarrassing personal problem. She might be dead, but she's not sure. During a nasty altercation with faeries a couple of years ago, Esther was turned to stone. When the statue was returned to the Cave of Twisting Shadows, her ghost floated free, and went about its unlife with a relieved vigor. The problem is that her covenmates have determined that the

faerie's curse is a reversible effect. Technically, she isn't dead.

That leaves Esther, not terribly sane before her accident, in crisis. She's not sure if she's acting through a projected image, if she's in ghostly form or if she's a spirit that simply thinks its Esther. Her covenmates aren't sure either, but are certain things will be cleared up once the rock binding is broken. Esther wants to confirm her status, but is simultaneously afraid she'll find out she's a figment of someone else's imagination. Esther herself does not follow a developed philosophy of the Enigma, but her sodales believe that her death and revivication could, were she to set her mind appropriately, clarify her path, as a form of personal investiture.

Echo and Esther were trained by the same magus, and argue regularly. Esther doesn't think the living should have intimate relationships with the dead. The past Primi find this particularly fascinating, since they know that Echo's relationship includes an illicit form of Twilight experience, and that the ghostly Esther is a Twilight effect deriving from that experience. Esther is a kind of *juno*, a sort of externalized conscience created from the spirit of a morally-conflicted being. Some of the Primi conjecture that they too form a single self-deceiving being, and they are delaying Esther's depetrification until they've observed the *juno* more closely. They can't decide if Echo's Twilight has formed it out of her own spirit, or that of her petrified *sodalis*, and don't want to cast *Intéllego Vim* spells on either while one, or arguably both, are in Twilight.

Let us discuss alcohol for a moment...In Alpine life it has many virtues.

For sore feet it is an excellent restorative. Mixed with a little tallow and massaged into reddened feet it will draw out the ill humors which cause blistering. Indeed, even without the tallow it is virtuous in this regard, although it leaves the skin dry and flaky. I've tried several varieties of alcohol, but the flakiness persists. I have sought kumis from Novgorod, which is made by fermenting the milk of the yak, and hope for better results.

Drinking cold water, as you know, unbalances the humors to a dangerous degree. Even heating the water does not make it safe, as witnessed by the unsightly *goitres* of the mundanes. Mixing it with alcohol, however, is a sovereign preventative. This is the reason that so many redcaps carry a dependable flask of alcohol. Mock if you will, but I assure you that it is the case. I have asked my *sodales* for permission to create thousands of gallons of alcohol, to mix with highland lakes. This would doubtlessly kill the malarial miasma, and bring great advantages to those who live about the lakes, but my colleagues have refused to provide me the necessary *vis*.

Fortuito filius Circum Perfico

Fortuito travels Europe, examining diviners and seers, attempting to discern the source of their information. Less interested in what they have predicted than how they

gain their insights, Fortuito offends and annoys his sodales. As an example, slightly after a calamity, a letter will arrive asking the player characters how they survived. The letter is dated before the disaster, and the redcap who brought it has had it for months, but was given strict instructions to deliver it no earlier. If questioned Fortuito tries to explain that if he warned people, it would invalidate his observations. Many magi refuse to accept his platitudes, because they feel that a note from him could have saved a cherished person or possession.

This magus is not seeking the answer to the Enigma. He is attempting to clarify what, precisely, is required for something to be the Solution, and how clues can be riddled from the noise of other uncanny experiences. Fortuito is a Seeker, insofar as he collects accounts of esoteric visions that contain supernatural beings. Other Seekers, aware of his habit of withholding useful information, sometimes track him down and browbeat him into sharing information relevant to their research.

Latrunculus filius Aurelia

A skilled surveyor, this magus believes that the Roman road network overlays a series of magical paths, similar to faerie trods. He concludes that the Great Ones are buried at the major intersections of the network, under the massive Dominion auras of the great cities of Europe. With fine enough calculation, he feels he can determine precisely where to dig to unearth a buried ancient. He believes, therefore, that wisdom is waiting in caches to be physically recovered — an unusually direct solution to the Enigma. Many of his sodales think he's taking the search for clues a little literally.

A skilled Terram magus, Latrunculus is often consulted by other Seekers. Excavatory magic isn't common in the Order, although this magus's spells are developing a following amongst Seekers of other Houses. He may soon travel to Egypt, to assist in the cataloguing of a cat-cemetery, and would welcome the assistance of younger, more violent magi.

Muscaria filia Varius

Muscaria is named after a hallucinogenic mushroom used ceremonially by the earliest local magicians. Although trained from an early age in the mind-altering fungal compounds, Muscaria finds them uninteresting. She doubts the usefulness of her insights and so has chosen to support others on the path to genius. Intensely practical, Muscaria's studies focus on way to reduce the dependence of Hermetic covenants on the mundane world. Her primary contribution to the covenant's welfare has been the development of the extensive mushroom farms that feed those inhabitants who still draw breath.

Muscaria would be surprised to learn that the reason she's been kept at the Central Clutch is that most of her predecessors believe she is likely to be the next Prima. She doesn't understand that the role of the Prima is essentially what she is already doing, but on a magnified scale. Other magi go to Twilight and presumably serve the interests of the House there. The Primi stay behind, to keep the channel open, and the Living Primus tends the roots of tree (mushroom?) of enlightenment, ensuring new magi enter at the base. The House is healthier with a prima who sacrifices her enlightenment to ensure that the basic functions — the recruitment and training of new Criamon magi — are magnified, particularly in times of mundane trouble.





Siobhan filia Vespasian the Avaricious

Hibernian initially, and with obvious filial connections to Bright Summer, Siobhan is the House's current specialist in matters Fae. Her covenmates are divided on whether her revelations — on the interconnection of spirits and fae — are fascinating or valueless. Although she is a Vim specialist, her art scores are poorer than average for a member of her House. She has spent a lot of time traveling, studying faeries and retraining under a Merinita magus, to learn the Faerie Magic virtue. Siobahn does not accept that Twilight and Deep Arcadia are different places.

Siobhan's three apprentices share her ability to suggest she knows a great deal that she'd like to tell you, but can't because you simply couldn't understand it if she did. This message isn't sent deliberately, and magi who notice the effect have a hard time picking exactly what one of these magi has said to give that impression. The Bonisagus who claimed Siobhan's latest apprentice suggests that their Gift has an odd flavor to it, so that their magical air, instead of frightening mundanes, makes their actions appear profound.

The peril of excellence

Each Criamon magus decides whether to pursue excellence in his or her field of study. Some, like La, believe they will never personally find the solution to the Enigma, so they throw themselves deeply into their field of specialization, searching for clues they can pass on. Others seek personal enlightenment. These magi find excellence in any field suspicious, because the field of study they pursue can become a distraction from the greater goal. They illustrate this with the story of a nobleman who learned how to play chess to impress his king, but spent so long considering board positions that he was distracted from the intrigue of the court, and so retired to a monastery after rivals took his lands. The Central Clutch members tend toward those who embrace excellence, which is seen as a sacrifice.

Viscus filius Circum Perfico

Viscus believes the secrets of the Enigma are found using heruspexian divination, reading the loops and blotches of the entrails of magical animals. It's difficult for him to find subjects, because he feels that spells like "Gather the Essence of the Beast" distort the organs. Since Hermetic magi are closely tied to the Enigma, and familiars are bound to Hermetic magi, he finds their intestines particularly illuminating, but few subjects are forthcoming. His name is also used to frighten Jerbiton apprentices, since he once had a bit of a look at the liver of a young fellow killed in a lab accident.

Viscus is, among the redcaps, the least popular magus in the Tribunal. Many animals have their vis naturally concentrated into an extremity, such as the horns. Magi from across Europe, having excised these useful organs, send the decaying remnants to Cave of Twisting Shadows. Although Viscus doesn't pay for these gifts, he does send gifts in return, some of them useful, many of them bizarre. His "surplus items" are usually sent back to whoever sent them originally, if that was requested, or sold off at the Midsummer Fair. Many visit the Twisting Shadows pavilion solely to see the bottled oddities his covenfolk have for sale.

Viscus is a variant of those Criamon who believe that the Universe's creative force desires that humans discover the solution to the Enigma and has locked part of the solution in the mind of each human, so that it must be coaxed out, and part in the physical world, so that it must be sought. He's looking in the sort of unpleasant places which have been neglected historically.

Briefly, others:

Circum Perfico is an elderly maga who believes that a Hermes Portal between the

Hera, Autocrat and Chatelaine

Characteristics: Int +3, Per +1, Pre +2, Com +2, Str N/A, Sta N/A, Dex +1, Qik +1

Magic Might: 65

Age: 100's of years (apparent usually mid-60's)

Size: NA, but appears to be 0

Confidence: 9

Virtues and Flaws: Wise One +1, Piercing Gaze +2, Destiny +4 (to serve the final Criamon magus) and many virtues. Her ghostly state is a Flaw.

Personality Traits: Faithful to Criamon +5, Desires Rest +2

Reputations: Always knows what you are going to say before you say it 2, with covenfolk; First servant of the House 3, with Criamon magi

Wpn/Atk	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam	Fat
Brawling (fist)*	-1	-2	-2	+0	n/a

*Requires magical glove

Soak: 0, can only be harmed by Mentem or Vim magic

Abilities: Awareness 6 (things out of place in the covenant), Bargain 9 (with Criamon magi), Chirurgy 3 (magical injuries), Cave of Twisting Shadows Lore 9 (history), Craft (many) 3 (repairs), Enigmatic Wisdom 3 (Primi succession), Etiquette 5 (covenfolk), Faerie Lore 3 (Alpine), Finesse 9 (telekinesis), Folk Ken 6 (her covenant), Forgery 6 (detection), Greater Alpine Tribunal Lore 6 (history of covenants), Guile 3 (magi), Hermetic Law 5 (applying to House Criamon), Hermes Lore 6 (history), House Criamon Lore 9 (history), Leadership 3 (times of crisis), Legend Lore 3 (dream spirits), Occult Lore 6 (detecting diabolists), Philosophae 3 (historical trivia), Scribe Latin 6 (instructions), Speak Latin 6 (with magi), Speak Romansch 6 (covenfolk)

Powers:

Mementos, ReTe(He) 10, 0 points: This ability allows Hera to handle objects to which she had a strong emotional connection in life, as if she was still alive. Hera's magical gloves make this power unnecessary, but most powerful ghosts have this power.

Unquiet Spirit, ReTe(An/Aq/Co/He) 25, 1 point: This ability allows Hera to fling objects with her thoughts. Hera's telekinesis is unusually powerful. While within the Cave she can fling an object of up to 250 pounds up to 100 paces. Lighter objects that reach the edge of this range fall vertically to the ground. Hera needs to make a targeting roll to have the objects land precisely. To hit a human-sized target with a small object has a +2 aiming modifier.

Possession (described below): Hera will never use this power, as it violates her religious precepts to take on matter.

Decrepitude: Dead due to corrosive poisoning

Equipment: Gloves. Hera wears a pair of pale gray leather gloves that allow her to handle material objects. Chatelaine. Hera carries an elaborate galena key ring on a belt. The keys are a mixture of material, magical, spectral and illusionary. They open every lock in the covenant, and much else besides.

The covenant's autocrat, Hera, was appointed by the Founder Criamon during life, and continues to serve today. She is tall and lean and her magical nature is so intense that, when she wishes to, she appears entirely solid. Her hair is dark and speckled with gray, and her eyes are extremely dark. She usually looks around sixty-five, her age at death, but can choose to appear as any age from her life.

While alive Hera served Criamon by caring for the needs of his followers, managing the petty distractions that drew them away from contemplation of the Enigma. She was so skilled that the Founder bound her to this site, to care for his children until the Enigma is solved. The ritual he used locks her at the site of her death, and grants her an extraordinary Might, but Hera is not a genius locus.

Hera's primary concern is the completion of the Enigma, but its easy to forget this and assume she's interested in providing creature comforts, since these two often coincide. Those who understand Hera's nature can bargain with her more effectively than those who treat her like a more mundane autocrat.





Jane, the Fifth Primus

Characteristics: Int +3, Per -1, Pre +3, Com +1, Str N/A, Sta N/A, Dex 0, Qik -2

Magic Might: 75 — but points used by one Primus disappear from the pools of all Primi.

Size: N/A — appears to be 0, but is never truly in solid form

Confidence: 9

Personality Traits: Devoted to the House +5, Cheerful +1

Reputations: Will mark the coming of the New Criamon 2, with certain Criamon magi

Wpn/Atk	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam	Fat
Brawling (fist)	-5	-3	n/a*	0	n/a

* does not take solid form

Soak: 0 — can only be harmed by Vim magic (Genii are not affected by “Lay to Rest the Haunting Spirit” or similar effects, since they aren’t truly ghosts.)

Body levels: Here, 0, 0, 0, 0, Gone (returns when a new Primus dies)

Abilities: Any that suit background.

Arts: Jane can cast any spontaneously cast any spell she wishes up to 25th level, and can cast any formulaic spell she knows up to 60th level.

Impersonate spellcasting, varies: Jane can cast spells as described above for Hermetic ghosts, but cannot earn Twilight points. The Primi get back lost “Permanent” points when a new Primus joins them.

Poltergeist: (ReTe15 — 1 point per magnitude of Target) Jane can move objects

of extraordinary weight. She usually acts out by appearing to touch the things she moves, but if it’s important she can move any thing in the aura. She can’t move things that have been in the aura for less than a year, but she can “cheat” by moving other items to push or lift the alien substance.

Possess: Jane has never used her possession power, and views taking on matter much the way living magi view swimming through sewage. The other Primi share this opinion.

Spells Known: All Vim and Mentem spells in the *Ars Magica* rulebook up to 60th level. Large numbers of spells up to level 25 in other forms.

Vis: The Primi contain vis, but no one is sure if they each contain some vis, or if they all contain part of a single pool.

Jane is considered a significant primus, because she is the youngest who knew Criamon in life. She looks to be about thirty, which shows how old her mind feels. She is friendly, approachable and often volunteers to tutor outsiders who come to the Cave seeking wisdom.

Some Criamon believe the primi will vanish in chronological sequence shortly before the new Criamon takes the place of the Founder. For them, Jane is the last prima who will vanish before the new Criamon takes up his role.

Cave and the North Pole would bring the axis of the Earth’s rotation into alignment with the Earth’s magical and magnetic fields. This will make the Earth more like the stars, so that the answer to the Enigma can exist (will not be sullied into illegibility) within it.

Gunther, the covenant’s chief baker, doesn’t study magic anymore, and avoids acting like a magus as much as is possible. He feels that rushing about, seeking wisdom,

is an utterly artificial process and seeks wisdom in the little moments of perfection of within mundane life.

Hagen, who creates atonal music using summoned spirits, believes that an underlying compositional structure resonates beneath the surface incidents of the world, giving them an occluded pattern of meaning. Many members of Hagen’s lineage have been driven mad by research into Plato’s Comma, a fundamental flaw in the

seven notes that correspond to the seven planets.

Pellam is a young magus who believes ball sports to be the folk-remnants of pagan rituals that might lead toward the Enigma, or the sacred places of the Seekers. He and Darius are allies, since their fields of study seem linked on a mystical level.

Phaelene sees Twilight as a biological, metamorphic process and studies animals that undergo transformations, like moths and amphibian. Her philosophy suggests that people outgrow the Enigma naturally, suggests that the political structure of the House is wrong and deduces that the sacrifices made by the Primi are pointless, so she doesn't debate philosophy with her sodales.

Regina was initially trained as a follower of Bonisagus, but her extended research into the Enigma has gradually redirected her sympathies toward the Criamon. She focuses on the creation of mystical spaces where things are possible that are not possible in the mundane world.

Covenfolk

People who are born, live the majority of their life at the covenant and die here often continue to dwell on as ghosts. Their Might scores are usually in the 15-20 point range, adjusted by aura strength. The covenant's autocrat, Hera, was appointed by Criamon during life, and continues to serve today. Her might score is 45 adjusted by aura, so she seems solid. She is equipped with a set of magical gloves, which allow her to handle material objects. Most strikingly, she retains the Piercing Gaze virtue.

The living covenfolk speak a Romansch dialect found nowhere else, although the personal servants of the magi speak Latin, as do the staff that watch the Gate. The ghosts here speak a variety of languages, some of which are extinct elsewhere. Although the ghosts refuse to teach Enigmatic Wisdom, they are willing to train students in any other skill or art. They form a reserve of information that substitutes in large part for a conventional library at this covenant.



Training with the Primi

The Primi and ghosts of House Criamon have exceptionally high Art scores. Many have ceased to study the Arts actively, seeing that phase of their existence as behind them. The Primi, and the ghosts of the covenant, serve in lieu of its library, but it must be remembered that they are stingy with their information.

The philosophy of the House, as laid down by the Founder, clearly states that young magi need to be trained sufficiently that they can understand mystical experience, but not so thoroughly that their perceptions are distorted by the beliefs of their elders. It is clear that the wisdom of the elders is imperfect, because were it not so, the new Criamon would have ushered in the new age. For the spirits of the dead to teach apprentices would have two crippling effects: the fresh eyes of the young would be clouded with dogma, and the wisdom gained through teaching would be lost to living magi of middle age.

On rare occasions, the precognitive powers of a member of the House indicate that a ghost or past Primus should train an apprentice. If the trainee is a player character, they should take the virtues Destiny and Patron and reduce their character's age by 5 years. Such characters cannot become Primus, for mystical reasons. More frequently the Primi, through the living Primus, tinker with the development of history by sending letters, tractatus, spells, vis or instructions to Criamon magi. They occasionally request the opportunity to teach a magus for a brief period of time, which does not bar the student from the role of Primus.

The fanatical search for rest that drives most ghosts prevents the less powerful spirits found elsewhere from taking the time to learn new arts, or sustaining sufficient interest to teach students over a fifteen-year period. In exceptional cases a magus trained by a ghost is possible, which is a source for the Ghostly Warder virtue.



Ghosts and the Environment

Few magi leave ghosts; since Hermetic magi cast “Lay To Rest the Haunting Spirit” on their dead, and wizards who enter Twilight take their ghosts with them. The Code of Hermes does not protect ghosts of magi, although it is illegal to read the memories of a ghost to discover information about a living magus. Although ghosts are not protected by the Code directly, those in covenants are treated as the property of their covenant or descendant, and most Hermetic ghosts have powerful descendants within their House who would react vigorously to their abuse.

Ghosts do not have souls or humors, so they cannot have the Gift and do not have passionate emotions. Replacing the Gift, wizard-ghosts have a Magic Might score of $\text{Creo} + \text{Vim} + 10$. Non-magus ghosts usually have Might scores between 15 and 20, although particularly powerful, notably determined or grievously wronged individuals may have higher values. Magical auras add to a magical ghost’s Might.

Ghosts are intangible, but can usually affect a few objects which were of value to them in life. Alternatively, some have the ghostly representations of prized objects, and use them to affect the real world. These abilities sometimes require the ghost to spend temporary Might. Ghosts may affect other ghosts as if both were alive.

Wizard-ghosts may cast spells at the cost of 1 might per five levels. These spells affect spirits normally, but affect tangible things only if the Might points are permanently lost. Objects, or people, that were not in the haunt at the time of the ghost’s death are immune to its spells and treat them as illusions. If a living magus casts a spell at a ghost, it can send a *Corpus* or *Mentem* spell back along the brief arcane connection this creates. These spells affect their target normally without the expenditure of permanent Might. Ghostly wizards who botch their

spells gain Twilight points, and most ghosts can spend Might to possess humans, but the strength of this ability varies, and is forbidden at the Cave of Twisting Shadows.

Ghosts have the same skills they did in life, and have characteristics that match those either at death or at the instigation of the emotion that keeps them active. All have a new trait: *Desires Rest*, which determines how driven they are to conclude their business of Earth. This score cannot be lower than 1.

The higher the ghost’s Might score, the less translucent they appear. Ghosts with scores of 25 or more appear solid, while ghosts with scores of 50 or more seem solid even to the closest visual inspection. Very weak ghosts appear as crudely shaped human forms, without distinguishing characteristics, or as glowing clouds. In this covenant the weakest ghosts appear as patches of darkness, hence the covenant’s name.

Building the Genius

The ritual murder of the Primi binds them to the Axis Magica. This means they are not true ghosts, they are *genii locus*, rules for which are given in *The Mysteries* (page 149). *Genii locus* are spirits of place, and cannot be permanently destroyed without first destroying the aura on the site to which they are bound. As each *Primus* is added, the axis becomes more powerful, “broader” the *Criamon* say. The Primi debate what their function is, whether one day all the Primi will merge into a single *genius loci*, whether they are already a *genius loci* deluding itself into thinking it is several *genii locus*, or whether they will one day be freed. The Primi cannot travel into Twilight: they are too solidly anchored by the Axis. Although they are able to train apprentices, the Primi usually refrain. They believe that only the living should produce new *Criamon* magi, or the techniques of the House will cease to advance.

Twilight's Gift

Twilight is unique to Hermetic magic. None of the other European traditions include this intermediate stage between success and terminal failure. Even the traditions out of which Hermetic magic arose, Mercurian magic, Druidism and shape shifting, are free of the gift of Twilight, although like the members of House Bjornaer, they have alternatives.

The one exception to this general rule is the magical tradition descended from Empedocles, who is described in *The Mysteries*. An ancient Greek mystic, he opened a path to Twilight by casting himself into a volcano. Criamon was a scion of his lineage. It is through Criamon that the ability to enter Twilight entered the Hermetic style of magic.

The Criamon can call up the ghosts of every Primus save the Founder because, they believe, the Founder has become the way through which Hermetic magi enter Twilight. When the Hermetic era of magic began, Criamon ascended into the place of Empedocles, freeing his ancestor. Had Criamon not paved the way, Hermetic magi outside the lineage of Empedocles would not have been able to enter that heightened state, to know the Enigma in this intimate way, to break the links of the chain of death and go... well, wherever those who fade into Twilight go. They don't agree on where that is. Criamon himself is unable to enter Twilight. Like the other Primi, he has sacrificed his own ascension to allow the illumination of others.

Where Have All the Armageddons Gone?

Virtually every Criamon Primus claims that the Order is doomed. Why they do this

is unclear, because they've been going on about it now since just after Criamon disappeared. It may be that they simply don't share the priorities of other magi, so that things which will happen long after their lifetime are still of intense interest. It may be that continually predicting doom holds it off, by making other magi cautious. It may be that they are simply insane and consistently wrong, or poor communicators who are continually right.

The Criamon Primi habitually give hints that the end of the Order is simply the beginning of a new, and far more significant, phase of magical practice. One suggested that the dusk he foresaw was really the dawn. One talked of the Order waxing like the Moon, but of it one day being as the Moon, so that its changes were mere show. The latest talks of the order as an egg, which will be destroyed when the chick hatches. What isn't absolutely clear is the relationship between House Criamon, its quest for the Enigma, Twilight and the transition to the new phase they constantly predict.

Perhaps the relationship is less passive than it appears. It may be that some Criamon magi feel that they can solve the Enigma — literally "puzzle" — and enter a new relationship with magic. If this is the case, they predict the Order's destruction and rebirth, because they are its assassins and midwives.

It is assumed that after this new phase is entered, the Primi will be freed, to seek the delights due those who have guided the world into its new state. Some believe that the Primi will fade away slightly before the new age begins, and so they regularly check that the eldest ghosts have not yet faded away. Followers of this philosophy sometimes claim there will be a certain number of Primi before the new age begins, but they differ as to the number. The new age will begin, they believe, when a new visionary ascends to take Criamon's place, freeing him to follow Empedocles, and adopting an even larger group into the Twilight lineage.





Chapter 4

The Covenant of the Icy North

The Covenant of the Icy North, whose name demonstrates the Italian focus of its founders, is dispersed throughout the Alps and, in a sense, exists only as a legal fiction. This covenant was one of the first attempts, in the newly created Order, to found covenants which had members from more than one house. Almost half a century after its foundation political divisions between the motherhouse

and three most prominent chapter houses became terminal. Each denounced the others claiming to be the true Covenant of the Icy North, and the true owner of the covenant's vis sources. Slightly before the Tribunal stepped in to demand the closure of the excess chapters, and the redistribution of the covenant's resources, a new agreement was reached. The Covenant continued as a loose affiliation of autonomous



The Motherhouse of the Covenant of the Icy North

Symbol: A spider web or snowflake made of three concentric hexagons, their corners joined with radiating lines which bisect each vertex, but do not extend to the middle of the smallest hexagon

Season: Autumn

Founded: A covenant of this name was formed in 771, as one of the first attempts at communal living by magi trained by different masters. The current site was previously held by another covenant, called Highest Aspiration. Highest Aspiration was destroyed in the Sundering of Tremere.

Members:

- Athena Alpina, the chief Quaesitor of the Alps
- Cato, follower of Guernicus
- Adrasteia of Tytalus, Quaesitor
- Kentigern of Ex Miscellanea, Quaesitor
- Archmage Vincent, follower of Criamon
- Katrina of Bjornaer

Note that the Covenant of the Icy North has 13 other members, but they are not members of the Motherhouse.

Site -1

Access Quality: (as per prosperous peasants) (+1)

Access Distances: 20/40/40

Seclusion: About a visitor per day (-3)

Environment: Average

Buildings +3

Size: 6 magi/20 specialists/50 grogs

Impressive Structures: Tribunal Chamber (+1), Tribunal Accommodation Buildings (+1)

Quality: Excellent for magi, Tribunal areas (+5), Good for specialists and grogs (+1)

Repair: Average

Defenses +5

Site: Moderate slopes in all directions, with a road running to the front gate (+7)

Elaborate Structures: Central building (free), Gatehouses on each wall (+2)

Extent: Crenellated wall around living areas of magi and specialists (+4); basic wall around inner wall, grog living areas and Tribunal courtyard

Repair: Basic in all areas except the central building, which is good (+2)

Stores +2

Vis: 100 pawns (0)

Supplies: Average (0)

Reputations: The site of the Midsummer Fair (+3), Order of Hermes; Good employers (+1), local peasants

Relations -3

Allies: Magvillus (+9, +1 intensity)

Enemies:

- Local count (-5, -2 intensity)
- Local faerie prince (-3, -3 intensity)
- Restless spirit within the covenant (-1, intensity -1)
- Magi from the Rhine or Transylvania trying to poach from the Bavarian Common (-2, intensity -1)
- Rivals in the covenant's business interests (3 x -1, -2 intensity)

Contacts: 0





Improvement +3

Income: 700 silver a year (+2)

Vis supply: 60 pawns per year (+6)

Inhabitants : 6 magi, 20 specialists, 50 grogs

Library

Spells: 2100 levels of spells, tending to favor investigation and violence. (+2)

Hermetic Books: 900 points (+5) strongest in Intéllego and Ignem.

Mundane Books: 240 points (-1) favoring Hermetic history and law.

Mystical Attributes

Aura: +6 (+3)

Magic Items: Hermes Portals to various chapter houses and Magvillus (+5)

Laboratories: 4 labs at +3 (+12)

Totals: +84 / -29

chapters, which meet in Council annually at the motherhouse.

Over time this covenant's structure has altered, as chapters, which are all but covenants, fall or are founded. Currently the covenant includes nine chapters, although five of these have only a single magus each. Each sends at least one representative to the Midsummer Fair, where they hold a covenant meeting. Informal and Quaesitorial tribunals usually coincide with the Midsummer Fair, and magi from across the Alps travel there to trade and socialize. Generations on, the bitterness that led to the covenant's division has faded away, aided by subtle-yet-decisive inter-chapter strife. Although the current chapters cooperate little, there is little animosity between them.

now known, collectively, as the Bavarian Common. In exchange all of the chapter houses except that belonging to the Covenant of Icy North were disbanded. The Bavarian Common provides two chairs, for a quaesitor and hoplite to maintain this system.

During the next forty years the political balance of the Covenant shifted decisively. Magi had begun to use the annual distribution of Common vis as an opportunity to trade, and this had increased the influence of the Common Chapter. After a series of setbacks, the original motherhouse was reduced to a chapter, and the bulk of the covenant's magi moved to the current Motherhouse in Bavaria. Some of the chapter houses closed by the Common Agreement have since been resettled.

The Motherhouse

During the Sundering of Tremere, the Covenant of the Highest Aspiration fell, leaving its resources unclaimed. Several covenants rushed to assert ownership, and five militarized and nervous chapter houses were created in the Bavarian Alps. An emergency tribunal was called, and a compromise was reached. The Quaesitores would oversee the harvesting of the resources of the fallen covenant, and divide them among the remaining covenants. These vis sources are

How do I join?

Many of the chapter houses in the Covenant of the Icy North are focused about a purpose; they are like dedicated covenants in other Tribunals. Sagas built around a research theme are particularly appropriate here.

On some occasions, for example when many magi have died together in an accident or misadventure, a cluster of vigorous young magi from respected lineages are selected to take charge and rebuild.

The Motherhouse of the Covenant of the Icy North is now all-but a Guernicus house covenant. Four Quaesitors live here, supported by two hoplites. Their main interest is management of the Bavarian Common, but they also perform their usual functions. Most of the Alpine covenants value their privacy, and, with the exception of Sinews of Knowledge, all of them request that the Tribunal be held here, in lieu of the Praeco's residence. The Covenant is therefore substantially larger than its usual population requires, and many rooms are moth-balled except for a brief period each summer. In emergencies, this often serves as the marshalling point for Marches.

This covenant's main building looks like a broad cone, tilted slightly to the north, with a stairway winding about its sides toward the summit. This design predates its current use. More functional structures have been raised about this odd centerpiece, including a perimeter wall and a series of watchtowers. A second curtain wall encloses the fairground, and two huge barrack-like buildings, which are only used during the summer meeting. A small town encircles the covenant. It rules itself democratically, with a show-of-hands vote by men. Many of its inhabitants are employed by the covenant, so their decisions usually favor the interests of the magi.

The empty buildings in the center of this covenant are chronically underused, and a chair is on offer for the person with the most productive project for them. A magical accident in Sicily led to the birth five years ago of a batch of two dozen Gifted children. Many suppose that at least one of the buildings will be used as a school for these children. Several claimants have put forward proposals, but the one most likely to be successful involves collegial training, an uncertain technique in its Hermetic infancy. The Quaesitores favor this approach, because the sudden graduation of two dozen children, of the same age with identical affinities, into a single house, might unbalance the Order politically.

Athena Alpina follower of Guernicus, the chief Quaesitor of the Alps

Athena is an Intéllego specialist, appointed to this post by the Primus of Guernicus 14 years ago. Interested most strongly in Hermetic contracts of trade and sale, she coordinates the annual Fair, and arranges the exchange of listed sites between covenants. She is called "Alpina" to differentiate her from the many other magae named Athena in the history of her house. Generally respected because of her position, she is disliked as an individual, because she doesn't share the biases of her neighbors.

Trained in the Roman Tribunal, Athena doesn't dislike the Tremere, and favors a greater role for them in Alpine Tribunal politics. At the last Tribunal, she was forced to send away one of her hoplites, because she was a Tremere maga. Further even-handed-



Mircalla, the Ghost of the Motherhouse

A Hermetic magus stole Mircalla's daughter. The mother followed them to the Tribunal meeting that was being held at the Motherhouse, but was unable to reclaim her child. Her kidnapper, whose name is not known, ordered his grogs to kill Mircalla and bury her, and, dutiful servants, they did. When she rose from the dead she crossed the Aegis of the Motherhouse, and has shrugged off attempts to lay her to rest.

Mircalla is very unusual: she seems to be immune to Hermetic magic. The more pious Hermetic magi feel that this shows she has a touch of the divine about her. Others suggest she is a genius loci (spirit of a place). She is kind to apprentices whose masters are cruel to them, and often distracts them from their studies. She also ruins experiments that she thinks look dangerous. A simple preventative, embraced by all of the current magi at the Motherhouse, is to not have apprentices. It's not unusual for a magus who wants to raise an apprentice to move to a chapter house, just to avoid Mircalla.



ness ('blatant favoritism') toward the Tremere may see Athena ostracized.

Athena is 112 years old but looks like she is in her late sixties. She is of Slavic ancestry with dark wavy hair and greenish-brown eyes. She prefers to wear the stola, including the veil, when traveling. The veil is removed when she wants to speak in public. She is taller than average, and built solidly.

Cato, follower of Guernicus

Cato doesn't do much "finger wagging". His technique is to disguise himself as a mundane, usually a crumpled and drunken

old man, and hang around strategic sites until his mark gives him the clues he needs. His strategy is two-pronged. Few magi expect to be spied upon by a technique as simple as putting your ear in the right place at the right time. Many of those who do suspect he is trailing them wrongly assume that he is a magical incompetent, and are unready for his subtle illusions. He does an amazing impersonation of a busy serving maid. Cato is the second-most senior Quaesitor in the Tribunal, sent here, in part, to ensure that if Athena is ostracized, Adrasteia does not become chief quaesitor for a Tribunal.

Adrasteia of Tytalus, Quaesitor

Chosen for her capacity for stealth and defensive violence, Adrasteia roves the borders of the Tribunal seeking wrongdoers to smite with the iron fist of justice. She spends most of her recreational time tracking raiders who cross the Tribunal borders to plunder the vis sites recognized as Alpine in the Peripheral Code. Since she's only allowed to batter wrongdoers caught in the act, she lays elaborate traps and constructs detailed ruses that tempt the greedy to err. She always takes at least two hoplites with her, so her ambushes are violent and effective.

Although her techniques wouldn't be accepted elsewhere, she's yet to receive a formal rebuke. The powerful covenants in the Alps wish there were more hoplites wandering about smiting uppity Rhinelanders. The Primus of Guernicus is aware that Adrasteia may become a problem, but is hesitant to withdraw her to Magvillus for retraining. He sees her as a stabilizing influence: she dissuades Alpine magi from taking up vigilantism or counter-raiding into the Rhineland, as Adrasteia sees counter-raiders as equally legitimate targets.



Kentigern of Ex Miscellanea, Quaesitor

A member of a beast-mage tradition from Hibernia, Kentigern's magical affinity is for dogs. He controls a pack of faerie

hounds that prowl about the Midsummer Fair, growling at people that they think smell suspicious. A skilled tracker, he hunts magical animals through the blizzard, and air elementals through the sky. When a quarry is too powerful for him, he invites magi from the nearest covenant to assist.



Kentigern of Ex Miscellanea, Quaesitor

Characteristics: Int +3, Per 0, Pre 0, Com 0, Str +1, Sta +1, Dex 0, Qik -1

Age: 99 (apparent late fifties)

Size: 0

Confidence: 6

Virtues and Flaws: Visual Eidetic Memory +3, Affinity with Animál +3, Animal Ken +1, Clear Thinker +1, Quaesitor (gained recently). Susceptible to Divine Power -4, Minor Magical Deficiencies (Au, Aq, Te, Ig,) -4

Personality Traits: Brave +3, Enjoys hunting +2

Reputations: No reputation has stuck, yet.

Weapon/Atk	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam	Fat
Brawling (fist)	+1	+1	+0	+1	+2
Sword	+4	+3	+5	+5	+3
Crossbow	-5	+4	n/a	+10	+3

Soak: +3

Fatigue levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Body levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Incapacitated

Abilities: Athletics 3 (hiking), Awareness 3 (people), Bargain 3 (magi), Brawling 1 (with animals), Certámen 3 (Mentem), Civil and Canon Law 5 (contracts), Concentration 5 (divination), Crossbow 1 (quarry), Etiquette 2 (magi), Faerie Lore 1 (dwarfs), Finesse 2 (hunting spells), Folk Ken 4 (Bavarians), Greater Alpine Tribunal Lore 4 (traditional exchanges), Guile 1 (detecting lies), Hermetic Law 3 (Alpine Peripheral Code), Hunt 2 (track), Intrigue 1 (detecting), Leadership 1 (hunting parties), Legend Lore 3 (quarry), Magic Affinity 8 (Animál), Magic Theory 4 (using

magic for criminal purposes), Occult Lore 1 (demons you can hunt and kill), Order of Hermes Lore 4 (Alpine agreements), Parma Magica 7 (Perdo), Penetration 2 (Animál), Philosophiae 1 (natural), Scribe Latin 5 (letters), Single Weapon 2 (Sword), Speak Latin 5 (magi), Speak Irish 4 (peasants), Speak German 4 (merchants)

Arts:

Cr 19 In 15 Mu 15 Pe 12 Re 20

An 30 Aq 0 Au 18 Co 9 He 9

Ig 0 Im 6 Me 3 Te 6 Vi 10

Twilight Points: 9 (Accidents +5, Potion use +3, Vim score 5 +1)

Equipment: Kentigern has purchased a longevity charm (-14). In addition to items described separately below, Kentigern has a light crossbow, a longsword and a suit of padded leather clothes that provide warmth when riding through the sky. His riding suit acts as full body, quilted armor (prot 2) and is enchanted to be weightless.

Encumbrance: 0

Spells Known:

SOOTHE THE PAINS OF THE BEAST (CrAn 20/+58)

Soothe the Pains of the Beast (CrAn40/+58) Heals six body levels

Call the Basilisk (CrAn(Re) 50/+58)

The Foes of the Ibis (CrAn(AuRe) 40/+58)

Daughter of Zephyrs (CrAn(AuRe) 45/+46)

Vision of the Marauding Beast InAn 15/+53)

To Know the Owner as Might His Hound (InAn 25/+53)



Opening the Tome of the Animal's Mind (InAn 25/ +53)
 Circle of Beast Warding (ReAn 25/+58)
 Mastering the Unruly Beast (ReAn 25/+58)
 Commanding the Harnessed Beast (ReAn 30/+58)
 Ward Against the Beasts of Legend (ReAn 30/+58)
 True Sight of the Air (InAu 15/+34)
 CHIRURGEON'S HEALING TOUCH (CrCo20/+29)
 The Inexorable Search (InCo 20/+25)
 Converse with Plant and Tree (InHe 25/+25)
 Eyes of the Past, (InIm 20/+22)
 Veil of Invisibility (PeIm 10/+19)
 Perception of the Conflicting Motives (InIm 25/+22)
 Liar's Chime (InMe 25/+22)
 Peering Into The Mortal Mind (InMe 30/+19)
 The Thief of Memory (PeMe 25/+16)
 Aura of Rightful Authority (ReMe 20/+24)
 SCALES OF MAGICAL WEIGHT (InVi 5/+26)
 Sense the Nature of Vis (InVi 5/+26)
 Sense of Lingering Magic (InVi 30/+26)

Kentigern's Items

Familiar: Tobias, a faerie hound (see *Faeries* Revised Edition for statistics). Kentigern has gained immunity to wind chill and the ability to fly by running from the bond connection, as well as bonuses to his art scores, which have already been factored into the numbers given above. Tobias has gained the ability to command other animals, which has made him the leader of his pack. He can also cast "Soothe the Pains of the Beast" (laying on his tongue, since he has no hands) and carries Animál vis on his collar in case it is necessary). He's also gained the Clear Thinker and Visual Eidetic Memory virtues.

Talisman: Kentigern doesn't have a talisman yet, but is seriously considering a crossbow that reloads itself magically.

Quaesitorial blindfold: These blindfolds contain effects that assist the detection of deception, and aid clear and insightful reasoning. Kentigern has borrowed his from the covenant, just until his own detection spells are up to scratch.

Kentigern's Spells

Call the Basilisk (CrAn(Re) 50)

R: Touch; D: Sun/Perm; T: Ind.

Spell Focus: A toad +1 or being in the parts of the Alps where basilisks are unnaturally common +1

This spell creates a basilisk (see the *Medieval Bestiary* Revised Edition, page 95). These dangerous beasts are relatively common in the Alps, especially near Basel and Vienna. Kentigern developed this spell so he could study them safely. Given that they only hatch from an egg laid in a dung heap he thinks that perhaps a magus is making them, and wants to be prepared to deal with the situation. The prescription for making basilisks is simpler in the Alps than elsewhere: in other parts of Europe they say that the egg needs to be laid by a rooster and sat on by a toad while a certain star is in the sky.

(Design: Creates a small magical animal 35, Might 50 = minimum level)

Daughter of Zephyrs (CrAn(Re) 45)

R: Touch; D: Sun/Perm; T: Ind.

Spell Focus: Silver horseshoes +3

This spell creates a magical horse that can gallop through the air as well as others do on land. Kentigern has used vis to make one of these permanently available.

(Design: Creates a large magical animal)

The Foes of the Ibis (CrAn(Re) 40)

R: Touch; D: Sun/Perm; T: Group

Spell Focus: A dead ibis +5

This spell creates a small flock of iaculii (see the *Medieval Bestiary* Revised Edition, page 102) — winged snakes. This is one of Kentigern's favorite combat spells, and he often enhances his snakes, for example by making them invisible. The spell's name comes from the story, reported by Herodotus, that each year the "syrenii" (which Hermetic magi call iaculii) attempt to migrate into Egypt and are killed by flocks of ibises.

The ibis is linked to the cult of Thoth, and through him Hermes, so iaculii are considered ill-omened by magi of the Order. Many believe they have odd powers that allow them to ignore Hermetic protection magic. Although this isn't actually true, Kentigern avoids disillusioning people. On the two occasions he's killed other magi he has made very sure to speak highly of his pets. Kentigern is considering creating a permanent flock of iaculii, because invisible, flying snakes make excellent hosts for "To Know the Owner as Might His Hound" (described below).

(Design: Creates a small magical animal 35, +5 extend target to group)

Liar's Chime (InMe(Im) 25)

R: Eye/Sight; D: Sun; T: Ind.

A modification of Frosty Breath of the Spoken Lie (145), this spell switches requisites to Imáginem, so that a bell sounds when the target lies. In the Alpine climate, all

breath looks frosty and in a hostile atmosphere a more decisive signal is necessary.

To Know the Owner as Might His Hound (InAn 25)

R: Touch; D: Sun; T: Ind.

Allows Kentigern to sense what an animal senses. He uses this spell to gather information, either by casting it on domestic animals, or by enchanting one of his flying serpents with it.

(Design: Read an animal's surface thoughts 20, extended duration +5)

The Thief of Memory (PeMe 25)

R: Eye/Sight D: Sun/Instant T: Individual

Spell Focus: Burning a forget-me-not (+3)

This spell removes all memory of a single individual, location or event from a person's mind. The target will often be aware that they cannot remember the individual or event. For example, if made to forget being robbed, they will still know that their money is missing, and will be aware that they do not recall where it has gone. This spell was originally created to suppress the manifesting Gifts of untrained children, or to remove their memories of home. The Quaesitores use it to tidy up after Hermetic criminals.

(Design: remove a major or long-term memory 25)



Kentigern was a monastic novice before his apprenticeship began, and he has retained an interest in the Church, especially canon law. He spends much of his time ensuring the ethical appropriateness of contracts between mundane groups and shell-organizations set up by covenants to avoid directly dealing with mundanes. He's also the quaesitor most likely to witness standard oaths. Kentigern only came to this Tribunal three years ago, after his retraining in Magvillus. He is something of an unknown

quantity, since he's both a highly respectable Quaesitor and a pitiful hedge magician.

Archmage Vincent, follower of Criamon

Vincent believes the solution to the Enigma is best found through the violent



application of magic to the human body. He believes the process of casting spells on his enemies purifies them; the magic in his spells is good for them, and teaches them the wisdom of not breaking the Code. He's not likely to be called back to the central Clutch in the foreseeable future.

Vincent's spells affect magic directly. His most deadly is a high-level optimization of "The Gift of the Enigma", which he uses only on those really 'disturbed' individuals who require a comprehensive, immediate infusion of wisdom. He is one of the finest practitioners of certámen in the Tribunal, and has had some success fighting demons.

Militaristic beliefs are counter-intuitive to those familiar with the quasi-monastic members of House Criamon, but Vincent's beliefs have an explanation. The Greek root meaning "to fit" *araviskein* is the parent of the Latin *veri*, "to think". From *veri* come reading, reason, riddling. From *aravirken* also comes the Latin *arma*, "arms". The Enigma is literally a puzzle and Vincent is looking into an unusual method of making everything in the world fit together. The pieces fit when he shoves them.

Katrina of Bjornaer

One of the Order's youngest hoplites, Katrina's heartbeast is a 'glutton' (wolverine). All but tireless, inhumanly strong and immune to cold, Katrina is a relentless predator who serves the Quaesitores. She and Adrasteia are closely allied, and often travel together.

Katrina is preparing to challenge for Archmagehood. Although she's unlikely to be successful initially, if she can fight a rival in an alpine environment, she can probably wear him down using her wolverine form to resist fatigue. She's currently exploring magical sites, trying to find creatures whose vis she can parley for magic items that are useful in either of her forms.

The Rorschach Chapter and the Magi of Mercere

Rorschach is a village and center of trade on Lake Constance. Near Rorschach is a palace belonging to the abbots of Saint Gallen.

This tiny chapter house, slightly outside the town after which it is named, is the home of two wizards of Mercere. Mary, the senior maga, spends most of her time creating lesser enchanted devices, which are usually dispatched to redcaps in other tribunals. Her abilities lie toward illusion, and most of her devices assist disguise, grant invisibility or hasten travel. Mary's junior colleague, Rogitien, is an alchemist, and brews the longevity potions for this tribunal's redcaps, and, through arrangement with House Guernicus, its long-serving hoplites. He also frequently travels between the covenants of the Alps, since he prefers active to laboratory duties. He has the Gentle Gift and a large mundane family, many of whom are non-magical redcaps.

The trade passing through Rorschach provides cover for the House's operations in this tribunal. The chapter is linked by Hermes Portal to the motherhouse in Bavaria, and through it to several of the other chapter houses. The Rorschach Chapter have a standing offer that they will provide one-fifth of the vis required to create Hermes Portals, provided they are permitted to use them in carrying out their duties. These links are lucrative for the Mercere, and convenient for Alpine magi, since they allow luxury goods, like salt, inks and vellum, to be transported inexpensively from Rorschach to the motherhouse, from where they can be distributed.

Pietrine Lineage, Virtue package +3

Players designing characters for the Pietrine lineage are required to heavily specialize in Auram magic — their usual starting scores are Auram 12, Creo 11, Rego 3. They must select Incantation of Lightning as one of their original spells —even though casting it always costs fatigue. They must also take a version of Wings of the Soaring Wind that has been adapted for longer duration (ReAu25, duration Sun) — again, casting this spell costs fatigue. They are expected to grow into their spells.

Jovians, as members of this group call themselves, also have the Mastered Spells virtue, and must spend 7 of those points on Incantation of Lightning. Close Family Ties (Pietrine lineage) is also required. These are included in the cost for the package.

A few other virtues and flaws are not included in the basic package, but should be considered. Most Pietrine Flambeau have an affinity with some form of air magic. Those in the Alps might consider Pietro as a Mentor. If the storyguide wishes, the player may also take the Enemies flaw, to represent animosity from Pietro's foes. The Driving Goal flaw is common, a remnant of Pietro's upbringing as a magus of Tytalus.

This group has the following beginning abilities: Concentration 1, Hermes Lore 2, Magic Theory 4, Parma Magica 2, Scribe Latin 2, Speak Latin 5, Speak Own Language 4. They have 10 + Age spare experience points, and many spend at least one in Intrigue.



Juno's Spire and Archmage Pietro

This chapter house is the personal demesne of Archmagus Pietro, the most senior hoplite in the tribunal. Pietro is a spry, small man, elderly and fascinated by structured conflict. Pietro was originally trained as a Tytalus magus, but he won membership of House Flambeau by defeating its champions using powerful lightning effects. He did this because it was difficult, and because some Tytalus magi see it as their duty to convert the other Houses to the philosophy of struggle by creating new lineages within them. Pietro's descendants are considered interlopers by some Flambeau, but he trusts they will prove resilient should a pogrom be attempted after his death.

Pietro's familiar is a leopard. He went hunting for a leopard to skin for his hoplite's sash, but his quarry circled him and attacked him from behind. Realizing that the leopard

was sneakier than he was, Pietro courted it as his familiar. Now that it is bound Pietro's leopard, called Cinnamon, likes to catch birds by ambushing them from behind cloudbanks.

Beloved Enemy (flaw, usually -2)

Some magi thrive on conflict, but find that it's difficult to nurture an enemy over the decades. Many don't understand the way a good enemy can force you to grow, and so they do foolish things, like trying to kill their enemies. Some very few magi are lucky; they find the one enemy who's right for them.

Beloved enemy is a flaw that mixes the Enemy flaw (variable) and the True Friend virtue (+1). It cost varies, depending on the power of the enemy. Since true enemies are usually equivalent in power, this is a -2 Flaw for a magus. The value can rise or fall, depending on the power, resources and free time available to the enemy.

Beloved enemies nurture each other through conflict, but never try to destroy their opponents. They also subtly aid the other if third parties disturb their duel, although they are willing to use third parties as collaborators and pawns. Much as true friends can sometimes feel when the other needs aid, beloved enemies are drawn together by fate, so that they continue to clash. Sometimes each can sense that the other is nearby.



Pietro is rumored to be the Antares, the supreme war leader appointed by the Council of Archmagi. This role, if it exists at all, is purely ceremonial, the stories say, unless the Order faces a grave crisis that requires decisive, united military action. Those who believe in the Antares say that the role takes its name from its badge of office. They claim that great generals in the order's history, like Pralix, who was sent against Dav'nalleous, and Entisimon, who marshaled the Flambeau during the Schism War, wore an enormous ruby that gave them extra-ordinary powers.

A Hermetic Portal links the motherhouse to the Spire. The ancient defenses placed here during the time of intra-covenant strife remain. The portal, which can be barred with a thick, metal plate, rests within a room that has been enchanted so that, on command, it incinerates all human flesh within it. The existence of this avenue of rapid communication is widely known in the Tribunal and adds fuel to the rumor that Pietro is the Antares.

The Tower of Ashes and Archmaga Jacinta

The Tower of Ashes is the home of Archmaga Jacinta filia Nicoli, of the line of Apromor, follower of Flambeau. As the most senior of her line, Jacinta is the most competent Perdo magus in the Order. Her key interest in recent years has been the development of "subopti-



mal” methods that broaden the effectiveness of the Perdo technique.

Some magi, rather than using the most efficient Arts to create an effect, try to use the Arts in which they are most skilled, resulting in a suboptimal spell. In Jacinta’s case, this means she tries to mimic the effects of other techniques, using the Perdo technique. She optimizes these new spells (as per *Wizard’s Grimoire Revised Edition*, page 83) to minimize the difference in levels between the efficient and Perdo-based effects.

Jacinta’s work is primarily theoretical, but two of her spells are popular with the rest of her line. One ages blood into a hard, thick scab, and can be used to bind wounds. The other destroys ill humors and disease spirits, which can halt the progress of illness, allowing a person to begin recovering naturally. Jacinta has several spells that “create by destroying”. The flashiest of these is “Carve the Mystic Tower”, which etches away surplus rock from the target, leaving a building and a tremendous quantity of dust. It’s most useful for excavating new levels of basement, because the flaws in natural stone make carved towers fragile.

Jacinta’s presence concerns many Alpine magi, who sincerely hope she will die before the few Flambeau magi who are older or more dangerous than she do. The possibility that she might be declared Prima of Flambeau, making Icy North that house’s temporary domus magna, produces a sort of resigned disgust, or vague trepidation, amongst her neighbors. Others hope that her theoretical approach will see her passed over, in favor of a younger, more vibrant, and thankfully more distant fire magus — preferably in the Levant somewhere, or one of those fellows in Ireland.

Jacinta and Pietro have been allies, rivals, enemies, and rumor has it, lovers, over the decades since their gauntlets. No one is ever quite sure how these two stand in regard to each other, because their relationship has layers of depth whose interactions are difficult to chart. Research would confirm that they were born in the same village in Portugal, that their masters were

covenant-mates briefly, that they declared Wizard’s War simultaneously on each other twenty-eight years ago, and that they have never engaged in witnessed certámen.

Each has hinted they would kill the other’s murderer, was someone else to successfully prosecute a War. Whether this is because they are allies, or because they’ve reserved the pleasure of killing their rival for themselves, is unclear, probably deliberately so. Some magi of House Bonisagus want to investigate their village of origin, to determine if a secret is hidden there, but have deferred the project until after both are confirmed dead.

Jacinta is the leader of the Rowan Sisterhood, an informal group founded during the purge of the Shadow Flambeau. Currently all but inactive as an organization, individual members of the Sisterhood continue a watch for diabolic or vampiric corruption. They maintain a small, distributed collection of specialized spells and items. Since membership of the Sisterhood passes to the oldest filius or filia of a member on her death, some of the sisters are male. This is kept private, since it makes the group appear smaller and less effective than it is.



Joining This Covenant

Entry into one of the little chapters of the Covenant of the Icy North is the easiest way for a group of young magi to be accepted into the Greater Alps Tribunal. Certain of these chapters are staffed at well below one magus for every ten pawns of income. Were a new source to be found, or the member of a single-magus Chapter to die, a group of apprentices, together with an older overseer, might be asked to fill the vacant chairs.

Apprentices in this situation may already be aware of one another. Their masters will have taken them to the annual Fair, and some degree of internal tourism occurs in the covenants linked to the Mother House by Hermes Portals. Such an opportunity can also present a rationale for flaws such as “Stingy Master”. An apprentice’s Gauntlet might be rushed to allow them to join this Alpine covenant — avoiding the usual requirement of emigrating to Novgorod or Hibernia for thirty years.



Chapter 5

The Covenant Where Journeys End

The tallest summit in Europe, Mont Joux, is the highest in a ridge of three peaks. It was named Mons Iovis by the Romans, in honor of Jupiter Pennius (Peonn), the Celtic deity of Alpine storms. In the Eleventh Century, the blessed Bernard of Menthon, founder of the Alpine hospices, chained the “demon” worshipped as Jupiter on the second-highest peak, or forced it to throw itself to its death from a cliff. This peak is now widely known as Mont Maudit, the “Accursed Mountain”. No one has ever climbed to the summit of

either peak, and the local priests suggest its is unlucky to try.

Early in the history of the Order, the maga Lucia, a filia of Merinita, came to Montjoux searching for the Temple of Jupiter. She was disappointed, since it had been repeatedly ransacked during the barbarian invasions of the Empire. A skilled combat maga, she decided to take out her frustration on the local faeries, gathering sufficient vis to make her travel worthwhile.

During her campaign she discovered a vast regio linked to Bright Winter, and

Crystals of Montjoux

The crystals of Montjoux demonstrate its otherworldiness. Rock quartzes are caused by extreme cold, but fluorites are created from a liquid that solidifies with extreme heat. That the two stones are found imbedded in each other is a contradiction of the natural order.

Smoky quartz crystals are used in magic that obfuscates. Black quartz is useful for divination. Both smoky and black quartz have unsavory theurgical uses.

Fluorite is found in clusters of cubes, and varies widely in color, although those found at the Covenant Where Journeys End tend to be pink. The mystical uses of fluorite vary by color, with the most valuable being rainbow-hued. The extremely rare, octagonal fluorites make better materials for enchantment. Seneca and Pliny both remark that Romans drank wine from hollowed fluorites, and say that Romans spent stupidly extravagant amounts of money on these goblets.

Form and Effect Additions

All Quartz: +1 Resist cold

Smoky quartz: +6 Obfuscation

Black quartz: +6 Darkness, +3 the divination of secrets

All Fluorites: +3 Inspire the desire to collect things, +1 Resist heat

Cubic Fluorite: +1 to illusions primarily of the color of the stone.

Octagonal Fluorite: +3 to illusions primarily of the color of the stone, +3 detect or resist faerie glamour

Rainbow fluorite: double bonuses above.

Quartz and fluorite naturally formed together: +9 transformation between elements

The Covenant Where Journeys End

Symbol: A ring formed of sharp, upward circumflexes, the front ones overlapping the back to give the impression of depth.

Season: Autumn

Founded: 817

Members:

Yselt filia Rosalia, follower of Merinita
Carlo filius Innocu, follower of Merinita
Charlotte filii Lupina, follower of Merinita
Giselle filia Bertrand, follower of Merinita
Capra filia Bullfinch, follower of Bjornaer
Miklos filius Kosma, follower of Jerbiton
Eginhard filius Caspar, follower of Bjornaer
Kamillia filia Bamber, follower of Bjornaer

Site

Access Quality: +1

Access Distances (60/-/-/40) (+2/-4)
most covenant members survive on flavored ice.

Seclusion: very (+4)

Environment: Ice distortion, described below (-10)

7/-14

Buildings

Size: +3

Impressive Structures: nil (-1)

Quality: Average. Many of the areas in the covenant are carved from virgin ice.

Repair: Average

Defenses

Site: Accessible only through a pool on a mountain (+15)

Elaborate Structures: nil (-1)

Extent -6: The township has no useful defensive structures, and some of the areas inhabited by magi are made of ice.

Repair: Average (0)

Stores

Vis: 200 pawns (+2)

Supplies: 350 pounds of silver (+1)

Reputations: Sufficiently little is known about the Covenant that it has no strong reputations.

Relations

Allies: (7, intensity 1: The Frost Giants of Dachstein)

Enemies: Valnastium (-9, -1 intensity)

Contacts: No special.

Improvement

Income: Covers costs 0

The covenant exports its agricultural surplus. Its unusual exports include crystals of smoky and black quartz, and fluorite. The covenant also has a small galena mine.

Vis supply: +15, favors Perdo, Auram, Herbam.

Inhabitants +3 magi, +1 specialists, +3 grogs

Library

Spells: 4500 levels — generally unpleasant faerie magic (+10)

Hermetic Books: 1350 points, favoring Perdo (+10)

Mundane Books: 300 points, favoring faerie lore (0)

Mystical Attributes

Aura: Faerie 8 (+1, as if Magic 4)





Magic Items: The covenant is believed to be defended by statues made of ice or diamond, but these are a spell effect. The covenant has a set of trinkets that allow normal people to live here comfortably (+3), and a few magical spears, described below (+3).

On the peak of the mountain is an entrance to Arcadia that consistently permits lengthy travel in minutes of mortal time, and lacks an effective guardian. (see *Faeries Revised Edition* p. 87-88.) (+5).

Laboratories: Average (highly specialized to overcome the aura's rejection of fire magic.)

ruled by the White Lady, a faerie queen skilled in illusion. The early Merinita magi thought little of faeries, so Lucia killed the queen, and claimed the kingdom as her own, systematically exterminating the queen's servants for the vis their bodies contained. Although she had no initial intention of founding a covenant, she spared a few souled half-breeds, since some of the regio's vis sources required attendants. A decade later, her apprentice, made magus, came to the mountain and founded a covenant. Since then it has grown into a thriving, if distinctly odd, community.

The death of Peonn, who the magi here think was a powerful faerie, closed the regio's links to outside world. The covenant's people were trapped here for about five years, although their histories indicate that local time traveled more swiftly. When they found a way to relink their regio to the mortal world, the covenant expanded rapidly, as it claimed vis sources in the area previously protected by Peonn.

Physical Appearance

The covenant is not visible from the mundane world. A gateway exists, but is hidden by illusions and an icy lake. The regio — which has an aura of 6 — replicates the topography of the mundane world. Long, low houses of blue-white stone line terraces that work down toward vineyards that border the

snowline. Further down the slopes are orchards, then cropped fields. To those with magical sight, virtually everything appears to be warped by the covenant's aura, the occasional human an exception. The covenant has no obvious central structure, because the magi's laboratories are burrowed deep into the core of the mountain.

Customs and Covenfolk

The arrival of uninvited mundanes, with the exception of known redcaps, will meet a delayed, but extremely hostile, response. The covenant is unused to being assaulted, except by faeries powerful enough to ignore the Aegis of the Hearth, and its grog turb, which is maintained solely for these crises, is trained to neutralize unexpected visitors as rapidly as possible. Since the small turb is trained to fight faeries they have few of the morale penalties associated with first-time magic exposure. All are excellent javelineers, and prefer to attack from distant cover. Some are equipped with magical spears, the most common of which flash-heat an area, then snap-freeze it. Used on deep snow, these encase victims, melting the ice on which they stand just long enough for them to submerge, before setting it again.

This covenant's crops supply its limited need for food. The covenant purchases exotic items at the Midsummer Fair or through

the Rorschach chapter of the Covenant of the Icy North, trading crystals, vis-depleted wine, crafted goods and vis for inks, parchment, metal and pressed flowers. Many of its inhabitants survive on flavored ice.

The covenant's most vital import is mundanes. Although the covenfolk warped by the aura here can interbreed, their offspring are at best faeries, and are often expressions of forces of nature, ripples of magical energy or embodiments of abstract principles. For the covenant's population to remain stable, a steady flow of spouses needs to be recruited. The covenant's community has about 200 members, and many want to marry other covenfolk regardless of sterility, so 5 or 6 mundanes, carefully selected for age, interest, gender, attractiveness, and temperament, need to be kidnapped or otherwise acquired each year.

A second effect makes living in this covenant inconvenient for outsiders, including prospective spouses. The regio is bitterly cold, varying from below freezing at the top

of the mountain to sharply cool at its outer extremities. The humans, crops and even pack beasts of this covenant have adapted to these conditions, and have a natural body temperature far below normal. The magi have created charms which protect from heat or cold, often built into wedding rings, but don't issue them to outsiders. When on expedition, these magi take along grogs that were recruited as spouses, since they find mundane temperatures comfortable.

Gifted children sometimes appear in the covenant's population, but the magi prefer to train outsiders as apprentices. Their laboratories and sancta are burrowed deep into the mountain, since they are usually kept at mundane temperature. A pair of laboratories are set aside for ice-distorted magicians, and they are sufficiently specialized that the usual penalty for not being able to use fire freely, -5, is countered. Ignem effects cannot be researched in these two laboratories, and are strongly discouraged in other parts of the covenant.





Magi

This covenant has eight magi. Four of these are members of House Merinita, three are from House Bjornaer and one is a Jerbiton magus. Only magi of the Houses of Merinita and Bjornaer have voting rights, and Yselt, the senior Merinita, has the right to veto any policy. Members of House Merinita recruited to this covenant usually have exceptionally strong faerie natures, and some are halflings — people with one faerie and one mortal parent. Redcaps sometimes stay here for extended periods, because the people of the Covenant prefer romantic partners from the outside world, tend not to have embraced chastity and have effective contraceptives.

Yselt filia Rosalia

An ice-distorted, faerie-blooded maga, Yselt rarely leaves the Covenant. Leader of both the Council and its community, she is a sort of stern aunt to her followers. Yselt's sigil is the icicle. Her distortion is so intense that some of her sodales worry she might be transformed into a faerie by her Final Twilight, assuming the role of the absent Queen. Since this might enhance the distortion of the covenfolk, twisting them into the shapes of the Queen's slain servants, Yselt might eventually need to be exiled.

A Note on Names

The name Mont Blanc won't be associated with this mountain on a map for over five hundred years, presuming Mythic Europe proceeds toward our present.

The covenant's name refers to the practice of kidnapping travelers, then holding them until they no longer wish to leave. This practice has been rare for the last century, curtailed, it is said by Jerbiton magi, and by the prayers of the monks of the hospices of Saint Bernard for lost travelers. It is usually abbreviated as 'Journeys End', in which 'End' is a verb with 'Journeys' as its subject, so there should be no apostrophe.

Carlo filius Innocu

Carlo was born of parents both distorted by the Aura of Ice, and like many others so bred, he has the features of the barbegazi, the gnomes that served the Queen before Hermetic magi seized the regio. Other magi have difficulty determining where his faerie powers begin and his Hermetic magic ends. Many believe that he makes hand gestures when using faerie powers as a private jest.

Carlo's sigil is icicles forming in his beard, a feature that gives this class of gnome its name. Like other barbegazi, Carlo has huge feet, with which he can tunnel through snow, or upon which he can slide rapidly across ice. He can survive being buried in snow, can travel by tunneling through it, and can summon blizzards to bury himself and his enemies. Other magi are unsure whether these powers are Hermetic or faerie in origin. Barbegazi are described in more detail on page 105.

Charlotte filia Lapina

The daughter of a farmer and a goose maiden, Charlotte lacks the bundle of feathers that would allow her to take animal shape. During her apprenticeship, the few feathers she sprouted each year were trimmed by her master, and consumed during experiments. Charlotte hopes that those were pinfeathers, and has a remarkable store of Muto vis, because in the decade since her graduation, she hasn't used the vis from a single feather. Although she doesn't know it, her bundle is almost complete.

Charlotte has a Latent Mystical Ability — skinchanging — that will be triggered by her first donning her cloak of goose feathers. Like many migratory birds, her type of goose spends part of the year in Faerie. This is the equivalent of the Secret Hiding Place Virtue. In goose form she also has Faerie Sight. This potential ability, to voyage in the distant parts of Arcadia, is what led to her acceptance into this covenant.

Charlotte is timid, and prefers to be in groups with strong leaders. By preventing her from skinchanging, her master retarded her emotional development. Although she has matured physically, she stuck in the unpleasant stage of adolescence where her body feels alien and she does not understand the extent of her abilities. She is more confident when acting alone, although she doesn't assess risks in a mature way.

Giselle filia Bertrand

Giselle was taken as an apprentice in error. Her father wasn't a faerie, he was a water elemental possessing and sustaining the body of a drowned sailor. Although Giselle has Faerie Magic, her style is far less whimsical than typical for her House. Her personality is practical, decisive and acquisitive. She often represents the covenant to other magi. Unlike Miklos, described below, who is charming, Giselle is mysterious, slightly frightening, and skilled in Certámen. Her sigil coats each spell's target with moisture, which can be deadly in the Alps. Her unusual halfling status provided Giselle her entry to this covenant's membership.

Capra filia Bullfinch

Capra is a middle-aged Bjornaer maga with an ibex (Alpine goat) heartbeast. She was abducted by the faeries just after her sixteenth birthday. With the assistance of the faeries, she developed her heartbeast, and served as a faerie wet nurse after her son, who is now the covenant's turb captain, was weaned. Capra was recruited to the Covenant Where Journeys End because she has experience as a faerie midwife, and births among distorted covenfolk are sometimes difficult. She sometimes travels to distant corners of the Order, assisting in births where mother or child has physiology too unusual for Corpus spells to be of assistance.

Capra's abduction, toward the middle of her apprenticeship, seriously compromised her magical development. She was able to succeed in her Gauntlet only because she is a member of House Bjorner, which does not require that its members be proficient spellcasters. Capra's abilities remain poor for her age — she is unable to take apprentices and has very limited ability outside her area of specialization.

Capra does not mind her paucity of magical ability because she believes that even as a goat suckled Zeus, so it is her destiny to find the new Jupiter Pennius and raise him. Other Bjornaer magi are aware of Capra's beliefs and feel that, as a deviant from the House's mysterious practices, she is likely insane. They have asked the other Bjornaer magi in the covenant to ensure she comes to no harm. When not discussing her role as the new Amalthea, Capra is pleasant, insightful and earthy.

According to legend, no matter how great a height an ibex falls from, so long as it lands on its horns it will not be hurt. Capra's never tested this for herself, although some of her impolite sodales have suggested this is the reason for her religious convictions.

Miklos filius Kosma, follower of Jerbiton

A young Jerbiton, Miklos is welcome here because he fell for a companion the Journeys End magi took with them to the fair. After seeing her annually for three years, he requested permission to join the Covenant and, after a bit of consensual mind reading, was allowed to immigrate. He has four children by Lyndsay, the covenant's chief equerry, and although none are Gifted, each have faerie blood from both parents and are likely to develop unusual abilities. Faerie magi know True Love when they see it, and know not to get in its way.

The Covenant's magi often send Miklos when they need an emissary to the outside





Miklos

Characteristics: Int +2, Per 0, Pre +2, Com +1, Str 0, Sta 0, Dex +1, Qik +1.

Age: 40 (apparent late twenties)

Size: 0

Confidence: 4

Virtues and Flaws: Light Touch +2, Sidhe Blood +2, Affinity (Cloth) +1, Free Expression +1, Gentle Gift +1, Social Contacts +1, Well-traveled +1. Gained after gauntlet: True Love (Lyndsay of the Covenant Where Journeys End), Weak Parma (Naked) -3, Non-combatant -2* (defined as inability to harm others through combat magic), Dependant (children) -1, Cyclic magic (summer) -1, Deep Sleeper -1, Obsession (hopeless romantic) -1.

Personality Traits: Brave +3, Easily distracted in conversation +2

Reputations: A lovesick puppy 2, with the old and cynical; a dashing romantic 1, with the young and romantic

Wpn/Atk	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam	Fat
Brawling (fist)*	-2	-2	-2	0	-3

*Non-combatant

Soak: 0

Fatigue levels: OK, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Body levels: OK, -1, -3, -5, Incapacitated

Abilities: Artes Liberales 2 (music), Bargain 6 (nobility), Certámen 3 (Creo), Charm 4 (noblemen), Concentration 5 (spellcasting), Craft 5 (tailoring — for magi), Disputatio 2, (with older magi), Etiquette 4 (nobles), Faerie Lore 2 (sirens), Finesse 4 (cloth), Folk Ken 3 (Covenant), Greater Alpine Tribunal Lore 3 (fashion), Guile 1 (no, that dress doesn't make you look fat!), Hermetic Law 1 (contracts), House Jerbiton Lore 1 (who wears what and why), Lectio 3 (pretending to listen intently), Legend Lore 1 (Spanish), Magic Affinity 5 (Cloth), Magic Theory 5 (Herbam), Order of Hermes Lore 2 (House Jerbiton), Parma Magica 3 (Animál), Philosophiae 1 (metaphysics), Play 5

(mandolin), Ride 1 (horse), Scribe Latin 5 (Arts), Speak Latin 5 (magi), Speak Iberian 4 (grogs), Speak Langue d'Oc 5 (merchants)

Arts:

Cr 10	In 10	Mu 0	Pe 0	Re 0
An 20	Aq 0	Au 0	Co 9	He 12
Ig 0	Im 11	Me 5	Te 0	Vi 6

Twilight Points: 2 (Vis score 5+: 1, Potion use +1)

Equipment: Anything a dashing young troubadour (safely married) might have, Miklos has.

Miklos has a pet spider that can make itself look like a puppy. He's planning to make it his familiar eventually, sometime before it dies of old age. Miklos's mandolin creates an effect similar to Aura of Rightful Authority and allows him to communicate with living things, but its effects can only be expressed through the lyrics to songs. He won it in Arcadia, and has heard that there is a similar flute, hidden out there somewhere. The mandolin and flute differ, since one commands living things, and the other commands the elements.

Encumbrance: 0

Spells Known:

The Finch Flourish (CrAn(Im) 10/+21)

Blizzard of Down (CrAn 20/+30)

The Scold's Bridle (CrAn 20/+30)

COCOON OF THE MULBERRY WORM (CrAn 30/+35)

Panic of the Elephant's Mouse (ReAn 15/+20)

The Gentle Beast (ReAn 20/+20)

Chirurgion's Healing Touch (CrCo 20/+19)

THE COUTURIER'S ART (CrHe(An, Im) 10/+26)

The Ninth Stitch (CrHe(An, Im) 10/+26)
Aura of Ennobled Presence (MuIm 10/+11)

Disguise of the Transformed Image (MuIm15/+11)

Thoughts Within Babble (ImMe25/+15)

Posing the Silent Question (InMe20/+15)

Miklos's Spells

Blizzard of Down (CrAn 20)

R: Near D: Dia T: Group

Spell Focus: A pillow or cushion filled with down +1

This spell creates a huge wad of feathery down, which pours as a flittery stream over the target group. This effectively causes blindness for the spell's duration. When the spell ends the target group is buried in a pile of feathery down. It takes them 5– Str rounds to extricate themselves, or they can wait two minutes for the spell to expire.

(Design: Equivalent to the corpse of a very large animal in weight 15, –5 for only part of an animal, Increased range +10, Increased target +5, reduced duration –5.)

Cocoon of the Mulberry Worm (CrAn 30)

R: Sight D: Sun T: Individual. Aimed –1

Spell Focus: A handkerchief made of silk

This spell wraps the target in multiple layers of silk. In Miklos's version of this spell the silk is thin enough about the head that it does not cause suffocation. If the character can use a sharp edge, for example a drawn blade, to cut themselves free, they can remove the cocoon after 10 – Str rounds. Alternatively they may make a Str check of 12+ to break free, but are only allowed one attempt. Silk is the strongest woven fabric, and has a breaking strain above that of the soft metals.

(Design: Creates woven silk (+5) sufficient to wrap a creature of size 1 +5, Increased range +20)

The Couturier's Art (CrAn(He, Im) 10)

R: Touch D: Sun/Instant T: Individual.

Spell Focus: Dressmaker's pins +1

This spell creates an entire set of clothes, complete with accessories. Since it cannot create metal, it mocks up metal pieces using animal bones covered with reflective colors.

(Design: Creates leather/wool +10, uses requisites to add colors and use plant based fibers.)

The Ninth Stitch (CrAn(He, Im) 10)

R: Touch D: Sun/Instant T: Individual.

Spell Focus: A silver needle +1

This spell magically repairs an item of clothing. It can't replace metal pieces, but can simulate them using metallic dyes.

(Design: Creates leather/wool +10, uses requisites to add colors and use plant-based fibers.)

The Scold's Bridle (CrAn 20)

R: Near D: Sun T: Individual. Aimed –5

Spell Focus: A horse's bit +3

A scold's bridle is a complicated gag used in some parts of Europe to prevent nagging women from talking. It wraps about the head, tying or buckling securely behind the neck. A small, sharp bit of metal, or large wad of leather, are forced into the victim's mouth, to prevent her from raising her tongue. This spell creates a scold's bridle around the head of the victim, which forces magi to cast silently. The handler's end of the bridle's lead — a length of leather that extends from the bridle — appears in the caster's hand if they are within Reach range.

(Design: Creates a small amount of leather 10, Increased range +10)



world. Miklos is faerie-blooded, linked to night and summer, and has the charm and poise of his

kin. He has the Free Expression virtue, and is a skilled musician, talents enhanced by his mag-



ical mandolin. These make him entertaining in the mundane realm, and useful in Arcadia. He's quite popular with his female cousins in House Jerbiton, and acts as an unofficial channel of communication between Yself and Andru, trying to smooth over their little disputes. His contact in these matters is Sourdine.

Like many Jerbiton magi, Miklos is an artist. He is fascinated by magical clothing and gladly swaps lab notes with other magi interested in enchanted tailoring.

Eginhard and Kamilla

A bonded pair of magi of House Bjornaer, both of these magi take the shape of lammergeirs, bearded vultures. Eginhard is of middle age; Kamilla slightly younger. They share a large laboratory and have a single sanctum. Cohabitation is an unusual practice for magi, even Jerbitons who marry, but pair-

bonded members of House Bjornaer sometimes find comfort in being in each other's presence, and so there are a few double labs in various covenants, which are partitioned after the original inhabitants pass away.

Eginhard and Kamilla share many psychological similarities, because they are a longstanding couple, and they share the vulture mindset as a frame of reference. That being noted, it is clear that Kamilla, although the younger, is the dominant partner in the couple. This is probably because vultures of Virtue reproduce parthenogenically: they have no males at all. Since the perfect vulture is female, Eginhard has more difficulty that Kamilla in developing his True Form. The vulture mindset, which Kamilla exemplifies, is based on intimidation of smaller creatures, tremendous patience and an extreme prudence with regard to combat that is easily mistaken for cowardice.

Eginhard is the less enlightened partner, so he is more likely to spend time in human form, and has better social skills than Kamilla. He has a talent for finding ways to stir trouble between people, but he usually just mentions these stratagems to others whom might be tempted to carry them out, rather than risking them himself. Although he's not a skilled negotiator, he has exceptional skill at dissecting situations and determining precisely what he desires, and how deeply. He substitutes this talent for the ability to negotiate well. Eginhard's habit of ineffectual scheming can be deceptive. He is simply glacially patient, and interested only in scenarios with a very high likelihood of success. When circumstances dictate action, he is efficient and ruthless.

This covenant always has at least one member from House Bjornaer. An indiscrete member once mentioned that this was because some of the earliest members of this covenant were followers of the original, nature-orientated style of Merinita magic, much of which has been lost by the modern, faerie-orientated style of Merinita magi. The nature magi, who retreated to House Bjornaer after being forced from House Merinita, brought with them techniques that are required to open some of the oldest wards in the covenant.

How Do I Join?

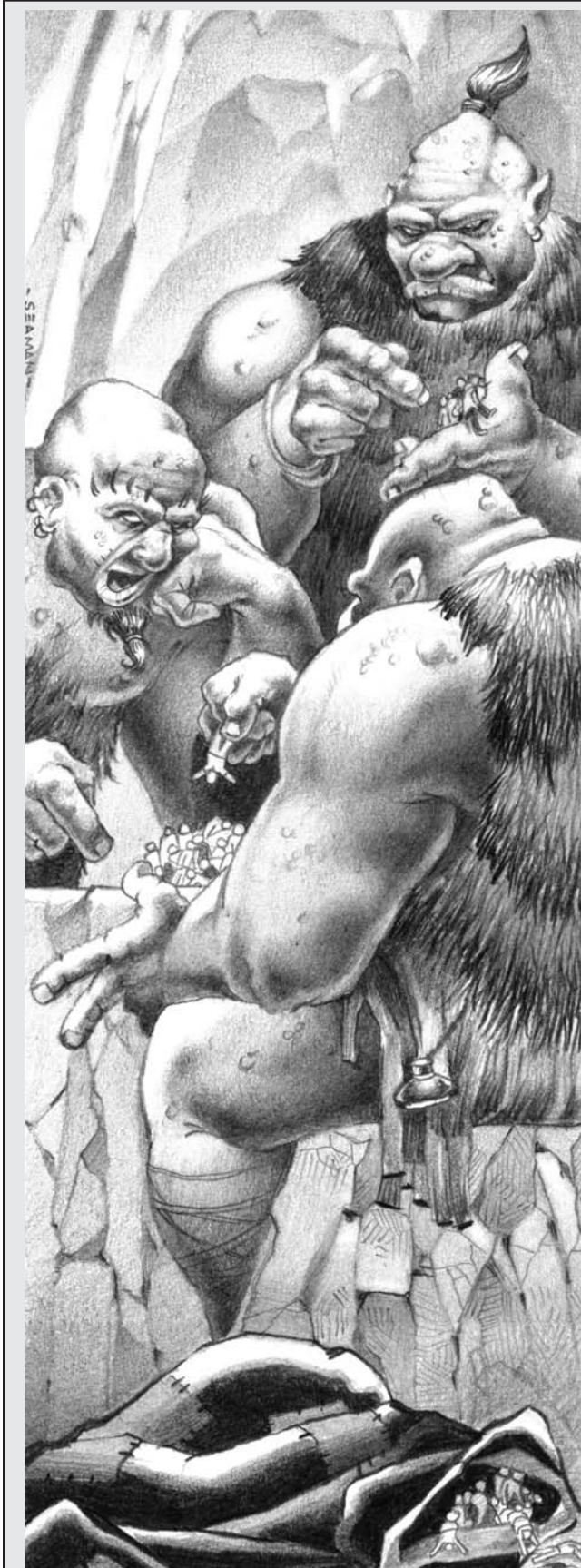
Since the covenant is, in essence, a two-house covenant, a variety of strategies need to be gathered together to draw in a new group of player characters. In addition to those found in the Hermetic culture chapter consider the following ideas.

Be Cursed — Be Local

Apprentices are rarely selected from the people raised at this covenant because they have such difficulty leaving when they reach maturity. That being said, when they are trained, they are allowed membership far more easily than non-distorted magi. Life as the weakest magus at the covenant involves a lot of time wasted leading expeditions, but that's perfectly suited for play. The compensating advantage is that ice-distorted magi tend to rise to the leadership of this covenant, so long as they don't turn into gnomes.

Offer Up Your First-born

As described under the entries for Miklos and Lyndsay, this covenant needs to import people who are willing to have chil-



dren. This includes magi, since some members of the Covenant heavily support the idea that the Gift is hereditary. Magi planning to be parents are usually young.

Do Something These Magi Can't

Journeys End accepts magi from many houses, provided they have particularly useful skills. The include, but aren't limited to, novel styles of Free Expression, unusual sorts of Faerie Blood, powerful faerie allies (Patron, Heir, Close Family Ties), faerie doctoring, and skills teaching children and midwifery. If one of the current mages has a specialty that you'd like your character to have, negotiate the non-player character's removal with your troupe.

Volunteer to Set up a Chapter on the Righi

As described in the Righi section of the geography chapter, the magi of this covenant are keen to see giants return to the Righi. Younger magi attempting to find colonizers would first need to study the giants of Dachstein, to familiarize themselves with Giant social customs, then travel to Arcadia to find new settlers. While attempting these difficult feats, they would be members of a temporary chapter of the Covenant Where Journeys End, founded near the Righi. Were they to be successful the player characters membership would be invested into the covenant as permanent members.





Chapter 6

The Covenant of the Sinews of Knowledge

Bonisagus's longevity potions were first improved upon by Sabrina filia Maura, who became the third Primus of House Bonisagus. Over time her formulae have been enhanced, and the project continues, although the rate of development has slowed to virtually nil, and the latest breakthrough was a formula that slowed apparent aging (as described in the *Wizard's Grimoire* Revised Edition, pages 67-68). Although the longevity project grinds slowly toward its next major breakthrough, its progress is hampered by the constant demand that the key researcher produce longevity potions for an unending list of Hermetic notables.

The main vis source of this covenant is of intense interest to the Seeker tradition. When the magi who held this site joined the Order of Hermes, they revealed that they were a hereditary priesthood, charged with

guarding a "dead god". The eight-foot skeleton, shackled by magical iron to a slab in the bowels of their covenant, oozed blood, and slowly grew scraps of flesh. The priests informed their new, and slightly disgusted, sodales, that their essential duty was to peel these new strips of flesh away, lest the god rise from the dead and seek vengeance on the priesthood. Further, they demonstrated that eating the strips of flesh slowed the aging process. Revolted and intrigued, Guernicus established to his satisfaction that the skeleton wasn't diabolic, or a faerie, but some sort of human-shaped magical creature, and therefore outside the protection of the Code.

Parties unknown exterminated the last members of the original priesthood, even though they were converted to a more regular form of Hermetic practice, during the Sundering. Although physical evidence demonstrated that an attempt to break the skeleton's bonds had been made, it was unsuccessful. House Guernicus sealed the site for years as it conducted a fruitless investigation, which delayed consideration of the skeleton's ownership until the Grand Tribunal of 865, when the site was awarded to Sancia filia Sabrina, then an archmage specialized in Perdo Corpus, who formally founded the Longevity Project.

The other major interest of this covenant stems from a hobby of one of the Verditius consultants engaged here during the Eleventh Century. A keen student of Aquam magic, he founded a little lineage of Verditius magi fascinated by hydraulics.

Longevity Specialists

Some storyguides may be uncomfortable with the idea that magi would allow someone else to make their longevity potions. This option has been included because it allows magi to develop without having to diverge into the study of Corpus during their early thirties. If each magus makes his own longevity potion, a magus who is a longevity specialist will live so long, compared to his sodales, that he will have time to exceed their skill in their area of expertise. All of the Praecones, if forced to make their own potions, are also likely to be longevity specialists, which favors certain Houses.

Sinews of Knowledge

Symbol: An extended, vertical oval, like an Egyptian cartouche, divided vertically by wavy lines representing a waterfall. At the base a ruby is set.

Season: Autumn

Founded: Pre-existed the Order, unknown

Members:

- Archmage Philomena filia Rafe, follower of Bonisagus
- Archmage Paxon filius Valentin follower of Verditius
- Hubert filius Lorenz follower of Bonisagus
- Balbina filius Seneca follower of Verditius
- Sabastien filius Luise, follower of Tytalus
- Cara filia Sigurd, follower of Bjornaer
- and a long-term visitor, Ragoneda filia Elisa, follower of Tytalus

Site: +1

Behind a waterfall on a minor tributary of the Danube

Access Quality: +1

Access Distances (20/40/20/20)

Seclusion: (poor, merchants come in groups to resupply at the village below)

Environment: 0

Buildings

Size: 0

Impressive Structures: The Cave complex, the overshot wheel

Quality: Excellent for the archmages, good for the other magi

Repair: Excellent in Paxon's lab, average elsewhere

Defenses -3

Site: In caves behind a waterfall -8

Elaborate (Defensive) Structure: Nil (-1)

Extent: Average defenses in all area (0)

Repair: Average

Stores

Vis: 200 pawns of vis, mostly Corpus

Supplies: -1 trading debts

Reputations: Famous (3) throughout the Order as the place where the finest maker of longevity potions usually lives.

Relations

Allies: Passive Allies +8. This score represents those elderly magi who require that the service offered by Sinews of Knowledge continues, and who would therefore give the covenant aid in desperate times.

Enemies: Local count -3, intensity -1

Contacts: Passive allies +4 The same informal client grouping that might aid the covenant in times of severe distress acts as an informal and unreliable information network

27 -24

Improvement

Income: 0. The covenant has no surplus income, which rankles the magi here no end. They were ordered to cease their previous ventures by the tribunal, because they were drawing attention to themselves by making goods from vis.

Vis supply: 80 pawns per year, 50 of which are Corpus +10

Inhabitants: Average.

Library +6

Spells: 3900 levels (+8) Strong bias toward Corpus rituals





Hermetic Books: (+15) 1800 levels of books, mostly high quality tractatus on Corpus, but include the original lab texts and research notes of the successive longevity researchers.

Mundane Books: (-1) 240 levels, surprisingly few

Mystical Attributes +6

Aura: 7, at the level where most of the magi have their labs, lower levels have

higher auras, but magic within them becomes dangerously unstable. (+10)

Magic Items: 275 levels, mostly enhancing lifestyle by creating heat or light, purifying air and drawing water. (+5)

Laboratories: (+7) The two archmages have excellent labs, although they have eccentric specializations. Sabastien and Cara have minimalist labs. The other two labs are good but not excellent.

80/-25

After gaining access to the Greek texts in Valnastium, this group have developed steam and water-powered machines far in advance of those found elsewhere in Europe. The covenant gets much of its motive power from an overshot wheel that turns invisibly within the waterfall that curtains the covenant entrance.

Physical Appearance

The covenant lies in a mostly-artificial cave system behind a minor waterfall in the Bavarian Alps. Certain skilled vivisectionists claim that the covenant's floor plan is disturbingly similar to the network of blood vessels that splay about the human liver, but the current occupants claim this design predates Hermetic habitation. A recurring stellar motif is found on the ceiling of the covenant complex's tunnels. The constellation might be Ursa Major, but if it is, then some of the stars are misplaced. Again, the Hermetic inhabitants have no idea what the meaning or function of this pattern originally was, although they have enchanted it to provide illumination.

Customs

This covenant trades along the river for its essentials, and is far enough to the north to trade for its luxury goods with Rhineland covenants. Until recently it produced wealth magically and has been reined in by the Alpine adoption of a law prohibiting flagrant spending. It doesn't have a Hermes Portal, and its magi have recently traveled widely, surveying potential sites. Some are said to have gone as far as Africa and the far edge of Persia, where the Code is not enforced in any practical sense. Several minor covenants in outlying Tribunals have sent representatives to Sinews of Knowledge, suggesting a formal alliance. This would make the minor covenant an avenue of Hermetic trade, linked, indirectly, to the Midsummer Fair.

For reasons not entirely clear to outsiders, during this covenant's Aegis renewal feast a statue of a dwarf is placed in a barrel and tumbled over the falls. The statue mysteriously vanishes from the barrel, reappearing somewhere along the banks of the river, up to 21 miles away. The covenfolk search for the statue over the next year: the magi are allowed to locate it magically only if eleven months pass without its recovery. In the past Sinews of Knowledge have rewarded other covenants whose magi have returned their dwarf.

Magi

Archmage Philomena filia Kate follower of Bonisagus

Philomena is the current chief researcher for the Longevity Project. Her progress has been slow, because her predecessors have all but exhausted the current line of research into longevity. Were she to be successful, allowing the development of more effective potions, Hermetic magi of moderate skill with Corpus could maintain themselves until consumed by Twilight. Her own contribution, based on her research into Faerie physiology, is the effect described in the Apparent Aging rules given in the *Wizard's Grimoire Revised Edition*. Although it is only cosmetic, it does prevent paracentennial magi looking so shriveled that they frighten mundanes.

Magi are asked to forward specimens taken from human-shaped faeries to Philomena through the redcap network. She freely distributes a spell that prevents the decay of human-like bodies, which also prevents them smelling. Redcaps prefer to carry bodies that have been disguised by illusions, since they don't want to be imprisoned as grave robbers, a detail which sends need to take care of. Corpses with the vis extracted are useless for Philomena's purposes, but, if prior arrangements have been made, she's willing to reimburse her sodales for their expense and trouble in procuring "rare and difficult" specimens.

Certain members of House Merinita hate Philomena with a passion, claiming she has dissected their relatives. That being noted, she's sufficiently aged that many suspect she can multicast a spell which removes the internal organs of the victim and arranges them on a nearby flat surface, which has kept open hostility toward her at

a minimum. In truth she's not terribly competent as a combat magus.

Philomena is a Progressive. Progressives are highly skilled Bonisagus magi who don't venerate the Founder in quite the same way as other magi. Deeply versed as they are in Bonisagus's personal documents, they see him as more human, eccentric and fallible than their sodales do. Although they see what they do as continuing his work, they don't believe, in terms of power, that they are inferior to his generation of magi. It may be that exercising the Inventive Genius virtue, which invokes originality, sets Progressives apart from those who feel that the Order is but a pale reflection of the mythologized Founders.

Philomena has a Dark Secret: she is an Amaranth halfling. Her father is one of the mysterious faeries who grow the forbidden Virtuous Amaranth plant. Philomena is immune to amaranth, because her body produces it. Philomena ceased aging at 21, but began gaining Twilight points at that time much like those who have taken a longevity potion. When she enters Final Twilight, she believes she will fade into Arcadia to join her father.

Although Philomena has not come into her full powers, she does have a weak hold over Amaranth addicts. When addicted characters make an Intelligence roll to resist her Social skills, they must subtract their addiction score. This power does not affect those who have taken her cosmetic potions, which are based on a substance that mimics, but is not made from, Virtuous Amaranth.

Hubert filius Lorenz follower of Bonisagus

Hubert is also a Bonisagus, and is also researching longevity effects, but his technique is more dramatic. The Order has long been aware of hedge magicians who use magical means to prolong their lives. Hubert's research attempts to formalize these





techniques, so that Hermetic rituals and devices can replicate them.

At the moment his most promising line of investigation is based on inverting one of the usual familiar bond qualities, so that instead of the familiar dying of old age when the magus does, the magus would die of old age when the familiar does. Although this would be worthless with, for example, a cat familiar, some Animals of Virtue, like Snakes and Eagles, have mystical methods of rejuvenation. Alternatively, magi could bond immortal familiars, like faeries or elementals. This wouldn't prevent magi entering Twilight, but it would ensure they reached Twilight without, in game terms, the need for aging rolls and periodically rebrewing a longevity potion.

The downside of this method would be that were the little faerie or elemental to be killed by a rival the magus would die immediately. The familiar would need to be protected, much like the folkloric magi who remove their hearts to become invulnerable, but need to hide them carefully afterward. Since the familiar plays much the same mental role as a

spouse, hiding them in some distant place would cause Hermetic magi anguish.

Archmage Paxon filius Valentin follower of Verditius

The senior Verditius of this tribunal, Paxon is the finest brewer of longevity potions currently active in the Order of Hermes. He brews a maximum of one potion for others every two years and, although his combat skills are poor, he has sufficient leverage to dissuade even archmages from threatening him. If the characters want his assistance, they need to make him an offer superior to that which an Archmage or Primus could make. This can't be a threat because, in the past, his equivalents have offered their next available appointment to whoever brings the heads of their enemies to them.



Paxon's status in his own House is low. He can make the best longevity potions, but he breaks no new ground. He's never won, and rarely enters, the magic item competition held at Verdi, and so is on the second tier of prestige within the followers of Verditius. He has the compensation, however, of being the wealthiest, and one of the most influential.

When Paxon dies, the next supreme potion brewer is likely to move to Sinews of Knowledge. It has a large and steady supply of *Corpus vis*, its library is unmatched on this subject, and the laboratory Paxon uses, built up over generations, is all but inimitable. It's specialized for brewing longevity potions, with a bonus of +10.

Balbina filia Havelock follower of Verditius

Balbina's name means "stammerer" which accurately describes her affliction, a curse that prevents her speaking correctly while casting spells. Trained in House Verditius, she is more traditional than most, because even with casting tools she has difficulty formulating spells, and finds her stammer embarrassing. Balbina is in charge of maintaining the odd devices her housemates have constructed here over the years, most significantly the overwheel that the covenant folk use to provide power for grinding, pumping water, circulating air and winching.

Beware — Optional Rules Ahead

Balbina's area of greatest skill is repairing enchanted items, a branch of Verditius Magic practiced by only a few each generation. It is kept obscure by its difficulty and costliness, since each repair is a different ritual, and needs to be designed from scratch. One of House Verditius's most skilled *Creo Vim* magi, Balbina's services are sufficiently expensive that most covenants replace their

items, rather than repairing them. In part, her price is high because she gets a steady flow of commissions from magi digging up odd things in the Levant and other remote areas.

A lot of Levantine items are not actually damaged, just insufficiently understood. Balbina's experience often allows her to discern an object's function and triggering actions. If requested, she damages the item strategically, to disable its defensive magic, while retaining its useful properties. Magi who have discovered items created by her ancestor, Himinis the Mad, sometimes consult her. His devices contained useful powers, but also included dangerous effects that he considered humorous. She will work with other similarly cursed items, provided they are not of infernal origin.

Sabastien filius Luise follower of Tytalus

Sabastien makes his living as a "professional intruder". The Order always has at least one magus who, in exchange for a stiff fee, is willing to walk into the sanctum of a dead sodalis and assure his covenantmates that their predecessor hasn't left a potentially-explosive experiment in progress. For a little extra, and if you could afford his initial fee the extra shouldn't worry you, Sabastien will disarm any wards he finds inside, making the suite suitable for its new occupant. If he finds signs of diabolic corruption inside, he keeps the fee and charges an added amount for specialist assistance.

In between big jobs, when the Council of Archmages hire him to crack a corpse out of its lab for proper burial or the *Quaesitores* ask him to secure a crime scene, Sabastien occasionally works as a consultant, breaking into the labs of the living to demonstrate how clients could make them more secure. Rush jobs, when someone's declared Wizard's War and the victim wants a quick lesson in home security, are extra, but he can be haggled down. After all, if someone gets





killed, he's probably going to be hired to disarm the departed's lab.

Sabastien has one of the highest Parma Magica scores in the Order. He has either the Charmed Life or Destiny virtue, possibly both. He specializes in Rego Vim spells, but his "trade secrets" aren't shared with others. He encourages rumors that he has a unique Parma ritual, that he's found a way around the Aegis of the Hearth, and that he has an ancient artifact of the Mercurial priesthood, because it spreads his name and brings in extra commissions.

Cara filia Sigurd, follower of Bjornaer

Cara dwells in Sinews of Knowledge because the complex includes a vast under-

ground lake that none of the other magi have found a use for, beside storage and garbage disposal. After tidying it up, Cara moved in, and spends much of her time exploring vast cave systems that riddle the Alps. Her heartbeast is unknown to the rest of the Order, except perhaps to magi about certain Celtic lakes. She's a sort of serpent-whale, what the Irish call a piest, which she attributes to being born near the Temple of Nodens in Stonehenge tribunal. It has rough drawings of them on its walls.

Cara uses magic to control the conditions in the cavern-pools deep under the covenant. In these she grows valuable "crops". At the Midsummer Fair her covenant sells winkles by the pound and oysters by the bucket. She also breeds lobsters so big that a man's two hands cannot make a ring about their carapaces. Her current project involves finding a way to produce pearls in mussels. These are tiny, irregular, seed pearls but are still extremely valuable. Cara's efforts to move beyond feeding her covenant to the production of crops are her effort to ease the tensions with the other members of the Tribunal, concerning the magical creation of wealth.

Staff, wand and spindle

The great flaw of the traditional accessory of a magus, the staff, is that a nose-high cylinder of wood with a gemstone on the end draws notice, and is unlikely to be mistaken for anything but a weapon. Some magi prefer wands, which can be slid into the sleeve. Female magi often sidestep this whole process by carrying their magic items in plain sight, as spindles, which they are expected to use just about anywhere.

Enchanted distaffs are extremely rare, because each member of House Diedne carried a forked stick, called a cymar, which looks like a distaff. Anti-Druidical prejudice remains strong amongst the more violent houses of the Order, and some of their senior members keep an eye out for objects that might bear Druidic enchantments. The few magical distaffs manufactured by House Verditius have practical enchantments, which usually wash and comb thread.

Form and effect additions

Spindle	+4 binding things together
	+4 affect that which surrounds or encloses the spindle
	+2 persistence
	+2 wealth
Distaff	+4 hold object in place
	+2 affect women

Ragoneda filia Elisa, follower of Tytalus

Ragoneda, a comparatively young Tytalus maga, acts as a negotiator for the Sinews of Knowledge on minor matters. She isn't a voting member of the covenant, but trades her service for library and laboratory time. She's the maga most likely to be in charge of doing practical, minor things at the Midsummer Fair, while her older covenmates seek contracts or indulge in politics. Ragoneda is a Corpus specialist and sometimes prepares longevity enchantments for young magi, who will upgrade them later in life. She prefers to enchant a small tattoo on her clients, because her sigil is particularly noticeable.

Ragoneda filia Elisa, follower of Tytalus

Characteristics: Int +5, Per 0, Pre +1, Com +0, Str +0, Sta 0, Dex 0, Qik 0.

Age: 56 (apparent late twenties)

Size: 0

Confidence: 6

Virtues and Flaws: Incredible Intelligence +4, Purifying Touch (Arthritis) +2, Clear Thinker +1, Magic Affinity (Bones) +1, Secret Vis Source (Corpus) +1, Strong-willed +1., Susceptible to Divine Power -4, Major Magic Deficiency (Im) -3, Major Magic Deficiency (Me) -3. Gained after gauntlet: Public vis source +2 (see page 6).

Personality Traits: Brave +3, Yearns for challenges +3, Secretive +1

Reputations: A rising star 2, with some Tytalus magi), Profoundly annoying 2, other Tytalus magi

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn
Dam	Fat		
Brawling (fist)	+2	+1	+1
	+0	0	

Soak: 0

Fatigue levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Body levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Incapacitated

Abilities: Artes Liberales 3 (geometry), Awareness 2 (hostile magic), Bargain 3 (magi), Boating 2 (not getting wet), Brawling 1 (avoiding being held), Certámen 3 (Creo), Charm 1 (magi), Chirurgy 2 (fractures), Concentration 6 (study), Disputatio 7 (apprentices), Etiquette 3 (magi), Faerie Lore 1 (gnomes), Faerie Lore 2 (Danu), Finesse 4 (bones), Folk Ken 5 (Bavarians), Greater Alpine Tribunal Lore 3 (what magi want), Guile 1 (detecting), Hermetic Law 1 (orbi), Intrigue 3 (against Tytalus magi), Leadership 3 (grog), Lectio 3 (apprentices), Legend Lore 1 (Normandy), Magic Affinity 12 (bones), Magic Theory 9 (using magic for criminal purposes), Medicine 4 (skeletal sys-

tem), Occult Lore 3 (animated dead), Order of Hermes Lore 2 (House Tytalus), Parma Magica 7 (Corpus), Penetration 4 (bone magic), Philosophiae 2 (natural), Scribe Latin 5 (spells), Speak Latin 5 (magi), Speak Norman French 4 (grog), Speak German 4 (merchants), Swim 1 (when encumbered)

Arts:

Cr 25 In 23 Mu 14 Pe 6 Re 6
An 11 Aq 6 Au 6 Co 30 He 6
Ig 6 Im 6 Me 6 Te 6 Vi 14

Twilight Points: 7 (potion use +1, Vim score 10 +2, lab accidentals and spell failures +4)

Equipment: Ragoneda has made few magic items, since she's still relatively young and has been busy building up her Arts. Her talisman is a bone spindle, which has been opened for all form bonuses, and is enchanted to snap human and animal limbs. She has yet to bind a familiar, but has a pet marmot that has some magical abilities. She has taken a longevity potion with a bonus of -13, but it has infected her body with her sigil, the color of bone. Her color may return when the potion fails.

Encumbrance: 0

Spells Known:

Recreating the Inner Sea (CrAq(Co) 25/+31)

CHIRURGEON'S HEALING TOUCH
(CrCo20/+59)

Shower of Needles (CrCo20/+67)

TEMPEST OF NEEDLES (CrCo25/+67) As Shower of Needles, but target is Group.

Eyes of the Owl (MuCo5/+44)

Rack of Thorns (MuCo20/+56)

Preternatural Growth and Shrinking
(MuCo20/+44)

EASING THE STRAIN OF CHILDBIRTH
(MuCo20/+44)

The Hidden Skin of the Serpent
(MuCo(Au)30/+48)





THE SUFFERING OF THE SEER
(MuCo35/+60)

Statue of Bone (MuCo50/+56)
SHATTERED LEG (PeCo15/+48)
Nagging Curse (PeCo20/+48)
Grip of the Choking Hand (PeCo15/+36)
Intestinal Suffering (PeCo40/+48)
Rise of the Feathery Body (ReCo 5/+36)
Leap of Homecoming (ReCo 35/+36)
Seven League Stride (ReCo 35/+36)

Ragoneda's Spells

Recreating the Inner Sea
(CrAq(Co)25)

R: Touch D: Sun/Per T: Small
The whites from a dozen eggs +1

Fills a container with a liquid in which human flesh can be kept alive, severed from the body. If vis is not used, the flesh decays immediately when removed from the fluid.

(Design: Create a highly unnatural liquid +15, includes Charm against Putrefaction +10)

Shower of Needles (CrCo(Re)20)

R: Sight D: Mom T: Ind (Aimed 0)
A wishbone +1

Showers target with bone needles for +10 damage

(Design: Creates bone 5, movement through Rego +5, increase range to Sight +20, reduce duration to Momentary -10)

Rack of Thorns (MuCo20)

R: Near D: Mom T: Ind.
A white rose +2

The ribcage of the target warps and develops thorns of bone along its inner surface. These puncture the lungs on the next inhalation, and then disappear, leaving the

target with pincushion injuries throughout the lungs. Fatal internal hemorrhage usually follows. A character who, forewarned, holds their breath needs only make a Stamina roll of 6+ to not gasp in pain when the thorns are created. Those without forewarning who wish to hold their breaths need to make a Stamina roll of 9+ or tear their lungs.

(Design: Change a limb +10, increased range +5, reduced duration -10. Doing something inside the body +15, as per "Lungs of water and death".)

The Hidden Skin of the Serpent
(MuCo(An)30)

R: Touch D: Sun T: Ind.
A snakeskin (+1)

This spell transforms the lower levels of the human dermis into osteodermal plates, similar to those found in reptiles. Osteoderms (literally "skin bones") are a layer of thin, internal armor plates that lie hidden beneath the upper levels of skin, but above the layer of muscle underneath. Osteoderms provide +10 Soak.

(Design: Make a body resistant to damage +30. Technically can be done without the requisite — but Ragoneda didn't design this spell herself.)

The Suffering of the Seer
(MuCo35)

R: Far D: Sun / Perm T: Ind.
A white blindfold (+1)

This spell alters the structure of the victim's skull. Plates of bone slide down over the character's eyes, and then fuse to their cheeks. This causes pain and blindness.

(Design: utterly change appearance +20, range extended +15)

Statue of Bone (MuCo50)

R: Near D: Sun/Perm T: Ind

An ivory statuette (+3)

Calcifies an enemy into a statue of bone. Ragoneda's reworking has many of the benefits of spells which turn people into stone, but hasn't that nasty Terram requisite. Since this spell's design was rushed, to prepare it before a Tribunal convened, it has an unwanted side effect. All of Ragoneda's statues fall over, regardless of the position of the victim when the spell was cast.

(Design: Makes humans inanimate +40, increased range +10)

Nagging Curse (PeCo20)

R: Sight D: Mom T: Ind

A piece of hard candy (+1)

The Nagging Curse cracks the enamel of one of the target's teeth, so that they suf-

fer distracting pain. This is represented by a lost fatigue level, which cannot be recovered without magical healing or the extraction of the tooth. Only one fatigue level can be lost due to this spell.

(Cause pain +10, increased range +10)

Intestinal Suffering (PeCo40)

R: Arcane D: Sun/Inst T: Small

A tooth belonging to the target +5

This spell creates a small, sharp shard of bone in the intestinal tract of the victim. This eventually results in death, as it perforates their bowels. Characters making a Sta roll of 12+ recover after a fortnight.

(Design: Creates a tiny piece of bone +5. Enhanced range +25. Target size reduced -5. Penalty for doing something really tricky +15.)



Ragoneda's sigil, the color of bone, permeates all of the effects she produces. For example if she reattaches a severed limb, that limb forever has a thin band of bone-colored skin along the join. When she took her own longevity potion, the color washed out of Ragoneda's body, so that she is a study in pale shades of bone and ivory. She dresses to match her unnatural skin tone. She often wears gloves, because her fingernails have serrations, like the teeth of an infant, and these change shape to match her emotional state.

Ragoneda's apprentice

Ragoneda has an apprentice, Augustina, who has been in training for eight years. Augustina is also a bone maga, but works more strongly in the Animál form. This makes her less suitable as a mercantile magus, and so she is interested in developing combat experience in relatively safe situations. Her desire for adventure often leads her, and her companions, into trouble.

There are children's stories in the Order of Hermes about those who make things with Corpus instead of Terram. Stories of towers of bone, with veins for plumbing and furniture coated with human tongues. Ragoneda spends as much time interacting with other magi as she can, because she knows that it is solitude, the lack of other people to be disgusted by what a maga is doing, that lets them slide down the slope toward the Tower of Skulls. At least — Ragoneda assures herself — she only uses animal bones when she makes tools.

Ragoneda has been selected as the covenant's liaison to whichever spring covenant agrees to act as this covenant's trading partner (see "How Do I Join?", on page 74, below). As the storyguide's motivating character in a new saga, Ragoneda has the virtues of providing healing, providing assistance with longevity potions, and expecting to be recalled to live at Sinews of Knowledge once she has greater experience — leaving experienced player characters in charge of their covenant. She is the representative from Sinews of Knowledge that beginning characters are most likely to make deals with at the Midsummer Fair.



Covenfolk

Sinews of Knowledge has few grogs, depending on publication of all its results, magical wards, and its hidden location for security. Its covenfolk, many of whom live in a small village at the base of the falls, speak a mixture of languages. Most know enough Latin for it to be the covenant's common language. Although the aura here distorts covenfolk, it is at its most intense in those areas where only magi are permitted to go. Most of the covenant's distortions are unnoticeable, various Immunities, but folktales suggest a more serious distortion suffered by the original priesthood, caused by ceremonial attendance to the skeleton. Its nature is not discussed with outsiders, but various Seekers claim to know the truth.

How Do I Join?

Be Rich or Entrepreneurial

This covenant has repeatedly been caught breaching the peripheral code rulings that restrict the amount of money covenants can make by creating valuable goods through magic. Young magi who can provide a solution to this covenant's financial problems are certain to be offered a place.

Be Somewhere Else Entirely

This covenant's main problem with the magical production of wealth is that it can't dispose of the goods in sufficiently inconspicuous ways. As a final resort, the magi here are considering setting up a Hermes Portal that links the covenant to a chapter house in another Tribunal, preferably to the east. Given that founding a new chapter house would be a difficult process, they might instead be persuaded to enter into an alliance with a young covenant in a frontier Tribunal. This offers troupes the advantages of Alpine play and the freedom of the wilderness, but it makes their covenant increasingly dependent on good relations with Sinews of Knowledge.



Chapter 7

The Covenant of Tarragon Vale



Physical Appearance

Perched upon a misty hilltop in Unterwalden, Tarragon Vale's main building is a long barn-like structure built of stone. Internally this building is three stories high, but much of the space is left open. A border of rooms rings the upper eaves of the building, and the covenant's magi and senior covenfolk used these. The building has many levels of basement, but these have been closed with magical wards by the Quaesitores. The lesser buildings of this covenant were wooden, and most have decayed into piles of compost.

Customs

The mages of Tarragon Vale were great metaphysical geographers and explorers, Hermetic pioneers in Arcadia and the Land of Spirits. Their great breakthrough was the Narrative Map, a device that displayed the underlying structures that support the variable topographies of mystical realms. This allowed them to deal with challenges on a structural level, instead of dealing with the

ephemeral representative presented by the Realm. The Tarragonese had many enemies within from House Merinita, because their ideology stated that faeries were simply ways of interacting with underlying forces, which should be ignored now that better tools were available.

How Do I Join?

If the player characters solve the puzzle of the Vanishing Away, then they have information of enormous value to a potentially-wealthy group of magi, and can bargain. One option is to have them request the right to settle here, perhaps paying a rent of vis to the heirs for a period of time. If they formally become the new members of Tarragon Vale, they inherit its legal position, including its debts and supernatural enemies, and these things are not clear even to the Quaesitores. Storyguides considering traditional dungeon delving might have the player characters pacify the things skulking in the many subterranean levels of the covenant while negotiating the defenses left by the original inhabitants.

If someone else discovers what happened to this covenant's inhabitants, then the Tarragon Vale vis is handed out, and ownership of the covenant's vis sources is divided up. Some of the heirs will want to move to the Alps. If the player characters are part of this group it gives them a reason to draw together and provides the vis for the covenant stores. Many of the heirs will not want to move to the Alps, and could be convinced to sell their new properties. A covenant or group of covenants could purchase some of these to set up a new chapter house and place their filii there.



Cymena the Redcap

Characteristics: Int +1, Per +2, Pre 0, Com 0, Str 0, Sta +2, Dex 0, Qik 0

Age: 48 (apparent late twenties)

Size: -1

Confidence: 3

Virtues and Flaws: Premonitions +1, Well-traveled +1 Redcap (Free), Indenture (Free), Whitlams (free, as described below) Small frame -2,

Personality Traits: Brave +3, Cautious +2

Reputations: Level-headed 3, with magi of Mercere

Wpn/Atk	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam	Fat
Brawling					
(fist)	+3	+2	+3	-1	+4
Alpenstock*	+9	+11	+6	+2	+5
Bow	+2	+2	n/a	+4	+4

*as quarterstaff

Soak: +1

Fatigue levels: OK, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Body levels: OK, -1, -3, -5, Incapacitated

Abilities: Animal handling 5 (equines), Athletics 5 (hiking), Awareness 3 (dangers on the road), Bargain 3 (for mundane supplies), Brawling 2 (with animals), Boating 2 (rough rivers), Bow 2 (wild animals), Carouse 3 (avoiding being drunk), Chirurgy 1 (self), Climb 2 (icy paths), Craft 2 (Leatherworking — repairs), Disguise 1 (fitting in), Etiquette 2 (covenfolk), Faerie Lore 2 (avoidance), Finesse 2

(Seven League Stride), Folk Ken 5 (Unterwalden), Greater Alpine Tribunal Lore 6 (safe traveling between covenants), Guile 1 (pretending to be a pilgrim), Hermetic Law 1 (redcaps), Hermes Lore 2 (personalities of magi), Hunt 2 (cattle stealing), Legerdemain 2 (protecting self from), Legend Lore 2 (dangerous places), Occult Lore 2 (self defense), Premonitions 5 (using Seven League Stride), Ride 3 (mule), Scribe Latin 4 (concise letters), Great Weapon 3 (alpenstock), Speak Latin 5 (with magi), Speak German 4 (peasants), Speak Langue d'Oc 3 (peasants), Speak Italian 3 (peasants), Speak Romansch 2 (peasants), Stealth 3 (Alpine wilderness), Storytelling 1 (anecdotes), Survival 4 (Alpine environment), Swim 1 (in very cold water), Wagoneering 4 (repair).

Equipment: Has taken a longevity potion (-5). In addition to her magic items, described below, Cymena has any item which an Alpine recap can be reasonably expected to have. She has an excellent set of boots made out of the skin of an Alpine dragonette, which she killed herself, of which she is extremely proud.

Encumbrance: 0

Magi

Tarragon Vale had four magi when they were last seen, twenty-two years ago. No explanation for their absence has been found, despite extensive effort by the Quaesitores, and by those magi who claim descent from the four. Since the Tarragon Vale charter makes no provision for its dissolution, the Quaesitores are reluctant to declare the covenant dissolved in the

absence of bodies. They are aware that the Tarragon Vale magi might emerge from Arcadia at some later time, claiming retrospective payment of their covenant's vis income. The Quaesitores have been collecting and storing the covenant's vis income for the last twenty years, spending only enough to maintain the covenant's Aegis of the Hearth, and to cast the Shrouded Glen about the site.

The descendants of the Tarragon Vale magi want access to the huge stockpile of vis that the Quaesitores are holding. The

Cymena's Items

Pin

An enchanted triangle of copper.

Heat object until warm (CrIg 6: Touch/Momentary/Individual — Constant)

Eyes of the Cat (MuCo(An) 10: Touch/Sun/Individual — 1 use per day)

Lickstone

A small metal plate that attaches to the palette. In this case, it's golden.

Lickstone spell: A tiny spell that intertwines two effects: *Adhere* (ReTe 1 — Constant — Device alone) and *Hide* (MuIm 1 — Constant — Device alone).

Seven-League Stride (ReCo 35: Personal/Momentary/Individual — 24 uses per day)

Since Cymena lives at her home the usual spell crafted into lickstones, *Leap of Homesoming*, would not be useful to her and the magi at Rorschach have allowed her to trade lickstones.

Leaves

Carries a copper leaf in each boot. Each leaf contains a pawn of *Rego vis*, but has the secondary property of reducing blistering and ankle injuries. The leaves allow a single reroll of any die that would result in blisters or ankle injuries, and are not used up in the process.



Quaesitores know this, and have passed on the work of finding out what happened to the original magi, by stating that until proof of death is produced, no estates may be finalized. This matter has been discussed at Tribunal, but the Quaesitoreal position has been upheld, pending further evidence. Most Alpine magi want the pool of descendants to grow sufficiently large that any individual magus gets only a rook or so of *vis* from the disbursement. They suspect that when the Tarragon Vale *vis* is finally distributed, the suddenly rich are going to cause their neighbors no end of trouble.

Covenfolk

The covenfolk of Tarragon Vale disappeared with their masters. Currently a non-magical redcap, whose grandparents were from Tarragon Vale, lives at the site. This arrangement is informal, and she has no particular right to the building or lands. About 25% of those born here had *Second Sight*. The Sighted were prized as grogs, and the export of skilled soldiers was one of the covenant's key sources of revenue. This effect has waned since the *Vanishing Away*. Other covenants have tried transporting pregnant covenwomen to Tarragon Vale, but none of the children have developed the *Sight*.



Chapter 8

The Covenant of

Valnastium

The Founder Jerbiton was descended from a Roman soldier who had been granted Alpine land upon his retirement. His family's holding, a villa in the Roman style, weathered the various invasions of the Italian peninsula because it was in one of the less accessible valleys of the Dolomiti region. When Jerbiton was reunited with his family he hid the entrance of the valley. When he founded his House he brought his converts home.

Appearance

Life in the valley still centers on the Roman villa. It is far more opulent than in Jerbiton's time, but many Primi prefer to build new palaces for themselves. Impressive residences dot the mountain terraces along the north side of the valley, testaments to the artistry and wealth of the senior magi of this House, who act as their "keepers". A peasantry who speak Rhaetian — a Rhateo-



Valnastium

Symbol: A griffin collared with a wreath of olive branches

Season: Autumn

Founded: 773 in a legal sense, practically around 775.

Members

By tradition Valnastium has either 20 or 21 members, but the membership churns far more rapidly than at other Autumn covenants. Valnastium has small chapters in Vienna, Constance, Saint Gallen and Geneva, and links to several large covenants in other Tribunals. The Valley itself, which serves as the Motherhouse, has 11 residents, but the members of the chapter houses and covenants in other tribunals drop by occasionally.

The core membership includes:

- Primus Andru filius Astrolabe follower of Jerbiton
- Secundus Constance filia Vortimer, follower of Jerbiton
- Sourdine filia Bronwyn follower of Jerbiton
- Sirocco filia Andru follower of Jerbiton
- Grazia filia Natura follower of Jerbiton
- Kalliope filia Bibliophilus follower of Jerbiton
- Bronwyn filia Astrolabe follower of Jerbiton

Three Lartan magi:

- Josephine filia Theodore follower of Jerbiton
- Francois filius Alban follower of Jerbiton
- Chloe filia Andru follower of Jerbiton

And:

- Carmine follower of Flambeau, a long-term non-member

Usually there would be an extra magus in the "Bonisagus chair", described below,

but currently it is being paid to a non-resident.

Site

Access Quality: as minor clergy +3

Access Distances: (20/40/-/-/40) -4

Seclusion: Strangers rarely come here +3

Environment: Crisp but otherwise average.

6/-2

Buildings

Size: +3 magi, +1 specialists +1 grogs

Impressive Structures: palaces (11)

Quality: palaces excellent (12)

Repair: 0

Defenses

Site: Overlooked on three sides by mountains, river on fourth side runs through covenant. (2, -8)

Elaborate Structure: the fortifications blocking the mouth of the valley.

Extent: Average in most areas, but most of the palaces are, from a defensive perspective, less than useless. (-12)

Repair: Average(0)

Stores

Vis: 100 pawns

Supplies: 50 pounds of silver

Reputations: Excellent mundane library (Order of Hermes) 1, Beautiful but a little dull (-1) House Jerbiton.

Relations

Allies: The abbot of Saint Gallen (5 points, 1 intensity)





Enemies: The Covenant Where Journeys End (-7, -1 intensity), The Fanes (-3 x 5 points, 1 intensity)
Contacts: A cardinal whose grandfather was a Jerbiton magus (5)

Improvement

Income: 0
Vis Supply: + 19 — 570 pawns. The House has traded sources to ensure a broad mix of techniques.
Inhabitants: +6 (12 magi)
 80 /-43

Library

(Note that parts of the famed Valnastium library are held in chapter houses.)
Spells: (+3) 2400 levels.
Hermetic Books: (+5) 900 levels
Mundane Books: (+15) 1200 levels

Mystical Attributes

Aura: 3, with patches of Dominion 4 or less (0)
Magic Items: Valnastium has an extensive network of Hermes Portals (20)
Laboratories: good, but highly specialized (+36)
 161 -51

Romansch dialect — and a small, educated class who also speak Latin support the magician caste. Rhaetian and Latin are close enough that characters with a score of 4 in one can speak as if they had a score of 1 in the other.

The role of the valley changes, as the philosophy of the house fluctuates between generations. Each fresh focus leaves a layer of material culture in the valley, which can be read, like an archaeological record. When the house sees itself as a collection of artists, it serves as an exhibition space, and magical effects proliferate. When the house aims to preserve Latin culture, it is a museum, and artifacts are collected. When the house sees itself as a band of aristocrats, it acts as a patron to mundane artists, whose works beautify the valley's structures. When the House sees itself as a bridge between mundane society and Hermetic culture, it becomes an embassy, and mundane information is compiled. Sometimes the House wishes to immerse itself in mundane culture, and then Valnastium becomes much like the Roman farming community it originally was.

Customs

House Jerbiton thrives on culture, but the administrative center is hidden in a mountain valley. Virtually all Jerbiton think of it as a nice place to go for a holiday, but even those who live here would prefer to be living somewhere with a little more bustle, a few more mundanes, and far more of whatever art form they most enjoy.

As a distraction, the covenant maintains chapters in Vienna, Constance and, reputedly, outside major cities in many other tribunals. These are linked to Valnastium by Hermes Portals. The current Primus rarely leaves the Valley, but often has servants attend festivals elsewhere, capturing music and images in mirrors which he crafts. Under former Primi, drunken bands of Jerbiton habitually popped up in other people's tribunals hunting fun, but Primus Andru has clamped down, and these dipsotic revels are remembered only in drinking songs popular amongst grog turbs from Connemara to the Tigris.

How Do I Join?

Be useful, be charming, be artistic — or just visit and don't leave.

Valnastium's city chapters serve two vital functions. They supply the covenant with goods, which player characters can be responsible for procuring. They also allow magi to travel from Valnastium to the cities, and return home. Each of these provides story seeds, and opportunities for player characters to progress.

Administering an urban chapter is extraordinarily difficult. Magi in those cities with vibrant artistic communities face the fullest effect of the Dominion. Secrecy is paramount, so earning a living with surreptitious magic is tricky. False owners for buildings and shops need to be recruited, then kept loyal or disposed of. These can be companions. The competitors of the commercial interests of the chapter, and the guildsmen who monitor

the quality of wares need to be misdirected. Magi who surmount these difficulties, however, can become the masters of their cities and influence the politics of Europe.

The problem with having a Hermes Portal in the basement is that you never can tell what story hook is going to walk out of it. Since the Valnastium portals link so many places, trouble can be exported from any part of Europe to your covenant at the storyguide's whim. The most unpleasant element of being part of the network is that only the Council at Valnastium has the right to bar people from using the portals.

Valnastium's rapid turnover of members, welcoming attitude to visitors, links to chapters and readiness to accept members of other Houses make it a simple covenant to hook characters into.



Primus and Secundi

The members of House Jerbiton, prior to the death of the incumbent Primus, elect his successor. Members need not travel to Valnastium to register a vote, since proxies and written expressions of preference, if witnessed by a quaesitor, are valid. The current primus has ten votes, Archmages three each, and all other members one. Purchasing proxies is perfectly legal, and politicking before the vote is occasionally intense. This is only usual if two magi interested in the process of administration contest for power. More often the magus most determined to become Primus gets the paperwork, and everyone else goes back to enjoying art. Primacy is for life, although several Primi have resigned, to dedicate additional time to their art, or to tourism. Following the lead of the College of Cardinals, which elects the Pope, the Primus is in no way required to follow through on promises made in exchange for support during the election.

Two Secundi — deputy Primi — are appointed and serve at the Primus's discretion. By tradition the Greater Secundus is the Primus's elected heir. The Greater Secundus is not required to live at Valnastium, but, if he chooses not to, the Lesser Secundus must. This is to ensure that someone is available to act as Primus until the Greater Secundus assumes the role. Whichever Secundus is not living constantly at the Vale is expected to act as the hand and eye of the Primus, but this isn't enforced.

Magi

This covenant has around sixteen members, but there's always someone coming or going. The magi described below are regularly found at Valnastium, and consider it their home for the rest of their lives. Other Jerbiton magi frequently come for a few



Andru, Primus of House Jerbiton

Characteristics: Int +4, Per 0, Pre 0, Com +1, Str 0, Sta 0, Dex 0, Qik 0.

Age: 81 (apparent mid-thirties.)

Size: 0

Confidence: 7

Virtues and Flaws: Charmed Life +3, Visual Eidetic Memory +3, Great Intelligence +2, Gentle Gift +1, Affinity (Illusions involving sight) +1. Several others (Free Expression, True Love, Social Contacts, Magic Items, Relic) developed since apprenticeship. Susceptible to Divine Power -4, Driving Goal (to reconcile the Church and the Order) -1, Dutybound (religious) -1. Others lost since gauntlet, and Enemy (Yselt of the Covenant Where Journeys End) -2 gained.

Personality Traits: Cunning +3, Brave +2, Pious +2, and Sneaky +2.

Reputations: Helpful, +2 with major clerics; Rising political power +1, with elderly magi; Mysterious, +1 with major clerics

Wpn/Atk	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam	Fat
Brawling (fist)	+2	+1	+1	0	+1
Sword	+4	+2	+5	+4	+1
Soak: +0					

Fatigue Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Body Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Incapacitated

Abilities: Artes Liberales 5 (logic), Athletics 1 (hiking), Awareness 2 (assassins), Bargain 6 (magi), Brawling 1 (with drunkards), Carouse 1 (keeping sober), Certámen 5 (Mentem), Charm 2 (magi), Civil and Canon Law 2 (offences tried in ecclesiastical courts), Climb 1 (stairs), Craft 1 (woodwork — repair lute), Concentration 8 (while plotting and scheming), Disputatio 3 (Mentem), Enigmatic Wisdom 1 (trying to understand Criamon magi), Etiquette 4 (magi), Faerie Lore 2 (weaknesses), Finesse 4 (illusions), Folk Ken 6 (local

festivals), Forgery 1 (documents), Greater Alpine Tribunal Lore 4 (magi), Guile 4 (magi), Hermetic Law 3 (self-defense), House Jerbiton Lore 8 (things you wish he didn't know), Hunt 2 (faeries), Intrigue 5 (magi), Leadership 5 (magi), Lectio 4 (Mentem), Legerdemain 1 (detect), Legend Lore 5 (local region), Magic Affinity 5 (emotions effects), Magic Theory 7 (Imáginem), Occult Lore 2 (detection), Order of Hermes Lore 4 (House Jerbiton), Parma Magica 6 (Mentem), Penetration 4 (Muto), Philosophiae 3 (ethics), Play Lute 1 (comedy), Ride 1 (horses), Scribe Latin 7 (obscure clues), Sing 1 (hymns), Single Weapon 1 (waving swords impressively), Speak Latin 5 (magi), Speak Greek 4 (magi), Storyteller 1 (about magi), Survival 1 (Alps), Swim 1 (Alps), Theology 3 (magic).

Arts:

Cr 9 In 10 Mu 20 Pe 10 Re 20
An 10 Aq 6 Au 6 Co 8 He 6
Ig 6 Im 25 Me 20 Te 6 Vi 6

Twilight points: 5 (Potion use +4, Vim score 5 +1)

Decrepitude: 0

Equipment: Longevity Potion: Does not make his own potions, current bonus -14. Magic items owned by the House, Veil of Fire and Fingerbone of the Blessed Cyrian (see insert).

Encumbrance: 0 Spells Known:

The Chirurgeon's Healing Touch (CrCo 20/+17)

Eyes of the Cat (MuCo 15 / +28) Modified effect R : Near D : Sun/Year T: Group. Thaumaturgical Transformation of Plants to Iron (MuHe(Te) 15/+26)

Phantasm of the Skilled Musician (CrIm20/+34)

Phantom Magic (CrIm 40 /+34)

Aura of Ennobled Presence (MuIm 10 /+50)

Image Phantom (MuIm 25 /+45)

years, then leave again, to seek the excitement of city life. Three of the current members are Larta magi. Another four chairs are registered with the Quaesitores, and are offered to visiting specialists, distinguished guests, and magicians of other Houses employed by the Jerbitons. The covenant, including all chapters, could comfortably support 28 members, but likes to keep their number well below that level, since “scrimping” is ignoble. Added chairs are pledged for visitors, who have negotiated access to Valnastium’s library.

A special chair, traditionally the twenty-first, is kept in honor of Bonisagus, and the proceeds from it are paid as a bursary to an exceptional young magus. This fund is sometimes dedicated to a member of a newly formed spring covenant, to allow the new institution to find its feet. This grant lasts a maximum of seven years, and is never renewed.

Primus Andru filius Astrolabe

Andru was elected Secundus at the age of thirty-eight, and became Primus five years after that, in 1182. Such a rapid rise is unexceptional among Jerbiton magi, since the House’s structure is relatively democratic and the duties of the Primus are a distraction from what’s really important: art. The powerful house covenants in other Tribunals became even more independent during the early years of Andru’s administration, but in the last fifteen he’s become a powerful, ideological force in his House. With about half his expected lifespan still before him, Andru is considered, by magi of political inclination, to be one of the long-term players. They are thankful he’s a stabilizing influence.

Andru still appears relatively young, because of his longevity potion, and retains





VISIONS BEATIFIC (MuIm(Me) 30/+45)
 Phantasmal Images (MuIm 35/+45) As
 Image Phantom, with Range Far-Sun,
 Duration Sun/Year and Target Group
 Restore the Image Transferred (MuIm
 40/+35)
 Wizard's Sidestep (ReIm 10/+45)
 Disguise of the Transformed Image (MuIm
 15/+35)
 Captive Voice (ReIm 15/+45)
 Haunt of the Living Ghost (ReIm 35/+45)
 Duration extended to Sun.
 Tickling the Humors (CrMe 20 or 25 /+34)
 Gift of Reason (CrMe 25/+29 or +34 if
 emotional affinity applies)
 Return of Mental Lucidity (CrMe 35/+29
 +34 if emotional affinity applies)
 Trail of the Lost Ways (InMe 25/+30)
 Aura of Rightful Authority (ReMe
 20/+50)
 Call of Morpheus (ReMe 25/+45) Based on
 Call to Slumber with Range Sight,
 Duration Momentary and Target
 Group)
 Time Unmans All Foes (PeTe 25/+16) A
 variant of Rusted Decay of Ten Score

Years with Range of Far / Sight,
 Duration of Momentary and Target of
 Group.

Circle of Warriors (ReTe10/+26)

WIELDING THE INVISIBLE SLING (ReTe
 10/+26)

Circular Ward Against Demons (ReVi
 35/+26)

Circular Ward Against Faeries (ReVi
 35/+26)

Opening the Intangible Tunnel (ReVi
 35/+26)

Watching Ward (ReVi 30/+26)

Although some of Andru's spells have
 not appeared previously in **Ars Magica**
 supplements, these "new" spells were
 learned from books provided by trading
 partners of the Valnastium library —
 Andru avoids researching spells himself.
 Casting totals do not include talisman
 bonuses, since Andru rarely carries his tal-
 isman.

Vis: Andru makes no strong distinc-
 tion between his own vis and that of his
 covenant. He carries as much as he thinks
 wise in any situation.

the charm and diplomatic acumen that led
 to his election. Initially from Greece, he is
 not so widely traveled as many other mem-
 bers of his house, but occasionally the
 Primus of Jerbiton will appear unexpectedly
 in one of the major European cities, fueling
 the belief that his House maintains an
 extensive network of Hermes Portals. Like
 most Primi, he's an enthusiastic and volumi-
 nous producer of letters.

Andru is aware of the tides that roll
 across the philosophy of his House, and deft-
 ly avoids being beached by them. In general
 his policy favors personal contact with rank-
 ing mundanes, stressing the benefits of co-
 operation. He favors attempts to soften the
 Church's position toward magic, although
 claims he is redesigning the House to
 become a part of the Church may overstate
 his goals. How wide Andru's web of influ-
 ence stretches is unclear.

Constance filia Frederich et Vortimer

Since the Greater Secundus does not
 live in the Valley, the Lesser Secundus must
 remain here at all times. Making a virtue of
 necessity, Andru appointed his ally
 Constance filia Frederich, trained as a fol-
 lower of Verditius, to the office. Many magi
 'retire' to House Jerbiton, so this style of
 appointment isn't unknown. Constance,
 now over 130 years old, was a specialist
 under contract to the Jerbiton for over fifty
 years before officially transferring to the
 House. If you are using *The Mysteries*,
 Vortimer, her adoptive parens, is a senior
 member of the lineage of Carolinus.

Constance is a leading member of the
 Craft School, a Hermetic movement that
 prizes beautiful and functional objects. Like
 most Crafters she is a mage-smith. She creates

Andru's Spells

Tickling the Humors (CrMe 20 / 25)

R: Eye/Sight D: Sun/Moon T: Ind or Group.

A cluster of similar spells, each is a variant of "Rising Ire", but they instill other emotions. Andru has two variants with Individual targets, one that causes hysterical happiness in the presence of the selected object, the other intense curiosity. Andru has three variants that are level 25 and have Group targets. These cause hysteria, instill courage and counsel chastity.

(Design: as per Rising Ire, with a different emotion as effect.)

Visions Beatific (MuIm(Me) 30)

R: Near/Sight D: Sun/Year T: Ind.

Spell focus: An ergotized stalk of grain +5

Causes everything the target sees to appear sublimely beautiful. The target rolls a Stamina die modified by appropriate per-

sonality traits, then consults the following table.

0 or less: The character will accept suggestions from those nearby as if from angels. They are, however, incapable of doing anything that could not be done by someone who is seriously inebriated.

1-5: Absolutely unable to do anything but gape at nearby objects, may accidentally hurt self on dangerous objects covered by the illusion. Has no sense of self-preservation.

6-9: Absolutely unable to do anything except gape at nearby objects.

10-15: Dance merrily, as though infected with Saint Vitus's dance. (-6 on all rolls)

16+: Can choose how to act, -3 on all rolls.

Ergot is a fungus that affects grain, causing those who eat it to dance and have visions, before rotting to death. Ergot contains vis, but the stalk is not consumed in the casting of the spell.

(Design : Vision of Infernal Terrors, just prettier.)



Andru's Items

Andru hasn't created many magic items, since he is able to borrow those that belong to his house. Items come to the house when a magus dies if they have no other magi who share the same teacher's teacher. Andru enjoys having a few surprises available and cycles the magic items he borrows from the house. It should be assumed he has access to items that contain virtually any mid-level effect, although he only carries a few at a time.

The most famous item he has used publicly is the Standard of the Shadowy Men. It creates Group versions of Seven League Stride, an invisibility effect and grog-enhancing enchantments. The Standard was used in the battle with the

Fanes. Andru's predecessors have created a few masks that have constant use versions of either Disguise of the New Visage or Image Phantom. His most trusted agents keep these. Andru has strong personal objections to the use of Enslave the Mortal Mind or similar will-sapping effects, and he doesn't use items containing them. Andru's sigil, a gold ring set with an amethyst, is kept by Carmine of Flambeau.

The Veil of Fire

Andru keeps Carmine's sigil, a bridal veil in the imperial Roman style. It is orange-red and is embroidered with the



Hourglass of Flambeau. Carmine and Andru were married in the Greek ceremony but with Hermetic (which is to say pagan) symbols included, a fact they need to keep concealed while House Jerbiton courts the favor of the western church. Since neither wears a ring, they carry each other's sigils, which, as representations of the True Love virtue, have unpredictable properties that transcend the limits of Hermetic magic. The Order, especially House Merinita, is aware of the existence of this class of objects, which they call Favors, but since their unusual properties are inaccessible save to True Lovers, they are difficult to examine in laboratory conditions.

The Fingerbone of Cyrian

Andru carries a relic of Cyrian, and he attributes to it the effects of his Charmed Life virtue. He's mistaken, but relics sometimes do manipulate coincidence. The tiny flake from a finger bone is sewn into a square of white silk the size of a handkerchief.

Familiar: Crucifixio

Characteristics: Int +3, Per +3, Pre 0, Com +1, Str -3, Sta 0, Dex +3, Qik +3
Magic Might: 10

Size: 0

Personality Traits: Curious +3

Wpn/Atk	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam	Fat
Brawling (fist)	+5	+5	+7	-3	0

Soak: +0

Fatigue levels: OK, -3, Unconscious

Body levels: OK, -3, Incapacitated

Abilities: Artes Liberales 1 (logic), Athletics 3 (chasing humans), Awareness 2 (food), Bargain 1 (magi),

Brawling 1 (with cats), Charm 3 (people who like cats), Civil and Canon Law 1 (things about which Andru has thought about aloud, at length), Climb 6 (trees), Concentration 2 (outstaring people), Disputatio 1 (natural history), Etiquette 1 (who to claw and not to claw), Faerie Lore 1 (edibility), Finesse 1 (bond powers), Folk Ken 6 (whereabouts of food), Greater Alpine Tribunal Lore 4 (cat familiars), Guile 1 (covenfolk), Hermetic Law 1 (familiars), House Jerbiton Lore 2 (life in Valnastium), Hunt 4 (small edible things), Intrigue 1 (cats), Leadership 1 (cats), Legend Lore 3 (Urbastis cult), Occult Lore 2 (cats), Order of Hermes Lore 4 (cat familiars), Philosophiae 1 (natural), Scribe Latin 5 (can read, but not write), Sing 1 (caterwaul), Speak Latin 5 (magi), Speak Greek 4 (magi), Survival 3 (around Valnastium), Stealth 6 (Hunting), Swim 1 (escaping), Theology (Andru's favorite religious stories) 1

Cords: Gold +2, Silver +2, Bronze 0

Bond Qualities: Mental Communication +10, Attunement of Speech +5, Primary Power +5 (as Veil of Invisibility), Secondary Power +10 (a spell like Panic of the Trembling Heart, but that instead makes people love cats and wish to serve them as princes.), Independent -5.

Vis: 1 pawn Mentem, body

So many magi from Valnastium have kept black cats as familiars that an odd magical strain of them — the Black Lineage — has become resident in the valley. Crucifixio, Andru's familiar, could talk before he was bound. He is not the most senior member of the Black Lineage, although his link to the Primus will speed his way through the hierarchy of cats.

intricate laboratories, whose towering, twisting structures soar and gleam. Although some of her laboratory designs are practical only for a few specialist magi, few are unmoved by the

grandeur of her creations. The magic items she creates are simple, and are used in specialist laboratories. Her lab texts are popular, and are traded at the annual Fair.

Angela filia Constance

Angela's mater was trained as a Verditius maga, so she uses casting foci, and is interested in creating magical objects. Angela specializes in crafting magical tools and instruments. Mundane musicians, Larta magi, and those Jerbiton magi who play music as a Necessary Condition prize these. She's a member of the Crafter movement and acts as the covenant's factor (chief buyer) at the Midsummer Fair.

Like other Crafters, Angela purchases unpredictably at the Midsummer Fair, selecting items that enhance her art. For example, at the last fair but one she bought a club from a grog of the party from Belaquin in Provence. Later the magi of Belaquin discovered the transaction, and figured out that she desired the wood because it had been grown in a faerie forest. Although it contained no vis, it had odd acoustic properties, which made crafting an extraordinary instrument easier.

The desire of Crafters to procure items for which other magi have little use can serve as a story hook, and can force the players to seriously consider what sorts of "mundane" items other magi might value. Crafters have an antipathy for Natural Magicians, because Crafters often want to incorporate objects of Virtue into their artifacts and Natural Magicians also collect them. Crafters are also interested in the natural products of distorted trees and wildlife, regularly found in autumn and winter covenants, but these tend to be one-off purchases.

Sourdine filia Bronwyn

Sourdine is House Jerbiton's finest spy. Gently Gifted, and a Silent Caster, who uses only subtle gestures, she's able to mix with humans and extract information, by magic or mundane means. She has a spell that allows her to appear as a male version of herself, known in the court of the Emperor as Lord

Roland of the Val Gardenia, but prefers to step into the places of servants that she kidnaps, and then adjusts with Mentem spells.

Sourdine is one of the Primus's closest confidants; acting as one of his go-betweens with the upper level of the intelligence network he inherited from the previous primus, then enlarged remarkably. Information is funneled through the network to the library, where specialized staff act as correlators. Andru's main areas of interest at this time are the politics of the Church, the actions of his fellow magi, and potential new sources of vis, but the system also keeps a watchful eye over mundane politics.

Sirocco filia Andru

Andru's filia is the coordinator of this House's push into the Islamic territories of North Africa. Her chief allies are the Jerbitons in the "Roman" covenants of Iberia, a group of pro-Islamic magi who have developed tentative, but positive, links to a shadowy tradition of Moorish magicians. Sirocco would like to draw them into détente with the Order, but acknowledges the difficulty of this task. Privately, Sirocco is also trying to discover what happened to the members of the last Hermetic covenant founded near Tunis. She's heard reports that they were enslaved by desert demons, but lacks the ability to investigate on her own.

Grazia filia Natura

Grazia is an Animál specialist, who supervises Valnastium's stables, kennels and mews. As noblemen and wizards, Jerbiton magi require magical animals as markers of status and for familiars. The covenant exports limited numbers of horses, donkeys, hounds and hawks, selling them annually at the Fair or along the redcap network. Most of these animals are mundane, but trained to accept





The Library of Valnastium

Valnastium's library, a genuine Temple of the Muses moved stone by stone from Greece, is one of the finest in the Order for research into mundane matters. Magi journey from distant corners of the Order to consult this immense collection, while others send reference queries and loan requests through the redcap network. Valnastium library has developed techniques centuries ahead of those used by the Church, and some of these have diffused throughout the Order. In part, this is because Valnastium trains librarians, who are then passed on to other covenants, and they carry with them the techniques of their school. Failed apprentices are sometimes sent to the library for training.

The library at Valnastium would disorient most Church librarians. Physically,

it is unusual, because the librarians here have invented the shelf. Shelving books upright is thought to damage them, so Valnastium's books lie on sloped shelves. Hermetic books are displayed with their front cover toward the viewer, because the ornaments and clasps on book covers tear the leatherwork on adjoining books if they slide against each other. Food and candles are welcome in the library, because magic items prevent them doing damage. Conversations are banned in many Church libraries. In Hermetic libraries they are usual, because library silence is a religious convention, because the staff don't have the authority to shush the magi, and because those engaged in earnest study take books to their laboratories.

masters with the Gift. Some are further specialized, so that they refuse orders from those without a magical air. A tiny proportion of these animals are inherently magical.

Grazia is a keen follower of the livestock sales during the Fair, and pays well for new breeding stock. She's also interested in established pairs of magical animals, since she'd like to diversify the range of livestock she raises. Magi of the Alps acquainted with her practices sometimes subdue magical animals they encounter, in the hope she'll purchase vis while its still on the hoof. A special project of hers, which she is just beginning to investigate, is the taming of griffins.

Kalliope filia Bibliophilus and the library of Valnastium

Kalliope, a magus of middle years, is the latest successor to an intermittent line of

librarian-magi active at Valnastium. Similar lines exist in a few other covenants and they form a small, interacting community. Most covenants leave librarianship to non-magicians, and even in Valnastium, Durenmar and Verdi, which most often have magician-librarians, menial, training and research tasks are left to mundane assistants or apprentices.

Bronwyn filia Æstrolabe

Trained by the Primus's parents, Bronwyn is most interested in how the voice is used as a tool to cast magic: Hermetic phonotactics. Although her interest was initially physiological, she has recently become interested in rhyme and meter in spell performance. She is researching a new way of structuring the verbal component of spells, making them easier to learn, if harder to design. Her progress toward this discovery is slow, because she's flighty and gets distracted by other things.

Designing a Lartan Player Character

To play a Lartan magus, you need to design a Mythic Companion. Complete rules for Mythic Companions are included in *Hedge Magic*, but the essentials are:

- You lose your “magus” slot. You can’t play a standard Hermetic magus and a Lartan simultaneously.
- You gain 10 free points of virtues, which you should use to create a unique form of magical expression for your character. These virtues need to explain why, out of all the artists in Europe, your character has been asked to join House Jerbiton.
- You also gain up to ten other virtue points, but you must counterbalance them with flaws.
- You have 41 + age experience points to spend on abilities.

Designing a metered spell is like designing a normal spell, but the verbal component is a piece of poetry. The meter in the poetry makes it easier to remember, which makes the spell easier to learn, cast and master. Metered spells are optimized, as described in the *Wizard’s Grimore* Revised Edition. Bronwyn has yet to publish a collection of her metered spells. Although her theory is sound, her poetry is embarrassing doggerel.

Larta Magi

Late last century, the rest of the Order caught on: some Jerbiton magi have no ability to cast spells. The first one to publicly acknowledge that she was unable to cast spells was named Larta. Her name is now used for this type of member of House

Jerbiton. There are only a handful of Larta magi at any time, and most of them live at Valnastium.

Playing Larta Magi

Larta magi are not merely exceptional artists, but phenomenal virtuosi, unique talents of the age. In the various disciplines from which they come, each is the ultimate practitioner of their generation, or seems likely to become so. It’s this hint of power that prevents true rancor from developing over the adoption of Larta magi into House Jerbiton. Further, the Verditius, those Bonisagus who want to study their techniques, and those Merinitans who like their work support them politically.



Larta Magi at Valnastium

Chef

Josephine is a cook whose food is as good as magical. A native of Engadine valley, she’s familiar with both the cuisine of nobles and peasants, and can prepare either perfectly. The food of nobles contains tremendous quantities of meat and bread, but little else. The food of peasants has small amounts of meat, almost garnishes of meat, extended with vegetables.

A chef is a sort of folk magician, who uses Free Expression to design menus, a Knack to cook food perfectly, and Craft Lesser Charm to imbue it with minor effects. An urban branch of village witchcraft, most chefs are herbalists, and some cook magical bread, while others are like alchemists, and create magical vintages. The hard cheese industry, just beginning in the Alps, gives



certain chefs a hardy medium to export their magical food through conditions that ruin bottles of wine or hard biscuits. Other virtues common to chefs are: Busybody, Venus's Blessing, Gossip, Patron and Protection.

An exceptionally elaborate form of chef craft, descending from the Romans, allows a cluster of chefs to create astonishingly complicated banquets, in which each course is a lesser charm with a different effect. This practice requires Ingredients of Virtue, and therefore is used only on the most special of occasions. Before each Grand Tribunal chefs from across the Order gather to compare their skills and pledge fantastic ingredients to the Tribunal's banquet. After days of testing each other's wares, the chefs select one of their number, titled the promoscundus, to act as master of them all during the catering for the Grand Tribunal.

Smith

An elderly, but powerful, man named François is the blacksmith in the Village of the Vale. His smithy is one of the most intensely magical places in the territory around the covenant. His family is large, both in number and in individual size, and many of them serve as grogs. Some have a valuable and frightening affinity for weapons (Knack), and these become grog sergeants at other covenants.

Now that he's getting on a little, François oversees several apprentices, passing on the secrets of his craft. His journeymen are in great demand, and most find places in other covenants with little difficulty. A number of the blacksmiths at the Order's covenants are related to François in one way or another, since he prefers to keep his trade in the family.

Blacksmiths are imbued with the properties of iron. Iron repels faeries because it is both intensely magical and easy for humans



to use. Smiths are often the hedge magician of a village, like a crone on the hill, but more approachable. Many have extraordinary strength, the power to curse and heal, and, in some cases, the ability to command the weather. Since their abilities are a specialised form of Natural Magic, they ignore the Dominion.

Magical blacksmiths often have virtues selected from the following list: Craft Lesser Charm, Craft Greater Charm, Heal, Curse, Exceptional Strength, Knack (Blacksmithing), Large, Weather Sense, Enduring Constitution, Long-winded, Tough, Reserves of Strength, Superior Armaments. Those who are Lartans often have Free Expression or Inventive Genius, which allows them to find new ways to apply the power of iron.

Minstrel

Minstrels use the almost-magical power of music to affect the emotions. Usually, their preferred effect is a strong suggestion that listeners should pay the minstrel money,

but other effects are also common. Some minstrels work with religious music, evangelising the beauty of creation and the beneficence of the Lord. Others, of the relatively new German tradition of Meistersingers, spread joy through bitingly cynical parodies of the manners of the nobility, and the corruption of the Church.

Valnastium's chief minstrel, Chloe, is unusual in that she composes, in preference to performing. Her works — soaring, ethereal, choral prayers — are a key part of Primus Andru's charm offensive. Chloe designs music that is somehow magical when performed by others, generally mundanes, often clergy, and usually in churches. Her explanations indicate she's an odd, possibly unique, variant of Natural Magician.

Minstrels often have virtues from the following list: Knack (Sing or Play), Magic Item (instrument), Carefree, Free Expression, Mimicry, Reckless, Social Contacts, Troupe Upbringing, Venus's Blessing, Well-travelled, Gossip, Enchanting Music, Exceptional Communication, Light Touch, Patron, Protection. They tend to play stringed or



Cuisine and Banqueting

The regional cuisine of Valnastium is based, distantly, on that of the Roman settlers, and variants of it are found in many covenants associated with House Jerbiton. The key condiments used on food are salt and cardamom, honey is used as a sweetener and lettuce leaves are eaten between courses, as palate cleansers, or after desserts. Many magi do not dine formally, preferring to eat simple, swift meals in their laboratories. Pastries are common, and small pans, which allow them to be reheated over braziers, are not unusual.

When magi of Valnastium are dining formally, they present food in three removes. Each remove is served on a separate table or set of tables, with its predecessor being whisked away in a creative or magical fashion. At less important or very large feasts, only the serving dishes and any table covering are removed. The frugal or practical feast only rarely, to mark special occasions.

Covenants in the rest of Mythic Europe follow traditions far closer to those of their surrounding cultures,

but this basic pattern isn't unusual although the method of serving feasts a dish at a time is not common. Since guests are not offered identical portions but eat from a central table of food, hosts can honor their guests to varying degrees by seating them next to the most prestigious dishes or by having servants carry the choicest morsels to them.

At Valnastium, the first remove whets the appetite with eggs, lettuce leaves, olives, figs and other food meant for picking. It is consumed with honeyed wine, called *mulsum*. The second table is the meat course, typically pork, lamb or mutton at Valnastium. The wine served with this course is the best the host has available. The last remove, after a pause, is the dessert. Valnastium imports dried, candied or preserved fruit in great quantity for its desserts, often arranging trades for such goods with covenants from outside the tribunal at the midsummer fair hosted by the motherhouse of Icy North.



wind instruments, but some play hand organs.

Carmine filia Susannah follower of Flambeau

Carmine is one of the most beautiful women alive. Apparently in her early thirties, she's of Iberian ancestry, with dark hair and a penchant for black clothes, sometimes in the Arabic style. A model and muse, she's the only non-Jerbiton magus permanently living in Valnastium, although many visit to consult its vast library of mundane matters.

Carmine arrived in the entourage of the Primus, forty-three years ago. Since he's so private a man, most of his entourage moved into an elegant house on a vine-planted hill, north of the river, that overlooks the small

village in the valley. This is one of the most comfortable of the artists' residences, which are used by favored covenfolk and visiting redcaps.

Initially Andru's model, Carmine also became his mistress, then wife, an open secret which isn't discussed, but which she doesn't deny. Her two children, both adults, lack the Hermetic gift, but her daughter may become a Lartan magus. Her son is being trained as an autocrat, although certain members of the House are trying to persuade him to join the priesthood. Their paternity is unclear, but most Jerbitons suspect they are Andru's children, under Roman adoptive law, if not in the flesh.

Carmine has built a place for herself within the society of the valley. She maintains good relations with the Secundi, is a popular hostess in this little community, and is an accomplished musician. Although she isn't legally a member of the covenant, she's vouched for as a visiting specialist, and aids the Jerbitons when acts of unseemly violence appear appropriate. She's also a spy, in that she provides reports about Alpine matters to her Primus if he asks, but these are always banal, and she shows them to Andru before dispatch. Carmine has passed the Jerbiton Gauntlet, and might some day join the House as "filia Andru", but currently prefers the autonomy her unusual situation provides. If you are using *The Mysteries*, Carmine is a member of the lineage of Abydaros.

Muse (virtue +1)

A muse can grant Free Expression to another character, or can increase the effects of Free Expression that a character already possesses, while the muse is with them. A muse whose artist already has Free Expression grants a +3 bonus on personality trait and skill rolls involved in producing art inspired by the muse. The muse chooses whom they will inspire, but not the form the inspired work will take. The vast majority of artists can only have a single muse at a time, and artists who can work with many muses simultaneously are thought to have mastered an arcane secret.

A muse can only directly affect one artist at a time, but this is not quite as restrictive as it appears. Many painters of the highest caste, as an example, produce works using a school of tradesmen and apprentices. The muse affects the quality of preparatory work supervised by the artist, provided that the artist intends to finish the piece personally.

Most artists must see their muse on a daily basis while working on a piece for it to be inspired, although they can stop working on pieces when their muse is away. Artists linked to their muses by virtues like True Love or Lost Love do not require the physical presence of the muse.

Covenfolk

Magical distortions are rarely found among the covenfolk of Valnastium, because its aura is unusually low for a covenant of such tremendous age. Unlike other early covenants it was founded in a mundane area, and the practice of Christianity has continued here, gently restraining the magical aura's development. Jerbiton knew that closed communities were targets for diabolic corruption, and his successors have ensured

regularity of sacraments in their valley. Many of the palaces used as sancta contain personal chapels. The main church of the valley was raised using Hermetic magic, and is dedicated to Saint Cyprian, who was a pre-Hermetic magus. Visitors usually mistake the dedication's meaning, thinking the Church was dedicated to Saint Cyprian of Carthage.

The covenfolk here speak Rhaetian, a dialect bought to the area by Roman settlers, from whom Jerbiton was descended. Their accent is distinctively different from that of Rhaetian speakers from other valleys. Certain magic items in the valley are keyed to Valley Rhaetian accents, which has slowed the rate of linguistic drift. They call themselves the Ierbii, but this name may be a contrivance.

Grogs in this covenant operate in groups of eight, which includes an officer who is shield-grog to a magus. These units are called "tent groups" and as the name suggests, this is because they are expected to bivouac together when away from the covenant. They train as a unit, and the membership of each is carefully balanced to

include a broad and useful set of skills. The Imperial Latin term for a tent group of legionaries — *contubernium* — is one source of the Hermetic collective noun for a group of grogs — "turb".

The Charm Offensive

Andru has noticed that the Dominion seems to have different flavors in different places, and that both sides in the Crusades claim miracles on their behalf. Side-stepping the common Christian assumption that Islamic miracles are false, and caused by demons, Andru has come to a revolutionary conclusion: God lets people pick what the Dominion does, within limits.

In the Book of Genesis, God grants dominion over the Earth to Adam. Andru believes, and he doesn't confide this to any



The Gardens of Valnastium

The gardens provide some of the covenant's food, but their produce includes more than fruit and vegetables. An island in the middle of one of the ponds is a corral for large culinary snails, which are delicious fried in butter with garlic. Several large clay pots are used as warrens for dormice, little mammals that are tasty minced and stuffed into other, larger, animals. The gardens contain several hives, and apprentices say that anyone upsetting the bees invites terrible luck.

The Valnastium gardens contain unusual features that will be noticed by visitors. The lawn is perfectly flat, trimmed with magic. Since medieval nobles scythe their lawns this lawn's smoothness gives the gardens a slightly eerie appearance. Many of the plants have been collected by Hermetic travelers in distant places, and are maintained in magical microclimates. Some plants are magical, while others are

simply bizarre. The covenfolk often relax in grottos in the gardens, in which beer and wine are stored while they ferment.

For Hermetic visitors interested in history there are a few equals to Valnastium. Although many Jerbiton magi are given church burial some of Jerbiton's early followers were buried in Roman-styled funerary gardens, and their monuments have been inscribed with accounts of their lives.

The gardens are important to Andru for many reasons. Jerbiton, who for a time at least had his laboratory on one of the lawns, laid them out and tending them is a sign of respect for the Founder. The gardens are a sign of wealth, power and order, used to impress those who come to the covenant. They demonstrate the fertility of the Earth under proper tending by human hands — a physical representation of his philosophy.



A Jerbiton View of Faeries

House Jerbiton dislikes faeries, despite their beauty and artistic prowess. There are several reasons for this, but during Andru's tenure, it's his opinion that has colored his House's antipathy for the fae. His opinion derives from his faith, which states that faeries have no souls.

The soullessness of faeries has several implications. Faeries are not people. They are, at best, intelligent animals and are no more human than dragons. Faeries are, generally speaking, incapable of creating things: they borrow their creativity from real people. They're parasitic animals, an affliction on the human race and an impediment to the spread of civilization. Their beauty is just a distraction from their essential nature. Faeries treat humans as prey — which is why the Church protects people from them.

A related problem is that a lot of the faeries which Hermetic magi meet are disguised demons. Many people will refuse

to follow any suggestion from a demon, but are willing to do foolish things with, even copulate with, faeries. Sex with faeries is a mortal sin — it's a type of adulterous bestiality that sometimes results in half-human children, but this becomes even worse when the partner is really a succubus.

House Jerbiton knows that faeries steal human creativity, or feed on humans directly. They know that they are cute and funny, but they find that creepy and insidious. Most members of the House think that faeries should be treated like elementals. The useful ones should be controlled and the dangerous ones should be rendered down for vis. Members of this House are some of the firmest advocates of the idea that it is only illegal to molest faeries if it brings down ruin on members of the Order. This does not endear them to House Merinita.

but his closest supporters lest other magi consider him insane, that the Dominion, although it comes from God, is mediated through the gift made to Adam. He is attempting to have the Church declare Hermetic magi to be "enchantment" (and thus permissible, like Natural Magic) rather than sorcery (which is infernal in origin). He hopes that this is within the range of flexibility God has granted those within the Dominion.

A complication for Andru is that the church is fragmented, so it is not absolutely clear who would need to make the declaration. The reasons for the fragmentation of the Church are many and complicated, but since 1059 relations between the eastern and western branches of the church have swung between resigned disgust and aggressive contempt. Finding the right person to make the declaration requires deep consideration of theological conundra, but Andru

tends to feel that the Council of Bishops would be required. Since crusaders recently sacked Constantinople, the see of the most senior eastern bishop, Andru doubts the Council, which includes both the bishop of Rome and the bishops of the east, will convene soon. It might be enough to get a large proportion of the rightful participants to agree, and this agreement is being sought, but Andru doubts its effectiveness.

Andru is hoping to demonstrate that the Gift is a charisma, a gift given by God and stamped upon the soul, like the others mentioned, in a non-exclusive list in the Bible. At the moment he isn't quite sure how, and is working on a "judge us by our acts" policy. House Jerbiton will give covert assistance to any research into the source of the Gift. Andru doesn't expect it to be successful, but a long list of things that don't create the Gift provides circumstantial evidence for manipulation by a higher power.





Chapter 9

Geography and History of the Greater Alps Tribunal

In the mountains travel routes are contorted. The land is twisted into curves, loops and hidden spaces. The history of the Alps is the story of human movement through, and habitation of, the corridors of Europe's largest labyrinth. Respect, authority and money are vested in those who control territory, by controlling travel routes.

Geography

The Alps are a series of mountains cut through with valleys. These valleys link together to form passes, which become avenues of settlement, travel and trade. The roads of the passes are, for the most part, impassable to wagons or carriages; goods are carried on horses and mules. Towns that control passes and their approaches are of military and mercantile significance.

A complementary method of travel through the Alps is by water. The rivers pour from the Alps toward the seas and the port cities that lie on the coasts. Alpine lakes serve as crossroads for river travel and lake towns are some of the oldest and richest in the region. While river travel is common, the rivers are not navigable in many areas because steep descents are filled with rapids.

High-yield crops are difficult to grow in mountainous areas. In lower or warmer passes wheat can be grown. In most areas only

rye grows. Most villages in the mountainous areas have reached the maximum population the area can sustain.

The Western Alps

The Jura Mountains form a line of obstruction to the northwest of the French Alps. The Jura are lower than the Alps but their valleys are heavily forested, so traders tend to divert either north or south about them. Between the Alps and the Jura is a plateau of high, hilly country called the Oberland. This is the breadbasket of the western Alps, where the population is most dense.

The two most important passes up to 1220 are the Little Saint Bernard and the Great Saint Bernard. Around 1220 a new pass, Saint Gotthard, is opened, linking the Italian trading cities to the north of Europe by a more rapid route. As its popularity grows, the relative wealth and power of the towns in the Oberland shift, with those on the new route stealing prosperity from those on the old.

There are several lower, flatter areas in the western Alps where crop yields are relatively high. Each of these areas is, comparatively, densely populated. A small, but notable, area includes the city of Saint Gallen, which exports wheat to surrounding areas. Yields are not as high in this region as

in the Oberland, so few settlements are large. In the southern foothills of the Alps the warmer climate allows production of more Mediterranean crops.

Aareschlucht (Aare Gorge)

Near the village of Meiringen is a deep crevasse in which dwells the Tatzelwurmli, a monstrous, limbless land dragon or variant of the well worm. No Hermetic covenant has claimed harvesting rights at this site, because none has demonstrated capacity to harvest from the worm's lair.

Appenzellerland

Appenzell is the main village in a secluded region of the area controlled by Saint Gallen. Its residents are the targets of ethnic humor in other areas. They are widely disparaged as unsophisticated rural yokels, even by those from other rural areas. Wrestling is particularly popular in this region, although the sport is pursued in many towns. Wrestling is covered by the Brawling skill.

Baden

The town of Baden, whose name means "Bath," contains a series of sulfur springs that have been visited for their medicinal properties since Roman times. They are particularly effective against illnesses of the joints, heart and lungs, and are considered an excellent remedy for baldness and the heart-sickness of failed love. Many other villages near hot springs were popular holiday spots for discomfited Romans.

Vindonossa

Between Baden and Basel lie these ruins of a Roman fortress that defended Helvetia from the German hordes across the Rhine. Within its fallen walls is the castle of

Hapsburg, from which that noble family takes its name. Bishop Werner of Straussburg, ancestor of the Hapsburgs, constructed it in the 11th century. A scion of the family, although not the most senior, lives here, and his ancestors rest on the family ground.

Basel

Founded in A.D. 44 by the Romans, this city sits near the highest navigable point of the Rhine, and looks across the river to a smaller settlement that it also governs. It is a city of merchants and usurers, and is made cosmopolitan by the steady stream of trade that passes through it to the larger towns of the Alps. The bishop has ruled Basel since 1032, and its cathedral has been in place for less than two centuries.

The Copper Rooster, an inn in Basel, is owned by House Mercere, and is used as a message transfer point. Redcaps from the three neighboring tribunals use it as a place to recuperate from long journeys, acquire



How to Wrestle Like a Mountain Man

The Alpine style of wrestling is a strength-based sport. Although agility is useful for attempting throws, this style of wrestling emphasizes power. A bout begins with two men — matched by height if there are many contestants — standing on a circle of wood shavings. They shake hands and take up the starting stance. Each is bent over at the waist, resting their weight equally on both legs. Each grips the other on the belt and on the hem of short, sturdy trousers used in this sport. A referee starts the match, and then the men try to throw each other. The first whose back hits the wood shavings loses. Friendly matches last for five minutes. Those involving money continue until someone falls. As an alternative to hitting the ground, a wrestler also loses if his opponent holds him in a bridge. The bridge is a lock hold where the loser is face-upward and is bent over the upper leg of his opponent, which is thrust into the small of the loser's back.



fresh horses, restock their saddlebags and drop off or collect messages that have been addressed across tribunal borders. Redcaps who have become too old for the arduous duties of the Hermetic postal service are often retired to the inn. This is why some of the tenants seem to lodge in the Copper Rooster indefinitely. Many retired redcaps train apprentices, as a way to continue serving the House. The inn is named, euphemistically, for the basilisk. These monsters seem to hatch in Basel more often than average.

Berne

Berthold V, Duke of Zähringen, founded Berne in 1191. On the day he laid the first stone he went hunting and killed an enormous bear. Taking inspiration from this he named the village after his hunting prize. The Bernese quickly became important players in the politics of this region. It came under control of the Emperor in 1218. Berne is keen to expand into the surrounding region, and it eyes the surrounding villages covetously.

Named for the bear slain by its founder, this city has an odd relationship with the

local ursine population. The ancient Celts in this region worshipped a bear goddess called Artio. A prince of Berne, according to folklore, was saved from a siege by an army of bears whose leader, a talking bear, he had befriended in the forest. Local myths talk of a merchant selling his daughter in marriage to a bear. The home of the talking bears is not known to the Order, but would be of interest to Bjornaer and Merinita magi.

Constance

Constance is the main city on Lake Constance and regulates trade from Bavaria into the Alps. Its merchants and bishop, who is the ruler here, are extremely wealthy. Some commentators claim that Constance is the richest bishopric north of the Alps, but it is hard to be certain if this is true. What is clear is that when the bishop is of decisive character he plays a significant role in both secular and ecclesiastic politics.

Botzberg (Mons Vocitius)

This is the site of the battle, which, in A.D. 69, ended Helvetian independence from Rome. This site is not generally haunted, but the remains here can be used to call up the ghosts of fallen soldiers. Many ghosts have reported that religious figures, who sound like primitive magi, were killed in the battle, and magi occasionally excavate in this area, seeking the skulls of these ancient wizards. Extended stays, especially sleeping on-site, stirs the spirits of the field to recreate their battle, with any Hermetic magi taking the role of the fallen Roman priests. A magus who survived the spirit battle would know where the skull he seeks was buried, but the groups of magi who have attempted this have all died, and been dumped on the edges of the field. The ghosts, apparently, don't want the newly dead magi haunting them.

Taking the Cure

Characters who take the cure, at any of the hot springs, must spend at least a month at a spa that is historically renowned for curing their particular malady. Afterward they may ignore the symptoms of an annoying or minor physical affliction for three years or until it worsens, whichever happens first. If the affliction worsens the character feels as though the affliction has just been gained, the previous level of affliction does not appear to return. If the character stays away from the baths for longer than three years, then one level of symptoms returns per month, with all returning the next winter.

The baths do not truly heal afflictions: the losses on the aging table remain unchanged and the characters live no longer than they otherwise would. The baths do, however, make people feel well, and relieve the symptoms of certain conditions if used regularly. The most serious conditions can, however, only be cured by the miraculous springs of the Church.

Cirque d'Annibal

Close to the entrance of the Alps from the Burgundinian side through the little pass of Saint Bernard, is a field in which stands a vast circle of ten, ill formed monoliths. Hannibal waited for stragglers from his army here, and held a council of war before marching on into Italy. Members of the Order say this site is ill-omened, filled perhaps with the spirits of those who died on the march from Carthage. As the descendants of the Romans, they believe, their presence angers the fallen. The more melodramatic myths say the shadows here fuse into a demonic shape, part bronze, part man, but mostly elephant.

Domleschg

This valley demonstrates the superabundance of castles in Rhaetia, holding 21 castles in various stages of use and decay. This

site is of particular interest because it is believed that, in the years before the founding of the Order of Hermes, a remarkable battle took place here.

Legend has it that during the early years of the Order, a group of 15 druids lived as a community here and were attacked by Díedne and her followers. The Domleschg druids resisted Díedne because they believed female druids were antithetical to their style of magic, and a female Archdruid would destroy their link to the mysteries of their religion. Which of the castles belonged to the fifteen, if any did, is unknown, but a grove of oaks, raised by the victors to mark the battlefield, is claimed as a source of Rego vis by the motherhouse of the covenant, Icy North. It is said each oak was grown magically from an acorn planted in the mouth of one of the corpses.





Einsiedeln

Saint Meinrad was murdered on the site of the town of Einsiedeln in 861. A member of a powerful family, he had withdrawn from the world to spend his life in prayer before a figurine of the Virgin, which had been given to him by Saint Hildegarde, the abbess of Zurich. A pair of ravens, which he had tamed, followed his murderers when they fled to Zurich. As the reputation of the cell as a place of miracles spread, it was rebuilt and a community of Benedictines settled here.

In 968 the bishop of Constance traveled to Einsiedeln to consecrate a new church. The night before the ceremony the song of an angelic choir awakened him. As he began the ceremony a voice from the heavens declaimed, "Desist! God Himself has consecrated this building." The pope ratified in a Bull that this miracle had occurred and declared the chapel a place of plenary indulgence. This has made Einsiedeln the most important pilgrimage site in the tribunal. Every year on September 14th the villagers hold a torchlight procession to celebrate the Festival of the Miraculous Declaration.

Of the abbeys of the western Alps, Einsiedeln is second only to Saint Gallen in terms of secular power. Its abbots are great princes, who are served by hereditary officers of noble lineage. From their vast riches the abbots of Einsiedeln paid for the construction of the Devil's Bridge in Saint Gotthard's Pass, or so they say. Others doubt it is the work of man, and locals swear it was constructed by the Devil, and can show the visitor great boulders thrown by the Devil when cheated of his price.

Fribourg

This town lies southwest of Bern. Berhtold IV, a Zähringer, founded it in 1157. The House of Savoy continues the frenetic castle building in the area around it, erecting new fortifications at Gruyeres, Estervayer-le-Lac, and Morat during the thirteenth century.

Follies

A desperate and self-destructive desire to build towns and castles typifies the noble families of the Alps. Following the lead of the now-extinct Zähringers, most noble families pour tremendous quantities of manpower and money into the construction of castles that have only temporary military value.

Much of this construction is due to a type of spirit found in the Alps. Spirits of this type inhabit buildings. To breed they need to lay the equivalent of an egg in a new building. Each spirit has minor mind-affecting powers, but the larger the building, the stronger the spirit becomes. Those spirits living in castles use paranoia to encourage the building of more castles, ensuring their offspring a good environment in which to grow. Since they are imbued with these spirits many Alpine castles will have weak magical auras, perfect for habitation by magi.

If Folly Spirits eat ghosts, it would explain the surprising rarity of haunted castles in Alpine folklore. A powerful folly spirit only needs to feed before producing an egg, and might feed by killing humans in ways that produce ghosts, leading to a spate of suspicious accidents.

Local legend says that if you stay up the night of Saint John's Eve you can catch the seeds of ferns. These are fiery, luminescent and golden. Peasants say servants of the devil are forced to give you a bag of money in exchange for them. Similar myths are found elsewhere in the Alps, linking fern seeds to wealth. Hermetic magi believe fern seeds contain Ignem vis, and call them "the blood of the Sun".

Geneva

Geneva is a relatively wealthy city that was ruled by first the Romans, who founded a bishopric here, and then the Burgundians.

In 1220 Geneva's bishop rules the city, while its count rules the surrounding lands. His lands are, in turn, surrounded by fortified positions held by the House of Savoy.

Pierres de Niton

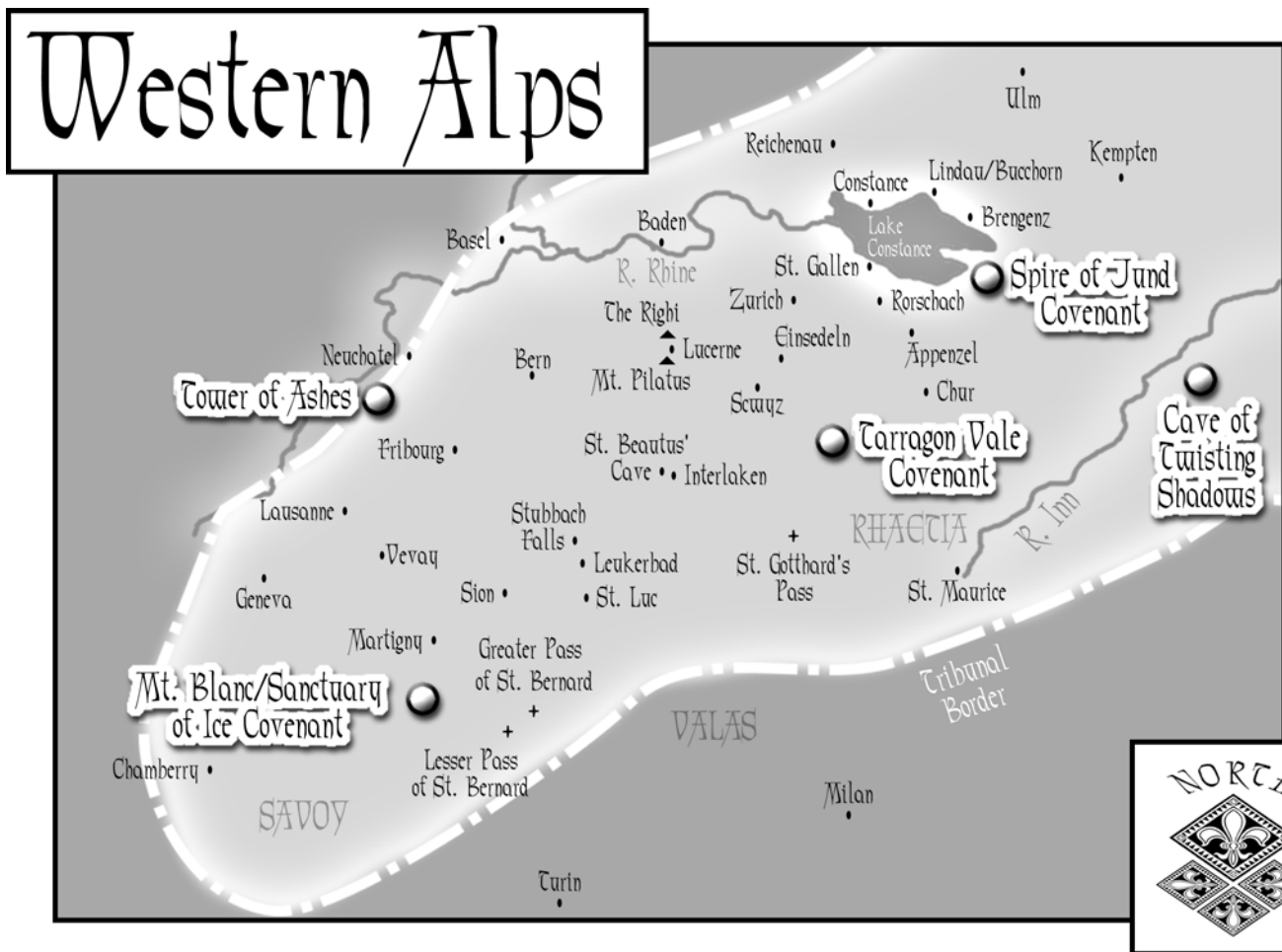
These are two large, flattish rocks that emerge from Lake Léman, slightly south east of the city of Geneva. Hermetic myth says that the members of House Dïedne used to perform human sacrifices here, but that may be a distorted folk memory of the Romans who may have sacrificed to Neptune upon them. Gargantua, a giant, threw the largest of these stones into the lake. He is credited with digging Lac Léman and the creation of many of the hills and troughs around Geneva.

Lausanne

A fortified town near Geneva, Lausanne was settled by the survivors of Alemmanian attacks on the Roman-settled town of Lousonna. In either locale their function was to ensure Roman possession of the approaches to Saint Bernard's Pass. Its inhabitants are in the process of rebuilding their cathedral, slowed by the enormous demand for laborers and masons bought about by the castle building mania.

Pfeffers

This is a Benedictine monastery found in 713, near which are a series of hot springs. Since these springs are recessed in a crevice, patients are lowered into them using long ropes. Since lifting the patients out at the end of each day is so burdensome, it is





traditional to leave patients in the heated wells for a week at a time, lowering food to them occasionally.

Heiligenblut

This village, whose name means “holy blood,” is named after a vial of the blood of Jesus held in the local church. It was brought to the area by a Byzantine general who died here, of exposure, while on campaign. A member of House Tremere was Marched two centuries ago for attempting to steal the vial.

Interlaken

Interlaken sits on a thin strip of land between two narrow lakes, Thun and Brienz, each a conduit of trade. It’s a useful docking point for merchants coming along the lakes before heading south. A castle, Unspunnen, overlooks it. Last century the Unspunnens ruled much of the Oberland, but their line came to an end in a single female heir, a beauty called Ida.

Ida caught the eye of a knight, Rudolph of Wadenschwyl, but his family members were supporters of the Zähringers. Burkland, the Count of Unspunnen, was a deadly foe of the House of Zähringen. So Ida’s beau scaled the walls of the castle and stole her away. This led to war between the Unspunnens and Zähringers. Many years later Rudolph returned, unarmed and with his wife and infant son, to confront the Count. Overjoyed to have his daughter returned, and meet the new hope of his house, the Count declared annual games would be held here to celebrate this happy day. Teams come from the neighboring areas to race, pitch stones, wrestle and perform other feats of manly strength.

From Interlaken one can see the face of the Harder Man, the portrait of a man formed by the rocky outcrops of Mount Harder. It is said that he was a monk who, possessed, chased a child off a cliff. As punishment he was set in stone, and now looks out over the Oberland, awaiting the Final Day.

The hill overlooking the western end of Lake Thun has been inhabited since before the arrival of the Romans. The name comes from the Latin *dunum*, fortified hill. The Zähringers founded one of their many castles, which shares the name of the lake, here at the end of last century. A vassal of the Hapsburgs holds a second castle on the shores of Lake Thun, Oberhofen.

Between Thun and Interlaken is a castle, called Spietz, which was founded by Attila the Hun for reasons unknown.

Lukerbad

Lukerbad has the hottest thermal pools in Europe. The usual procedure for use of the baths of Luek is to bathe for one hour on the first day after arrival, and then add an additional hour per day until the patient is bathing for four hours before noon, followed by an hour’s nap, then four hours after dinner. A complete cure is thought to take three weeks. Lukerbad was the home of a powerful Flambeau maga named Sabina in the previous century. She disappeared, but her laboratory has never been found. Some magi suspect that Sabina was involved in unsavory theurgic practices, given that she lived near sulfurous wells.

Martigny

The Romans conquered the Martigny in A.D. 15 and it is the site of a festival that has continued since Roman times. Cows are encouraged to fight each other for the honor of becoming the Queen of the Herd. Hermetic magi have occasionally researched this festival, and some think that before the coming of the Dominion, it might have summoned a protective faerie spirit into the Queen, who then watched over the herds. The Queen of the Herd may have some link to the Mithran religion. If you are using the Legion of Mithras from *The Mysteries* in your saga, their Alpine meeting place is in this region.

Mount Pilatus

Mount Pilatus is a center of Alpine myth. It has so many unusual inhabitants that some Hermetic magi speculate that its slopes have a cluster of regions that open unpredictably. It is the reputed lair of dragons, home of gnomes, eyrie of a witch, and haunt of a sinner cursed by the Lord. Locals avoid it, and punish anyone who attempts its ascent.

Mount Pilatus is one of those sites in Mythic Europe that is always the source of new adventures. No matter how thoroughly characters survey it, no matter how many creatures they burn out of their lairs, there is always something new on the mountain, or in the mountain, or terrorizing the communities near the mountain. The mountain might be linked to Arcadia, or to the Realm of Magic, or both. Hermetic magi settling there would incite the local peasants and any residents would know no peace due to the mountain's inhabitants.

Pontius Pilate

Mount Pilatus takes its name from the unquiet spirit of Pontius Pilate. Those who climb the mountain anger him, and he retaliates with terrible weather, which damages the crops in the Lucerne region and makes the lake unnavigable for a few days. Even priests are forbidden to climb Pilatus, because few think that they can exorcise a spirit being justly punished by the Lord. His body lies incorrupt in an icy pool and he descends from the mountain once a year to wash his hands in the lake, which is said to then turn to blood. Hermetic magi once attempted to harvest vis from this ancient ghost. The following tribunal both made the act illegal and sent its commiserations to the sodales of the magi crushed in the avalanche that spoiled the attempt.

Lucerne

Lucerne is a small fishing village near Mount Pilatus that becomes economically and politically significant with the opening of the Saint Gotthard Pass, around 1220. Sagas that focus on Mount Pilatus can consider it as their source of manufactured supplies.

Barbegazi

The gnomes of Pilatus are small and blue. They avoid coming below the tree line and sleep through the summer. They have huge feet that they can use as skis, or to dig tunnels through snow. These gnomes can affect the weather, calling down instant snowstorms to bury themselves and their enemies. The barbegazi, whose name probably means "icicle beards," are always male. They are found in much of Western Europe, living in tunnels on the tops of mountains that are permanently snowcapped.

Temple of Mercury

There is a ruined Temple of Mercury near Mount Pilatus. It is of intense interest to Hermetic historians, who try to link it to the three Founders whose *domus magna* adjoin the Alps. Thus far their cogitations are inconclusive. The temple was used as the meeting place for tribunals before the Midsummer Fair became popular. It remains hidden by magic items that generate illusions, but is not currently inhabited by magi, or used regularly. It would be an excellent site for a chapter house.

Rhaetia

The main settlement of this area is the town of Chur, once a Roman colony. It has had a bishop for eight hundred years, but its new cathedral was finished in about 1150.





Much of the territory of Rhaetia lives in a state of *faustrecht*, “club law,” where rights go to the strongest. The area is scattered with castles, filled with nobles whose territories are insignificant. The owner of each claims sovereignty and rights over nearby peasants, terrorizing sustenance out of them. Many settlements in Rhaetia have independent entries.

Reichenau

This island is owned by the Benedictine abbey founded upon it in 724. The abbey is extremely wealthy and has estates scattered down through the Alps to Italy. In the Munster Church, built in 806, lies Charles the Fat, who died here in 888. He is kept company by dozens of spurious treasures.

Legends of Barbegazi

There is a girl who lives in Lucerne with her mother. Three years ago she had an encounter with the barbegazi. The story, as she tells it, is that her mother was very ill, and too poor to afford the care of a doctor, or medicines, or even food. She was sent to ask her uncle for money, but he refused her, saying that it was not his responsibility to help. He called the girl's father, now dead, a spendthrift and a fool, and said that her mother was now reaping the folly of marrying him. He said he would rather have his fields filled with stones than help her. The girl begged for any small comfort for her mother, but her uncle mocked her and said he would not even give her the rind from his cheese. The girl fled his cottage in tears.

She paid little heed to her path, wandered from her way home, and met one of the gnomes. He gave her a pouch of herbs, and a wedge of cheese, and sent her on her way. The herbs were medicinal, and her mother soon felt well enough that her appetite returned. When the girl tried to cut the cheese, she found it extremely heavy and too hard for her knife. It had turned into gold.

That night, a terrible storm caused an avalanche which destroyed her uncle's cottage. He was crushed to death as his house was buried under tons of rubble. His fields were filled with stones.

Barbegazi

Characteristics: Int +2, Per +4, Str +2, Sta +5, Pre -1, Com 0, Dex +3, Qik +2.

Faerie Might: 20

Size: -2 or smaller

Traits: Sense of justice +3, Sense of mischief +2

Weapons: avoid melee combat using weather powers

Soak: +10, immune to cold and to metal weapons

Fatigue: OK, -1, -5, Incapacitated

Body levels: OK, -1, -5, Unconscious

Powers: Control Auram and Terram 8, Enchant Objects (see *Faeries* 2nd edition pages 92-93.)

Vis: One pawn of vis in each large foot. Type varies by what the gnome was doing when killed.



These include a water pot claimed to be from Cana and an "emerald" weighing 28 pounds that was presented to the church by Charlemagne, but is made of glass.

Members of House Merinita believe that many of these relics are the result of a wager between one of their number and a local faerie queen. She would pay the magus vis if he could get the Church to accept increasingly flagrant forgeries. The right to make this wager, which the magus must have won repeatedly, may have passed to one of descendants (the Heir virtue) or might be arranged by seeking out the faerie lady.

The Righi

The Righi is a mountain roughly halfway between Schwyz and Lucerne, thought by the peasants to be the abode of giants. Shadows, vast and with rainbow-hued edges, are sometimes seen projected upon the fog that shrouds the mountain. Hermetic magi know that these are, at best, the ghosts of giants. The death of the last giant on the Righi was the event that catalyzed the movement to limit the Hermetic population of the Alps to sustainable levels. The Covenant Where Journeys End owns this territory in the Hermetic sense, and hopes that giants will resettle the mountain eventually.



St Beatus' Cave

In the Jungfrau region lie a series of caves that show signs of habitation by ancient and primitive people. This cave system is believed to have been the retreat of a British saint. He converted the people of this region to Christianity and performed many miracles, the most dramatic of which was evicting the previous tenant of this cave complex, a dragon.

Saint Bernard's

Benedictine monks support a hospice in this region, dedicated to, among other goals, saving those who become lost on the Saint Bernard Pass. There have been several monasteries in this pass, the earliest of which was founded either by Charlemagne's illegitimate brother, or his uncle, each of whom was called Bernard and led troops through this area. Yet another Bernard, whose pious service as leader of this community for four decades, led to his canonization, founded the current monastery in 962. At about the same time he founded a second house on the Little Saint Bernard Pass. Each of the houses of Saint Bernard was dedicated to Saint Nicholas of Myra, but Saint

The Dogs of St. Bernard's

When modern readers think of a St. Bernard, they know only the dog that is the culmination of centuries of breeding. In 1220, the characteristic breed is in its infancy of development. Dogs, however, have been part of Alpine life since the Romans. Used in war and as draft animals, the large Roman dogs known as Molosser formed the basis for the St. Bernard breed. For many farmers in the mountains of the Alps, a dog is more useful than a horse as it can fulfill many draft chores and also will guard herds of cattle from marauding predators.

Bernard, the patron of Alpine travelers, has proven popular.

Late in the 11th century the monastery was razed, the monks dispersed and the surviving structures captured by Saracens. When it was refounded in 1123 the hospice was renamed after Saint Bernard.

Prior to the foundation of the first monastery there was a pagan temple in the pass. First used by worshippers asking the protection of the Celtic mountain god, in

Dragons and Dragonets

A man was out hunting chamois on the mountain when he fell into a deep crevasse. Coming to his senses he found that he was in a great cavern, in which slept two dragons. The man hid himself when one of them stirred, but it simply uncoiled itself, licked a rock at one end of the cave, then went back to sleep. After three days of watching each dragon wake and lick the stone the chamois hunter, who was starving, licked the stone himself and found that it made his hunger end. The chamois hunter survived for months by licking the stone, until summer came and the dragons awoke at the same time. One flew off, and the second turned to glare at the spot where the man was hiding. Then it reached for him with its tail, and lifted him from the

cave. He went home, and has not visited the mountain since. House Mercere has made it known they would pay handsomely for this rock.

There was once a criminal in Lucerne who was told all his misdeeds would be forgiven if he killed the dragon assailing the village. Hiking up the mountain he tracked the beast to a flat little spur on the mountainside. The dragon was tiny, no longer than a man is tall, but quick and fire breathing. The man dropped his backpack and gear, all except his sword, and after a series of feints and stops he was able to slice through the dragonet's neck. In the next second he died. The dragonet's blood was corrosive, and ate his flesh away.

Roman times it became an enclave of the priests of Jupiter. It was destroyed during the barbarian invasions, perhaps with the assistance of evangelical monks. The monks collect the artifacts that occasionally surface from the previous tenancy.

The hospice has strong, but informal, Hermetic ties. House Jerbiton assists in the identification of dead travelers, as part of their charming of the Church. The mundane merchant house behind which House Mercere shelters occasionally supports this monastery financially. Properly equipped Redcaps can use less developed passes, for example they use the Saint Gotthard long before it becomes popular among mundanes, but merchants in their less covert operation find this an essential waypoint.

Saint Gallen

During the dark period between the fall of Rome and the rise of the Frankish empire,

Blizzard demons

Monastic presence in the mountain passes is vital, because it protects travelers from a type of demon that dwells in the Alps. These creatures can cause blizzards, so that travelers become lost in the snow, and lose their faith when faced with their own mortality. Once their faith is broken, the demons slay them.



Celtic monks made valiant efforts to keep the light of civilization alive. One of these, by the name of Gallus and from Iona, was strolling through the Alps one day when he tripped and fell into a briar, which tangled into his clothes. He'd been seeking a sign from the Lord, and read this to mean that he should stay in this spot. He built a hermitage, aided by a bear, and settled in.





Infernal Bridges

The area about Lucerne lies on a trade route through the mountains that divide Italy (and the sea-lanes of the Mediterranean) from the agricultural lands and manufacturing centers of France and the Holy Roman Empire. This trade increases once St Gotthard's Pass, in the Ticino valley, is bridged, sometime around 1220. This bridge, like many in this Tribunal, is said to have been built by a devil.

In the usual story, the devil agrees to build a bridge in exchange for the soul of the first thing that crosses it. The human dealing with him agrees that the devil can have the first being that crosses the bridge. The devil is then tricked out of his due when an animal is herded across the bridge before any people use it.

Hermetic magi know that demons can be tricked, but most demons are sufficiently cunning that this trick should not be repeatable, and there are several bridges that have been built by devils. They also note that chickens and sheep lack souls, so

the trick doesn't fulfill the contract. Occultists theorize that:

- Sometimes the animal trick works
- Some of the bridges are the straight deal, with the sheep story as a cover for the newly damned bridge owner.
- Some of the bridges are created by faeries, which ask for sheep as sacrifices.
- Some of the bridges have human children sealed in the foundations to placate the faeries, and the sheep story is a cover.
- Sometimes demons want the bridges in place, because they think evil will come of it, for example, that people will use the bridges to wage war on their newly assailable neighbors.
- Some demons deliberately set up situations in which they can be tricked. Huge monuments like this encourage people to believe they can get the better of the Devil, which is the sin of Pride, and lead fools into unwise wagers.

Gallus's cell grew into a monastery, then a cathedral, as a town sprang up around the place where he had fallen into the briar

bush. True to the goal of the Celtic founders, Saint Gallen became a center of learning. In time it sent out bands of monks to found new establishments. Its library, the Stiftsbibliothek, remains marvelous, but its prestige has waned.

During the 10th century the abbot fortified the town with a curtain wall and seven watchtowers. He and his Benedictines, perhaps 100 monks, took up weapons and conquered their neighbors. Since that time the abbot of Saint Gallen has controlled many of the surrounding territories.

Rosegarten

One regio that is still accessible belongs to a dwarf king, Laurens, who rules a land of roses. Laurens made war on his neighbors to kidnap a beautiful faerie princess. Her family followed the path of roses back to his realm, and reclaimed her. They captured Laurens, and imprisoned him.

Following lengthy detention, and a daring escape, Laurens traveled home to the Catinaccio. He noted that the roses marked the entrance to his realm, and made him vulnerable to his enemies. Laurens cursed the roses, commanding them to hide by night or day, giving them the appearance of stone. At dusk, however, when the sun lies low across the mountains of the Val Gardena, the Rosegarten can clearly be seen, wreathing the mountains in red.

Saint Pierre

This tiny village contains a column raised by Constantine the Great, which initially sat at the highest point of Saint Bernard's Pass. It was erected in 339 to

replace a statue of Jupiter Penninus, which the first Christian emperor ordered destroyed.

Saint Gotthard Pass

This pass was opened for foot traffic around 1220, diverting traffic from the other Alpine passes, as it is a more direct route from Basel or Zurich to Italy. Locals claim the Devil built it but the abbot of Einsiedlen insists they paid for its construction. It is undergoing improvement, and may be ready for pack animals soon.

Saint Maurice

This village is named after a Christian soldier martyred here in 302 for refusing to worship the Roman gods. The Ring of Saint Maurice, a powerful relic, is held by the archbishop of Salzburg.

Savoy

Those sections of the tribunal that lay in the Kingdom of Burgundy are in the territory of the house of Savoy. The Covenant Where Journeys End, an ancient covenant whose magi are predominantly members of House Merinita, claims many of the vis sources in the area, but most of the other Alpine covenants have at least one chapter house here, primarily to gather vis. This region has been ill-omened for the Order, as Hermetic settlements here were destroyed during the Schism War and the purge of House Tytalus. Journeys End was severely damaged during the civil war within House Merinita, and some predict that the next crisis that shakes the Order will be presaged by the destruction of a Hermetic settlement in this area. Hermetic magi of a less mystical bent point out that there was no warning from this area about the corruption of House Tremere, or the rise of the Shadow Flambeau.

Savoy attracts Seekers interested in the various ruined Hermetic settlements, and the relatively stable chapters here are often the proving grounds for magi of middle age, or retirement quarters for ancient or addled magi. Savoy, and its ruler, are described on pages 24–27 of *A Medieval Tapestry*.

Val Fanes

The Fanes, a style of faerie, ruled a powerful kingdom in a valley in the Ticino region, but were conquered in ancient times by humans. They hide, awaiting the time of reckoning, when they shall have vengeance and rebuild their fallen palaces. Valnastium, the covenant in this area, favors priests because the aura of the chapels built on places of faerie power has bottled away many of the Fanes, leaving other important sites unguarded, and harvestable.

A ruling in the Peripheral Code indicates that Primus Andru, leader of the Covenant of Valnastium, engaged in just war against one of the faerie kings in this region. He was pardoned as the Tribunal ruled that he had the right to defend those in his employ or under his protection from the manipulations of the faerie, who wished to use them as game-pieces. Gossip indicates that Andru claimed the crown of a summer-aligned prince during this conflict. Discrete ill will is still felt between Valnastium and Journeys End over this issue.

Vervay

A society dedicated to the cultivation of the grape, called the Abbaye des Vignerons, is centered on Vervay. Every fifteen to twenty years the society sponsors a festival to celebrate viticulture. The finest grape-grower is crowned and presides over a procession and festival, and the most beautiful girl in the village is given a large dowry and is allowed to select the husband of her choice. The society acts like a guild, rewarding skilled growers with medals and pruning shears. Bronze tools were a traditional sacrifice to





the goddess of the Rhaetians, so this festival may be very ancient.

Voralberg

A small region on the flood plains of the upper Rhine, Voralberg is notable for its isolated villages, and relatively high faerie auras. The Romans had a fortress here, at the site of the regional capital, Bregenz. Several folktales from this area describe dragons, and “wandering scholars” who interact with them. Dragons in this region seem to be linked not to fire, but to tempests, storms and avalanches.

There are many dragons in the area. A beggar destroyed a farm in Bezau with a pet dragon he led by a red piece of rope about its neck. Lake Sonderdach has a resident dragon, which speaks to those who would swim in the lake, warning them away. Vale Galina contains a cave where a hoard, deposited by a scholar, is guarded by a dragon. A man

from Venice once came to the village of Sontag and mounted a dragon there, riding him off into the surrounding mountains. In this area Venedigers, “Men from Venice”, are a type of faerie.

Winterthur

Outside the village of Winterthur, near Zurich, is the home castle of the Kyburgers. Their territories extend north to the Rhine and east as far as Lake Constance. In that area they have about 100 other castles under vassalage, but given the vast number of castles in the Alps, this may not have been too difficult to achieve. As a demonstration, although Castle Kyburg is within two hours walk of Winterthur, a vassal of the Kyburgs constructed a second castle, overlooking the town, during the last century.



Zurich

The Romans, who named it Turicum, founded the city of Zurich. It was a customs port, mostly for textiles shipped south from Gaul. Trade along this route continued to be profitable, and Zurich gradually expanded in size and status. In 1218 it came under the control of Frederick, who became Holy Roman Emperor slightly later.

Bavaria

Bavaria is a broad plateau surrounded and pierced by mountains. It is divided into northern and southern sections by the Danube. The ducal seat is at Regensberg, straddling the river at the highest point navigable by deep-draughted vessels. The

The Traveler and the Dragon of Brand

A dragon was tormenting this village when a traveling scholar stopped here for the night. He said he had terrible powers, and the people became more afraid of him than the dragon. He offered to destroy the dragon and asked the villagers if he should destroy the beast with fire or water. Being more afraid of the man than the dragon, and more afraid of fire than water, they chose the latter.

The traveling scholar conjured up a terrible lightning storm. The deluge was so great that the entire hillside on which the dragon laired came away and cascaded into the valley floor. Then, a bolt of lightning struck the dragon dead. The next morning the villagers found great piles of rock and rubble, which they now call the Grave of the Dragon, but the stranger has never been seen in the region again.

Danube and its tributaries are major avenues for transport and trade. The river valleys and other low-altitude areas are particularly fertile, concentrating the population along them. Fertile soils encourage heavy forestation in the less civilized areas.

Bavaria's wealth is found in trade, forestry and agriculture. With notable exceptions, for example, Augsburg, Bavaria has comparatively little mineral wealth.

Augsburg

The people of Augsburg mine gold, silver and copper. This has made them extremely rich, and given their settlement extraordinary prestige.

A series of secret tunnels have been found beneath Augsburg, linking two churches, one on each side of the city. The Quaesitores, and members of the Houses of Jerbiton and Criamon, have investigated these catacombs, and suspect, from the Hermetic symbols mixed into the religious iconography on the walls, that this was the residence of a religious magus. The identity, location and fate of this individual remain absolutely obscure. No covenant claims these tunnels, and they might be suitable for settlement by a chapter house, but the dominion aura of city has so far dissuaded those seeking a site.

The Danube

The Danube is one of Europe's major rivers. It rises from sources in the Black Forest and, fed by Alpine tributaries, flows in a roughly southeasterly direction, passing Regensberg and Vienna before leaving the tribunal. A few days travel after it enters Hungary its course turns south, before eventually turning east again and draining into the Black Sea. It is a major route for trade, being navigable for virtually all of its length, although it is subject to periods of flooding and low water, and parts freeze in winter.

The Romans portaged goods between the Danube to the Main, a route still popu-





lar in 1220. Charlemagne attempted to have a canal dug to link to the Danube to the Main. Since the Main flows into the Rhine, this would have created a transport corridor across the continent. The magi of Mercere find the idea charming, but can't find a way of helping the process along without breaching the Code.

The Covenant of the Sinews of Knowledge lies hidden behind a minor cataract that feeds the Danube.

Mittenwald

Mittenwald is renowned as home to a master carver who makes the very finest instruments. None can match his technique, yet, when he dies, one of the other instrument makers in the village somehow becomes the new master carver. The transition takes less than a day.

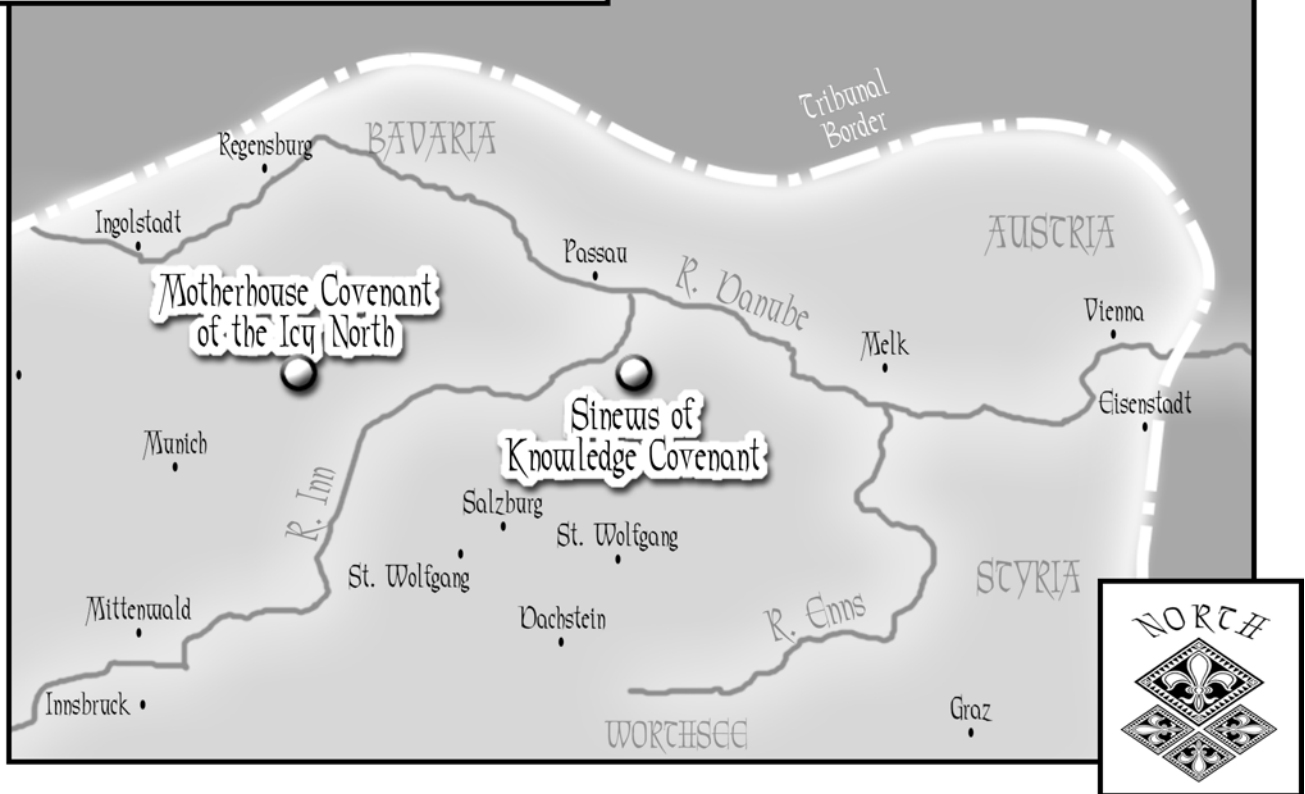
This is a remnant of one of the oldest forms of magic, atavism. By being where the master carver should be and wanting what the master carver should want, each new claimant is mystically made able to do what the master carver should do. The new master carver even inherits a few of the memories of their predecessor, such as commissions yet to be filled and payments yet to be made.

Members of the Order who have investigated the master carver have found his technique and practices absolutely mundane. If the techniques of the master carver are followed exactly, the instruments created are not magical, merely excellent mundane versions.

Munich

Although this area was settled for some time before their arrival, this town's history

Bavarian Alps



Danu

Danu is a river goddess of tremendous power. Unlike most river deities, who gain their power from an attachment to a single watershed, Danu is linked to a complicated web of rivers found throughout Mythic Europe. She embodies the Danube, the Dnieper, the Don and several other rivers with similar names in England and Ireland. Danu is also linked to the land of Ireland, but her presence there dimmed when the Gaels forced her children, the Tuatha de Danu, to become reclusive creatures that dwell under the Earth. She has a few followers in House Merinita, and they claim her area of influence spreads even further east, into Asia.

Danu faded from the world along with many of the other ancient powers. The nymphs of the waters, who were once her handmaidens, obey her will and preserve what they can of her treasures. Hidden in the rivers of Danu are regiones, jeweled grottoes in which the nymphae dwell. At the chthonic springs from which the rivers flow are portals that lead through undersea realms to Arcadia, and the River.

In Faerie, Danu is the queen of a mighty river — the River — that flows miles-wide from the most distant reaches of Arcadia, caressing the border of bright summer and bright winter. The headwaters of the river are a venerated place, even among the wonders of Arcadia, but humans who travel there never return. The few Merinita magi who worship Danu think of the river's headwaters as a paradise in which to take their eternal rest.

Danu is powerful beyond statistics and no longer interacts directly with mortals.

dates back to the 700s, when a band of Benedictines started a monastery here. A settlement formed about it, and is still expanding.

Regensburg

Regensburg is the seat of the duke of Bavaria, and is the richest city in the region. It sits on the Danube, and trades with the cities to the east. Trade also flows through it over the Brenner Pass and down into Italy. The link is substantial enough that Italian cultural influences are starting to appear in the social life and architecture of the richer sections of the city.

The cathedral of Regensburg was started last century, and still isn't completed. In part this is because the various bishops keep adding new bits to an already complicated design, but there seems to be an indefinable something that stops the construction from being finished.

The Eastern Marches

As one travels east, the Alps grow mountainous and climatically unpleasant. In the center of the eastern marches the Alps divide into three parallel ranges, running, very roughly, east to west. Mountain passes break each of the three ranges, so that the eastern Alpine region, despite being mountainous, is relatively easy to traverse. The mountain ranges taper into foothills as they continue east, and beyond the foothills are plains that mark the edge of the Tribunal.

The population of the eastern marches is concentrated in the eastern foothills, because soils are richer there and the land easier to farm. The ducal seat for Austria, the oldest eastern duchy, is on the Danube at Vienna. There is a cluster of other duchies in this region. The most significant pass in the east is the Brenner, in use since Roman times.

Burgenland

The territory of Burgenland is divided between two tribunals, with its northern plains part of Transylvania. The southern





Dolomite Legend

The white color of the Dolomites is contrasted, in the local imagination, with the somber blackness of the Alps. Folklore suggests that the Salvani, a tribe of gnomes, made the mountains white.

The prince of the Dolomites had come of age and a party was held so that he could choose a wife from the local noblewomen. Retiring to the garden for some air, the prince saw the most beautiful woman in the world, but when he tried to touch her, his hand went through her, since she was made of moonlight. The prince chose none of the local women as his bride, and, to the concern of his peoples, spent increasing amounts of time haunting the dark places of his kingdom at night, awaiting moonrise.

One evening he was met by a troop of Salvani, who were seeking a new home, having been forced from their woods by humans. The prince, who felt sympathy for their social exclusion, offered them one of his forests. In exchange they told the prince that he could reach the Moon by climbing the highest peak in the Dolomites, and just stepping across as the moon sailed by. The prince did so, and married the princess of the moon

The marriage was happy, but seemed doomed. In time the intense light from the Moon began to blind the prince, so he bought his bride back to Earth. They lived happy for a time, but the princess became depressed and lethargic. When it seemed that either she would die, or the prince would have to accept blindness on the Moon, the Salvani returned and wove a web of moonlight into the mountains, turning them white. The princess recovered.

The myth does not say that the couple had children, but Lucent Faeries are of extreme interest to the magi of the Alps. Both Valnastium, which rests in the web of moonlight, and Journeys End, which rests on a peak taller than the highest in the Dolomites, feel their rival is withholding the vital information that will allow access to the Lunar Faerie Realm. Bonisagus magi are fascinated by the idea that the entire Dolomite region might be a huge, weak regio. Merinita magi who study the area hope to find a technique for weaving moonlight into stones, either for harvest, or to create regiones.

and central area is a thin strip of wooded hills that lie at the very edge of the Alps. Dividing the land types, the Burgenland is also traditionally the border between the lifestyle of civilized Europe and the plains of Hungary. The territory is named "land of castles" because its central and southern areas bristle with fortifications. Each successive wave of Eastern invaders, once they settle down to Alpine agriculture, puts more bricks on the walls of Burgenland.

The settlement of Eisenstadt effectively marks the Tribunal border. The redcaps use an exchange point west of Eisenstadt, a small regio that contains a marble statue of the Trivia, the threefold goddess of the roads.

Dachstein

Close to Dachstein lie a series of ice caves, which lead to a regio. In the Dachstein regio live a community of giants. The majority are not particularly bright. They are ruled by a small caste of magic weaving giants, who sometimes pretend to be as simple as their servants, but are exceptionally devious. The giants travel to Arcadia to forage, but their gateway leads to the Summer lands. They claim to be a raiding party that was harried by Summer Faeries and took refuge in the mortal world.

The giants are allies of the Covenant Where Journeys End and sometime trade with the magi there. The giants value iron;

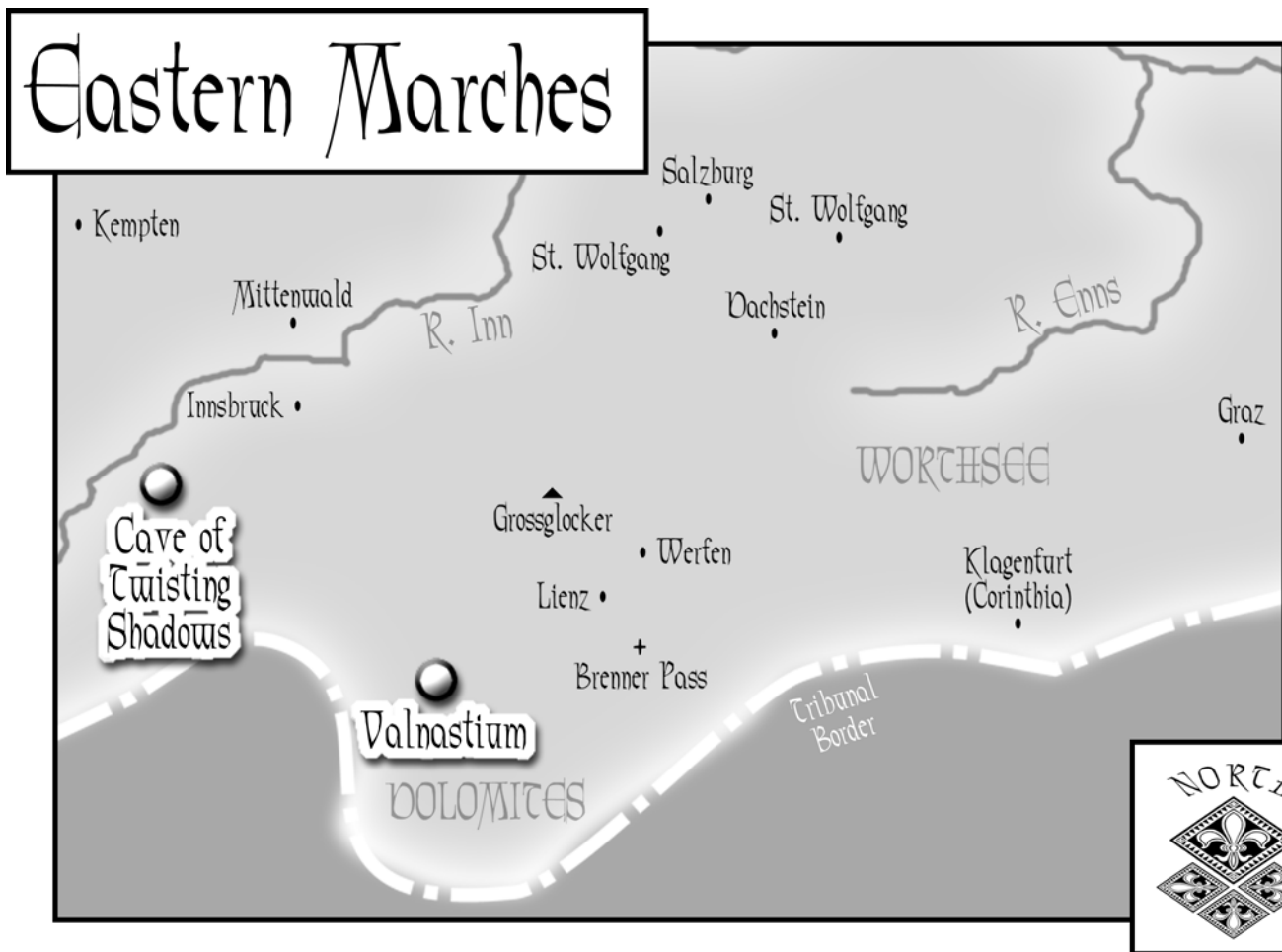
they use it to poison their enemies. They want, most desperately, to recover the Banner of Winter, which allows them to travel in the hot summer lands for an extended period. Magi from Journeys End sometimes search for the Banner, but aren't sure they want to return it to their massive allies. It would allow the giants to either depart into the depths of Arcadia or to rampage across Mythic Europe.

The giants of Dachstein claim an ancestral homeland on the edges of Arcadian Winter. The giants there are larger, smarter and more cultured than the Dachsteiners, who have been weakened by their proximity to the mundane realm. Giants, beings aligned to the Magical realm who live in Arcadia, fascinate those Hermetic magi who advocate retreat before the Dominion.

Dolomites

The Dolomites are a region of mountains in the south-east of the Tribunal. Their inhabitants differentiate the Dolomites from the rest of the Alps because they are made predominantly of limestone, which gives them a paler colour. The erosion of other materials from around the limestone has left hills and mountains of unusual starkness. They sometimes look like single, enormous rocks. At sunrise and sunset, the limestone surfaces blaze with reflected colour and during each day, on an erratic schedule determined by the angles of their surfaces, the mountains glow in white.

Local folklore suggests that the rocks of the region are not entirely natural, as described in the nearby insert, and Hermetic magi agree that something about the region is a little odd. A faerie aura rises in the wild areas of the region on most nights, its inten-





sity determined by the lunar schedule. On nights with no moon, it does not rise. Its usual strength is 1, but on nights of the full moon it is 2. In those areas which already have Bright-aligned faerie auras, this lunar tide acts as a bonus.

A second unusual phenomenon is that coral is sometimes found in the rocks here. Hermetic magi consider coral a useful substance, since it can be employed in anti-demonic enchantments, so the life cycle of the coral plant is well understood. That coral is found beneath the earth on some of the highest mountains in Europe is bizarre. Some speculate that it is an earth coral that, like normal water coral, turns to stone when removed from its growing environment. Religiously inclined Jerbiton magi see it as the buried remnant of a crop that grew during Noah's Flood.

Klagenfurt

Refounded in 1161, this Carinthian town was the site of one of Herakles's less-publicized labors. The villagers were unable to drain the marshes nearby because of the lindworm, a dragon with a taste for the flesh of virgins. Fortunately Herakles wandered through the area and dispatched the creature, thereby making all the virgins in the vicinity quite grateful. The locals keep the skull of the lindworm to this day.

Melk

The abbey at Melk was originally a castle of the Babenbergs, but was passed to the Benedictines a century and a half ago. The monks here are great collectors and cataloguers of knowledge, and their library is excellent. The abbey reports directly to the Pope, without intermediary bishops, and persistent rumor links it to a special school for Hermetic magi who take monastic and military vows, dedicating their lives to the war against demons.

The Other Mine

Emeralds are extremely rare in Europe, compared with the rest of the world. Stones in Mythic Europe, other than those created by magic, usually come from a series of mines near the shores of the Red Sea in distant Egypt. Some come from Asia, along the Silk Road. Others may come from Russia, in many ways even less accessible than the Levant. There is only one viable source of emeralds in Europe, exploited by the Romans, in the Habach Valley, near Salzburg.

No one knows just where it is.

Many suspect that the mine will never be found. Some claim the faeries took the stones. A few continue prospecting, in the hope that the defenses of some ancient magus, who hid the site, will erode as time and the Dominion wash over them.

Salzburg

This city has been the main settlement of a broad region of Alpine land since the Romans invaded in the first century. They mined salt here, which gives the town its name. The town was fortunate enough to avoid the destruction wrought on its neighbors by successive migrating tribes of barbarians. As a surviving city, it has tended to draw refugees from its desolated neighbors.

One of the traditional gateways to the Alps, its size and wealth have made its leaders decisive players in regional politics for centuries. In the thirteenth century it is the seat of a powerful archbishop, who opposes the Duke of Austria. The archbishop keeps the ring of Saint Maurice, said to make one undefeatable in battle. His castle, thought impregnable, has never been successfully taken in siege.

St Wolfgang

In 976 a priest named Wolfgang decided he wanted to found a church in the Abersee valley. He flung his axe at random and founded his church where it fell. He then challenged and defeated the Devil, so that he might never harm the new foundation. Wolfgang was canonized for his miraculous feats, and his church is a pilgrimage site. Characters who are plagued by demons sometimes retire from the world here. At any time, one or more of the monks may be a powerful, retired magus, hiding out from the servants of demons he has banished back to Hell.

Schwyz

Slightly before the year 1200 the monks of the Einsiedlen were granted the lands around Schwyz, after claiming that they were uninhabited waste. The Schwytzers, whose opinion differed, violently assaulted the abbey's tenants. They then became active in international affairs, joining the coalitions that formed against the Emperor. Recently the Imperial mantle has descended on their ally, Frederick II.

That it should be possible to misplace the Schwytzers seems extraordinary, even to Hermetic magi, who make a habit of ensuring nobles misplace Alpine villages. Many see the Vanishing Away of the magi from the Covenant of Tarragon Vale, which is nearby, and the sudden appearance of the Schywtzers as being too strongly linked for coincidence. If any of the other covenants have discovered a more detailed explanation they have yet to proffer it to their sodales.

Staubbach Fall

The Dust Fall is a thin cascade near Lauterbrunnen. Its height is so great and volume so little that before the water can strike the ground it dissipates into mist. This gives it the appearance of a diaphanous cloth whipped by the wind. During the win-

ter an inverted icicle of monstrous proportions forms here: its cone towers halfway up the falls.

The Dust Fall is a source of *Imáginem vis*, but its harvesting rights are highly mobile, traded as a high-value barter item amongst the magi of the Tribunal. Currently the right to harvest *vis* from the mists of Staubbach lies with Paxon of Verditius, but it is inconveniently distant from his own covenant, and he would be willing to sell were an intriguing offer to be made. This is a public *vis* source — see page 6.

Styria

Styria is a broad swathe of foothills that stretch from the Austrian Alps down to the plains of Eastern Europe. Historically it is a border, a defensive line held by the Romans, and later Christians, against the steppe peoples who emerged from central Asia. Although there have been garrisons here since Roman times, Styria, along with Austria, was founded to defend the flank of the Frankish empire.

During the period of relative peace in the 11th century, churches sprouted throughout this country much as castles sprouted elsewhere. This was part of the effort toward consolidation of the territory made by the ruling family, who died out in 1192. The new rulers, the Babenbergs, have continued in much the same vein.

Vienna

Vienna sits at the crossroads of two major trading routes: the Danube and the eastern Baltic-Italian route. The Romans, understanding its strategic importance, founded a city here, but when the Germanic peoples rolled back the borders of the Empire they abandoned this site, on the advice of a local saint.

For 500 years Vienna was an insignificant village within the old Roman walls, until the crusades stoked its economy. It was the last German-speaking place on their





march, and they tended to pause here and re-supply before heading off into infidel lands. It became a town by 1137, and the Duke of Austria moved his seat here in 1156. The trade in local wine, exported both south and north, rapidly expanded to link into the trade from Europe to the eastern states. In 1190 the city was rich enough for the duke to found a mint. By 1200 Vienna had become a major stopping point on the road to and from Venice.

Several Alpine covenants have interests in Vienna. The Rorschach Chapter of the Covenant of the Icy North has an extensive property here, held in the name of the trading house that hides the activities of House Mercere.

A basilisk hatched in a house in Vienna in 1212. The locals hope they destroyed it by chasing it into a well and pouring stones down upon it. Some Hermetic magi doubt the efficacy of this technique, noting that even if it works it leaves a dead basilisk in the groundwater. Several covenants would be grateful to anyone who could determine the fate of the basilisk.

Werfen

A complicated series of ice caves is hidden near Werfen. The caves have a magical aura of 4 and contain a fountain that pours forth 30 pawns of *Imáginem vis* each year, and they are mentioned a couple of times in the tribunal's *Peripheral Code*. *Hermes Lore* rolls of 9+ reveal two attempts to found chapter houses here, but each has failed. No covenant can claim the source, since they cannot demonstrate that they have the ability to consistently use it. Ambitious young magi might consider settling near the ice caves.

The only access to the caves is by foot through difficult terrain. New colonizers would be wise to secure transportation magic, to allow them to haul their supplies. One advantage of the site is that it is moderately near to Salzburg and to the trade route that runs from the Brenner Pass, through Lienz then north past

Grossglockner and into Bavaria. The closest village would be Werfen and covenfolk could perhaps be recruited from there.

One of the potential chapters failed for logistical reasons — it had been planned badly from the beginning. The members of the other were found dead, although they showed no obvious injuries. Some had cut syllables of gibberish into the walls of the ice caves. The most widespread theory is that the cave is the lair of a *lucifugus* (see *Hedge Magic*, page 76). Others believe it might be some sort of delirium-inducing disease spirit or a monster that hibernates between feeds, like an ice wyrm.

Wörthsee

This lake, in Carinthia was once the site of a town of sinners. One evening a tiny man, with an equally diminutive keg under his arm, walked into the public house claiming to be an agent of the righteous anger of the Lord. He demanded the people of the town mend their ways, lest he pull the bung of his little barrel and flood the whole town. The drunkards of the inn mocked the little man, and, as good as his word, he drowned the village. Those sailing across the lake at night can still hear the bells of the church below the lake's still waters.

History of the Western Alps

In 59 BC the consul Caesar was given command of the Alps, and used them as the stage from which to stride into history. One of his earliest acts was to prevent a mass migration of the *Helevetii*, a Celtic tribe, from the western Alps to the Atlantic coast. He defeated the *Helevetii* and forced their survivors to resettle the passes between Italy and Gaul. Some of Caesar's soldiers were



probably born in the area he was now controlling, young men from the Alps who had left their villages to seek wealth in the armies of neighboring states.

Caesar's successors stiffened their authority in the western part of the Alps, seeding the area with colonies. The soldiers granted farmland in these colonies were, for the main part, Romanized Celts. The emperors also claimed Rhaetia, conquering the Etruscans who lived there after fierce battles in which the women threw their babies at legionnaires. Since the passes through that area were less profitable, they paid less attention to enforcing Roman dominance there. The Rhaetian capital, Chur, was an exception, but even there Roman cultural presence was weak, perhaps limited to the upper classes. For the century and a half following the conquest, Rome continued to spread its influence outward. The Helvetii and the Rhaetii lived cradled within areas the Romans considered stable.

As the Empire entered its slow and complicated decline, a pair of tribes invaded the territory of the Alps. The Burgundians were bought to heel by Germanic allies of the Empire and forced to settle in the territory that, in the thirteenth century, is called Savoy. The other tribe, the Alemanni, swept into the Alps and claimed territory that roughly matches that of Bavaria.

Alemmania flexed and bunched as its neighbors assaulted it, falling under the control of the Merovingian Franks. The Alemmanians almost become independent in the seventh century, but the revival of the Frankish monarchy under the Carolingians prevented this. When Charlemagne's empire was split, Alemmania became part of the eastern state. The Alemmanian distrust of feudal authority and habit of electing village headmen is still present in Alpine settlements.

The Burgundians fell swiftly to the Franks, and their state became part of the western fragment of Charlemagne's empire. Less than a century later a kingdom arose in Provence. Slightly after that, the Count of Auxerre claimed all the land between the Jura and the Reuss and proclaimed himself





King of Transjuran Burgundy. His line gradually exerted heavier influence on Provence and expanded their territories out across the Alps, finally conquering Zurich.

The Carolingian dynasties, east and west, both died out in the tenth century. In 911, when the final eastern Carolingian expired, his dukes gathered and elected his successor. Alemmania was mentioned as a duchy in records of this time, with "Count of Rhaetia" being a second title of the Alemmanian duke. When the western line of Carolingians was extinguished the successor dynasty of the east, from Saxony, claimed the Imperial mantle. They sought to pacify Alemmania and Burgundy, to enhance the security of their Italian possessions. They killed the last king of Burgundy in 1032.

In 1033 the Kingdom of Burgundy became part of the empire of Conrad the Salian. From that time the Alpine lands have been firmly within the Holy Roman Empire, although various minor noble families administered them. The imperial dynasties first squabbled with the pope, then with each other, which allowed regional dukes to reassert themselves. The Alemmanian duchy, renamed Swabia, set up a pretender to the Imperial mantle. After the civil war ended, his territory was partitioned so that claimants from each ally in the war were given something. His title and Alpine lands went to the Zähringen family, while the bulk of his lands went to the Hohenstaufens.

The Zähringen family's territory was centered in Breisgau, but they had substantial holdings in the Alps. When they were granted further Alpine land, including Zurich, they tried to create a principality that contained both Burgundians and Alemmanians. Their attempts to instill in the Alpine people a sense of shared identity were worse than useless. They indicated to Alpine people that they had many things in common, including a hatred of foreign landlords. Enhanced cooperation between the valleys made the formation of military alliances possible.

In 1217 the last of the Zähringers passed away and the Emperor reclaimed much of

their territory. Their lands were inherited by their relatives-by-marriage, the Kirburgers. The Kirburgers hold Thurgau and a substantial block of the northern Alps which, coupled with the towns founded by the Zähringers, make them the most powerful of the indigenous nobility of the Western Alps. Zurich and Lucerne were each made imperial cities, that is, cities directly enfeoffed from the emperor, in the last few years. This means their tax burden is less heavy.

History of Bavaria

Conquered by Drusus in 15 BC, the territory that comprises Bavaria was lost as the Roman Empire rolled back under Germanic assaults. The Baiuvarii tribe formed a powerful duchy here in the sixth century, controlling much of the Eastern Alps. The main bishoprics of the Bavarian Church were founded in the early eighth century. In the late eighth century Bavaria was conquered by Charlemagne and its title was held by the royal family until it was granted as a Duchy in the late 11th century to the Gulephs.

Some of Bavaria fell under Magyar control after 898, until Otto I recaptured it in 947. Raiding by the Magyars continued until the Battle of Lechfeld, near Augsburg, in 955. Otto's forces annihilated the Magyar army: folklore records that only seven Magyars returned to Hungary. The German army was also shattered and an exhausted pause lasted for 15 years.

In 973 a formal peace was settled between Otto and Geza, the newly Christian King of the Magyars. Geza sought German aid against his rivals and even hired Bavarian bodyguards. Stephen, Geza's son, and Gisela, the daughter of Henry III of Bavaria, married in 996 and a combined force of Magyars and Bavarians fought in the

succession war that followed Geza's death. In 1020, after the death of Gisela's brother, who had risen to become Holy Roman Emperor, violence between Germans and Magyars recommenced. St Stephen and his successors generally fought defensive wars on Hungarian territory, so Magyar raids on Bavaria did not enjoy a revival.

From the 9th until the 11th century, dukes of Bavaria were central to series of rebellions against the Emperor. The Emperors responded by slicing territory from Bavaria when they suppressed rebellion, shrinking it down so that the new dukes would be less powerful. In 1180 Frederick I confiscated Bavaria from Henry the Lion and granted it to Count Palatine Otto von Wittelsbach. Otto's Bavaria was small by historical standards. In 1214 the Wittelsbachs gained control of the Rhenish Palatinate, which became part of Bavaria.

History of the Eastern Marches

Before histories were written a layer of villages covered the area of the eastern Alps. It is clear that some communities farmed, others mined; some trade occurred between the two. The Celts invaded about 500 BC, and founded a kingdom whose capital was at Noricum. The Romans, who traded with these Celts for iron and salt, invaded the area in 15 BC, securing the Danube as a frontier against the Germanic tribes to the north. Continued raiding by groups emerging from Asia and northern Europe eventually forced a Roman withdrawal, in AD 500. After much internal strife, the area was divided between the Bavarians, Slavs and Alemmanians. The Bavarians attempted to pacify their neighbors using evangelists, and the city of Salzburg, spiritual center of the region, traces its history from one of these attempts.

Apocalypse Delayed

Some Austrians believe that the world was meant to end in 1000. A dragon so large that it fed on other dragons was to rise up from the Earth and battle a gargantuan beast from the sea, thus heralding judgment and the unpleasantness due sinners at the end of the world. Saint Sylvester prevented the end of the world by slaying the creature as it awakened on New Year's Day. How far this set back Armageddon isn't clear. There is some confusion about which "Saint Sylvester" this was. It might have been Pope Sylvester II, widely thought to be a magician, whose pontificate ended slightly after the millennium.

Magi have sometimes tried to find this dragon, which Austrians confusingly call "Leviathan". Some claim it stretches beneath the entire Alps, since they are the only things large enough to hide it under, but few make any progress when they seek the site of the battle between the monster and the saint.



In the ninth century Charlemagne, facing the same sort of trouble from Asian invaders that had so discomfited the Romans, fortified this region to act as a buffer for the flank of his empire. During a period of strife between Charlemagne's sons the eastern marches were overrun. Otto I, Charlemagne's distant successor, invaded it in 955 and gave its new noblemen the same task: fortify against eastern invaders. They proved less than competent.

In 976 a nobleman named Marchio Liutpoldos was made overlord of the nobles who held territory in this area. His territory came to be known as the East March, the Ostarricchi. The Duchy of Carinthia was also founded at this time. Liutpoldos's family's name was Poppon, and he came from somewhere in Swabia, but during the eleventh century a historian, who was one of his descendants, renamed the whole clan



The Devil in the Details

M a n y cathedrals are said to be constructed with the aid of devils. A usual condition of this contract of employment is that if the master mason supervising the construction speaks the name of any of the saints, then the Devil can take his soul. A story told of many other cathedrals, and as useful at Regensberg as anywhere, is that the master mason was in love with a girl, and avoided seeing her during the final phases of the cathedral's construction. Since the devil wanted the mason to lose his soul, he took the shape of the mason's beloved, and walked past the construction site, either ignoring the

mason or walking into danger. The mason, lovesick or in fear for his beloved, called out her name, Maria, and so was damned.

The rationale for devils helping build cathedrals is unclear. It might be that those cathedrals he has helped to build do him less harm than those built by

the sweat of the faithful. Another possibility is that by strict interpretation of the contract, the devil is preventing the final completion of the cathedral. Then again, it could be a mason under onus of such a contract that is forestalling completion to save his soul, unwittingly accomplishing the devil's goal.

Babenberg, after a castle that he thought was a better patch of native soil.

A period of relative peace followed Marchio's appointment, during which many fine churches were founded. In 1096 crusaders traveled through the region around Vienna and renewed interest in the trade route along the Danube. This made the ruler of Austria, still a Babenberg, far richer and more influential. In 1156, Austria became an independent duchy with Vienna as its capital. In 1180 Styria was separated from Austria to form another eastern march, but in 1220 the Babenbergs hold all three.

The Nobility of the Alps

With the exception of the dukes of Austria and Bavaria, important nobles with Alpine holdings do not live in the Alps. Most Alpine agricultural communities do not produce enough exportable wealth to make stationing armies within them economical. Each noble appoints others to manage their Alpine territories, lets the territories choose their own rulers or hands territory over to the Church to govern. Local

lords, who rule a small region, usually apply the title of “count” to themselves.

The manorial system, popular in the rest of Europe, works on the premise that the lord has his lands tilled by a community of peasants, who rent their own lands from him. This system cannot function well in those areas of the Alps where the main industry is cattle grazing. The Alpine villages have herds that consume all of the available winter grazing, and require a lord less for defense than to coordinate the use of winter feed stores.

The counts appointed by far-distant dukes tend to be resented by the peasantry. When the Church is landlord, the system leads to hostility toward priests in some areas. Local resentments sometimes bubble to the surface, fuelling peasant revolts. As local industry develops, many communities become wealthy enough that stationing forces within them becomes sensible. This is often seen as a means to impose the duke’s will rather than as a method to protect the people and, therefore, can also ignite peasant revolts.

Counts and Colonizers

Counts attempt to keep their workers in one place by founding new towns, a craze

begun by the Zähringen family. The Zähringers believed that a series of towns would congeal their land into a continuous bloc. Simultaneously their new foundations served as points of military strength. Their rivals, the families of Kiburg, Savoy and Hapsburg, each followed a similar policy. This craze is in full swing in 1220.

Towns form at the whim of a noble. Following the seizure of a castle, the granting of advocacy for an abbey or the construction of a new fortress, a local count declares the supporting village a town. Simply calling a village a town gives its residents a few minor privileges, so each town is further granted exemptions from taxes and traditional dues. These additional rights attract settlers with the promise of better conditions. The benefits offered must be substantial, to draw settlers from other settlements. Toward the end of the century, some nobles get so desperate for settlers that they begin to pay people wages to tend crops.

German nobles, themselves tossed about by the winds of politics, encouraged their communities to form supportive regional groups. These alliances, called *landfriedensbund*, were designed to keep the peace, by encouraging neighboring communities to develop processes of law, in preference to entering into military feuds. These alliances are temporary but significant. They pave the way for the eternal alliances, more militant in character, which may later form.





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