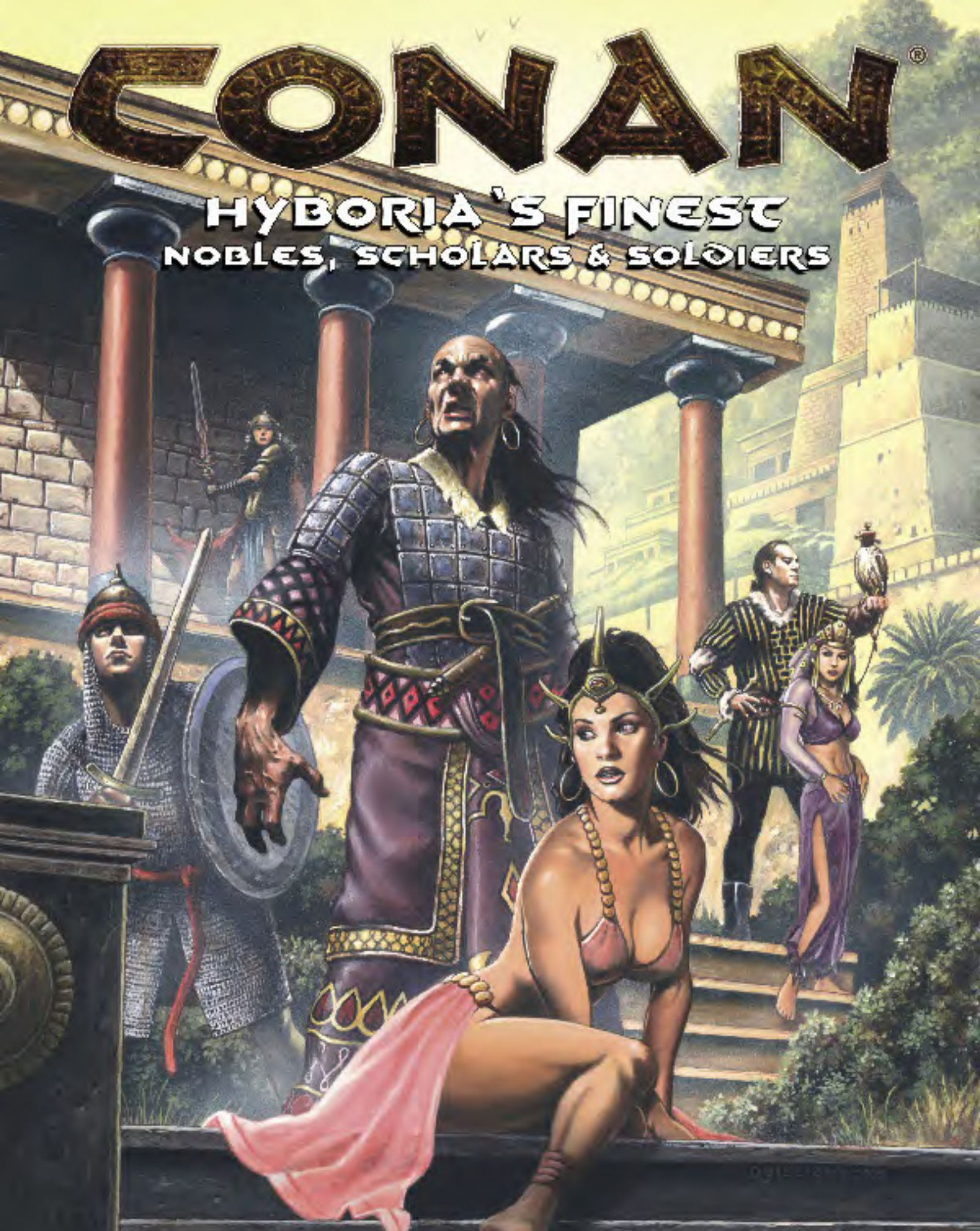


CONAN[®]

**HYBORIA'S FINEST
NOBLES, SCHOLARS & SOLDIERS**



CONAN[®]

HYBORIA'S FINEST NOBLES, SCHOLARS & SOLDIERS

Credits

AUTHOR

Vincent Darlarge

EDITOR

Richard Ford

COVER ART

Chris Quilliams

INTERIOR ARTISTS

Stacy Drum, Tony Parker, Chad Sergesketter,
Ronald Smith & Alejandro Villen

RPG MANAGER

Ian Belcher

PRODUCTION DIRECTOR

Alexander Fennell

PROOFREADING

Jody Macgregor

PLAYTESTERS

Sam Vail, Andre Chabot, Robert Hall,
Trevor Kerslake & Alan Marson

SPECIAL THANKS

Thommy Wojciechowski & Fredrik Malmberg at
Conan Properties.

Contents

INTRODUCTION	2
THE FINEST OF THE LAND	3
SECRETS OF THE NOBLES	49
SECRETS OF THE SCHOLARS	55
SECRETS OF THE SOLDIERS	69
FINE FEATS	75
BY RIGHT OF BIRTH	79
BY KEEN INTELLECT	94
BY DISCIPLINED MIGHT	III
LICENSE	128

Hyboria's Finest: Nobles, Scholars & Soldiers is © 2005 Conan Properties International LLC. CONAN®, CONAN THE BARBARIAN® and related logos, character, names, and distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks of Conan Properties International LLC unless otherwise noted. All Rights Reserved. Mongoose Publishing Ltd Authorized User. Conan the Roleplaying Game is released under version 1.0 of the Open Game License. Reproduction of non-Open Game Content of this work by any means without the written permission of the publisher is expressly forbidden. See page 96 for the text of this license. With the exception of the character creation rules detailing the mechanics of assigning dice roll results to abilities and the advancement of character levels, all game mechanics and statistics (including the game mechanics of all feats, skills, classes, creatures, spells and the combat chapter) are declared open content. Printed in China.

Introduction

Welcome to the Social Elite

NOBLES, SCHOLARS AND SOLDIERS are the mainstay of the Conan stories as well as the focus of this rulebook. Nobles wield wealth and influence; scholars wield knowledge and alchemy; soldiers wield swords and bows. Each has an arena of expertise. Each is a specialist, expert in a field but uncomfortable and often ineffective outside of their specialty. The nobles tread the jewelled thrones of the Earth, hovering around the perfumed courts and palaces of the Hyborian Age like flies around a carcass. Scholars delve deep into books and tombs, seeking answers to riddles most men shudder to even think of. Soldiers are the lords of the battlefield, mastering their weapons to a degree few can even hope to attain.

The first section of this book discusses how the various cultures of Conan's age look at the noble, scholar and soldier classes. Advice is given on what skills and feats to emphasise for each culture's iconic brand of those three classes, as well as additional cultural information to complement the information found in *Conan: The Road of Kings*. In some cases, variant rules are offered to better portray these character classes in some cultures.

The second section of this book reveals the secrets of the finest classes. First up, the noble is discussed, with some suggestions regarding ability scores, skills and feat selections. Some new social abilities are also offered, as well as some additional regional features. Next, the scholar is examined. Options regarding ability scores, backgrounds, skill and feat selections and sorcery style choices are discussed. Combat options and tactics are also looked at, with some suggestions given on how to boost combat survivability for the scholar. Five new scholarly texts, including the evil tomes of Sabatea of the Golden Peacock are examined, along with several new magical/alchemy items. This section is rounded off with new spells. Then, the

soldier is studied. Skill, ability and combat style options are scrutinised. Tactics on the field of battle and new combat manoeuvres are then analysed

The third section of this book focuses on new feats designed with the noble, the scholar and the soldier in mind.

The final section of this book shows how to mix and match the eight character classes to create new archetypes of the three classes this book is focused on: the noble, the scholar and the soldier. Here you will find cavaliers, criminal masterminds, hermits, cult leaders, fops and many other character class combinations.



The Finest of the Land

Cultures of the Fine

THE VARIOUS CLASSES, in and of themselves, are but variations on the other classes, with better statistics here and there. These are not the recipe for great roleplaying experiences, but mere mechanics used to solve physical problems such as combat and stealth. In *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, race and culture is more important to the character than class. A Nordheimer scholar will be more barbaric and savage than a Nemedian barbarian, for example. This information is supplemental to *Conan: The Road of Kings*. More information on these countries, cultures and the people who inhabit them can be found in *The Road of Kings*, as well as in other *Conan the Roleplaying Game* products such as *Conan: Across the Thunder River* and *Conan: Aquilonia – Flower of the West*.

AQUILONIA

Aquilonia, of course, is comprised of Hyborians, one of the most adaptable of all the races. Nobles and soldiers are plentiful throughout Aquilonia. Other than commoners, one is more likely to meet an Aquilonian of these classes than of any other.

AQUILONIAN NOBLES

Aquilonia is ruled by its nobles. The Adaptable and Background Skills for the Aquilonian noble should be chosen from Appraise, Diplomacy, Knowledge (nobility and royalty), Ride and Sense Motive. Feats enhancing both melee combat skills and social skills are appropriate to this social order. Note that members of this social order are forbidden to take the commoner class except in extreme circumstances. Roleplayers of noble-blooded characters are advised to keep maximum ranks in Knowledge (nobility), Knowledge (local) and Ride. Games Masters should encourage games that allow use of who the nobles know to accomplish social story goals. Being skilled garners less respect than knowing skilled people. Skill ranks will largely be spent in Knowledge (nobility), Diplomacy and Gather Information skills. The ability to know and influence people is highly regarded among the aristocracy.

More detailed information about nobles in Aquilonia can be found in the *Conan: Aquilonia – Flower of the West* sourcebook.

The Bossonian Marches: There are no Bossonian nobles. In order to dominate the Bossonians and incorporate them into Aquilonia, all the land is owned by other types of Aquilonians. Some may have traces of blood from old blood-lines and may have the Noble Blood feat, but they are still not of this social order – at least not until a Player Character rises from the masses and leads a revolution.

Gunderland: Gunderland does have a landed nobility. Predatory counts and hawk-like barons rule the various fiefs and manors of Gunderland. Many of the ruling class have served in Gunderland's military forces as officers, often using a noble/soldier or noble/borderer combination. Gunderland's nobles tend to have a military air about them, proud of their service and of their wars. They are strong willed, even for Gundermen, who are already stronger willed than most. Knowledge (local) and Knowledge (nobility) are still valued skills, even for the most military-minded, backwoods Gunderland count. Who they know is far more important than what they know or what they can do as individuals. These connections establish safety and growth, both of which are important to the noble. Hunting is important to Gunderland nobles, emphasised by the regional bonus these characters gain in the hunting bow. Roleplayers of noble-blooded characters are advised to keep maximum ranks in Knowledge (nobility) and Knowledge (local) to maintain this aspect of nobility. Possessions tend to be unique artefacts, legacies, estates, pedigrees and bloodlines. Skill ranks will largely be spent in Knowledge (nobility), Diplomacy and Gather Information skills.

Gunderland nobles, persevering and proud, can also choose two skills as Background Skills in addition to Craft (weaponsmith). The adaptable and Background Skills for the Gunderland noble should be chosen from Appraise, Diplomacy, Knowledge (nobility and royalty), Ride and Sense Motive. Skills that aid hunting are also appropriate, as hunting is a common pastime in Gunderland. Noble Blood (from *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos*) is an appropriate feat for nobles without the noble class. Feats enhancing both melee combat skills and social skills are appropriate to this social order. Note that members of this social order are forbidden to take the commoner class except in extreme circumstances.

Poitain: Poitainians are well known for their proud and brooding nobles of powerful character and indomitable charisma. Their innate chivalry and diplomacy make this class a natural for them. Many Poitainian nobles become knights or officers by combining their noble class with that of soldier. Noble/borderers are extraordinary huntsmen, men so given to hawks and hunting dogs they spend most of their time outdoors, learning to track prey. Poitainian nobles have a regional ability that grants them a bonus to the hunting bow, which aids this class combination nicely. Noble/thieves are nobles who have lost their lands due to war and survive as bandits. Virtually all Poitainian nobles have a civilised code of honour.

Tauran: Tauran nobles are landowners and fief-holders. They still spend a lot of time hunting and sporting, learning a fair amount of woodcraft. The Tauran noble is especially able with the hunting bow, thanks to the Hyborian special regional feature. Survival as well as Knowledge (nobility) will tend to be maximised. A Tauran noble who is not known for his hunting skills is likely to suffer some damage to his Reputation.

The adaptable and Background Skills for the composed Tauran aristocrat should be chosen from Diplomacy, Knowledge (nobility and royalty), Ride and Sense Motive. Taurans are renowned for their woodland skills, so feats enhancing both hunting skills and social skills are appropriate to this social order.

Note that members of this social order are forbidden to take the commoner class except in extreme circumstances.

Westermarck: Except in the province of Thandara, the Westermarck does have classes of nobles. Many of them are officers (soldier-nobles) but others are actual landowners and fief holders. Characters native to Thandara may not take the noble class at 1st level. Hunting is particularly good in the Westermarck, although one must be wary of Picts at all times. Feats such as Awareness might help a noble avoid a disastrous ambush by the Picts. All nobles are aristocrats, although there are no typical knights in the Westermarck. The heat, humidity, swamps and Picts make plate armour and heavy warhorses impractical. As several unfortunate knights have found out, one does not have to run faster than the Picts, just faster than the fool in heavy armour.

The adaptable and Background Skills for the Westermarck aristocrat should be chosen from Diplomacy, Knowledge (nobility and royalty), Ride and Sense Motive. Westermarckers are renowned for their woodland skills, so feats enhancing both hunting skills and social skills are appropriate to this social order. Note that members of this social order are forbidden to take the commoner class except in extreme circumstances.

AQUILONIAN SCHOLARS

Aquilonian scholars are rarely sorcerous. Aquilonians, like most Hyborians, revile sorcery. Their legends are replete with stories about degenerate rituals of demonic debauchery, horrifying plagues and worse. Aquilonia is so advanced many scholars work as tutors or teachers. The feudal courts often maintain scholar advisors. Some multiclass into soldier to become adjutants (see *Conan: The Free Companies*), while others multi-class into borderer to become explorers, the authors of bestiaries and other fabulous tomes. Most scholars in Aquilonia are members of the aristocracy and have the Noble Blood feat from *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos*. More details about scholars in Aquilonia can be found in the *Conan: Aquilonia – Flower of the West* sourcebook.

The Bossonian Marches: Bossonian scholars are rarely sorcerous. Most Bossonian scholars will be engineers and adjutants. The engineers build cities or, if they are militarily minded, siege engines. The adjutants are scholar/soldiers, the advisors to military leaders. Instead of learning new sorcery styles, Bossonian scholars take Skill Focus feats to supplement their soldier bonus feats. The Bossonian engineer or adjutant knows his strength lies in his skills and knowledge. They know how to bring down walls and what lies beyond the next wooded hill. Their soldier bonus feats (if the character has multiclassed) will still focus on archery for most Bossonians.

Gunderland: Like the Bossonians, Gunderland's scholars are rarely sorcerous. Most Gunderland scholars will be engineers and adjutants. The engineers build cities or, if they are military minded, siege engines. The adjutants are scholar/soldiers, the advisors to military leaders. They are often the regimental staff officers that assist the commanding officer of a garrison. During character creation, the character should consider having a high Intelligence (in addition to Strength and Wisdom) in order to maximise the benefit of having a large skill selection. This also allows the character to increase skills that are not class skills for the soldier when taking levels of soldier, as bonus Intelligence skill points may be spent on any skill as though it were a class skill.

Poitain: There are Poitainian scholars, many of whom are advisors to the feudal lords or are feudal lords themselves. Scholar/soldiers serve as adjutants in the military and scholar/nobles serve as royal tutors. Scholar/borderers investigate the half-wild bandits roaming the Poitainian Mountains or lurk around the vast forestlands of the nobles cataloguing the wild life and strange creatures found therein.

Tauran: Tauran scholars are rare. Zoologists and botanists tend to make up a majority of these. This is not the most appropriate class for a Tauran character, but can make for an interesting choice nonetheless. Tauran scholars may make trips across the Westermarck to notate Pictish tribal customs or may simply be experts at mercantilism or some craft. Many Tauran scholars merely maximise their craft or professions,

using their scholar bonus feats (in lieu of new sorcery styles) to boost their skills higher than most commoners can.

Westemarck: There are few Westemarck scholars. Most of them are specialists in their craft or profession. For example, some blacksmiths or merchants may be of the scholar class. Priests of Mitra are usually of this class, although the priesthood has only a marginal presence in these darksome lands. Most members of this class are of the free townsfolk or clergy social orders, although some independent scholars venture here to study the Picts or, Mitra forbid, their horrible magic. The Westemarck culture has become dominated by the dangers from Picts, isolation, disease and animals, and so too has the scholar class. Many scholars in the Westemarck are physicians and clergy, travelling the countryside to heal its afflictions.

AQUILONIAN SOLDIERS

Aquilonian soldiers tend to be knights if they have noble blood or infantrymen if of common blood. Soldiers train as archers, men-at-arms, pikemen and footmen.

The Bossonian Marches: The favoured class for the Bossonian is soldier. This is an excellent choice because of the bonus class feats and the bonus feats for choosing a favoured class. Bossonian soldiers tend to put ranks in Craft (bowyer), Knowledge (geography), Perform (guard mount) and Search, with Craft and Search being the predominant skills chosen. Bossonians are indifferent horsemen, so Ride is rarely invested in while serving in Bossonia. *Skirmisher* is often the first favoured formation combat style chosen by the Bossonian soldier. Archery feats, such as Point Blank Shot, Far Shot, Precise Shot, Ranged Finesse, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (Bossonian longbow), Weapon Specialisation (Bossonian longbow) and Improved Precise Shot are typical feats taken by the Bossonian soldiers. Bossonians are well known for their archery skills, although few learn to fire a bow from horseback, so Mounted Archery will be a rare feat for the Bossonian character. Bossonian characters are so soldier oriented that many who opt for other paths still take several levels in soldier.

Gunderland: The favoured class for the stalwart Gunderman is soldier. This is an excellent choice for a Gunderman character because of the bonus class feats and the bonus feats for choosing a favoured class. Gundermen are renowned for their skill at arms, making the best infantry soldiers in the world. Reliable and unshakable, Gundermen are especially known for their skills with pikes. Not only do they get a racial bonus for the pike, feats such as Gunderland Pike-and-Shield Fighting (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*) accentuate their natural inclinations. Power Attack, Improved Sunder, Improved Bull Rush and Iron Will are common feats for a Gunderman. Most Gundermen make *Heavy Infantry* their first formation combat style choice. Intimidate, Jump and Search are the skills Gunderland soldiers tend to emphasise.

Gundermen are indifferent riders, so usually only the nobles bother to really learn the Ride skill. Gunderland characters are so soldier oriented that many who opt for other paths still take several levels in soldier.

Poitain: The Poitainians make excellent soldiers and their knights are renowned all the world over. A Poitainian soldier will concentrate his limited skill points on Ride and Intimidate, and will almost certainly make *Heavy Cavalry* his first formation combat style choice.

Tauran: Men from the Tauran make excellent navigators by combining levels of soldier with borderer. By itself, the soldier class is a weak option for men of the Tauran, but when combined with borderer, the strengths of both classes can be honed to precision. Most Tauran soldiers will put ranks in Knowledge (geography) and Search, and few will bother with ranks in Ride, at least so long as they remain in the Tauran. A Tauran soldier will almost certainly make *Skirmisher* his first choice when choosing formation combat styles.

Westemarck: This is probably the next best choice for a Westemarck character after borderer. Some Westemarck characters combine the soldier class with the borderer to create a military navigator character. Others combine soldier with noble to create an officer. *Free Companies* has particular advice for combining various classes with soldier for optimum effect. Soldiers should have ranks in Perform (guard mount) to simulate the various marches, parades and inspections the soldiers are put through. Horses are largely ineffective in the Pictish Wilderness (and too expensive to feed or to risk against Picts), so few Westemarck soldiers bother to learn to ride. Westemarck soldiers are charged with keeping the peace between the settlers and the Picts, so ranks in Intimidate are advised to keep local natives in line. Most soldiers wear lighter armours but few go with anything less than mail shirts. Characters living in the Westemarck need to be fairly self-sufficient, so characters should have Intelligences as high as can be managed without sacrificing too much Strength or Constitution. Survival in the Westemarck and the Pictish Wilderness often depends on a character's skills, so getting as many skills as possible is essential. Most Westemarcker soldiers choose the *Skirmisher* formation combat style at the first available opportunity.

ARGOS AND THE BARACHAN ISLANDS

Argos, like Aquilonia, is comprised of Hyborians, one of the most adaptable of all the races. The Argosseans and Barachans, however, have grown more specialised, focusing on

the sea for the most part. Pirates are the favoured heroes of these people.

ARGOSSEAN NOBLES

Argossean nobles tend to be fairly stable in terms of military politics. Military action between noble families and even between the Merchant Houses is almost unheard of. Their battles are largely economic and are usually related to trade. Nobles do not attack other fiefs in Argos – if an Argossean noble wants another noble family destroyed, he finds a way to beggar them financially.

The noble families own the land under fief from the king. They administer their own estates and exercise their own justice. They mint their own money and levy whatever taxes or tolls they wish. Nobles without land often own a ship where they exercise the same rights.

The lords of the Merchant Houses do not own land or buildings unless they have somehow earned a true noble title from the king himself. They do, however, own ships (purchased from the barons) and control the commerce of the land, so the nobles and the lords live in an uneasy alliance of mutual reliance. The nobles control the land and the resources and the Houses control the economy.

Argossean nobles and the lords of the Merchant Houses do not labour and are almost always accompanied by slaves who do work for them, including military work. Rarely will an Argossean noble take ranks in a Profession or Craft skill beyond the Background Skills afforded to them unless they are routinely on board a ship as captain. Such things are beneath them. Appraise, Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, Knowledge (local), Knowledge (nobility) and Sense Motive are more typical of the skills the Argossean nobles and House lords concentrate on. Any two of those skills are suitable and appropriate for the Argossean's Adaptability racial feature.

The exile (page 81), the cavalier (page 83), the dilettante (page 87), the professional knight (page 89) and the mastermind (page 91) are all excellent class combinations for the Argossean/Barachan noble. The noble of the coast (page 84) character concept (possibly renamed as the King of the Argossean Coast or the King of the Barachan Islands) is the most likely.

ARGOSSEAN SCHOLARS

Argosseans, like most Hyborians, revile sorcery. Their legends are replete with stories about degenerate rituals of demonic debauchery, horrifying plagues and worse. Sorcerers in Argos hide their talents from the people

GITA

Gita is an obscure spider goddess worshipped in the city of Athos, deep in the backwoods and nestled among the treacherous hills of Argos. The spider is a female force in this cult. Her priests and priestesses believe in the superiority of noble blood and some engage in breeding programs to produce strong, pliable slaves.

Requirements of Worship: Submit to the will of the priests and priestesses without question.

Benefits of Worship: Spells (divination).

Requirements for Ordained Priesthood: Must sacrifice at least one victim per year to Gita.

Benefits of Ordained Priesthood: Spells (Nature Magic, Divination, Curses, Hypnotism), ability to transform into a giant spider as per the *shapeshifter* spell (in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*) in lieu of a bonus spell.

Typical Punishments for Disloyal Priests: Tied up naked to a stake and sacrificed to mounds of venomous insects and spiders.

for fear of mobs with pitchforks, torches and nooses. Many scholars, however, do reside in Argos as tutors, choosing to take bonus feats and skill points instead of new sorcery styles and advanced spells.

Scholars with noble blood or from the Merchant Houses tend to concentrate on the same skills as listed above for the noble class. Those who work as tutors take the appropriate Knowledge skills and the Profession (tutor) skill. The skills assigned to the Adaptability racial feature should be chosen from those skills. Sorcerous scholars tend to be unique in their skill selections, although many focus on Sea Witchery or Weather Witching sorcery styles (both from *Conan: Pirate Isles*). Nature Magic is another common sorcery style for the Argossean scholar. Other spells particular to Argossean sorcerers can be found in *Conan: Messantia – City of Riches*.

Although the Mitran religion is the primary religion of Argos, several cults can be found there, although most are heavily persecuted by the Mitrans. A regional cult found around the area of Athos is the cult of Gita, a spider goddess. Bel is worshipped along the coast, especially in Messantia.

The hermit (page 94), the druid (page 96), the cult leader (page 99), the observer (page 102), the temple warder (page 106), the navigator (page 104) and the occultist (page 109) are all excellent class combinations for the Argossean scholar.

ARGOSSEAN SOLDIERS

Although the merchant Houses fight among themselves often enough, they do recognise the need for mutual defence.

Each House spends a small portion of its wealth to fund the Guardians, mercenary protectors of Argos' borders in times of peace. These mercenaries, chosen from the population by lot to serve for a term of several years, owe no loyalty (in theory) to any one House, but to Argos itself. Argos also has marines – soldiers who multiclass with pirate (presented in *Conan: Pirate Isles*) – as a career for those who serve in the military. Other soldiers are usually drawn from the nobility as part of their feudal obligation to the barons and/or to the king himself. Many of these follow the professional knight multiclass option presented on page 89.

Soldiers along the coast tend to emphasise Intimidate, Profession (sailor) and Search skills, even if they do not multiclass into pirate. If possible they add ranks in Balance, Gather Information and Use Rope. Argossean soldiers stationed away from the coastal cities emphasise their Intimidate, Knowledge (local), Ride and Search skills. The skills assigned to the Adaptability racial feature should be chosen from those skills.

The brawler (page 111), master archer (page 114), the fop (page 116), the contemplative (page 123), the wasteland warrior (page 118), the sea hawk (page 121) and the assassin (page 125) are all excellent class combinations for Argossean soldiers. The sea hawk and the marine (see *Conan: The Free Companies*) are the most likely and most appropriate soldier multiclassed, as well as the brawler. Many brawlers hang out in the seaport taverns and docks in Argossean coastal cities and throughout Tortage.

BORDER KINGDOM

The haunted land is another Hyborian nation, a buffer between the wealthy Hyborian nations of the south and the barbaric hordes of Cimmeria and Nordheim to the north.

BORDER KINGDOM NOBLES

Nobles in the Border Kingdom are often little more than robber barons or exiled nobles from other lands. Hunting is a passionate pastime for Border Kingdom nobles for courtly intrigue is virtually non-existent. Few Border Kingdom nobles bother with much diplomacy, preferring military solutions to their problems. Their lands are overrun with beast-men, degenerate humans, in-bred families and villages, haunted ruins, lost Acheronian remnants and worse horrors. Diplomacy does little against such terrors, so the nobles lean on their swords and their armies. Border Kingdom nobles are hard men who have been forced to labour to some degree just to survive and rebuild their lost kingdoms. Perfumed sycophants die quickly in the harsh environs of the Border Kingdom.

In the western reaches of the Border Kingdom, where the cult of King Bull holds sway, the noble women of the region

ISHITI

Ishiti is a snake goddess linked to Set and his black pantheon of grim gods. She is a demon who variously appears as a woman who is snakelike from the waist down with snakes for hair or as a medusa who is snake-like from the neck down. She governs time, serpents and snake-men. Her breath can change a man from human to snake-man. She does not like to be lied to. Even though she is a demon goddess of Set, she is not without compassion.

Requirements of Worship: Obey priests of Set, even if called upon as a sacrifice; tithe 2 sp/level/month to the local temple.

Benefits of Worship: Spells.

Requirements for Ordained Priesthood: Must sacrifice at least one victim per year to Ishiti; must know at least two sorcery styles and the Tortured Sacrifice feat; obey the high priest of Set; obey the high priest of Ishiti.

Benefits of Ordained Priesthood: Standard, plus as follows: sorcery teaching is available in any style save Oriental Magic.

Typical Punishments for Disloyal Priests: Betrayers of Ishiti or Set are sent to an island on a different plane and imprisoned and tortured for all eternity.

who are initiates in the religion, on the second night of an autumnal festival, perform a certain ritual in the nude and any male who witnesses the ritual is summarily executed. These women are likewise charged to never reveal to a man what the ritual is.

Border Kingdom nobles usually choose Hide, Intimidate, Listen and Survival as Background Skills. Spot and Listen are usually chosen for their Adaptability racial feature; Border Kingdom nobles tend to be on edge, ever alert for attack and ambush. Many are wanted men and almost all have enemies who may strike at any time.

The noble savage (page 79), the exile (page 81), the cavalier (page 83), the dilettante (page 87), the professional knight (page 89) and the mastermind (page 91) are all excellent class combinations for the Border Kingdom noble. All classes are favoured for the Border Kingdom Hyborian, so they tend to excel at whatever role they need to in order to survive. The exile character concept is the most probable of all the multiclassed.

BORDER KINGDOM SCHOLARS

Border Kingdom scholars are often members of degenerate, in-bred

KING BULL

King Bull is a sacred symbol in the western portions of the Border Kingdom. During his autumnal festival, all travellers are left unmolested and all the people are at peace. A woman is stripped and bound then sacrificed to the living avatar of King Bull at the climax of the festival. If the King Bull becomes old and loses his virility, a tedious ritual is performed at the festival whereupon the old King Bull is slain with a certain flint knife and a younger bull inaugurated as the new avatar of King Bull. Ancient custom forbids the raising of any other weapon against the King Bull, which is an embodiment of luck and the fertility of the flocks and herds.

Requirements of Worship: Attend the autumnal festival in the Border Kingdom every year, obey the priest and priestess of the King Bull, never draw a weapon on the King Bull.

Benefits of Worship: Oracles. The religion is a prophetic one and provides oracles for the faithful. Often this is related to the Spells benefit but only divination spells are cast for the devout and at no cost, although donations are always accepted.

Requirements for Ordained Priesthood: Must sacrifice at least one victim per year to the King Bull.

Benefits of Ordained Priesthood: Spells (Nature Magic, Divination).

Typical Punishments for Disloyal Priests: Tied up naked to a stake and sacrificed to the King Bull.

families, keeping dark secrets locked away in their cellars or attics. Hermits (page 94) and occultists (page 109) seem to abound in the Border Kingdom, performing their dark rituals in secret. Cults determined to enslave the sub-humanoids hide in the marshes, wastelands and mountains, building strange cities for obscure reasons. Scholars determined to catalogue the inhuman beings for obscure travelogues and bestiaries wander deep into the unknown places of the kingdom.

Border Kingdom scholars learn to survive in the wild. Hide, Move Silently, Knowledge (geography) and Survival are usually chosen as Background Skills. Hermits and other scholars need to hide from the sub-humanoids even if they live in bleak fortresses of grey stone. Survival and Move Silently are usually chosen as their adaptive skills. Many of the scholar's skill points are tied up in Knowledge skills, and most also take ranks in Perform (ritual), so using the Background Skill points and the Adaptability racial feature in these other areas gives a nice base

for the scholar to at least have a chance in the wilds of the Border Kingdom.

Some cults in the Border Kingdom include Ishiti and King Bull. Many of these cults are led by a cult leader (see page 99), a noble/scholar multiclassed character.

The hermit (page 94), the druid (page 96), the cult leader (page 99), the observer (page 102), the temple warder (page 106), the navigator (page 104) and the occultist (page 109) are all excellent class combinations for the Border Kingdom scholar. All classes are favoured for the Border Kingdom Hyborean, so they tend to excel at whatever role they need to in order to survive.

BORDER KINGDOM SOLDIERS

The nobles of the Border Kingdom protect themselves with soldiers. Mercenaries and retainers can find steady employment in the Border Kingdom. Border Kingdom soldiers are grim and brutal, wielding weapons designed to kill in as few blows as possible. Border Kingdom soldiers do not learn fancy swordplay techniques or use light weapons. If possible, they prefer to kill in a single blow. Most wield greatswords, broadswords, spears or pole arms. They wear mail hauberks and steel caps. Power Attack, Cleave and Great Cleave are common feats. Insurgencies, massed hordes of sub-humanoids, caravan guards and other dangers tend to exist in packs, so the soldier learns to cut through the packs with as many attacks as possible, making sure each bloody slash of his weapon counts. Formation combat tends to favour the *Heavy Infantry* and *Skirmisher* techniques.

Border Kingdom soldiers tend to choose Hide, Move Silently, Knowledge (geography) and Survival as Background Skills. Survival and Move Silently are usually chosen as their adaptive skills. The soldier gains so few skill points, putting non-class skills into the character's background and Adaptability racial feature makes the character more likely to survive the harsh world that is the Border Kingdom.

The brawler (page 111), master archer (page 114) and the wasteland warrior (page 118) are the most appropriate class combinations for Border Kingdom soldiers. The scout and the guerrilla (see *Conan: The Free Companies*) are also likely and most appropriate soldier multiclassed.

BRYTHUNIA

Brythunia is a pastoral kingdom of callused herders, sun-bronzed farmers and wilderness-wise hunters. Vineyards and orchards are plentiful and the kings of the city-states prosper.

BRYTHUNIAN NOBLES

Blonde Brythunian nobles are those who own land in Brythunia. Many of the ruling elite are descended from Corinthian nobles. Unlike Aquilonia or Nemedra, the land does not belong to a single king – it is owned by the nobles. Kings are those who own the land whereupon the large cities are built. Many of these nobles would like to be the King of Brythunia but the system of land ownership makes this unlikely to ever happen. With this break from the feudal norm, Brythunian kings find the raising of armies to be difficult, if not impossible, without forcing conscripts or hiring mercenaries. There is little in the way of feudal duties owed to a superior lord in return for land use. Instead, lords make pacts and treaties with more powerful lords, obligating them in similar, although less binding, ways. Nobles do not marry common women but are permitted to buy them as concubines from slavers or parents.

Brythunian nobles wear badges and medals denoting their title and rank. Most Brythunian lords include a white horse in their coat-of-arms somewhere.

Brythunian nobles are often self-aggrandising. Nobles usually choose Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information and Sense Motive as Background Skills. They often pick Diplomacy and Sense Motive as adapted abilities since they are not known as a warrior people and often need to use diplomatic solutions. Male Brythunian nobles are often judged by their swordsmanship so most feats are spent on martial skills. Female nobles usually are trained in embroidery and often have several ranks in Craft (embroidery).

The noble savage (page 79), the exile (page 81), the cavalier (page 83), the dilettante (page 87), the professional knight (page 89) and the mastermind (page 91) are all excellent class combinations for the Brythunian noble. All classes are favoured for the Brythunians.

BRYTHUNIAN SCHOLARS

Pale Brythunian scholars tend to be rather sorcerous. Most Brythunian scholars have the Noble Blood feat (from *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos*), otherwise the character would have to labour for a living and would never have had a chance to become literate or have a leisurely life of books and study. Many of these scholars no longer own land; they sold their land for their tomes or for their training. Others were sent by their families to become members of the Mitran or Amalian clergy, depending whether they are from the south or the north, respectively.

Brythunian scholars take quite typical skill selections. Bluff, Intimidate, Knowledge (nobility) and Perform are usually chosen as Background Skills. Bluff and Perform are usually chosen as their adaptive skills.

AMALIAS PLUVIUS

The temples of Sargossa proclaim Amalias Pluvius to be the chief god of the Brythunians, worshipped there in complete defiance of Mitra. His temples have many statues and ornate temples. His followers believe in omens and signs. During the hallowed Feast of Amalias, gambling for profit is illegal. It is a high holy day and all vices are illegal and profane. Blasphemers breaking sacred laws are sent to the mines to work. Another high holy observance is Naming Day. On Naming Day, which is whatever day a travelling priest appears at a given locality, the circuit priest names all the virgin children of a mature age, entering their names in the church register and allowing them permission to pursue marriage or become concubines. The virgin's forefinger is cut with a copper knife and the resulting blood is used as ink to pen the name into the register. Priests of Amalias ritually wear a copper sacrificial knife about their necks. They dress in elaborate grey robes. From birth, Amalias' faithful are taught the Amalian Laws, Prophecies and Divine Revelations, including myths of the Brythunian race's origin, as well as the names and histories of the pantheon's lesser gods. Many of their priests are charlatans and do not know real sorcery. At best they tolerate local shamans and healers but are quick to hang one as a witch if a scapegoat is needed.

Requirements of Worship: Obey priests of Amalias and his pantheon; promote Amalias as the chief god of the Brythunians; promote Sargossa as the capital of Brythunia and its king as the King of Brythunia; tithe 4 sp/level/month to the local temple

Benefits of Worship: Faith, Atonement

Requirements for Ordained Priesthood: Must have 9 ranks in Perform and Diplomacy; 4 ranks in Sleight of Hand.

Benefits of Ordained Priesthood: Standard, plus as follows: sorcery teaching is available in Divination and Conjuring.

Typical Punishments for Disloyal Priests: Sent to work in the hidden gold mines of the Karpash Mountains for the remainder of their lives.

The hermit (page 94), the druid (page 96), the cult leader (page 99), the observer (page 102), the temple warder (page 106), the navigator (page 104), the adjutant (see *Conan: The Free Companies*) and the occultist (page 109) are all workable class combinations for the Brythunian native.

WICCANA

Wiccana is worshipped by rural Brythunians as a nature goddess. Her priestesses (for she does not accept male priests) never cut their hair, wear white linen dresses embroidered in patterns of mistletoe leaves and berries, and carry small golden sickles at their belts. Rural Brythunians, no matter how poor or violent, will not lay a hand on a Wiccana priestess. Occasionally priests of Amalias hang Wiccana priestesses, but this usually raises the ire of the rural folk and so is a rare occurrence at best. Ordained priestesses wear their hair bound back with a white linen band. Her acolytes braid their long hair in tight spirals about their heads. They study herbalism and healing. Although the priestesses live in the villages, Wiccana is worshipped in sacred groves. Men are not usually invited to the groves save as sacrifices to Wiccana. They guard a certain magical blade dangerous to Acheronian beasts of fire.

Requirements of Worship: Revere nature, revere priestesses of Wiccana.

Benefits of Worship: Atonement, Spells.

Requirements for Ordained Priesthood: Must know the Nature Magic sorcery style. Must have 9 or more ranks in Craft (herbalism), Knowledge (nature) and Heal. Must not know the Necromancy sorcery style. Must be celibate (although not necessarily a virgin).

Benefits of Ordained Priesthood: Standard, plus as follows: sorcery teaching is available in any style save Necromancy, Summoning and Oriental Magic.

Typical Punishments for Disloyal Priests: Sacrificed to Wiccana in a sacred grove.

BRYTHUNIAN SOLDIERS

Brythunian soldiers are not all that different from most Hyborian soldiers, save they receive little respect from others. Overall, Brythunian soldiers seem to be under-trained. Most Brythunian soldiers serve in city garrisons with infantry soldiers mainly studying the pike. Hyrkanians on horseback sweep the nation occasionally, so the Brythunians have learned to use the pike in hopes of better fending off the raiders. Most Brythunian soldiers wear a mail shirt under a breastplate. They carry pikes and short swords. They usually have the *Skirmisher* formation combat style. Their Background Skills are in Appraise, Search, Knowledge (local) and Profession (gambler or farmer). Their adaptive skills are often two of the four Background Skills.

Soldiers who catch a nobleman's fancy and are invited to join the noble's retinue are trained to fight on horseback. They wear mail haubers

under breastplates and fur-trimmed great helms. They are trained to fight with heavy lances and large shields, using greatswords when unhorsed. Soldiers with levels in noble or the Noble Blood feat (from *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos*) are automatically in this category of soldier. They learn cavalry formation combat. Those with the Noble Blood feat usually choose Handle Animal, Ride, Knowledge (nobility) and Knowledge (local) for Background Skills, and usually choose Handle Animal and Ride for their Adaptability racial feature.

Brythunian archers fight in leather jerkins and steel caps, wielding hunting bows and short swords. They are stationed in small garrison forts built throughout the countryside in a feeble attempt to slow down Hyrkanian nomads who sweep through the countryside.

Brythunian soldiers tend to spend most of their time in taverns instead of drilling and training. As a result, they tend to be less dedicated and less skilled than other Hyborian soldiers. Many have feats such as Brawl and Carouser. They tend to put a lot of skill points in Search as the main reason many stay in the army is for loot.

The brawler (page 111), master archer (page 114), the fop (page 116) and the wasteland warrior (page 118) are the most

THE SUDDAH OBLATES

Based out of 'The Temple That Will Not Fall', the Suddah Oblates are a peace-loving cult of martial artists living in the mountains of northern Brythunia. The Oblates fight with the *fimbo*, a type of cane, as well as staves, nets and ropes. They oppose violence but will use it if a diplomatic solution fails or is impossible (such as defending oneself against animals or brigands). They do not eat anything with warm blood; they can eat fish. Their main temple is a massive structure balanced on an impossibly thin spire of rock. Women are not allowed inside their temples. The high priest of the Suddah Oblates is known as the Highest Oblate. Scholars of this order take exotic weapon proficiencies and Craft skills.

Requirements of Worship: Celibacy, must never use an edged weapon in combat, oppose violence when possible, must eat no meat or fowl.

Benefits of Worship: Faith.

Requirements for Ordained Priesthood: Must be celibate.

Benefits of Ordained Priesthood: Standard, plus as follows: sorcery teaching is available in Oriental Magic and Prestidigitation.

Typical Punishments for Disloyal Priests: Expelled from the order.

TOLOMETH

Tolometh is a black god of the abyss, a demon worshipped by the most corrupt of Brythunian scholars. His eye is a single amulet blasted into six parts. When this amulet is reassembled, he will arise from his sunken slumber to sear the Earth. He promises great power and wealth to those who align themselves with him. Tolometh has three horns and one eye, a moon-bright gem found in a monstrous meteor.

Requirements of Worship: Do Tolometh's bidding, seek out his shattered eye-amulet, try to summon him from his sunken depths.

Benefits of Worship: Spells.

Requirements for Ordained Priesthood: Must know at least two sorcery styles and the Tortured Sacrifice feat.

Benefits of Ordained Priesthood: Standard, plus as follows: sorcery teaching is available in any style save Oriental Magic.

Typical Punishments for Disloyal Priests: Tortured to death as a sacrifice to Tolometh.

appropriate class combinations for Brythunian soldiers. The brawler is especially fitting. The soldier multiclassed from *Conan: The Free Companies* are also likely and appropriate for Brythunians.

CIMMERIA

Cimmeria is a bleak nation of forested hills and towering mountains. Rain clouds hover perennially over the dark hills, bringing stinging rain, slick sleet, and freezing snow. Rank upon rank of dark hills rise and fall in all directions, forested with strange, dusky trees that give the land a frightening, menacing appearance even by day. Its appearance at night would terrify a civilised man to the brink of sanity.

CIMMERIAN NOBLES

Cimmeria does not have a line of blooded nobility. Cimmerians are prohibited from taking the noble class at 1st level. Those who later become noblemen, such as Conan, must multiclass into it. Cimmerians do not respect nobility as it is practised elsewhere in the world; a man is judged on his character, not on his lineage. Few Cimmerians respect those who claim to have authority, they instead respect honour and combat prowess. Honour and reputation for the Cimmerians is a mixture of courage, honesty, integrity, loyalty and physical prowess. They will treat those who are honourable and skilled with respect. Cimmerians do not have social rankings beyond that simple attitude; chief or herdsman, it does not matter.

CIMMERIAN SCHOLARS

Cimmerians are not the scholarly sort and are prohibited from taking the scholar class at 1st level. They have no priests, sorcerers, shamans or witches. Those who traffic with the power of the gods, even through prayer, are weaklings in their eyes. Cimmerians do not make sacrifices to Crom or any other deity and see those that do as either touched in the head or simply weak. Those Cimmerians who take the barbarian/scholar multiclassed path are known as oracles, as befitting their superstitious nature. These oracles can read the dooms evident in a flight of birds or in the entrails of an animal. Just about any aspect of nature is endowed with spiritual significance that can be read by those who are wise. These Cimmerian oracles learn the sorcery style of Divination only; thereafter they take bonus feats in lieu of additional sorcery styles and when they run out of divination spells to learn, they take +2 skill points in lieu of additional advanced spells.

In addition to the oracles, Cimmeria also has an oral tradition of story-telling by blind-men who can no longer provide for themselves, their families or their clans. Cimmeria fears the written word, believing letters and runes to be magical. Blind or blinded Cimmerians often multiclass into scholar and become the oral repositories for Cimmerian and clan histories and stories, thus earning their keep. It is also possible that Cimmerians intentionally blind their bards to prevent them from becoming literate. Again, just like the oracles, if a blind bard of Cimmeria learns a sorcery style, he will likely limit himself to Divination only. Many Cimmerians consider writing to be a form of magic, so literacy is rarely available to Cimmerian scholars who have not travelled. These scholars will focus on Knowledge skills (as many as possible) and Perform skills (to convey their knowledge).

CIMMERIAN SOLDIERS

Cimmerians are natural barbarians, though there are some who actually train to fight, becoming soldiers. They are no less barbaric for not having the barbarian class but they are formidable warriors. Many gather in bands known as Bands of Brothers, to perfect their fighting skills. Almost all learn the *Skirmisher* formation combat style.

Cimmerians have a skill disadvantage because of the -2 penalty to Intelligence. Appropriately, Cimmerians gain a racial bonus to Climb and circumstance bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Spot and Survival when they are in mountains and hills. Although mechanically there is little reason to maximise the Climb skill for most campaigns, from a roleplaying perspective a player may want to keep the Climb skill as high as possible. Imagine the embarrassment of a Cimmerian character failing his Climb check! At any rate, a total bonus higher than +25 is unnecessary.



Cimmerians should also keep their Listen and Spot checks maximised as these are usually opposed checks. Survival should also be kept high to make the most use of the Track class ability.

All Cimmerian soldiers should consider taking the Fighting-Madness feat. Also, the bonuses to Strength, Constitution and Will saves offset the penalty to defence – and if an opponent can be demoralised then the penalty to defence is effectively negated. Power Attack and Cleave are also great feats for the Cimmerian soldier. It is much easier to defeat an opponent in *Conan the Roleplaying Game* than it is in most other fantasy roleplaying games because of the higher weapon damages and the lower massive damage threshold.

The Cimmerians do not practice refined sword-play as do the sword masters of Zingara or the martial artists of far-off Khitai, but battle with hard-borne experience bought on the battlefield. Fighting is a serious business among the Cimmerians and one does not make an enemy of a Cimmerian unless willing to fight for one's life. Impoliteness is an invitation to a fight to the death.

Cimmerians are, at best, indifferent archers. Some tribes may use the bow to hunt with, but most either trap, fish or hunt with the spear. Virtually none use the bow in battle, believing the bow to be an unmanly, cowardly weapon.

Conan even says as much in *The Queen of the Black Coast* when he proffers that he learned archery not among his people but from the Hyrkanians.

Most Cimmerians fight without armour but some clans use round shields in battle. Armour is often considered to be cowardly, although some of the more practical Cimmerians have been known to ignore that attitude.

The brawler (page 111), the wasteland warrior (page 118) and the berserker (see *Conan: The Free Companies*), as well as the barbarian multiclassed presented in *Conan: Hyboria's Fiercest*, are the most apt options for Cimmerian multiclassing.

CORINTHIA

Corinthia is a triangle of land south of Brythunia, west of Zamora, east of Ophir and north of Koth. The Karpash Mountains, which run along its southeastern, southern and southwestern borders mostly dominate its landscape. A portion of the southern 'point' of Corinthia is desert where the city-states of Kamalla and Zahmahn are located. The forested foothills and jagged mountain ridges of the Karpash Mountains that rise above the towering tree line, separating Corinthia and Ophir, dominate the west. It is among these terrains that Corinthian nobles, scholars and soldiers live and thrive.

CORINTHIAN NOBLES

Corinthian nobles in their ornate, hooded gowns and their wide cloaks are experts at political espionage and diplomatic subterfuge. Corinthians place a high value on skilled oration, so most nobles put ranks in Perform (oratory). Most also have ranks in Ride, although they rarely bother to become expert horsemen. Virginitiy and virginal behaviour is expected of noblewomen, so many take ranks in Perform (virginitiy).

Corinthian nobles usually choose Bluff, Diplomacy, Perform (oratory) and Sense Motive as Background Skills, choosing Diplomacy and Perform (oratory) for their Adaptability racial feature. Female nobles may choose Craft (embroidery), Perform (dance) and Perform (virginitiy) in place of any of those listed above for their background or adaptive skills.

The noble savage (page 79), the exile (page 81), the cavalier (page 83), the dilettante (page 87), the professional knight (page 89) and the mastermind (page 91) are all excellent class combinations for the Corinthian noble. All classes are favoured for the Corinthian, so they tend to excel at whatever role they need to in order to survive.

CORINTHIAN SCHOLARS

Corinthian scholars tend to be of two sorts: those who use sorcery to achieve power and those who use sorcery to achieve knowledge. Some Corinthian scholars are inventors, using

technology to mimic witchcraft, while others truly delve into the darkest of ominous tomes to pry forth the horrible secrets of the universe. Nabonidus, for example, used mirrors to achieve an effect Conan deemed to be witchcraft in Howard's *Rogues in the House*. Scholars in Corinthia tend to be just as politically active and diplomatically engaged as Corinthian noblemen.

Corinthian scholars usually choose Bluff, Diplomacy, Perform (oratory) and Sense Motive as Background Skills, choosing Diplomacy and Perform (oratory) for their Adaptability racial feature. Noble Blood (from *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos*) is a common feat for 1st level scholars to ensure a few noble contacts as well as the wealth to build trap-laden lairs and book-laden libraries.

The hermit (page 94), the druid (page 96), the cult leader (page 99), the observer (page 102), the temple warder (page 106) and the occultist (page 109) are all excellent class combinations for the Corinthian scholar.

CORINTHIAN SOLDIERS

Corinthian soldiers drink all night and fight all day. They prefer straight blades with blood-grooves and dress in whatever they can afford. Many Corinthian soldiers take the Carouser or Brawl feat.

The Corinthian Infantry are commoners levied for three year terms of duty, so most of these soldiers have at least one level in commoner. They use light lances as spears and are also armed with swords, heavy mail hauberks, breastplates, steel helms and large shields. Those who do not return to their common lives after their tour of duty is completed join the ranks of the hoplites, the elite infantry force of the Corinthian city-states. Infantry soldiers do not usually take many (if any) ranks in Ride. Their Background Skills are usually chosen from Profession (any), Craft (any), Use Rope and Spot. Their adaptive skills are usually Intimidate and Search. Their skill points are often spent in Intimidate and Search, although many also put points in Perform (guard mount).

The Corinthian Cavalry are professional soldiers fighting under green and gold flags and heraldic devices. They are hard-bitten soldiers who do not put up with cowardice or foolishness. They ride heavily armoured horses, intent on riding through any opposition. They use light lances, heavy mail hauberks and breastplates as well as the straight-edged sword. Soldiers with levels in noble, nobles with levels in soldier or soldiers with the Noble Blood feat (from *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos*) often take up a tour of duty among the Corinthian Cavalry. Members of the Corinthian Cavalry take ranks in Ride and Search. Their Background Skills (unless they are noble, in which case they usually take the Background Skills listed under the Corinthian noble section) are often Handle Animal, Intimidate, Ride and Search. Ride

and Search are often the skills chosen for their Adaptive racial feature.

The brawler (page 111), master archer (page 114), the fop (page 116) and most of the soldier class combinations presented in *Conan: The Free Companies* are nearly perfect class combinations for the Corinthian soldier. All classes are favoured for Corinthians, making any class combination more than workable.

GHULISTAN

The inhabitants of the Himelians are divided into many different tribes and clans of tall, hairy hillmen, both strong and fierce. These hill-tribes have their own barbaric code of honour, disdaining civilised behaviour, making fun of the weak and foolish. Above all, they hate traitors. Like the Hyrkanians they prize horses and like the Vendhyans they prize customs and traditions. Like both, they fear mesmerism and sorcery. They are a fatalistic, superstitious lot, but easily enthused, especially at the prospect of slaughter and loot. They are of the east and bound by long traditions and ancient ideas. A survivalist culture, the hillmen have adapted well to their surroundings, using the noble, scholar and soldier classes well to achieve that survival.

The men of the Himelian tribes tend to be hairy and ragged. On their heads sit wide turbans. Their curly hair is long and they are bearded, their faces cragged and wizened from the harsh Himelian winds. They are tall and boast broad, hairy shoulders. The men wear sturdy sheep- or yak-skin tunics, belted cloaks and soft leather boots. When traversing the higher slopes, they wear huge fur greatcoats with sleeves long enough to envelop cold hands. They gird themselves with Bakhariot belts that hold their ivory and gold hilted tulwars. They squat or sit cross-legged in the Eastern fashion when resting and are superb guerrilla fighters

GHULISTANI NOBLES

There are no Ghulistani nobles. The class is prohibited because the Ghulistani leaders rule by might; as barbaric tribesmen, the hillmen have no compunction about killing an ineffective, traitorous or weak leader. Unlike the civilised people to the south, they do not teach that their kings are holy, divine or special in any way, so the chiefs must defend their right to rule by force of arms and willpower.

GHULISTANI SCHOLARS

A Ghulistani scholar, although not prohibited, is a rare character. Ghulistani tribes are too afraid of sorcery to permit shamans to live among them, although any that might arise and be charismatic or strong enough to survive would likely be hypnotists. Himelian shamans live apart from the tribes, often as

RAKSHSA

These Ghulistani scholars are experts with Oriental Magic. They usually combine this expertise with at least some knowledge of martial arts, to complement such spells as warrior trance. They are also skilled hypnotists, capable of defeating most foes without even lifting a finger or raising a sweat. Finally, most learn at least a measure of countermagic, recognising that another sorcerer is a far greater threat than most ordinary humans could ever be.

Most wear plain robes and appear unarmed, though they often have concealed weaponry or sorcerous objects under their robes. Rakhshas are usually acolytes of far more powerful groups and are usually apprenticed to the Seers of Yimsha, regarded as completely expendable by their wicked masters.

hermits (page 94) and shamans (see *Conan: Hyboria's Fiercest*). A Ghulistani scholar will put skill points in his Background Skills whenever possible. These skills are almost a necessity to survive in those grim mountains. He should multiclass with barbarian to gain access to bonus feats.

The hermit (page 94), the cult leader (page 99), the observer (page 102), the temple warder (page 106) and the occultist (page 109) are all excellent class combinations for Ghulistan natives. The shaman concept from *Conan: Hyboria's Fiercest* is also appropriate. The hermit is perhaps the most likely because it uses the favoured barbarian class in conjunction with the scholar, giving the character bonus feats in addition to sorcery.

GHULISTANI SOLDIERS

Ghulistani favour the barbarian class but some actually learn to focus their energies on combat, becoming soldiers in effect, although Ghulistan does not have a standing national army. They are brave, steadfast, persistent and hospitable. They are also fearsomely violent. They are guerrilla fighters of noted ferocity, so many of them multiclass into thief to enhance their hit-and-run capabilities.

Ghulistani soldiers prefer stealth and raids to open combat, so skills such as Hide and Move Silently are usually maximised. Due to their environment and the need to climb to high reaches to make their ambushes, they usually maximise their Climb skills, at least until a total bonus of +21 to +25 is reached. Survival skills are also maximised if possible.

Ghulistani nobles should choose the Fighting-Madness feat at 1st level to reflect the sheer danger fighting one of them entails. Ghulistani soldiers are among the most dangerous and barbaric combatants around. Stealth is another appropriate feat to take. It stacks well with the +2 circumstance bonus the Ghulistani already receive for Hide and Move Silently and the +1 racial bonus to Hide and Move Silently. A 1st level Ghulistani soldier with a mere 10 Dexterity and with the Stealthy feat already has +9 in Hide and Move Silently. Ghulistani soldiers should put their highest statistics in Strength and Dexterity to make the most of their Background Skills.

They fight with javelins, stones, arrows, Zhaibar knives, scimitars or tulwars. The tribesmen are also aware of the superior bows made by the Hyrkanians and those weapons are especially prized among the hillmen.

The brawler (page 111), master archer (page 114) and the wasteland warrior (page 118) are all excellent class combinations for the Ghulistan soldier. The brawler is most likely as barbarian is a favoured class for the Himelian tribesman.



HYPERBOREA

Hyperborea is a cold, windy land to the east of Asgard. Hyperboreans are often tall and gaunt with pale eyes and hair, although many have foreign blood in them. The gaunt Hyperboreans hunt wild animals, herd domesticated animals, gather meagre berries and pick pale mushrooms to supplement their sparse gardens of grains and vegetables. Their culture is exclusive, shunning most outside trade contact, so the Hyperboreans have minimal industry. Still, the Hyperboreans are skilled at woodcraft and stonework. Common Hyperboreans know how to move through the pine forests and survive in the wild for days. Many Hyperboreans go on extended wilderness forays, even going so far as to visit other countries.

HYPERBOREAN NOBLES

Hyperborean nobles live in great stone castles, aloof and distant from the serfs who live beneath them in stone walled villages. Most Hyperborean nobles dabble in magic or multiclass into scholar. They tend to be languid and bored, slow of speech and lacking in strength of character. Feats such as Carouser and Debaucher are common among them.

Hyperboreans are given Craft (stone) and Intimidate as Background Skills, plus the character may choose one other skill. Nobles should choose Bluff and Intimidate as their adaptable traits – no matter what class the Hyperborean noble may multiclass into later, he has been trained from birth to be deceptive and to intimidate others. He will always want those to be class skills. Choosing Intimidate for the Hyperborean's Adaptable racial feature also effectively negates the penalty to the skill from the lowered Charisma of the race. The competence bonus also stacks with the Hyperborean racial bonus to Intimidate. The languid noble also surprises people with their strength and agility, making the competence bonus to Bluff make sense.

The noble savage (page 79), the exile (page 81) and the dilettante (page 87) are all excellent class combinations for the Hyperborean noble. Although soldier is a favoured class for the grim Hyperboreans, the culture does not support the social mechanisms for professional knights (shown on page 89) so this concept is not appropriate for a Hyperborean noble/soldier multiclass unless he has left Hyperborea. Few Hyperborean nobles will ever have the drive to learn to fight as a soldier for an army. That is the purview of the lesser Hyperboreans to their lofty minds. However, some of the border nobles have learned to fight nomad invaders and do call themselves knights. They wear mail shirts under scale hauberks with helmets stolen from Æsir, Cimmerian or Hyrkanian invaders. They carry lances into battle while crouching behind teardrop shields, using Æsir broadswords when their lances break.

LOUHI, DEATHGODDESS OF HYPERBOREA

Although Louhi is a mortal sorceress, she is considered to be the living avatar of the Hyperborean death-goddess. She is the master of the cult and all worshippers must follow the Rule of the Master as given in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*. She teaches magic, warping her followers' bodies, minds and souls, in exchange for their obedience.

Requirements of Worship: Pay a tithe worth 1 sp/level/month to the local priests of Louhi, attend at least one cult meeting/month.

Benefits of Worship: Spells (Counterspells, Curses, Divination, Immortality, Necromancy, Oriental Magic, Prestidigitation).

Requirements for Ordained Priesthood: Standard, plus as follows: must know at least three sorcery styles and three advanced spells; Knowledge (arcana) 8 ranks; must give up at least three magical links to oneself to the cult's avatar.

Benefits of Ordained Priesthood: Standard, plus sorcery teaching is available (Counterspells, Curses, Divination, Immortality, Necromancy, Oriental Magic, Prestidigitation)

Typical Punishments for Disloyal Priests: Killed in a sorcerous ritual.

HYPERBOREAN SCHOLARS

Hyperborean scholars are a fearsome lot, gaunt and tall, with white hair and immense endurance. Hyperborean scholars suffer because of their languid personalities, which makes them an uncharismatic bunch. The scholars of Hyperborea appear in stories in various forms. L. Sprague de Camp and Lin Carter introduced the White Hand and the Witchmen of Hyperborea. Kurt Busiek also featured Hyperborean sorcerers.

Hyperborean scholars emphasise Prestidigitation, Nature Magic, Summonings, Weather Witching (see *Conan: Pirate Isles*) and Immortality (see *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos*) in their sorcery style selections. They summon great air elementals to defend their nation, swat at mortals from a distance, alter the nature of humanity and pursue immortality. Many also learn Divination and Necromancy and are able to see the past just by holding a skull. Many Hyperborean scholars have the Permanent Sorcery feat (from *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos*). Others are capable of corrupting creatures, remoulding them in the vats of life to create *gurnakhi*, giant slave soldiers. They live lives of luxury and decadence, dependant upon their slaves for all their basic needs. Feats such as Carouser and Debaucher are common among

them. When one of these immortal scholars tires of life after centuries of carousing he walks to a bridge built over a supposedly bottomless chasm and flings himself off.

The White Hand is a weird cult of pale wizard/assassins that holds power in Hyperborea through the terror of their horrible arts. They kill without leaving a mark and fight only with their strange, platinum-tipped rods. Those who serve in the White Hand undergo strange mortifications of body, mind and will. They are counted amongst the deadliest fighters in the world, immune to fear and pain. In addition to the death goddess, they worship a whole host of devil-gods and avatars. All members of the White Hand are subject to The Rule of the Master (see the *Conan the Roleplaying Game* for details).

Hyperboreans are given Craft (stone) and Intimidate as Background Skills, plus the character may choose one other skill. Scholars should choose Perform (ritual) and Intimidate as their adaptable traits – no matter what class the Hyperborean scholar may multiclass into later he has been trained from birth to cast spells and intimidate others. He will always want those to be class skills. Choosing Intimidate for the Hyperborean's Adaptable racial feature also effectively negates the penalty to the skill from the lowered Charisma of the race. The competence bonus also stacks with the Hyperborean racial bonus to Intimidate.

Most Hyperborean scholars choose Survival as their open Background Skill. Hide and Move Silently are often chosen as their adaptive skills for their Hyborian Adaptability trait.

The hermit (page 94), the druid (page 96), the cult leader (page 99), the observer (page 102), the temple warder (page 106) and the occultist (page 109) are all excellent class combinations for the Hyperborean scholar. The temple warder is the most likely as soldier is the favoured class for the Hyperborean.

HYPERBOREAN SOLDIERS

Hyperborean soldiers are massive men with greatswords who fight for grim nobles and languid scholars safe in their stone keeps and granite castles. Many soldiers leave Hyperborea to become mercenaries in foreign armies. They are slow of speech but are not necessarily dim or foolish. Some are little more than gaunt brutes but others are keen and sharp, always alert, ready for someone to assume they are as slow of movement, reaction and thought as they are of speech. They often wear scale hauberks and fight with techniques similar to the Æsir.

Hyperboreans are given Craft (stone) and Intimidate as Background Skills, plus the character may choose one other skill. Soldiers should choose Survival. They should also choose



Survival and Intimidate as their adaptable traits – no matter what class the Hyperborean soldier may multiclass into later, he has been trained from birth to survive and intimidate others. He will always want those to be class skills. Choosing Intimidate for the Hyperborean's Adaptable racial feature also effectively negates the penalty to the skill from the lowered Charisma of the race. The competence bonus also stacks with the Hyperborean racial bonus to Intimidate.

The brawler (page 111), master archer (page 114), the contemplative (page 123), the wasteland warrior (page 118) and the assassin (page 125) are all excellent class combinations for the Hyperborean soldier. Soldier is a favoured class for the Hyperborean, so most multiclass combinations, including several in *Conan: The Free Companies*, work well for this race.

HYRKANIA

Hyrkanians are born to the saddle, learning to ride before they learn to walk. Hyrkanians almost always travel with three or four horses per warrior and they never stop to change horses; switching mounts is done on the run with the Hyrkanian simply gathering up his gear (including the saddle) and vaulting onto another steed. Horse races, hunting and archery contests are popular pastimes. Blacksmiths are important in their society and are particularly honoured.

Each member of a Hyrkanian nomad tribe is essential for the tribe's survival (this includes women). Hyrkanian hordes

tend to have total mobility for warfare and many women also take up arms and fight. Others remain behind and care for the animals or follow the military hordes and slay the wounded and the fleeing.

The Hyrkanians, whether noble, scholar or soldier, armour themselves in urine-hardened horsehide, wearing a tightly woven silk shirt beneath robes to blunt the damage of enemy arrows, and use a small shield to protect their face. A sharply pointed steel cap with dangling earflaps protects the skull and iron squares are sewn into the fabric of their boots to protect their calves. Much of their armour and clothing is trimmed in fur. A typical Hyrkanian warrior carries his double-curved bow of wood, sinew and horn and up to three quivers of arrows. Most Hyrkanians also carry hooked lances, a scimitar or sabre hooked to their belt or saddle and a dagger strapped to their left arm. Hyrkanians, regardless of class, tend to behave similarly.

HYRKANIAN NOBLES

Hyrkania is a barbaric land known for its nomads. These nomads have rulers known as khans. Hyrkanian nobles usually lead the Hyrkanian hordes. Most have at least a few levels of barbarian or nomad (or both). The Hyrkanian noble understands the fundamental problem facing the Hyrkanians; his nomadic people are dependent on trade with sedentary peoples and can never accumulate a surplus or possess reserves. Surpluses cannot be carried, thus the Hyrkanians need trade to gain access to grain and other products, including artistic items and weapons. However, few communities need items created by Hyrkanians; to get needed merchandise and goods, the Hyrkanians must attack. The nobles understand this; it is survival. Those who surrender and pay tribute are spared. Those who resist are killed down to the last person. Again, it is an issue of Hyrkanian survival.

Hyrkanian nomads look for certain traits in a leader such as courage, wisdom, generosity and luck. The nomads will not follow a leader, be he a khan or clan chief, if he is not worthy of respect. If a noble proves himself to be a coward, an idiot, a miser or just plain unlucky, the nomads may exile or even kill the former ruler. Nomads do not respect the weak or those who have lost honour. The Hyrkanian noble must ensure that no member of the tribe goes hungry.

Hyrkanian nobles are noted cavalry and horse-archers. All Hyrkanian nobles will take the Mounted Combat and Mounted Archery feats. Feats improving their archery will almost certainly be taken, especially Far Shot, for which the Hyrkanian does not need to meet the prerequisites. Hyrkanians are well reputed for being able to shoot things at incredible distances. For this reason, a Hyrkanian will often keep his Spot skill as high as possible. A Hyrkanian noble will usually keep his Ride and Survival skills maximised. A Hyrkanian will rarely walk as much as 20 paces if he can ride

instead. He will often put at least 5 ranks in Handle Animal to earn the synergy bonus to Ride.

The noble savage (page 79), the exile (page 81), the cavalier (page 83), the noble of the coast (page 84), the professional knight (page 89), the suzerain (see *Conan: Hyboria's Fiercest*) and the jinette (see *Conan: The Free Companies*) are all propitious class combinations for the Hyrkanian noble. The cavalier (noble/nomad, page 83) is the most likely because nomad is a favoured class for the Hyrkanian.

HYRKANIAN SCHOLARS

The Hyrkanian scholars believe words create reality if said with conviction. Melodies and songs carry words of power, and the drum is the primary instrument for creating such music. They believe in astral projection and similar out-of-body experiences where battles with hostile spirits occur. It is a dangerous occupation, for certain powerful objects can trap souls. The northern Hyrkanians believe the 'man in the moon' is a shaman who flew too close to the moon and became ensnared by it. The moon is analogous to the Land of the Dead for most of these Hyrkanians. In the shamanistic society of the northern Hyrkanians, the blacksmith is considered more powerful than the shaman, for though the shaman can speak with spirits, the blacksmith commands fire and is protected by fire. Often, the blacksmith is the older brother of the shaman. Still, the shaman is the more charismatic, and must be, for he has to be able to sway his tribe with the power of his performances to have any effect, using props and symbols as necessary.

The shamans use cosmology, believing the cosmos has multiple layers, all connected by a spire, be it a tree or mountain. This system of belief requires that souls and bodies are separate entities. There are many varied types of shamans in Hyrkania, depending on where the tribe primarily lives because the shamanistic religion is invariably tied to ecology. Some are merely healers, others are skilled hunters and others exist to ward off evil spirits in efforts to stop plagues or kill witches and sorcerers. Many shamans deal primarily with the forces of the world, either the classic elements such as the wind, or the animal kingdom such as wolves. Stories tell of shamans who can sit naked in the snow and melt ice with their body heat. Other shamans can turn into animals. Most Hyrkanian shamans, however, are concerned primarily with the continuation and reproduction of family and are associated with the cult of skies and mountains. The sites of their worship are cairns of stones with a single vertical pole sticking out of the centre where prayers and sacrifice were performed.

Non-sorcerous Hyrkanian scholars function as engineers, musicians, translators, doctors and scribes. These usually accompany

the Hyrkanian nobles, aiding in the administration of the conquering hordes.

Hyrkanian scholars are part of the nomadic tribe and are also horse-archers. All Hyrkanian scholars will take the Mounted Combat and Mounted Archery feats. Feats improving their archery will almost certainly be taken, especially Far Shot, for which the Hyrkanian does not need to meet the prerequisites. Hyrkanians are well reputed for being able to shoot things at incredible distances. For this reason, a Hyrkanian will often keep his Spot skill as high as possible. A Hyrkanian scholar will usually keep his Ride and Survival skills maximised. A Hyrkanian will rarely walk as much as 20 paces if he can ride instead. He will often put at least 5 ranks in Handle Animal to earn the synergy bonus to Ride. He will usually teach his horses tricks. The scholar will also put ranks in Hide in order to attack from ambush at range. Moving silently is secondary to Hide, as the Hyrkanian scholar rarely gets up close to his prey, and distance hides sound fairly well. Hyrkanian scholars will often have ranks in Craft (blacksmith) as well as in various Perform skills. Hyrkanian scholars should put their strongest statistic in Charisma. Shamans live and die by the effectiveness of their magic. A high magic attack bonus is better than more spell points. A high Charisma also adds to Perform bonuses, an important aspect of shamanistic life.

Shamans are expected to be able to heal the tribe, so ranks in Heal are a must. Self-Sufficient and Skill Focus (heal) are well-chosen feats for Hyrkanian shamans who specialise in healing. Those who focus on warding off evil spirits take the Counterspells sorcery style early in their careers. Others take the Weather Witching style (presented in *Conan: Pirate Isles*) or the Nature Magic sorcery style.

They are typically part of a nomad tribe (and many multiclass into nomad or into scholar from the nomad class) or a barbarian horde (multiclassing into barbarian or from the barbarian class). Those who are not multiclassed or otherwise part of a tribe of nomads or barbarians are typically hermits. The hermit (page 94), the druid (page 96), the cult leader (page 99), the observer (page 102), the adjutant (see *Conan: The Free Companies*), the shaman (see *Conan: Hyboria's Fiercest*) and the occultist (page 109) are all excellent class combinations for the Hyrkanian scholar.

HYRKANIAN SOLDIERS

Hyrkanian soldiers, as with virtually all Hyrkanians, are noted cavalry and horse-archers. While most Hyrkanians are of the nomad class, not all are dissident, plains wanderers. Some become extremely organised and efficient nomadic warriors. These are the Hyrkanian soldiers. They take *Heavy Cavalry* and *Light Cavalry* formation combat styles. Their focus on combat often sends these Hyrkanians into the ranks of the



kagan (tribal commanders) for their prowess and battle skill. *Kagan* are Hyrkanians with the Leadership or Horde feat. Nomads serving under a Hyrkanian soldier *kagan* often start multiclassing into soldier as they drill, learn manoeuvres and become more and more professional in their formations and techniques. Despite a more professional attitude among the soldier *kagan* units, the Hyrkanian preference for personal glory in battle tends to exert its pull eventually in battle, causing their lines to slowly disintegrate as battles lengthen.

All Hyrkanian soldiers will take the Mounted Combat and Mounted Archery feats. Feats improving their archery will almost certainly be taken, especially Far Shot, for which the Hyrkanian does not need to meet the prerequisites. Hyrkanians are well reputed for being able to shoot things at incredible distances. For this reason, a Hyrkanian will often keep his Spot skill as high as possible. It is easier to shoot a thing at a distance if one can see that thing in the distance. A Hyrkanian soldier will usually keep his Ride and Survival skills maximised. A Hyrkanian will rarely walk as much as 20 paces if he can ride instead. He will often put at least 5 ranks in Handle Animal to earn the synergy bonus to Ride. He will usually teach his horses tricks.

The brawler (page 111), the master archer (page 114), the wasteland warrior (page 118), the sea hawk (page 121), the warrior of the horde (see *Conan: Hyboria's Fiercest*), the assassin (page 125) and the jinette (see *Conan: The Free Companies*) are all appropriate class combinations for the Hyrkanian soldier.

IRANISTANI

The folk of Iranistan are black-haired and often broad across the shoulders, with a full range of heights. Their eyes are brown and their complexion dark, with a small range of tribal variation in appearance and culture. They can range from fine-featured and near fair skinned, to swarthy and heavy-featured. Men favour facial hair, often oiling their beards, and women traditionally wear their hair long and straight. Women (and sometimes men) ornament their eyes with kohl, and most Iranistani wear richly ornamented clothing and anoint themselves perfumes or scented oils when possible.

Culture: The Iranistani are essentially a tribal people, with the tribal unit based on an extended family and hereditary allies, led by powerful chiefs loosely united under a powerful Shah. They are a proud people, and somewhat xenophobic, with a strong distrust of those outside their culture. Iranistani have a great appreciation of life and its pleasures, seeing it as a temporary gift that might be taken away at any moment. This fatalism fuels their art, with rich ornamentation adorning virtually all crafted items, and at the same time, they will readily give their lives in combat for honour or in defence of their faith.

Names: Iranistani names tend to be Arabic in origin, particularly Iraqi or Iranian. Examples: (male) Arshak, Balash, Bardiya, Gotarza, Hakhamani, Kerim, Kobad, Kujala; (female) Nanaia. Suggestions: (male) Abbal, Amar, Assad, Bijan, Davoud, Farouq, Firouz, Haroun, Hassan, Jaafar, Khalid, Parviz, Rahim, Rassoul; (female) Alireza, Badri, Farah, Farida, Fatima, Nissa, Sabah, Samina, Soraya, Tahereh, Zora.

Religion: Many northern Iranistani have adopted the Asuran religion and follow its strictures. However, their culture has flavoured their worship of this faith, and their innate fatalism steers them from attempting to divine the future. As a result, Iranistani scholars and mystics rarely use divinatory magic styles, and those schools are not taught to Iranistani worshippers or priests in Iranistan. The southern Iranistani follow a variety of more shamanistic, primitive faiths, and are not bound by this restriction.

- ❖ -2 to Wisdom, +2 to Charisma. Iranistani are quick to anger and often let their passions overcome their better judgement, but are charismatic and socially adept when dealing with their family, friends and potential allies.
- ❖ +2 circumstance bonus to all uses of the Appraise, Diplomacy, Forgery, Intimidate, Sense Motive and Spot skills when relating to haggling or negotiating the price of goods in an appropriate situation or venue. This bonus can apply whether the character is the buyer, seller, or an impartial negotiator, and only relate to the motives, goods, and or currency relating to any and all the parties in the transaction. This +2 circumstance bonus can also apply to any appropriate Craft or Profession skills if the character possesses them and they relate to the negotiation at hand.
- ❖ *Fatalistic:* Iranistani believe strongly in the machinations of fate, and that their destinies are to be adhered to rather than fought against. As a result, Iranistani characters do not collect or spend Fate Points as easily as other characters do. Iranistani characters begin with only 1 Fate Point (opposed to the standard 3 Fate Points for starting characters), and can never have more Fate Points than they have combined levels in all classes. Furthermore, the Games Master may impose an unmodified check (DC 10) for the use of a Fate Point – if the roll is less than 10, the Fate Point is lost and the character must adhere to the path the gods have set before him. The player can spend another Fate Point on the same action, but the same check must be repeated until the roll is successful or the player chooses not to spend further Fate Points. *(Note: Restricting player use of Fate Points is a seriously limiting factor, though in character with the Iranistani culture. The Games Master should feel at liberty to ignore this restriction, favouring only the initial limitation of Fate Points, or ignoring all aspects of this racial characteristic altogether. If so, it is suggested that this ability be replaced with a -1 racial penalty to all saving throw checks as per the Shemite race, described in Conan the Roleplaying Game.)*
- ❖ +2 racial bonus to Animal Handling and Ride checks for horses and camels. Most Iranistani are familiar with horses and camels from an early age, using them for travel (and food when necessity requires).
- ❖ **Weapon Familiarity:** Iranistani characters can use sabres and tulwars as though they are martial weapons, rather than exotic weapons. Additionally, they gain a +1 racial bonus to attack and damage rolls when using either of these weapons.

Background Skills: Appraise, Intimidate, Sense Motive.

Favoured Class: Nomad.

Prohibited Classes: Borderer.

Automatic Languages: Iranistani.

Bonus Languages: Afghuli, Kosalan, Puntian, Zembabwean.

IRANISTAN

The culture of Iranistan is one of art, family, honour, hospitality and fatalism. Its people are barbaric and nomadic. Most Iranistani are familiar with horses and camels from an early age, using them for travel and food. They believe strongly in the machinations of fate, and that their destinies are to be adhered to rather than fought against.

IRANISTANI NOBLES

Noble villages in Iranistan are built around the family unit, self-sufficient groups that follow a headman, usually the oldest male in the village, who in turn follows the chief. These headmen and chiefs are the barbarian nobles. In the cities of Iranistan are the civilised nobles. They have codes of honour and are fervent about tradition.

Iranistani nobles fight with sabres and tulwars, just as the soldiers do. They are more likely to use a crossbow than a bow and arrow. Diplomatic and charismatic, the Iranistani nobles are usually intimidating as well. The Iranistani also have Appraise and Sense Motive as Background Skills. Players should be sure to place a few ranks in these skills as they fit the race well. Iranistani nobles are also horsemen, so ranks in Handle Animal and Ride are fitting.

The noble savage (page 79), the exile (page 81), the cavalier (page 83), the noble of the coast (Iranistan has a coast) (page 84), the professional knight (page 89), the suzerain (see *Conan: Hyboria's Fiercest*) and the jinette (see *Conan: The Free Companies*) are all superb class combinations for the Iranistani noble.

IRANISTANI SCHOLARS

Many northern Iranistani have adopted the Asuran religion and follow its strictures. However, their culture has flavoured their worship of this faith, and their innate fatalism steers Iranistani scholars from attempting to divine the future. As a result, Iranistani scholars and mystics rarely use divinatory magic styles, and those schools are not taught to Iranistani worshippers or priests in Iranistan. The southern Iranistani follow a variety of more shamanistic, primitive faiths and are not bound by this restriction.

Fire is an important tool for the Iranistani scholar, who lives in the hot climate of that shrouded kingdom. He tends to be restless and energetic, passionate and enthusiastic. Scholars are usually blacksmiths and take ranks in Craft (blacksmith).

The hermit (page 94), the druid (page 96), the cult leader (page 99), the observer (page 102), the adjutant (see *Conan: The Free Companies*), the shaman (see *Conan: Hyboria's Fiercest*) and

the occultist (page 109) are all excellent class combinations for the Iranistani scholar.

IRANISTANI SOLDIERS

The Iranistani are essentially a tribal people, with the tribal unit based on an extended family and hereditary allies. The soldiers call their headmen sheiks.

The professional soldiers of Iranistan are the King's Slingers. They knock enemies off their horses with sling-stones so the demounted troops can be run over by the tribal cavalry units conscripted from the various nomad or hillmen tribes of Iranistan. The embroidery on their clothing and headdresses, which are worn over armour and helmets, identifies the King's Slingers. The peacock in its pride is a common design among the Iranistani soldiery. These professional troops fight with slings and scimitars. Their armour is typically mail hauberks and steel caps. Most have ranks in Ride but they are not cavalry and do not ride their horses into combat.

Other soldiers come from the tribes. They fight from horseback with bow and scimitar. In battle, each is expected to use bow, scimitar and horse to the utmost. Tribal soldiers wear leather jerkins and steel caps. Like the King's Slingers, the Iranistani soldiers identify their units through the embroidery on their clothing and headdresses, which are worn over armour and helmets.



Two of the Iranistani's Background Skills (Appraise and Sense Motive) are not on the soldier's class skill list. Still, for roleplaying purposes, put skill points (hopefully those derived from Intelligence) in these skills as they are appropriate to the race. Intimidate should also be given ranks as the soldier moves up in levels. As soldiers, the Iranistani are familiar with horses, so at least 5 ranks should be put into Handle Animal and as many ranks (up to maximum) as can be spared in Ride. The Iranistani are notoriously diplomatic, so ranks in Diplomacy are also appropriate for this character. The Iranistani also have keen eyes when viewing goods – keeping the Spot and Appraise scores high is also advised. The Iranistani are notoriously artistic, so a few ranks in Craft (any mundane) is also apt.

The brawler (page 111), master archer (page 114), the wasteland warrior (page 118), the sea hawk (page 121), the warrior of the horde (see *Conan: Hyboria's Fiercest*), the assassin (page 125) and the jinette (see *Conan: The Free Companies*) are all appropriate class combinations for the Iranistani soldier.

KHITAI

Khitai is an insular kingdom few ever leave, those who do are scholars and sorcerers. That they are yellow-skinned worshippers of bizarre gods and demons is not to be doubted, however. Their eyes have a typical Oriental look and their hair is dark, while their priests have their heads shaven. The knowledge and traditions of these people are esoteric and ancient and the people here have a taste for spectacle and tradition. The Khitan people are also noted for being extremely knowledgeable and wise, well-versed in ancient lore and folk-tales.

KHITAN NOBLES

Khitai has a long-standing and rich tradition in nobility and class hierarchy. At the top of the hierarchy is the Emperor, called the *huangdi*, who is backed by seven counsellors. Some believe the Emperor is but a figurehead and the seven counsellors make the decisions. The seven counsellors are three *huang* (god-kings) and five *di* (sage-kings). The emperor title is passed from father to son, although not necessarily the eldest son. Also, Khitan politics allows for changes in dynasty so successful rebel leaders can also replace emperors. Generally, royal or official titles from one dynasty are not carried over to the next dynasty. Otherwise, titles are hereditary for up to 26 generations.

Beneath the emperor are the nobles. The nobles are ranked as follows: *gong* (prince); *mingong* or *kung* (duke); *hou* (marquis); *peh* (earl); *bo* (count); *tszi* (viscount); and *nan* (baron). If the noble actually governs a place, the place name is also in his title. The eldest son of a consort inherits the title from his father, retaining the same rank. Other sons from the consort,

as well as from concubines and mistresses, are given titles one rank lower than their father. These nobles rarely have a place name in their titles. Dukes are required to render assistance to the emperor in an emergency. Many of these titles are granted for military merits, not bloodline merits. Thus it is easier for a Khitan to multiclass into noble than most races.

Beneath the nobles are the gentry, the *Oing*. These are often court officials assigned to the nobles, generals (*qingche duwei*), commanders (*qi duwei*), officers (*yunqiwei*) and knights (*enqiwei*). The lesser sons of barons are also in this rank. Any member of the nobility or gentry can be called *gongzi*.

Ranking beneath the gentry are the gentlemen. The gentlemen, or *daifu*, are often sages or physicians. Scholars with the Noble Blood feat are usually of this rank. Also, the lesser sons of the gentry are of this rank. Court officials assigned to the gentry are also members of this rank. Below the gentlemen are the yeomen or *shi*, who are minor court officials assigned to the gentlemen, as well as the lesser sons of gentlemen. Often this rank is awarded to commoners who perform valorous deeds for the emperor or the kings.

Any female member of the nobility, save for the wife of the emperor or a king (who are called queens or *wang hou*), may be called princess or *gongzhu*. She may also incorporate any place name she is associated with into her title. Even women can become generals in this culture. The spouse of a princess, unless he has a title of his own, is given the noble title of *fuma*.

Nobles wear ceremonial articles and personal ornaments of exquisite craftsmanship, usually in designs such as coiled dragons, trumpeting elephants, charging tigers and crouching bears. Jade is especially valuable to the Khitans. It is, to them, the essence of heaven and Earth combined. Almost all items used in Khitan rituals are made from jade. It is more valuable than gold. If the Emperor sends a noble or scholar on a royal mission or duty, he often gives the noble or scholar a certain jade tablet to prove that he is doing divinely charged work. In addition to jade, the nobles of Khitai wear silk. The Emperor and his counsellors usually wear yellow silks. The nobles dress in high-necked, long silk jackets and embroidered trousers, the women fix their hair in complicated coiffeurs.

Nobles often have their orders to their officials inscribed on bronze bowls. Great military or diplomatic conquests are likewise commemorated in bronze.

Charisma will almost always be the highest statistic for a Khitan noble. Khitai's culture places a lot of value on strong leadership. Khitan nobles should choose Knowledge (nobility) as one of their Background Skills.

KHITAN RULES VARIANT

The Games Master may allow Khitan nobles to apply the Dabbler feat to the Nature or Oriental sorcery styles.

Knowledgeable is a good choice of feat, taking advantage of the character's racial bonus and the noble's special regional bonus to make a true know-it-all. Walking quietly is important to Khitans, so a few ranks should be placed in Move Silently. The Khitan noble should take either Dodge or Improved Unarmed Strike for his bonus feat. Bluff, Diplomacy and Intimidation are also appropriate for the Khitan noble. Khitans tend to be looked at with suspicion by other races, making Intimidation a natural choice. Their inscrutable, almost unemotional, mien makes Bluff another natural choice. They are also known for careful word choice and precise emphasis on tone and inflection, making Diplomacy yet another natural choice. Khitan nobles tend to be scrupulously honest and most take the honest nature of Reputation.

Kings of Khitai practise divination. Using a bone, such as an ox scapula or a tortoise shell, the king inscribes a question on one side. He drills an indentation in this side, then applies a heated point to the depression. This causes the other side of the bone to crack and the cracks are interpreted for their meaning. Some kings translate the meaning themselves while others employ a court diviner for the interpretation. Many kings and nobles of Khitai at least play around in Divination via the Dabble feat.

The noble savage (page 79), the exile (page 81), the noble of the coast (page 84), dilettante (page 87), the professional knight (page 89) and the jinette (see *Conan: The Free Companies*) are all choice class combinations for the Khitan noble. The dilettante (noble/scholar, page 87) is the most likely because scholar is a favoured class for the Khitan. The exile is another good choice, as most Khitans met by those in the West are usually exiles or sorcerers.

KHITAN SCHOLARS

Most Khitan sorcerers value information above all else and though they will not hesitate to slay those who deserve it or are their allotted targets, they prefer to avoid unnecessary killing. They also learn Oriental magic and curses, making them highly effective combatants. They favour

staves as weapons, and, if they can get them, Staves of Death (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*) as a means of delivering their spells. Khitan sorcerers almost always travel and train in small groups. One member of the group will be the senior sorcerer, responsible for teaching the others. He will usually be scrupulously fair but by no means a pushover.

Human sacrifice is the name of the game for Khitan scholars. Ancestral spirits require blood to be spilt to prove the serious nature of any request. River, mountain and other nature spirits often require similar tokens. In addition to human sacrifice, animal sacrifice is also rampant, especially large animals such as elephants and rhinoceroses. There is a Khitan notion that a person's spirit lingers on in a spirit world after death. If a scholar shows proper respect to departed ancestors, this realm's powers can be tapped into to aid the living. This being the case, the dead in Khitai are buried with things needed to live a comfortable life in the hereafter, for a comfortable, pleased spirit is more conducive to giving advice or favours when requested. Further, the spirits of ancient kings act as intermediaries to the actual gods, who are strange and unknowable to mortals. Spirits are nourished by human blood, so vast amounts of human sacrifice are necessary to maintain the integrity and unity of Khitai.

Bells and chimes also play a large part in solemn Khitan rituals. Almost all Khitan bells have a two-pitch quality, the sound depending on where the bell is struck by the mallet. Almost all bells are inscribed to indicate the notes each bell plays, indicating remarkable musical achievement, for the pitches are calculated before the bell is cast in bronze. These bells range in size from eight inches to over five feet in height. Some nobles and scholars have sets consisting of 64 of these two-pitched bells covering the entire range of sizes. These sets are usually arranged hanging mouth down in three rows on a huge L-shaped frame capable of supporting the three tons of bronze bells. The 19 smallest bells occupy the top row. The 33 middle-sized bells occupy the middle row and are used for the melody. The remaining bells (the largest) are on the bottom row to produce the accompaniment. The whole set is played by numerous musicians working in concert, often accompanied by dancers. Owning a complete bell set gives a noble or scholar a +1 bonus to Reputation.

The kings of Khitai like diviners. Only the king practises divining but he employs court diviners to interpret the results of the oracle bones. Many Khitan scholars, if they do not begin the game with the Oriental sorcery style, begin with the Divination style. Further, Khitans are notorious demon worshippers, so many eventually take the Summoning sorcery style (if they do not start out with it) and make pacts with demons lurking in the lost jungles to learn spells and magic. Most Khitan scholars take each of these styles as early as possible. Cosmic Sorcery (from *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos*) is another popular style for Khitan sorcerers. They are also known as hexers. Virtually all the sorcery styles are open and recommended for a Khitan sorcerer.



Khitan scholars in search of immortality have a curious method of doing so. They believe only total seclusion can bring about the spirits' permission to earn immortality. Those who learn the Immortality sorcery style (from *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos*) will forbid their servants to reveal their whereabouts to anyone, even another servant, and will enclose all walkways on their property so that no one ever knows where they really are until the style is mastered (all spells known in that style).

Tombs in Khitai are built below ground with walls and floors of rammed earth. The tombs are often huge, measuring around 60 feet long, 50 feet wide and 40 feet deep. An eight-foot-tall wooden chamber is built to house the coffin. The Khitan kings are buried with hundreds of bronze artefacts, jades, bone objects, ivory carvings, pottery and cowry shells. These artefacts include mirrors, ceremonial vessels, bells and weapons. Men, women, children and dogs are sacrificed for the benefit of the tombs' occupant and buried with him. Their bodies litter the walkway to the tomb. They are sacrificed by beheading in a gruesome ritual. The skulls are not placed with the bodies, instead they are stacked in the centre of the tomb facing the wooden chamber. Many Khitan hermits (page 94) lurk around these tombs, practising Divination and Necromancy sorcery styles.

Other scholars function as expert craftsmen. The smelting of bronze is a major industry for Khitai, as is the working of jade. The scholars of Khitai also breed the silkworm and spin the fibres into silk. Khitan scholars are surveyors of heaven and have a calendar that is both solar (for keeping track of years) and lunar (for keeping track of months). Other

scholars master the martial arts, taking unarmed attack style feats or fighting with the staff.

Knowledgeable is a good choice of feat for the Khitan scholar, taking advantage of the character's racial bonus to make the Khitan seem like a veritable walking encyclopaedia. Walking quietly is important to Khitans, so a few ranks should be placed in Move Silently. The Khitan noble should take either Dodge or Improved Unarmed Strike for his bonus feat. Bluff, Diplomacy and Intimidation are also appropriate for the Khitan noble. Khitans tend to be looked at with suspicion by other races, making Intimidation a natural choice. Their inscrutable, almost unemotional demeanour makes Bluff another natural choice. They are also known for careful word choice and precise emphasis on tone and inflection, making Diplomacy yet another good choice. Of course, ranks in Perform (ritual) and Perform (any music or dance) are a must, especially if the Khitan intends on summoning elementals and other powerful outsiders to his service. Music plays an important cultural role in Khitai's esoteric rituals, so putting ranks in musical performance skills is equally important. Most of a Khitan's servants will also have Perform (any music or dance) skills to help with any large rituals or to play large instruments, such as the bells described earlier.

Even among scholars, Khitai's culture expects them to be honest and charismatic. Charisma will usually be the highest ability score a Khitan scholar has. Most will also take the honest nature of Reputation, especially if they are seeking ordained priesthood. Respect is accorded to those with the most followers, so even Khitan sorcerers take the Leadership feat if they seek popular support or noble respect. Many Khitan scholars also take vows of obedience, vows of poverty and/or vows of chastity. These are not universal among all scholars, but they are fairly common.

Khitan scholars dress in high-necked, long silk jackets, embroidered trousers, hooded and wide-sleeved robes of a very dark grey or black material and sandals beneath their robes. The women fix their hair in complicated coiffeurs.

The hermit (page 94), the druid (page 96), the guide (see *Hyboria's Fiercest*), the cult leader (page 99), the observer (page 102), the temple warder (page 106), the navigator (see page 104) and the occultist (page 109) are all admirable class combinations for the Khitan scholar.

KHITAN SOLDIERS

Soldiers abound in Khitai. Khitan kings often find it necessary to go to war. When not fighting wars, Khitai's mighty armies either sit on the border to await an Hyrkanian attack, or they patrol the interior of the nation, collecting taxes and suppressing anyone rebelling against the Emperor. Khitai arranges its

troops in regular and predictable formations determined more by tradition than anything else. Infantry and archers are arranged in formations consisting of three 100-man companies, one each to the left, right and centre.

Archers are barely trained conscripts from the peasant class (so many have one or more ranks of commoner) who are forbidden to see their families for four years. Archers are equipped with bows and arrows, as well as infantry knives and broadswords. Bows are made of cattle sinew and horn and are the height of a man. The feathered, wood-shaft arrows are half the size of the bow. They are tipped with stone, bone, antler, shell or bronze. Archers wear light armour. They use their bows until the opponent closes, then they sling their wicker shields from their backs and continue the fight with their knives and swords. Their shields are useless after five rounds of combat. Player Characters playing one of these characters should avoid feats promoting expertise with the bow as the character would likely never be trained for such expertise. His skill points are best spent in methods of making his harsh life a little easier, such as Survival and Search, as well as Knowledge skills, particularly local and geographic knowledge. Craft and Profession skills are common.

Infantrymen wear no armour, wearing high-necked, padded jackets and embroidered trousers. Infantry are equipped with small bronze knives, sharpening stones, yard-long wood-hafted bronze halberds or spears and leather or wicker shields backed with silk on a wooden frame, usually decorated with a tiger motif. Almost all soldiers have a few levels in commoner. Characters playing a Khitan infantryman should realise that his character will not be trained to become an expert with his weapon. He is fodder and little else.

The Khitan cavalry is also poorly equipped and trained but numerous. They use broadswords and large shields in battle, wearing high-collared, embroidered coats with raw silk padding and steel caps. Khitan cavalrymen spend skill points on Ride and Handle Animal, as well as Mounted Combat. They are at a supreme disadvantage against the Hyrkanians because they do not practise mounted archery. They attempt to make up for this disadvantage through sheer weight of number.

The most fortunate of Khitan soldiers are the engineers, soldier/scholars who use remarkable war machines in combat.

Most of these are even skilled alchemists. They are trained to fight with staves and fire weapons, wearing red, high-collared coats with black embroidery and peaked black caps.

Chariots are used in companies comprised of five squadrons. Each chariot squadron has five chariots. The chariots are used as transportation and archery platforms and rarely have any

real presence on the battlefield. Usually they are seen as honour guards or used in parades. Charioteers have small bronze knives, sharpening stones, wood-hafted bronze halberds and leather or wicker shields on a wooden frame, usually decorated with a tiger motif. Charioteers wear slightly heavier armour than archers and infantrymen and wear light helmets secured with elaborate bows.

Commanders and other officers wear intricate, lacquered armour, complete with tassels and flaring helmets secured with a complicated bow. This armour design has an exotic, sinister look to Westerners. The armies of Khitai use colourful flags to indicate the locations of units. Unit commanders have a similar flag attached to their armour, jutting up over their helmets. Individual soldiers do not wear distinguishing identification. Commanders usually have Charisma as their highest ability. A commander does not have to be noble born, but he must be regarded as honest and a powerful leader (thus the high Charisma). Most have the honest nature of Reputation.

Other soldiers, not members of the military, are persons trained to defend the temples via hand-to-hand combat. Some form cults of assassins trained in stealth and the martial arts. They take unarmed fighting feats, Stealthy and similar feats. Since only nobility or members of the military may wield weapons, these soldiers must learn to fight without swords.

The brawler (page 111), the wasteland warrior (page 118), the sea hawk (page 121), the warrior of the horde (see *Conan: Hyboria's Fiercest*), the assassin (page 125) and the jinette (see *Conan: The Free Companies*) are all appropriate class combinations for the Khitan soldier.

KHORAJA

Khoraja is Shemite land captured by Kothic invaders to form their own kingdom. They are Hyborian characters and take Hyborian traits.

KHORAJAN NOBLES

In most respects, Khorajan nobility is the same as Kothic nobility. They are guided by tradition and are proud of their independence from both Koth and Shem. Their hair tends to be curled and scented. Pointed moustaches are the fashion for the males. They wear pointed, satin shoes and gold-broidered velvet cote-hardies. Their manners are slightly affected. Khorajan nobles do not care much for barbarians or mercenaries despite their reliance on mercenaries for national defence. Khorajan nobles are few in number, but they are knights in high Kothic fashion. When the knights march to war, they wear a lady's token on their helmet or sword-belt. Armoured in plate and helms with colourful plumes, Khorajan knights are as skilled and powerful as Poitainian

knights. They are the nation's heavy cavalry and are usually reserved for the final charge in a battle. Each knight carries a heavy lance, a large shield and a broadsword. He usually learns the Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack, Trample and Weapon Focus (heavy lance) feats.

As Hyborians, nobles can choose any four skills as Background Skills, plus they get the Adaptable ability. Most Khorajan nobles pick Diplomacy, Intimidate, Knowledge (nobility) and Ride as Background Skills. Ride plus any one other skill are chosen for the Adaptable ability.

The noble savage (page 79), the exile (page 81), the cavalier (page 83), the dilettante (page 87) and the professional knight (page 89) are all excellent class combinations for Khorajan nobles. The cavalier is probably the most apt due to their role as Khoraja's cavalry.

KHORAJAN SCHOLARS

Khoraja has little tolerance for sorcerers. The Khorajans revile sorcery unless it is associated with one of the temples, so any Khorajan sorcerers hide their talents for fear of execution. Most Khorajan scholars are tutors, choosing to take bonus feats and skill points instead of new sorcery styles and advanced spells.

Scholars with noble blood tend to concentrate on the same skills as listed above for the noble class. Those who work as tutors take the appropriate Knowledge skills and the Profession (tutor) skill. The skills assigned to the Adaptability racial feature should be chosen from those skills. Sorcerous scholars tend to be unique in their skill selections, taking the *Independent* background.

The Ishtar cult is the primary religion of Khoraja. Ordained priests, who have at least two levels in soldier, can learn any sorcery save Oriental Magic, Necromancy and Summonings. Any spells learned are never practised in public.

The hermit (page 94), the druid (page 96), the cult leader (page 99), the observer (page 102), the temple warder (page 106) and the occultist (page 109) are all excellent class combinations for the Khorajan scholar.

KHORAJAN SOLDIERS

The most esteemed post a Khorajan soldier can earn is to the palace guard. The palace guard are known to be a fun-loving, but heavy-handed lot. Without support, these elite soldiers can suppress restless citizens with only a minimum of casualties. They do not ride horses, but wield massive bardiches, which are both impressive and intimidating. These elite soldiers wear ornately lacquered breastplates, steel caps and arming swords, as well as carrying a bardiches. Their crest is a yellow field divided by the emblem of a towered wall with three dots beneath. They are usually trained at

1st level to have the following feats: Power Attack, Combat Reflexes and Weapon Focus (bardiche). They quickly learn Carousing, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (bardiche), Improved Sunder, Parry, Toughness and Weapon Specialisation (bardiche). Hyborian Khorajan palace guards often take Intimidate, Knowledge (nobility), Sense Motive and Spot as Background Skills, taking Intimidate and Sense Motive as adaptive skills. Their job is to spot trouble and troublemakers, then suppress them.

Beneath the palace guard in status are the spearmen of Khoraja. Wielding war spears and daggers, these skilled Hyborian troops wear quilted jerkins and steel caps. They are usually trained at 1st level to have the following feats: Power Attack, Combat Reflexes and Weapon Focus (war spear). Many have the Noble Blood feat instead of Combat Reflexes; these are the lesser sons of penniless nobles. Regardless, the spearmen quickly learn Cleave, Improved Critical (war spear) and Weapon Specialisation (war spear). Upper-class Khorajan spearmen usually take Intimidate, Knowledge (local), Perform (guard mount) and Search as Background Skills. Virtually any two skills can be chosen for their adaptive ability.

The brawler (page 111), master archer (page 114), the adjutant (see *Conan: The Free Companies*) and the assassin (page 125) are all excellent class combinations for Khorajan soldiers.

KOTH

Koth is one of the oldest Hyborian kingdoms, a vast meadowland north of Shem, founded alongside Corinthia and Ophir. Koth is landlocked, so it has no ports but it is a fertile land. Western Koth is a sub-humid prairie; meadowlands, forests, orchards and farms. It is described by Robert E. Howard as a land of blue lakes and rivers. Kothians are Hyborians and all classes are favoured. The fashionable men of Koth wear beards tied with ringlets like the Shemites.

KOTHIC NOBLES

The olive-skinned Kothic nobility dress well, wearing velvet pantaloons and silk shirts of foreign manufacture, embroidered dresses of bright colours and embossed armours of artistic craftsmanship. Rebellious by nature, the nobles of Koth respect independence. Even their women speak their minds well. The noblemen of Koth prefer pointed moustaches and perfumed and curled hair. Many of the nobles reject Balardus as king for making Koth vassal to Aquilonia.

The Royal Cavalry contains the greatest warriors in Koth. They have the best training, the heaviest weapons, and the most sophisticated logistical support available. Their members are justifiably proud of their reputation as being some of the most skilled

knights in existence. Of course, the Poitainians disagree with this assessment, but the distance separating the two elite forces means that they may never get a chance to settle their differences. Each member of the Royal Cavalry wears plate armour and a great helm with coloured plumes. They carry heavy lances, broadswords, and large shields into battle. They learn the Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack, Trample and Weapon Focus (heavy lance) feats. As Hyborians, nobles can choose any four skills as Background Skills, plus they get the Adaptable ability. Most Khorajan nobles pick Diplomacy, Intimidate, Knowledge (nobility) and Ride as Background Skills. Ride and one other skill are chosen for the Adaptable ability.

The noble savage (page 79), the exile (page 81), the cavalier (page 83), the dilettante (page 87) and the professional knight (page 89) are all excellent class combinations for Kothic nobles. All classes are favoured for Kothians, so they tend to excel at whatever role they need to in order to survive.

KOTHIC SCHOLARS

Olive-skinned scholars in Koth are either learned tutors and philosophers or priests and priestesses of Shemite gods and goddesses. Ordained priests, who have at least two levels in soldier, can learn any sorcery save Oriental Magic, Necromancy and Summoning. Any spells learned are never practised in public. The Harangi hillmen tend to be shamans who speak to spirits. One such shaman is said to have plucked out his eye and given it a full burial so that it could continually gaze upon the spirit world.

The hermit (page 94), the druid (page 96), the cult leader (page 99), the observer (page 102), the temple warder (page 106), the navigator (see page 104) and the occultist (page 109) are all excellent class combinations for Kothic scholar. All classes are favoured for these Hyborians, so no favoured feats are lost by multiclassing.

KOTHIC SOLDIERS

The quintessential Kothian infantryman is the spearman. Giants dressed in mail brigandine and steel caps, these soldiers support the knights. In addition to their war spear, they carry an arming sword as a back up weapon. The introduction of pikemen to Koth has elevated the veteran spearman units to an almost elite status in traditional circles.

Kothic pikemen often take the Improved Initiative, Power Attack and Weapon Focus (war spear) feats. They take Formation Combat (heavy infantry). Background skills include Intimidate, Knowledge (local), Perform (guard mount) and Search. Their adaptive skills are usually Intimidate and Search.

Some Kothian soldiers become pikemen. Structurally the equivalent of Aquilonia's men-at-arms, the Kothian pikemen are a relatively new organization in the ancient Kothian army. They are slowly replacing the giant spearmen, who once dominated the battlefield. This transition has not come without some tension. Older military men are less willing to fight with the new pikemen, leaving them with young untried leaders or mercenary captains. Koth cannot yet afford to equip its pikemen with heavy armour, instead, they must make do with leather jerkins and steel caps. In addition to their pike they carry an arming sword as a back up weapon. Kothic pikemen often take the Improved Initiative, Power Attack and Weapon Focus (pike) feats. They take the *Skirmisher* formation combat style due to their lack of armour.

Kothian cavalry, called knights, present the model of military organization for most of the region. Any mounted warrior in arms is generally called a knight in Koth, regardless of bloodline. Noble knights are part of the royal cavalry. Extremely well equipped, the knights spend the majority of their time in professional training. Knights are trained for seven years before being unleashed in combat. A Kothic knight should begin play at 4th level. The expense of fielding a single knight is enormous; fortunately, the impact of a massed charge more than makes up for it. Kothian knights wear plate armour and helms. They carry large shields, heavy lances and arming swords into combat. They usually learn Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge and Weapon Focus (arming sword). Handle Animal and Ride are usually chosen both as Background Skills and for the Hyborian Adaptable ability. They take the *Heavy Cavalry* formation combat style.

The brawler (page 111), master archer (page 114), the contemplative (page 123), the fop (page 116) and the assassin (page 125) are all excellent class combinations for Kothic soldiers. All classes are favoured for the Kothic Hyborians, so they tend to excel at whatever role they need to in order to survive.

THE BLACK KINGDOMS

The so-called Black Kingdoms of the Hyborian Age are a grouping of widely disparate groups of indigenous peoples, each with their own habits, religions and lifestyles. The differences from one group to the next vary more expansively than can be discussed fairly in a work of this size. With the broadest of strokes, some of the more well known tribes and kingdoms will be discussed below in regards to nobles, scholars and soldiers. The Games Master is encouraged to do his own researches into real-life or fantasy Africa to give a more realistic flavour to games run in these jungle-shrouded kingdoms where violence is taken as a daily matter of course.

BLACK KINGDOMS RULES VARIANTS

The rules call for many inhabitants of the Black Kingdoms to have Profession (sailor) as a background skill, which does not make a lot of sense for those landlocked nations who are prohibited from taking the pirate class at 1st level. This can be replaced by Intimidate or Perform (drums).

Additionally, several feats from *Conan: Across the Thunder River* are appropriate for Black Kingdom natives. Even though many have 'must be Pictish' as a prerequisite, the Games Master may allow Kushites, Southern Islanders, Darfari and other Black Kingdom natives to take these feats. Some choice feats from that sourcebook include Wicked Savagery, Teeth Gleaming, Sense Weakness, Primitive Instincts, Into the Fray, Culling the Weak, as well as many of the Drum and Paint feats.

love to dive into politics. They worship Set, but they will not be ruled by priests as their ancestors in Stygia were. They have Stygian names for the most part, although a few have adopted Stygian-Gallah mixed names. Many Chaga take the Track feat in order to hunt (a favoured pastime). Jewels are a sign of wealth in Kush, so the nobles display as many as possible. The nobles are proud of their ability to ride the slim Kushite horses, so ranks in Handle Animal and Ride are common among

them. Mounted Combat is likewise a common feat among the Chaga.

BLACK KINGDOM NOBLES

Kush

Nobles in Kush are of Chaga descent. They are tall, dark people, though not as dark as their Kushite subjects but darker than their Stygian ancestors. The Chaga love to hunt and they

Noble is a prohibited class for the Gallah Kushites – they are ruled by the Chaga. Their tribal chiefs might be considered barbarian/noble multiclass, but they may not take noble at 1st level.

Darfari

Noble is a prohibited class for the Darfari. Their tribal chiefs might be barbarian/noble multiclass, but they may not take noble at 1st level.

Southern Black Kingdoms, the Black Coast and Southern Islanders

The head of a southern black tribe is the Inkosi. He is regarded by his people as a father figure and is the source of their wealth, the spiritual symbol of their tribe and the man who determines the fate of his people. The Inkosi is best represented by the clan chief class combination (see *Conan: Hyboria's Fiercest*) although he may not take the noble class at 1st level. He must first prove himself as a warrior before he is acknowledged to be the heir to the throne of his people.

The Desert Tribes

Noble is a prohibited class for the Ghanata. Their tribal chiefs take the barbarian/noble multiclass, but they may not take noble at 1st level.

Zembabwei

Zembabwei is ruled by two kings. Apocryphal sources claim the kings of Zembabwei were twins and when one twin died, the other killed



himself or was driven from the country. The Zembabwan priests then divined a new set of twins to be set on the throne.

The Zembabwans are traders and empire-builders; long-horn cattle are the measure of wealth here. About 5% of the population is comprised of the ruling elite, the few who have control of almost all the cattle and other items of wealth. Zimbabwe is a rich source of gold, copper, iron and tin. The nobles live up on plateaus behind great stone walls and the peasants live on the slopes of the plateaus. Anyone who can amass a certain amount of cattle and trading wealth can multiclass into the noble class. The nobles oversee the accumulation of tribute by neighbouring tribes of peasants. In the agricultural off-season, the peasants are put to work by the nobles to mine gold and other minerals of value.

BLACK KINGDOM SCHOLARS

Much of the Black Kingdoms' religion is dominated by superstition and magic. Monkeys and apes are commonly believed to hold the souls of men punished for past crimes. Shamanistic beliefs co-exist with ancestor worship and the worship of local gods and demons. Monstrous *things* from the Outer Realms, such as Ollum-onga, Thog, Thaug and Khosatral Khel are worshipped in lost cities and decadent villages. Derketa, the Queen of the Dead is worshipped in Kush and Zembabwei, and the vile fish-god Dagon is also worshipped. The Darfari may well worship Yog, Lord of the Empty Abodes, in fiery ceremonies that end with the consumption of human flesh.

Kush

The ruling class of Kush worship Set, while the common masses of Gallah worship Jullah in opposition to Set. The Chaga have modified their Set worship somewhat over the centuries from the original Stygian ceremonies, mixing in doses of witchcraft, shamanism and Gallah superstition into the faith.

The specific rituals used to worship Set are a shrouded secret, but they are known to be gruesome and sinister, comprised of unspeakable rites and human sacrifices in grisly quantities. Priests wear monstrous, half-bestial masks surmounted by ostrich plumes in certain ceremonies. Silent, ritualistic processions also play an inexplicable part in this dark religion. Sacred objects, such as curious black candles that flicker with strange green light and staves with white skull heads

KUSHITE WITCH-FINDER

The Kushite witch-doctors, witchmen or witch-finders are particularly famed for their Countermagic abilities. Their duties are to protect the tribe from rival witches, predict the future and curse tribal enemies, in approximately that order of importance. Most favour feathers, bones and animal skins as their outfit, in classical shamanic style. Often they also sport long, wild dreadlocks.

The Kushite tradition of scholarship is in many respects far more open-minded than that of the more supposedly civilised nations. They are happy enough to share their knowledge with others, even those from distant lands. Likewise their sorcerers rarely exert undue influence over their acolytes – though a senior witchman can be a harsh taskmaster, he is genuinely concerned for the welfare of his acolyte and desires to train him to be an asset to the tribe.

abound in the Chaga's grim ceremonies of black magic. The priests of Set are largely sorcerers and they terrify their subjects as well as their enemies, for they can and will sacrifice their own followers to gain their corrupt ends.

Gallah shamans tend to focus on curses and magical links. They often learn the *Doom of the Doll* curse (see *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos*), taking feats such as Hexer and Focused Magical Link. Crafts are also important to this class of shaman. The blacksmiths of Kush can make iron heads for the spears and lances, garnering them a reputation bordering on magical, for they steep their art in mystery, guarding their secrets of turning raw iron ore into durable metal tools. Blacksmiths became shamans or work closely with them.

In addition to Set and Jullah, the Shemite Derketo has been adopted by the Gallah Kushites, particularly along the shores and the border of Stygia, as has Derketa, Queen of the Dead. She is a type of Earth Mother figure, a goddess of fertility as well as of death, symbolising the circular nature of life. Derketa is represented as the mate of whatever god each tribe holds supreme. The Gallah of Punt represent her as the mate of Jullah. Worship of Derketa involves orgiastic rites carried out before squat golden idols. Human sacrifice is also part of her ceremonies, using the poisoned fruit called the Apples of Derketa. The juice of those fruits can kill, whether by ingestion or external application. Shamans of Derketa take the Carouser and Debaucher feats, focusing on curses, hypnotism and magical links for their magic. Sexual enslavement via magic (see *Enslave* in *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos*) is a common end to enemies of Derketa's shamans.



Darfar

Cannibalism is not just an example of perverted dietary preference among the Darfari; their ghastly cult demands such grisly fare. The eating of people is a matter of ritual and symbolism. The Darfari prefer bludgeons as weapons as they prefer to beat their enemies to death or unconsciousness, feeling that this retains the flavour of the meat far better than slicing them open and letting their blood spill upon the earth. The Darfari of Zamboula swear by Set, but their masters are Set worshippers. The Zuagirs believe the Darfari worship Yog, Lord of the Empty Abodes, with fiery rites that always end with the consumption of human flesh. They do not worship any one particular god, but have a shamanistic religion based on many disgusting gods, such as Yog and numerous dark spirits of nature – animal and jungle spirits that empower the world with magic and life. Witchcraft, sorcery and juju are the mainstays of their religious experience although most of their magic is directed toward mystical entities that bring chosen weather, encourage a good harvest or bring about success in war. Their magic is not directed against terrestrial foes. The spear and club are usually far more reliable against flesh and blood. Nature magic, Divination and Curses are common sorcery styles for a Darfari shaman.

Keshan

Keshan priests have deified the unnamed white race that founded Alkmeenon, with Yelaya at the height of that hierarchy because of the physical ‘evidence’ of her divinity. Her body, which does not rot, does exist and the priests record hearing her voice as a true oracle. This deification may account for the lack of hostility between the aboriginal black and mixed-race rulers – they have the blood of gods in them. The ruling class treat those stationed beneath them fairly and will intermarry with them.

The deification of Yelaya indicates ancestor worship consistent with some forms of primitive shamanism. Rituals probably were to harmonise relations between one’s ancestors and the dark jungle gods, smoothing the way for the ancestors to be safe and to bring about prosperity to the family. The high priest’s job is to ensure the welfare of Keshan as a whole with his ritualistic magic and protect his people against evil deities. Gwahlur is one of those dark jungle gods, a king of darkness that was thrown down by the other darkly powerful gods and his glowing teeth were given unto men for safe-keeping. Many other disgusting and bestial gods were acknowledged and worshipped by the people of Keshan.

Punt

The people of Punt worship the ivory goddess, Nebethet. She is primarily worshipped in a shrine-temple located in an uninhabited place not far from Kassali, the royal city of Punt. The temple is a round, domed marble building in the shape of a skull, built before the arrival of the Gallahs. The statue is made out of a single piece of ivory.

Southern Black Kingdoms, the Black Coast and Southern Islanders

The Southern Islander or southern black kingdom natives have their own brand of shamanism. There are shamans, isangomas and inyagas. The shamans are usually witch-finders, concentrating on counterspells and divination, or they are priests of dark gods such as Jhil and Agujo, concentrating on curses and counterspells as sorcery styles. Isangoma are female spiritualists who commune with the spirits of the ancestors. They primarily focus on divination and counterspells as sorcery styles. Some delve into curses and necromancy. Inyanga are male herbalist shamans, wise in the knowledge of flora and fauna. They learn nature magic as their first sorcery style, taking feats such as Self-Sufficient, Skill Focus (Craft (herbalism)), Skill Focus (Heal), Skill Focus (Knowledge (nature)) and Skill Focus (Survival).

The Desert Tribes

The Ghanatas are a fierce desert people related to the people of the northern Black Kingdoms, loosely organised into tribes and even smaller groupings. Their social structure is almost non-existent. Might makes right among these dark people. Illiterate and unsociable, the Ghanata are not friendly toward strangers, given to brutalise, rape or attack wanderers from foreign lands. Expert riders of horses and camels, the Ghanata fight with curved, razor-sharp knives and scimitars. They worship Jhil the Merciless in gruesome ceremonies that include the torture of sacrificial victims.

Zembabwei

The Zembabwans worship Derketo and Dagon and the capital city boasts of a holy shrine dedicated to the empire

where squat gold statues of both deities sit. Derketo is an Earth-Mother type deity of fertility. Her rites are sensual and sexual, designed to bring about the blossoming of the earth. Dagon is a sea god.

BLACK KINGDOM SOLDIERS

Kush

The armies of Kush are made up of spearmen and swift cavalry. Kush is simply too hot for armour and the horses are too small to support heavy armour. The blacksmiths of Kush make iron heads for the spears and lances.

Soldiers in Kush tend to be of Gallah descent. They are ebon giants separated into different tribes among the savannahs of Kush. The Mandigo live along the coast in a long string of trading villages. The Baghirmi, Dangola, Khalis, Zumba and Bornu are tribes of the grasslands. The tribe is more important than the nation and a Kushite might think of himself as a Dangola rather than a Kushite.

The Gallah Kushites are typically hunter-gatherers and are warlike and expansionistic, living in villages of white clay, mud and grass. They hold the aged in high honour, using their wisdom in counsel. Most are not nomadic – they do not need to move with the seasons because the climate is always hot. Their life revolves around the game animals they hunt and the stalking and spearing of prey is their daily focus. They often provide mercenary services and serve as caravan or safari guards. The Gallah regard the passage of seasons, the night sky and other astronomical bodies and they are prone to see omens everywhere and acknowledge the smallest coincidence as evidence of a spirit's will made manifest. Status is often determined by how many white slaves a warrior has, although he is always technically subservient to the Chaga. If a Kushite spears a lion and holds onto its tail as it dies, the warrior gains a +2 bonus to his Reputation and is allowed to keep the lion's mane for his headdress.

Gallah Kushites are a robust and happy people despite living off minimal resources. They are straightforward and do not suffer from remorse. Most refuse to take life too seriously, although they tend to become sullen and moody if they cannot hunt, which is their pride and joy. If they feel an emotion, they express it, even if the situation is inappropriate. Look to a Kushite to laugh when others are coming to grief, to sing when the urge takes them and to flare up in instant anger when frustrated.

These savannah soldiers, for which the barbarian class is favoured, are well versed in the use of the spear, hiding, moving quietly and surviving in a hot realm of grasses and scrub. The spear is the favourite weapon of the Kushite

soldier, although those enslaved by other cultures are often given other weapons to wield. Spot and Listen are invaluable skills for the Kushite savannah soldier, as is Survival. Run is a common feat among these soldiers. Some soldiers learn to ride, although few become true masters of horsemanship, save for the Keshani. Those that do usually multiclass into nomad. Most Kushites take the Fighting-Madness feat and are well-accorded to be savage in combat.

Keshan

Keshani soldiers are horsemen and cattle-herders. All are raised to be warriors. Boys around age 13 leave their parents' home, paint their bodies white and, in a three month program, they are taught how to become warriors. When this training is over, they shave their heads and are circumcised. After this, sometime before their 17th birthday, they enter into a camp and allow their hair to grow again as they practice hunting the wild animals that may attack their herds. This stage of training may last a few years, but when they are done they may marry and own their own cattle herds. At this point they are also allowed to sleep with the wives of anyone in their own age-set (sexual jealousy is unknown among the Keshani). Keshani soldiers usually put ranks in Handle Animal and Ride to reflect their place as herdsmen and horsemen. Adventuring Keshani usually do not put more than five ranks into Handle Animal. Most Keshani barbarians learn the Fighting-Madness feat at 1st level.

Darfar

The Darfar prefer bludgeoning weapons and grapple attacks and their feats will reflect these preferences. They are intimidating hunters by nature, whether they are hunting animal or human prey and they view other peoples as chattel. The Darfari does not regret his savagery and revels in the strength to be drawn from merciless murder, acting as he feels he must, without regret and without thought. The Darfari is vigorous and unrestrained.

The military strength of the Darfari consists of all able-bodied men of any number of ages. There is no formal organization or training (thus no real soldiers). Experience in handling their weapons is gained through games of skill, the hunt and actual fighting. However, a few practise their weapon skills to an alarming degree; it is these Darfari who are represented by the soldier class. Their entire boyhood having been spent tending cattle or in the darkest of jungles hunting prey turn them into the tough and strong tribesmen that they are.

In skills, the Darfari soldier emphasises Intimidate, Hide, Move Silently and Survival. Perform (dance), Bluff, Listen and Spot are also important for both cultural and survival reasons. Most Darfari take the Fighting-Madness feat at 1st level to reflect their savagery in combat. Darfari soldiers are most likely to multiclass with barbarian simply to gain the necessary skills to be considered an able member of the tribe. See page 111 for the multiclass options for a soldier.

Southern Black Kingdoms, the Black Coast and Southern Islanders

The dark warriors of the Southern Kingdoms are tall and rangy. Their warriors wear white plumes in their hair, but rarely bother with armour. The Southern Blacks are tribal in nature, resembling the great African tribes like the Zulus and Bantu. They often go naked, but may be adorned with rings of ivory or precious metal in their noses, ears or lips. The spearman armed with an ox-hide shield is the level of 'soldier' among the Southern Black Kingdoms. Ritualistic displays of aggression are often used to intimidate an opponent rather than having an all out war, since most tribes are too small to survive if they sustain heavy casualties. However, wars do sometimes occur and tend to be bloodthirsty.

Other Southern Black Kingdoms tribesmen tend to be barbarians but even they have their elite societies of soldiers, warriors trained especially for the needs of warfare and not for the more generalised needs of hunting and surviving. Most of these soldiers form bands of brotherhood or function as palace or royal guards. Others are enslaved warriors trained as guards. Regardless of their training they still retain their barbaric ferocity. Black Kingdom soldiers should take the Fighting-Madness feat to reflect this innate savagery lurking beneath the surface. Slave soldiers are often trained primarily in the scimitar or tulwar. Black kingdom tribesmen belonging to a native war brotherhood still learn to track, so the Track feat and ranks in Survival are appropriate. Enslaved Black kingdom soldiers rarely learn this, but they are trained to focus on their weapons, so Weapon Focus and Weapon Specialisation feats are appropriate for them. Berserker (see *Conan: The Free Companies*) is an excellent class combination of barbarian and soldier for both Kushites and Southern Kingdom tribesmen. The marine (*Conan: The Free Companies*) is an excellent class combination for a Southern Islander soldier/pirate. The wasteland warrior (page 118) and the sea hawk (page 121) are also good combinations for Southern Islanders.

The Desert Tribes

The Ghanatas are a fierce desert people related to the people of the northern Black Kingdoms loosely organised into tribes and even smaller groupings. Their social structure is almost non-existent. Might makes right among these dark people. Illiterate and unsociable, the Ghanata are not friendly toward strangers, given to brutalise, rape or attack wanderers from foreign lands. Expert riders of horses and camels, the Ghanata fight with curved, razor-sharp knives and scimitars.

Power Attack, Fighting-Madness and other feats that increase the ability to damage others are usually chosen by the Ghanata. The strongest must often defend his title by force of arms and the best proof of strength is to lay low one's enemy with a single blow. The Ghanata soldiers also take feats to enhance their horsemanship as a secondary measure. Mounted Combat is common. They are not given to archery



or mounted archery, however. They prefer up close melee combat as a test of prowess and strength.

Zembabwei

Zembabwan soldiers fight much like southern Black Kingdom tribesmen although there is an elite group among them – the wyvern riders. These soldiers specialise in flying the great wyverns of Zembabwei and fighting from their backs with spears. Regular Zembabwan soldiers take the Fighting-Madness feat at 1st level, but the elite wyvern-riders rarely do so for fear of losing control of their wyvern.

NEMEDIA

Nemedia is the second great kingdom of the Hyborians, technologically and economically superior to the other Hyborian nations save Aquilonia. Nemedia's culture is similar to Aquilonia's, although the Nemedians emphasise feudal bonds more and personal freedoms less.

NEMEDIAN NOBLES

Nemedia maintains a strong feudal government. It is ruled by King Tarascus. As king, Tarascus divides up the land and the responsibilities of the kingdom among various barons and counts, who then subdivide their properties and responsibilities further in smaller and smaller fiefs.

The counts and barons perform civil and military functions in the name of the king in their assigned fiefs.

These aristocrats swear fealty to the king and, in return, gain his official permission, called a patent, to govern areas of his kingdom. This gives the aristocrat all rights pertaining to the fief but he is expected to pay tribute to the king and to raise armies for the king in times of national war. The baronies and counties of Nemedica are large, usually thousands of acres, often too large for the top aristocrats to rule efficiently, so they further divide up their granted fiefs to lesser nobles who swear fealty to the baron or count in return for power. Unfortunately, the boundaries of these fiefs are not always absolutely defined and conflicts over rights and duties sometimes turn into armed warfare.

The fief granted by the king and the lesser sub-divisions of that fief include both private property and a noble title. The private property includes a manor house or even a castle and one or more cities, towns and associated villages. A third of the land supports the noble and his retinue and the serfs are expected to spend at least half their time working the noble's lands and crops. The serfs, in turn, can expect the protection of the noble from his knights and soldiers. The noble title, once granted, can be passed on through bloodlines. These noble titles are inherited through the male line, although the king may remove a title at his pleasure. The eldest son or the husband of an eldest daughter almost always inherits the noble title. The actual property of the fief, however, can be divided among the lord's heirs however he may see fit. If a dispute over inheritance occurs, especially in a case where a nobleman produced no heir, a higher ranking noble in the chain of fiefs and sub-fiefs may intercede and name an heir, following complex rules of chivalry.

Much like the nobles of other Hyborian nations, the knights of Nemedica ride in the vanguard of their armies. These highly trained warriors wear full plate and great helms. They carry heavy lances and arming swords along with their large shields. Despite their boasts the Nemedian knights do not bring anything unusual to the battlefield in terms of skill or tactics. They are, however, heavily armed and armoured, which makes them difficult foes. Most nobles have the Mounted Combat feat. Those who are especially proud of their martial skill also take Parry and Weapon Focus (heavy lance).

As a civilised nation, the citizens wrap their words in honeyed phrases, veiling their meanings to preserve a sense of respectability and etiquette. Those who do not conform to conservative Nemedians' sense of good manners are disliked and may be treated with a varying levels of hostility (dependent perhaps on the Charisma of the offending party and the importance of the offended party). People who ask questions too directly are not likely to find the answers they seek. The challenge in Nemedica is to properly present oneself, to show that cooperation is returned in

kind without openly saying so. Almost all Nemedian nobles take ranks in Diplomacy, Sense Motive, Bluff and Knowledge (nobility).

Noble status is required for most offices of state. Only those of noble lineage may serve on the Courts of Justice. The heads of the Inquisitional Councils are also of noble birth. High ranking military positions are also reserved for the nobility, as are the knights, who offer protection to all Nemedian citizens regardless of rank. Chains of command, processional order and heraldry are all second nature to the cultured Nemedian. Above all is a reverence for noble blood and royal prerogative. It is unlikely the Nemedians would ever sponsor a royal coup as the Aquilonians did when Conan led the revolt against Numedides. Such a thing would be uncivilised. When Tarascus desired the throne of King Numa, the king and his sons had to die naturally so his ascension would be unopposed. The Nemedians who resurrected Xaltotun in *Hour of the Dragon* did not want to see Nemedica torn apart by strife. This respect for noble blood is, in part, the reason why the Nemedians so strongly object to King Conan's reign in Aquilonia.

The nobility typically wear cavalry boots, fur or leather kilts and pleated silk shirts. Nemedians take pride in their culture and never dress outside of their station.

NEMEDIAN SCHOLARS

Nemedica is a land of scholarly research. The Nemedian language is the universal language of learning during the Hyborian age, much as Latin was the universal language of learning during our own Medieval period. Nemedica boasts schools and centres of learning unlike any other to be found in this era. Economically and technologically, Aquilonia may be king, but scholastically, Nemedica is the more advanced nation.

Nemedian scholars are rarely sorcerous. Nemedians, like most Hyborians, despise sorcery. Their legends are replete with stories about degenerate rituals of demonic debauchery, horrifying plagues and worse. Nemedica is so advanced many scholars work as tutors or teachers. The feudal courts often maintain scholar advisors. Some multiclass into soldier to become adjutants (see *Conan: The Free Companies*), while others multiclass into borderer to become explorers, the authors of bestiaries and other fabulous tomes. Many scholars in Nemedica are members of the aristocracy and have the Noble Blood feat from *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos*. Those who work as tutors take the appropriate Knowledge skills and the Profession (tutor) skill. The skills assigned to the Adaptability racial feature should be chosen from those skills.

If a citizen does not care to fight and wants out of his situation, Nemedica is also a land of scholarship and education. Although

noble sponsorship is necessary to gain any kind of Imperial grant, noble blood in and of itself is not a requirement. History is a special favourite among the Nemedian scholars, as the famous *Nemedian Chronicles* testify. Other fields include theology, science, cartography and arcanology. Of course, sometimes these scholars find themselves moving down sorcerous paths, as Orastes did in *Hour of the Dragon*. The most outstanding scholars are employed by the Dragon Throne to produce their works for the crown, to be stored for posterity. It is through such employment that we know so much of the Hyborian Age. Nemedian scholars usually take Decipher Script as one of their Background Skills and as one of their Adaptable skills.

Other scholars become priests. The Mitran priests wear silken robes in Nemedias. They otherwise conform to the standard for any Hyborian priest of Mitra as covered in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*.

The hermit (page 94), the cult leader (page 99), the observer (page 102), the temple warder (page 106) and the occultist (page 109) are all excellent class combinations for the Nemedian scholar.

NEMEDIAN SOLDIERS

Nemedias maintains a powerful army composed of its noble knights and heavy cavalry. The infantry is fodder for archers and is not considered an honourable field of military service. Most of the infantry are commoners that are given minimal training. They are easily demoralised in combat.

The Nemedian Adventurers are a class of soldiers unique to the Nemedian army. Individuals desiring to advance themselves, or those wishing to escape the sins of a prior lifestyle, may join the Adventurers without any questions asked. While they serve the crown no man may question them or bring them to accounting for their past crimes. When the Adventurer retires, the protection lifts and old sins come back to roost. The Adventurers are both a standing military unit in the Nemedian army and a mercenary company engaged in battles around the world. The crown spends their lives like coppers, as there are always more eager blades looking for a new start in life. A unit of Adventurers may be found anywhere a king has sufficient coin to hire them. Each Adventurer wears a grey mail hauberk and a steel cap. They all wield greatswords in battle. They are expected to know how to ride, but generally act as mounted infantry; they ride to the battle and then fight on foot. They will charge with the knights if given an opportunity but do not carry lances or other weapons suited to the task. It is possible, if unlikely, for an Adventurer to distinguish himself enough to earn a royal pardon. Some manage to enter (or re-enter) the ranks of nobility through service. Improved Initiative, Mounted Combat, Parry, Power Attack and Weapon Focus (greatsword) are common feats for

the Nemedian Adventurers to take. Some have the Noble Blood feat from *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos*. As Hyborians, the Nemedians can choose any four skills as Background Skills. Most take their background ranks in Gather Information, Intimidate, Knowledge (nobility) and Ride. They often take Intimidate and Spot for their Adaptable trait.

Nemedian crossbowmen use powerful arbalests to pound the enemy's ranks. These weapons can inflict terrible damage on even heavily armoured knights. Unfortunately, they also have a considerably shorter range than the Bossonian longbows used by Aquilonian troops. As such, they are considered as much a liability as an asset on the battlefield. However, until the Nemedian kings can come up with a better replacement the crossbowmen will continue to get royal support. Crossbowmen wear leather jerkins and steel helms. Most carry a buckler and poniard in addition to their arbalest and a quiver of 20 quarrels. Most of these are stationed on the Aquilonian border, but some are available for immediate deployment anywhere in the country. Improved Initiative, Parry, Weapon Focus (arbalest) and Weapon Focus (poniard) are the normal feats for a Nemedian crossbowman. Background skills for a Nemedian crossbowman usually include Spot. Spot is also usually chosen as one of the two Adaptable traits.

Like Koth to the south, Nemedias is attempting to duplicate the success of Aquilonia's Gunderland pikemen. Although they have not yet reached that level of success they have trained sufficient quantities of pikemen to make Aquilonia's knights think twice about riding headlong into their formations. The king equips his pikemen with brigandine coats and steel caps. They also carry their signature pikes, as well as arming swords for close combat. If a man loses his arming sword he must replace it from his own funds. The majority of these units are stationed on the Aquilonian border. Improved Initiative, Toughness, Weapon Focus (arming sword) and Weapon Focus (pike) are the usual feats trained into a Nemedian pikeman. Background skills chosen are usually Intimidate, Knowledge (local), Search and any other one chosen by the Player.

NORDHEIM

The Nordheimir are fierce warriors, proud and honourable. With white hot enthusiasm they pursue life, facing death fearlessly with a song on their lips. They are giant men who value honour, loyalty and reputation above all things, for their land is harsh. Even the women are strong, running households while the men war with each other across the icy plains and mountains. War is an essential ingredient in the life of the Nordheimer. War is their economy. War is their social setting. War is their religion. War measures courage. War measures honour. War measures manhood.

NORDHEIMER RULES VARIANT

Nordheimir live in a tundra land, frozen to the point where agriculture is pointless, thus they are hunters and gatherers, plunderers and raiders. For most of the Nordheimir, their lands are landlocked. Even the Vanir, some of whom live on the coast, have not really discovered long sea-voyaging. The background skill of Profession (farmer or sailor) listed in the *Conan the Roleplaying Game* is largely inappropriate for most Nordheimir. Substitute Intimidate instead. The hairy, fur-bedecked Nordheimer barbarian is an intimidating sight.

NORDHEIMER NOBLES

Nordheimir do not have nobles. They are prohibited from taking the class at 1st level. Nordheimir who later become noblemen must multiclass into it. Nordheimir do not respect nobility as it is practised elsewhere in the world. A man is judged on his character, not on his lineage.

NORDHEIMER SCHOLARS

Nordheimir scholars are a rare breed. Nordheimer shamans, known as *godi* in Vanaheim and *godar* in Asgard, tend to be more political than religious, taking a chieftain-like role as well as ensuring the proper ceremonies are conducted for any given event. Religion tends to be a personal event among the Nordheimer, but even they have their oracles, much as the Cimmerians do. A Nordheimer can only take the scholar class by virtue of his bloodline, his wealth and his Reputation. If he is found lacking in any of these three areas, then he will not be chosen for this role. The character must be descended from a king or shaman, he must be wealthy as Nordheimer measure wealth and his Reputation must exceed 10 before he can multiclass into scholar. Worship is conducted outdoors at places such as guardian trees, sacred wells or within sacred arrangements of stones. The Nordheimer shaman focuses on Divination sorcery styles almost exclusively, although a few branch out into Cosmic Sorcery and/or Hypnotism. Mostly, they take the bonus feats and bonus skill points in lieu of new styles and further advanced spells once they have learned the Divination sorcery style. These scholars will focus on Knowledge skills (as many as possible) and Perform skills (to convey their knowledge).



NORDHEIMER SOLDIERS

Nordheimir soldiers take a more studied approach to their warfare than the standard Æsir or Vanir warrior. Still a 'barbarian' by nature if not by class, the Nordheimir soldier should take the Fighting-Madness feat to emphasise the fury lurking beneath his otherwise studied manner. The berserker (soldier/barbarian) from *Conan: The Free Companies* is perfect for these frenzied warriors of the north. Their racial bonus with swords works well with the soldier class motif. Taking soldier instead of barbarian allows the character to focus and specialise in his weapon of choice, building on that racial modifier in a manner a barbarian cannot do past 7th level.

OPHIR

Ophir is a feudal kingdom, as many Hyborian kingdoms are. It is not as unified as Nemedra and is more fractious than Aquilonia. Ophir has a fragmented government run by an aristocratic class of local powers, counts and barons, who perform civil and military functions in the name of the king for an equally fragmented kingdom subdivided into numerous fiefs and sub-fiefs. The people of Ophir tend to be a silent, surly lot and do not trust outsiders. This is extremely true of Ophir's nobles, scholars and soldiers.

OPHIREAN NOBLES

The counts and barons of Ophir hold noble titles and fiefs from the king granting them official power. The granting of these fiefs is done by a patent or contract, wherein the noble swears fealty to the king and the king grants the noble

all rights pertaining to the land proffered as fief. The fief includes both private property and a noble title. These noble titles are inherited through the male line, although the king may remove a title at his pleasure. The eldest son or the husband of an eldest daughter almost always inherits the noble title. The actual property of the fief, however, can be divided among the lord's heirs however he may see fit. If a dispute over inheritance occurs, especially in a case where a nobleman produced no heir, the king may intercede and name an heir.

Unfortunately, the political and military structure of Ophir tends to maintain only the illusion of unity beneath the king. The counts and barons frequently can and do ignore the edicts and commands of the king. Although the king rules all of Ophir in theory, the true practice of power there shows that the king rules Ianthe and its surrounding manors only. The noblemen tend to be treacherous and greedy. Baron Rigello, cousin to King Moranthes II, once burned ten villages of his fief when the folk could not deliver their quota of crops due to drought. Noblemen are armed with slender swords and dress in silks and gold, decorated in gleaming jewels. Appraise, Bluff, Forgery and Sense Motive are important skills for Ophirean nobility.

Ophir's nobles train, just as their fathers and their father's fathers did, in the art of mounted warfare. The knights of Ophir wear mail gilt with gold and sport plumed helms. Their tabards and clothing bear a star-shaped emblem. They carry broadswords, heavy lances and large shields into battle. Most take the following feats: Mounted Combat, Parry, Weapon Focus (heavy lance).

OPHIREAN SCHOLARS

Ophir, like so many other Hyborian nations, has little tolerance for sorcerers. The Ophireans condemn sorcery unless it is associated with one of the temples or associated with science, so any Ophirean sorcerers hide their talents for fear of execution. Most Ophirean scholars are tutors and scientists, choosing to take bonus feats and skill points instead of new sorcery styles and advanced spells.

Scholars with noble blood tend to concentrate on the same skills as listed above for the noble class, although they are more apt to learn sorcery and disguise their actions as science. The noble houses have diplomatic relations with Stygia, and selected nobles are often allowed to travel to Kheshatta to learn science and sorcery from the masters. Those who work as tutors take the appropriate Knowledge skills and the Profession (tutor) skill. The skills assigned to the Adaptability racial feature should be chosen from those skills. Sorcerous scholars tend to be unique in their skill selections, taking the *Independent* background.

The hermit (page 94), the druid (page 96), the cult leader (page 99), the observer (page 102), the temple warder (page

106) and the occultist (page 109) are all excellent class combinations for the Ophirean scholar.

OPHIREAN SOLDIERS

Ophir's military backbone are the crossbowmen. Ophirean crossbowmen train in the Nemedian fashion. They use powerful arbalests to disrupt the enemy ranks then sweep the reserves while the heavy cavalry does the majority of the work. Like their Nemedian counterparts they do not fare well in battle against the faster, longer ranged Bossonian longbows wielded by Aquilonian troops. Crossbowmen wear quilted jerkins and steel helms. Most carry a buckler and an arming sword in addition to their arbalest and a quiver of 20 quarrels. Many are stationed in various towns or border forts. Improved Initiative, Parry, Weapon Focus (arbalest) and Weapon Focus (arming sword) are common feats for Ophirean soldiers. As Hyborians, they may choose any four skills as Background Skills. Many in Ophir are amateur prospectors. They choose the Appraise, Search, Spot and Survival skills as Background Skills, often picking Spot and Search for their adaptive skills.

PICTLAND

The Pictish Wilderness is a lush forest, an expanse of dire swamps and lushly vegetated woodland, hilly and almost jungle-like in its vitality and fertility. To the east dwell the Hawk, Raven, Wildcat, Turtle, Panther, Alligator and Otter tribes. The Hawk, Raven, Wildcat and Turtle are to the northeast and the Panther, Alligator and Otter dwell more to the south, but all of them live along the Thunder River. To the west is the great confederacy of the Wolves, and the Eagles live to the west of the Wolves, along the shores of the ocean.

The land is vitally important to the Picts, essential to their identity. The Picts deal with the realities of their woodland realm every moment. No matter where or when, the Picts are aware of their environment. They could mimic animal calls to attract prey within the range of their weapons. They can make use of natural lighting and foliage to hide within mere feet of prey. The environment provides the materials each of them uses to live – homes, weapons, clothing and food. The Picts who live along the shores of the ocean are not sea-farer's, however. They comb the beaches for walrus and whale carcasses thrown up by the waves and they fish along the shores. They do not venture far out into the wild, blue ocean.

For more information on the Picts, including additional class information, feats and prestige classes, see *Conan: Across the Thunder River*, a sourcebook on the Pictish culture.



PICTISH NOBLES

There are no noble Picts. They are prohibited from taking the class at 1st level.

PICTISH SCHOLARS

The shamans of the clans hold terrible magical powers, often wielding more influence than the chiefs of the clan. The shamans are the centre of the nasty religious and ritual aspects of the Picts. Picts understand good and evil as indications of whether or not obligations to the malicious spirits are being met and the shamans control this aspect of life. They are mediums acting as intermediaries between this world and the dark spirit world. Fortunately for the Westermarck and the rest of the world, the various tribal shamans spend most of their time battling spirits or each other rather than banding together and raiding the Hyborian kingdoms. Thus some of the earliest spells they learn are curses, and they love practising such spells on rival tribes.

The magic of the Pictish shaman is bloody and grim. Their altars are crude affairs, charred with fire and stained with blood. Accompanied by thundering drums, the shaman dances grotesquely and their captives are sacrificed to their dire gods and vile spirits. Blood makes their magic mighty. They torture and flay captives alive in these gruesome ceremonies that revolve around the hunt and the cycle of life, including births, rites of passage and deaths. Pictish shamans are wary of sharing their magic, and this even extends to teaching it to their own tribe or even family. Acolyte shamans must be constantly on the alert to prove their loyalty, or they are likely to find themselves used as the next sacrifice to the weird Pictish gods.

Costume and performance are inextricably linked to a shaman's success. They may act like animals, dress as animals and possibly even transform *into* animals.

Pictish shamans favour feathers, bones and simple loin-cloths as their garb, using war paint and other ceremonial colouring to show off their intent and call their spirits' attention. Feathers

hold mystical significance to the shaman and his followers. Masks are also common to enhance the mood or as a magical focus. The ability to change form to fight spirits is also crucial to the shaman, either in reality or via his convincing performance, for he must be a trickster to outwit the harmful spirits that plague the Picts. Drums are another vital part of the Pictish shamanic ritual. The drums are holy to the Picts, who liken them to the heartbeats of the spirits. With such emphasis on performance, for shaman magic must be shown and displayed to the tribe despite the inner experience of it, Charisma is a vital characteristic for the successful shaman. They must hold the attention of the tribe and convince them they are powerful enough to command the spirits that infuse their wild land. This reliance on performance can be shown in the game through the Performance (ritual) skill. Every five ranks of Perform (ritual) gives a +2 synergy bonus to Heal and Survival checks.

A Pictish shaman may make a Perform (ritual) check to play upon the deep superstitions of other Picts. The performance must be at least ten minutes long, cannot be interrupted and only influences Picts who watch the entire performance. At the end of the performance, the Shaman may make a Perform (ritual) check opposed by the Picts' Sense Motive checks. The shaman gains a +1 circumstance bonus to any magic attacks directed toward audience members who fail this opposed check. If anyone beats the shaman's check by 5 or more, the shaman gains a -1 circumstance penalty to any magic attacks directed toward those Picts and they may attempt to deride the shaman's feeble attempts to influence them. If this happens, audience Picts may make a second Sense Motive check with a bonus equal to the number of Picts deriding the shaman's performance. Repeat attempts may be made, but at a -4 for each successive try. These effects last until the next sunrise.

A shaman's mask often represents the tribe's totem animal or helper spirit and is used in rituals by the shamans, turning the shaman from a mere man to a supernatural giant with ominous powers in the eyes of the tribe. By donning this mask, a shaman calls upon the power of the darksome spirits infusing the world to aid in his rituals. In *Wolves Beyond the Border*, the shaman wore a scarlet mask that represented one of the forest-devils. Rules concerning masks can be found in *Conan: Across the Thunder River*.

The hermit (page 94), the druid (page 96), the cult leader (page 99), the observer (page 102), the temple warder (page 106), the navigator (see page 104) and the occultist (page 109) are all excellent class combinations for Pictish scholars.

PICTISH SOLDIERS

The Picts have secret societies devoted to war. This is what a Pictish soldier is all about. He is part of a military society devoted to combat-at-arms. They still need to be productive members of society, so feats such as Track and skills such

as Survival should be taken. Berserkers (from *Conan: The Free Companies*) are appropriate to Pictish secret societies. Many Picts maximise their Survival, Hide, Move Silently, Listen and Spot skills. They are guerrilla fighters and the best woodsmen in the world. Many take additional ranks in Tumble, especially if their Intelligence is high enough to do so without spending cross-class points in it. Picts also take feats such as Stealthy, Fighting-Madness and Point Blank Shot.

SHEM

Pastoral Shem is a non-Hyborian land of decadent despots in the west and fierce soldiers to the east. Shem is a large nation, lying betwixt Koth and Stygia. To the west and to the east are Argos and Turan, respectively. In the west, Shem is meadowland. In the east, desert. Although some Shemites are skilled with swords and spears, their archers are the most lethal. Extremely keen of eye, the Shemites are feared for their deadly archery skills. The Shemites are practically born with bows in hand and horses beneath them. Dressed in scale corselets and cylindrical helmets, the sons of Shem are always ready for war.

SHEMITE NOBLES

Shemite nobles, devoid of compassion or mercy, are inveterate traders. Shemite nobles are renowned as unrepentant liars and tellers of tall tales, thus they tend to have high Bluff scores.



Treasures, riches and beautiful trinkets cause the hearts and souls of the Shemites to soar. They live to accumulate wealth and beauty, surrounding themselves with jewellery and lovely slaves. The Shemite nobles tend to keep their Appraise scores relatively high. Keen judges of character, Shemite nobles also have high ranks in Sense Motive. Shemite nobles, especially Meadow Shemites, also keep their Diplomacy skills high.

The Meadow Shemite nobles wear loose, floor-length robes with sleeves. The robes are embroidered and made of dyed fabric trimmed with cloth-of-gold. Nomadic Shemite nobles, called sheiks or chiefs, wear white, embroidered girdled robes with full open sleeves, silken breeches and a flowing headdress banded about the temples with an ornate, embroidered triple circlet of braided camel hair. The amount of embroidery on the clothing indicates the status and wealth of the wearer.

Shemites love to own slaves, but their manners with slave-girls tend to be shameful and humiliating for the slave.

The noble savage (page 79), the exile (page 81), the cavalier (page 83) and the dilettante (page 87) are all excellent class combinations for the Shemite noble.

SHEMITE SCHOLARS

Most Shemite scholars are either nomad shamans, city-state priests or Pelishtim wise men.

The nomad shamans of the east pay homage to Fate and several of their gods and goddesses are deities of fate and destiny. The sons of Shem do not struggle against fates regarded as inevitable. The Shemites also believe in a just afterlife, a type of resurrection or reincarnation. The souls of evil men, according to the Shemites, are imprisoned in the bodies of apes as punishment for their wickedness. The nomad shamans have at least two levels of nomad in addition to their scholar levels. They generally do not learn Oriental Magic, Necromancy or Summonings.

The polytheistic Shemites have a penchant for gods and goddesses. Each city state worships some obscene fertility god or goddess as its patron, trusting that the horrible, squat brass idols actually hold the essence and presence of those gods and goddesses. Most of these fertility deities were Earth Mothers of the sort common to agricultural communities and her subordinate lover gods. In many of these religions, the male consort is killed and reborn each year, coinciding with annual growing and harvest cycles. Many Shemite rituals involve enactments of this sacrifice and rebirth in caricatured, symbolic manners that often include human sacrifice and sexual rituals. Indeed, even coming before these awesome and feared gods, humanity must show humility, often requiring worshippers to approach on their hands and knees in the nude.

Most of these deities are simple in concept with elaborate and curious ceremonies dedicated to their worship. The gods are given copper or brass forms by skilled artisans who capture their obscene, pot-bellied forms with exaggerated sexual features. These idols are believed to be the actual god or goddess in question. The priests of the city-states often have the Ritual Sacrifice feat.

The Pelishtim wise men are steeped in sorcery. The scholars of Pelishtia live for hundreds of years and may well possess the secret of eternal youth. Certainly the Pelishtim sorcerers are afforded respect even among the Stygians and Khitans, for they are learned in arcane secrets and wander far in search of knowledge. They strive to learn the Immortality sorcery style from *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos*. Many of the spells in that style require the Ritual Sacrifice, Tortured Sacrifice and Permanent Sorcery feats, so the Pelishtim usually learn those as early as possible. The Pelishtim accept the ideas of life after death, believing also in ghosts and the undead, knowing that a strong will can allow the dead to return to fulfil unfinished business.

Shemite scholars are also healers of the sick and diviners of the will of the gods. The *asu* healers prepare herbal remedies and set broken bones. They keep their herbal recipes a complete secret. They maintain maximum ranks in Craft (herbalism) and usually take Skill Focus (Craft (herbalism)) as a feat. *Ashipu* healers are exorcists who use incantations to drive demons (diseases) away from the patient, often driving the demon into swine, sheep or statues, which are then destroyed. Knowledge (religion) and Knowledge (arcane) are important for them. The *ashipu* healers learn the Summoning sorcery style. *Baru* healers are diviners who can determine what sin or violation caused the creation of the demon that brought about the illness. *Baru* healers practice hepatoscopy, using animal livers to read the intent of the gods. The *baru* healers believe that if they can decipher the signs and portents from the gods, then humans can act wisely when the preordained events come to pass. The *baru* healers also develop occult arts and ritualistic formulas to influence the gods whose decisions determine human fate. The *baru* healers learn the Divination sorcery style as well as the counterspells style.

The hermit (page 94), the druid (page 96), the cult leader (page 99), the observer (page 102), the temple warder (page 106) and the occultist (page 109) are all good class combinations for the Shemite scholar.

SHEMITE SOLDIERS

The soldiers of Shem are considered to be men devoid of compassion or mercy. These cold-blooded killers are inhumanly cruel, fighting with the ferocity and lust of wild beasts. They do not leave fallen foes behind, but kill the wounded and the downed with pitiless intensity. Although

some of the Shemitish mercenaries are skilled with swords and spears, their archers are the most in demand. Extremely keen of eye, the Shemites are feared for their deadly archery skills. They are practically born with bows in hand and horses beneath them. Dressed in scale corselets and cylindrical helmets, the sons of Shem are always ready for war.

The elite warriors of the Meadow Shemites call themselves *asshuri* and they do not refer to themselves as Shemites, they are members of whatever tribe or region they belong to. They are not Shemite *asshuri*, but the *asshuri* of Nippr or the *asshuri* of Eruk. Their swords have pommels shaped as hawks and the material they are made of displays the prowess of the mercenary. An *asshuri* with an iron hawk has killed at least ten men in battle. A bronze hawk indicates twenty slayings in war. A silver hawk shows fifty confirmed kills. The gold hawk is given to those hearty warriors who have slain over a hundred men in various wars and skirmishes.

The *asshuri* are from the Meadow Cities in the western part of Shem. They draw their numbers from the free men of the city with good wages and a tradition of civic service. The king of each city supplies his *asshuri* with the best equipment he can afford, as well as military training. A soldier may serve in the *asshuri* for as long as he wishes, though few choose to make a life of it. Most take the training and the equipment, earn their gold, then move on to more lucrative careers in Shem's merchant empires.

Each *asshuri* trains in archery, mounted warfare and swordplay. They ride horses supplied by the desert nomads in eastern Shem. In battle, they wear scale hauberks topped with steel caps. Most wield light lances, scimitars and Shemite bows. When they serve as scouts they carry a quiver of 40 arrows. When working as archers or mounted archers each *asshuri* carries a double load of arrows. Mounted Combat, Point Blank Shot, Mounted Archery and Weapon Focus (Shemite bow) are extremely common feats for the *asshuri* to take. They will maximise their Ride skills and take at least five ranks in Handle Animal to earn the synergy bonus to Ride.

Shemite archers, armed with powerful bows, are capable of breaking the thunderous charges of armoured knights on their mighty horses. They can kill horses with their deadly arrows or pick off the knights from their mounts, heedless of their armour, for every suit has weak points – something the keen-eyed Shemites always manage to hit. Shemite soldiers also maximise Spot if possible; one cannot shoot something (or someone) one cannot see.

The master archer (page 114), the wasteland warrior (page 118) and the assassin (page 125) are all excellent class combinations for the Shemite soldier. The soldier multiclassed found in *Conan: The Free Companies* are also appropriate for the Shemite *asshuri*.

STYGIA

Stygia is a decadent, sinister menace, a black land of nameless horror feared by the Hyborian races. Ruled by a dark theocracy devoted to the cult of Set, its small population is notably xenophobic and the people are obsessed with the subjects of death and immortality, building dark tombs for their mysterious mummies. The population of about four million people is notably small for a kingdom of its size, for there is little arable land for the people to live on and there is a constant demand for sacrifices by the cults.

STYGIAN NOBLES

Mysterious Stygia organizes its inscrutable society in a strict class system based largely upon physical racial characteristics. Stygian royalty and nobility are relatively tall people with black hair and fair skin, as were their ancient forebears, the original inhabitants of Stygia. They worship Father Set and his pantheon, including sensuous Derketo.

The fair skinned nobles of Stygia, descended from the Giant-Kings of the Elder Empire, have black hair and are notably tall. They have luminous eyes. The tall nobles born of the ancient families are also lithe and sinuous. Like the Acheronians, these nobles are descended from the sons of a race of wizards, veritable devils born of a lineage of black diabolism stretching back tens of thousands of years. Characters of this race should maximise their Diplomacy, Intimidation, Knowledge (nobility), Knowledge (arcana) and Sense Motive skills. Even if they do not multiclass into scholar, they should at least have the Dabble feat.

Below these, the haughty, ruling elite of aristocrats are dusky-skinned, hawk nosed men. Interestingly, it is this caste which most non-Stygians consider to be true Stygians. Holding the reins of power in the government and in the temples, the aristocracy leaves the nobles free to hang about the court at Luxur. Even those who do not multiclass into scholar dabble in the black arts. Although not horse riders, most do ride in chariots, so Mounted Combat and/or Mounted Archery is common. Enjoying hunts, the Stygian aristocracy often take feats such as Track and Weapon Focus (Stygian bow). This stacks nicely with their racial bonus with this weapon.

In battle, the noble typically wears an archaic mail hauberk, overlaid with plates of strange pattern and design. This armour comes from patterns laid down from before the temple records, and may be of even more ancient origin. It is not particularly effective, but does present an imposing sight on the battlefield. Each noble is also expected to wear a battleaxe of curious design in his belt. Most ignore it in battle, but a few have been known to pull it out when in dire straights.

The noble savage (page 79), the exile (page 81), the cavalier (page 83), the dilettante (page 87), the professional knight (page 89) are all choice class combinations for Stygian noble.

STYGIAN SCHOLARS

Stygia and scholars are almost synonymous. Stygian scholars are part of the ruling elite of Stygia. The cults utterly dominate Stygian society; the temples own most of the arable land and the government bureaucracy is filled with priests. As with many religions, this Stygian theocracy is conservative and closed-minded. Sorcery in Stygia is synonymous with the worship of Father Set, who reigns supreme over that darksome land. His pantheon, however, includes several 'hideous, half-bestial gods' as subordinates. At one time, according to Xaltotun, much of the world was likewise dominated by the Old Serpent. Set, today, is worshipped primarily in Stygia and in places of strong Stygian influence, such as areas of Kush and Shem and by dark sorcerers everywhere. Set's symbol is a scaled serpent, coiled, with its tail in its mouth.

His is a bloody religion, a throwback from the strange pre-human culture that was cast down by the Stygians in pre-Cataclysm days. At one time, Set walked the earth in the form of a man and created that mysterious pre-human race. Now the god of the Stygians, Set's cult is outlawed by the Hyborians, who regard Set as the arch-enemy of Mitra and fear the gruesome and mysterious rituals of Set's priests.

The specific rituals used to worship Set are a guarded mystery, but those sinister rituals are known to be gruesome indeed, comprised of unspeakable rites and human sacrifices in grisly quantities. Priests wear monstrous, half-bestial masks surmounted by ostrich plumes in certain ceremonies. Silent, ritualistic processions also play an inexplicable part in this dark religion. Sacred objects, such as curious black candles that flicker with strange green light and staves with white skull heads abound in the Stygians' grim ceremonies of black magic. Sacred beasts, both terrestrial and otherwise, abound in their religious culture. Giant pythons hunt abroad in the dark alleys of black Khemi, innumerable human sacrifices are given to amorphous monsters from the Abyss held in deep pits and giant, drugged serpents coil in their temples, ready to accept worship and sacrifice from the priests of Set.

The priests of Set are largely sorcerers, and they terrify their subjects as well as their enemies, for they can and will sacrifice their own followers to gain their corrupt ends. The most powerful of these priests are members of the Black Ring, the main sorcerous coven in Stygia. It is made up of priests of Set, formerly independent sorcerers whose infamy and power draws the attention of the senior wizards of the Black Ring, and acolytes of the Black Ring. The most powerful of these are known as Lords of the Black Ring (see *Conan: The*



Scrolls of Skelos). Lords of the Black Ring are feared wherever they go, even in Stygia itself. Even the threat of their wrath is generally enough to bring their cowering inferiors back into line.

Stygian sorcerers usually maximise Perform (ritual), Intimidation, Knowledge (arcana) and Gather Information skills. Almost all Stygian sorcerers take the Ritual Sacrifice and Tortured Sacrifice feats. For those wishing to hide their corruption, the Deception of Set and Foul is Fair feats from *Conan: The Road of Kings* might be useful.

The hermit (page 94), the druid (page 96), the cult leader (page 99), the observer (page 102), the temple warder (page 106) and the occultist (page 109) are all excellent class combinations for Stygian scholars.

STYGIAN SOLDIERS

The Stygian warrior caste is a tall and muscular breed, hawk-nosed and dusky-skinned Stygian soldiers are strictly disciplined and regimented. They are never mounted as they regard cavalry as ignoble, fit only for foreign mercenaries. They are a walking anachronism, with outdated training, arms and armour. Most Stygian soldiers are archers. The numerous Stygian archers

once commanded great fear from armies and nations, their powerful bows launching waves of steel-tipped death into the air, blasting through flesh and bone. Then the Hyborians came, with heavy armour, massive shields and cavalry that could cover the ground long before the archers could destroy them. Now, these unarmoured archers are considered something of a joke by the world's great powers. However, they can still inflict incredible punishment on those foolish enough to underestimate them. Each archer is clad in a light shirt and trousers. They carry daggers and a sheaf of 30 arrows into battle, along with their signature bows. The nobles station the majority of these forces around Luxur. Common feats at 1st level are Point Blank Shot and Weapon Focus (Stygian bow). Later they are trained for Endurance, Far Shot and Precise Shot.

Stygia maintains almost 3,000 chariot teams, each consisting of a chariot driver, a noble-born soldier/archer, and a two horse team. These ponderous devices require relatively level surfaces, have a wide turning radius and are notoriously vulnerable at the wheels. Nobles primarily use them for racing and demonstrations of martial skill rather than real fighting. The noble/soldier usually takes Chariot Archery, Chariot Combat and Point Blank Shot as feats. The noble soldier usually has ranks in Intimidate and Spot. The chariot's driver is unarmoured and unarmed. The driver usually takes Endurance, Improved Unarmed Strike, Mounted Combat, Skill Focus (Handle Animal) and Weapon Focus (Stygian bow) as feats. Handle Animal is maximised. These teams usually spend time in the Luxur garrison rather than on the various fronts.

The ships of the coast also host marines (see *Conan: The Free Companies*). The brawler (page 111), master archer (page 114), the assassin (page 125) and the sea hawk (see page 121) are all excellent class combinations for Stygian soldiers.

TURAN

The Turanians are dark and generally tall and slender, the descendants of the ancient Lemurians, once enslaved by the ancestors of the Stygians in ages past. They conquered the indigenous aboriginal people that lived in the region of the Vilayet and turned the region into a bastion of culture, commerce and beauty. The Turanians are a proud people, pleased with the imperialism of their leaders and the wealth brought to them in tribute from subjugated nations.

TURANIAN NOBLES

The kings of Turan are harsh task masters, permitting no rebellions, uprisings or dissent. When one ascends to the throne, all of his brothers and his brothers' children are put to the sword to prevent even the possibility of civil war. When a king dies, the first child to reach the capital is declared the new king.

TURANIAN RULES VARIANT

Turanians seem more sedentary than their forebears, the Hyrkanians. Games Masters may wish to make soldier the favoured class for Turanians, retaining nomad as the favoured class for Hyrkanians.

Turan is broken up into provinces, or *satrapies*, ruled by a *satrap*. The king of Turan appoints generals and secretaries of state to serve alongside the *satrap* lest the governor grow too powerful. With the power divided among the three, each has to report to the king and personal inspectors visit frequently. The duty of the *satrap* is to protect the heartland by administering the outer provinces, particularly as regards the frontiers, preventing Turan's centre from being threatened. The *satrapy* also has the responsibility to pay taxes and/or tribute to Aghrapur. By tradition the *satrap* is always a loyal Turanian of Hyrkanian descent, not from any subjugated nation. This is not law, merely tradition and nothing keeps it from being broken should the king of Turan want to honour another race with a *satrapy*. The *satrapies* are further broken down to city-states that are somewhat autonomous. The duty of the appointed general is to see to the welfare of the armies and militia of the *satrapy*, assuring they are only used for purposes that benefit Turan as a whole. The secretary of state is there to serve as an official liaison and diplomat, both for the *satrap* and for the king of Turan.

Turanian nobles are noted cavalry and horse-archers. All Turanian nobles will take the Mounted Combat and Mounted Archery feats. Feats improving their archery will almost certainly be taken, especially Far Shot, for which the Turanian does not need to meet the prerequisites. Turanians are well reputed for being able to shoot things at incredible distances. For this reason, a Turanian will often keep his Spot skill as high as possible. A Turanian noble will usually keep his Ride and Survival skills maximised, rarely will he walk as much as 20 paces if he can ride instead. He will often put at least 5 ranks in Handle Animal to earn the synergy bonus to Ride.

The noble savage (page 79), the exile (page 81), the cavalier (page 83), the dilettante (page 87), and the professional knight (page 89) are all excellent class combinations for the Turanian noble. The cavalier (noble/soldier) is the most likely because soldier is a favoured class for the Turanian.

TURANIAN SCHOLARS

Turanian scholars are rarely sorcerous. Turanians tend to find sorcery to be superstition, mirrors and smoke. Most



Turanian scholars are tutors and councillors. Other scholars are members of the Turanian priesthood.

Erlík was supposedly the first man, a creation of Ulgen. Erlík was taken to the heavens and given the mantle of death and, in time, seemed to supplant his creator in popularity. Turanians, of course, love the kill, so perhaps it is not surprising a god of death, fire and war became more popular than a creator god. Erlík is called the 'Yellow God of Death,' and according to L. Sprague de Camp in *The Flame Knife*, his followers are cannibals with filed teeth. He respects the noble warriors who wield life and death on the battlefield. Lotus is considered a holy sacrament to the followers of Erlík, reserved for those who have reached Paradise. The followers of Erlík do not appreciate non-believers using it. The Paradise promised by Erlík to his True Believers is peopled by beautiful mekhrani who live in the pleasure houses of eternity. Erlík has an opposite number called Thutala, a trickster who appears to unbelievers in a whole host of different guises. The followers of Erlík call any foreign god 'Thutala.' Erlík's priests learn Curses and Hypnotism.

Tarim is supposedly a mystic who may have founded Turan. Since

Tarim's high priests are all under the mental domination of the Master of Yimsha, it is possible that the religion is spurious, an invention of the Black Circle used to dominate the Hyrkanians. The priests of Tarim do, at least, seem to have some loyalty to Turan and its king. The Seers of Yimsha have probably posed the Tarim as an avatar of Erlik himself, taking the form of a god of herding and animal fertility. His priests learn the Nature Magic style and Weather Magic style from *Conan: Pirate Isles*.

Turanians living near Koth or Shem have also added Ishtar to their gods, calling her Yenagra. She has alabaster skin and is otherwise worshipped as the Kothic Ishtar, although a little more restrained in terms of worship. Other Turanians still worship Ahriman and other bizarre deities, such as Ormazd, a bright god who battles the devil Ahriman.

The hermit (page 94), the druid (page 96), the cult leader (page 99), the observer (page 102), the temple warder (page 106), the navigator (page 104) and the occultist (page 109) are all excellent class combinations for the Turanian scholar. The cult leader (scholar/soldier) is the most likely as soldier is a favoured class of the Turanian.

TURANIAN SOLDIERS

The Turanians are noted for their superb archery skills, especially with their double-curved Hyrkanian bows. For swords, the Turanians favour the scimitar and they also carry ten foot long lances for spearing their foes from horses. Extremely militant and exceptionally organised, Turan attempts to expand its empire in all directions, dominating Iranistan, threatening Vendhya, conquering the caravan cities of the eastern deserts, battling Hyperborea and sending troops into Zamora and Brythunia. The Turanians prefer cavalry, using mercenaries if they need infantry. The cavalry maximises its Ride skill, including at least 5 ranks in Handle Animal. Spot is also kept high so as to see enemies better. They learn the following feats: Far Shot, Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (Hyrkanian bow) and Weapon Specialisation (Hyrkanian bow). Most of Turan's cavalry have a few levels in nomad.

The Turanians divide their disciplined cavalry in squads of ten, troops of fifty, companies of a hundred and divisions of 10,000. Commanders, or *kagan*, are those proven in war, not tribal chiefs. A squad-leader is called a 10-commander or a commander-of-10. Other commanders of larger numbers follow similar naming schemes. Commanders signal with flags during the day and with lanterns in the nights.

Better quality scimitars are given to soldiers who earn higher rank. If a Turanian is demoted, his superior officer takes his scimitar and breaks it in front of the ranks. The demoted Turanian then must take a scimitar appropriate to his rank.

Turanian males are typically bearded, wear turbans, sashes and loose-fitting trousers. The warriors wear gold-sharply pointed helmets, white silk shirts, sleeveless mail, baggy trousers and tiger-skin cloaks.

The Mighty Archers are an elite Turanian unit designed in part to prove the superiority of modern methods of warfare. A member of this elite unit must have the following feats: Far Shot, Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (Hyrkanian bow) and Weapon Specialisation (Hyrkanian bow). They must have a Reputation of at least 10 and their Reputation cannot be of the Coward or Trickster natures. They draw their numbers from among the elite archers of the realm, and it is said they have never been beaten in battle. Those who wear the spiral helm and leopard skin cloak of a Mighty Archer have proven in battle that they stand for the future. Mighty Archers carry Hyrkanian bows and daggers into battle. Most carry at least 36 arrows; many carry twice that number if they expect a protracted engagement.

Other Turanian soldiers are employed not as cavalry but as marines, sailing the Vilayet to protect Turan's shipping and shores from the Red Brotherhood. Marines, described in detail in *Conan: The Free Companies*, are soldier/pirates. Marines take the Marine Formation presented in *Conan: Pirate Isles* and often learn the Improved Bull Rush feat to help them bull rush pirates off the edge of ships. Many take ranks in Climb, Swim and Tumble.

The brawler (page 111), master archer (page 114), the contemplative (page 123), the fop (page 116), the wasteland warrior (page 118), the assassin (page 125) and the sea hawk (page 121) are all excellent class combinations for the Turanian soldier. The soldier class is favoured among the Turanians.

VENDHYA

The people of Vendhya tend to have an olive skin tone, a slim body-style and straight black hair. They are also remarked for having large dark eyes and Vendhyan women use make-up to enhance their eyes to further that effect. Vendhya's culture resembles that of the mythical India described in the *Vedas* and the population is divided into distinct classes or castes. People are born into their given class and this arbitrary system of division cannot be altered by skill, prestige or wealth. However, the caste system is similar to the feudal system of the Hyborians for the caste system implies a series of privileges and corresponding responsibilities. The caste system is not intended as a scheme for oppression but simply for order and organization.

VENDHYAN NOBLES

The highest of Vendhya's caste system, at least in regards to secular power, are the Kshatriyas, from whom the king is

chosen. In *People of the Black Circle*, Howard writes, ‘The rulers of the golden kingdoms south of the Himelians were considered little short of divine.’ Only Kshatriya can take the noble class, either at 1st or any other level. Vertical mobility in Vendhya is impossible.

Vendhyan noblemen organise mass feeding ceremonies, as well as public distribution of grain and other necessities, to ensure the economic survival of the people. They wear a lot of jewellery, including crowns, belts, arm and leg bands, often with bangles, nose rings, finger rings, toe rings and, if no crown is worn, hair adornments. Nobles keep parrots and peacocks as pets.

Kshatriya education is accomplished via hermits in hostels deep inside the dank Vendhyan forests or in certain caves on the Himelian Mountains. Vendhyan nobles usually have a few ranks in several Knowledge skills to reflect the influence of these teachers on them.

Spying is an ancient art in Vendhya, but the price to pay if caught can be slavery or even one’s life. Slavery is a fact of life in Vendhya, established by Robert E. Howard in *The People of the Black Circle*, where he writes, ‘Trembling slave-girls knelt at the foot of the dais...’ Slaves can be of any caste and slavery is often a punishment. In addition, people can be intimidated into slavery; they are simply scared into accepting slave status. Thus, ranks in Intimidation are vital to Vendhyan nobles.

The Kshatriya Nobles form the backbone of Vendhya’s fighting forces. These caste soldiers train for war their entire lives. Many are not truly suited for it; they lack the willingness to kill or the reflexes needed to keep them alive. However, many can wield scimitar, light lance and bow just as easily as they speak of privileges or force lower caste women to their beds. In war, each Kshatriya wears a scale corselet topped with a steel cap. They carry light lances for use on horseback and scimitars for hand-to-hand fighting. Most also carry a short but powerful bow, giving them the ability to act as archers if the need arises. Although they are trained in the art of archery they must dismount to make an effective archer unit.

Common feats for Vendhyan nobles include Mounted Combat, Negotiator, Persuasive, Skill Focus (Intimidation), Spirited Charge, Improved Unarmed Strike, Knowledgeable and Improved Grapple.

VENDHYAN SCHOLARS

Higher in spiritual power than the Kshatriyas, but lower in secular strength, are the priests and to them belongs the responsibility for religious observances and education. Education is provided by Ashramas (hostels) located deep

in the forests of Vendhya. Vendhya reveres the mystical religion of Asura, a religion born of enormously complex rituals derived from four great books, the compilations of centuries of religious thought and practice. The priestly class prize their intellectual acumen and they use that intelligence to further their own aims. The people believe in a cosmic order, a belief in cause and effect that extends beyond the physical realm, so the priests teach that if these mysterious and shadowed rituals are performed incorrectly, the cosmic order will be disturbed and catastrophe will follow, for Asura keeps a keen eye on how smoothly the world runs. Of course, the priests are the only ones able to perform these clamorous rituals properly. Vendhyan scholars always maximise their Perform (ritual) skills, often taking Skill Focus (Perform (ritual)) and Performer feats to ensure against error in their execution of these rituals. As a result of this sense of cosmic order and justice, Vendhyans believe in a heaven, a hell and the judgment of souls. Sorcerers who learn the Curses sorcery style believe they are part of this sense of justice in the cosmos.

For the Vendhyan priests, sorcery and religious rituals amount to nearly the same thing. These priests understand sorcery and the best ways in which to fight and foil the activities of sorcerers. A common first style to learn is Counterspells. Vendhyan sorcerers also understand the power of Magical Links and counsel the Vendhyan royal family to destroy shorn hair, nail trimmings and other bodily waste materials. Also important is water and pigment. These two common substances play a large part in nearly every Vendhyan ritual. Female Vendhyan scholars use pigment to create abstract designs on floors as part of their spell casting. These devilishly ancient and magically potent designs are treated as concentrated forms of their will, desire and hope. Both male and female sorcerers ritually pour pigment over images of gods or daub it onto the skin of those who will receive their aid. Craft (pigment) is a common skill among Vendhyan sorcerers, male and female. The Painter of Dreams and Visions, Patterns of Protection and Patterns of Shelter feats from *Conan: The Free Companies* would be appropriate for a Vendhyan dabbler. Water is seen as a metaphor for life and rivers of any size are venerated as goddesses. The pouring of water also plays a role in many Vendhyan rituals and spells.

The Vendhyans, with their strong belief in cause and effect, carry that thinking toward an idea of fate, an idea that reinforces the rigid caste system, for each man’s position in life is a direct and unavoidable consequence of fate, a fate they determined in a prior life, a fate that has now become a duty. The Vendhyans have developed an intricate system of astrology and cosmic law to help divine both causes and effects, thus determining potential fate. Divination and Cosmic Sorcery are common styles for Vendhyan sorcerers.

The Asuran priests teach that life is illusory and the only final truth comes after death, in the light of the soul. The cult devotes itself to 'penetrating the veil of the illusion of life.'

Asura's doctrines reveal that all beings reincarnate and that the purpose of life is the paying of the karmic debt against the soul. Each evil act extends the cycle of reincarnation, each good act shortens it. Those who suffer earned their trials in previous lives; they are not to be pitied. The Vendhyans also do not believe time is a steady, linear progression; time is a cyclical perception instead. Time is a revolving cycle where everything that has happened before will happen again and nothing will ever happen that has not happened before, and this cycle binds the universe together with Asura. Again, the priests insist their rituals are necessary for the proper functioning of this all-important cycle, for each ritual is a mystical repetition of events crucial to the continuation of the universe.

Asura is the chief god of the Vendhyans, much as Mitra is the primary god of the Hyborians, but, unlike Mitra, Asura does not rule the heavens alone. He leads an entire pantheon of mysterious gods. Katar is the vile goddess who leads the Katari, Vendhya's dreaded assassins. Yama is the king of devils in Vendhyan belief. Yizil is another of their strange pantheon, but little is known of him. Hanuman is also worshipped in Vendhya. His image, wielding a *gada*, often adorns the doors and windows of Vendhyan temples as a guardian demon.

VENDHYAN SOLDIERS

Most Vendhyan soldiers are Kshatriyan nobles, soldiers who have at least one level in noble or the Noble Blood feat from *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos*. Other soldiers come from the Nayars, a warrior sub-caste of the Kshatriyas. The people of Vendhya form their military into squads that contain exactly one elephant, a chariot, three armoured lancers on horseback and five infantry soldiers. Armies are formed by bringing together as many squads as can be gathered.

The lancers are soldiers or noble/soldiers who fight from horseback. They take maximum ranks in Ride and at least five ranks in Handle Animal. They learn Mounted Combat and tend to focus and specialise in the lance. They are equipped with chahar-aina armour, light lances, kukris and khandars (all described in *Conan: The Road of Kings*). Alternatively, they can be equipped with scimitars instead of khandars.

The infantrymen are archers, foot-soldiers or borderers (see *Conan: Hyboria's Fiercest* for the role of borderers in Vendhya). The archers wield their traditional hunting bows with care, practising for hours every day, working on both pin-point accuracy and rapid, volleys of arching arrows. The Vendhyan archers wield hunting bows and battleaxes. They wear leather jerkins and steel caps



in battle. The foot soldier learns the subtle arts of spear and shield. He wears a leather jerkin and protects himself with a large shield. He carries a wide-bladed hunting spear, useful more for pinning tribesmen to the ground than hunting game.

High-level soldiers become instructors and are expected to perform as doctors and healers. Many start taking ranks in Heal after they are appointed to such a role. Any of the soldier multiclass options presented in *Conan: The Free Companies* are available to Vendhyan soldiers, as are the multiclass options presented in this volume.

ZAMORA

Zamora is not a Hyborian kingdom. Zamora is an ancient kingdom whose people are descended from a mysterious race known as the Zhemri, an elder and evil race from pre-Cataclysmic times. The fortunes of the Zhemri, and later Zamora, rose and fell constantly. The ancient origins of Zamora causes them to look with some disdain upon Hyborians and their barbaric origins. Some of the nobles in Zamora can trace their lineage back to the earliest of the Zhemri families, a heritage extending far beyond any known Hyborian family line. Locked in vaults and in private libraries, mouldering tomes detail periods of time so ancient as to cause the mind to reel with the magnitude of history. Many Nemedian scholars long to get even a peek at some of these family histories for their own essays and researches. Currently the 3,000 year old civilisation has fallen into decadence and

its people are viewed as a wicked race of thieves, cutthroats and sorcerers. More information about Zamora can be found in *Conan: Shadizar – City of Wickedness*.

ZAMORIAN NOBLES

The noble class belongs to those who have lived with Zamorian wealth for two generations or more. This economic and social class has an amazing amount of material security and political power; their time is usually spent in efforts to keep their wealth and gain more. Members of this class usually take the noble class (from *Conan the Roleplaying Game*) or the Noble Blood feat (from *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos*) in combination with another class. Financial connections, social connections and political connections are the three most important elements involved in decision making. Who they know is far more important than what they know or what they can do as an individual. Everyone known is considered to be one or more of the above types of connections, otherwise the person is not worth knowing or even noticing. These connections establish safety and growth, both of which are important to the noble. Players of noble-blooded characters are advised to keep maximum ranks in Knowledge (nobility) and Knowledge (local) to maintain this aspect of nobility. Games Masters should encourage games that allow use of contacts to accomplish social story goals. Possessions tend to revolve around unique artefacts, legacies, estates, pedigrees and bloodlines. In this class, people do not introduce themselves. People are introduced by others in this fashion: 'This is (name) of (family name) family.' This serves the purpose of not only identifying the noble but illustrating his connection at the same time. If an introduction is merely, 'This is (name), a very dear and close personal friend,' or something similar, then the unspoken understanding is that the person has no connections of worth. Being skilled garners less respect than knowing skilled people. Planning is strategic, extending out months or even years. Skill ranks will largely be spent in Knowledge (nobility), Diplomacy and Gather Information skills. The ability to know and influence people is highly regarded.

The nobility of Zamora live a precarious life. Should their estates, reputation or popularity ever be perceived to exceed King Tiridates', their lives are forfeit. Should they show even the slightest sign of discontent in their lord, their lives are forfeit. The king has spies in every household as well as assassins, the nobles know this. Many nobles even know who the spies are but do nothing about them for fear of royal reprisals for harming a loyal subject on the king's mission.

The nobles of Zamora organise themselves by Houses. House Perashanid is an example of a noble family from Robert Jordan's *Conan the Magnificent*. These noble Houses strive to rise in the king's favour without raising the king's drunken paranoia. The Houses engage actively in the vice and trade of Shadizar, employing complex networks of intermediaries to control the wealth of the city. Some of the noble families

are little more than organised crime families and others are descended from ancient Zhemri nobility, inheriting their wealth and status generation after generation.

The nobles control so much of the wealth in Shadizar that King Tiridates must play a careful game. Even though he is a tyrant, he knows he needs some level of fear and support in the noble classes to remain fully in power. Many of the nobles are highly charismatic and diplomatic men who understand Tiridates and the demands of power. These nobles tend to have the king's ear.

ZAMORIAN SCHOLARS

The black arts are practised illegally in the temples and dark places of Zamora. Many nobles dabble in the occult and numerous priests are simply adept at using foul sorceries. Although rarely advertised openly, many of Shadizar's sorcerers will take on the mantle of Master by accepting apprentices. Some few sorcerers may even cast spells for profit but, with the possible exception of minor divinations, will usually use intermediaries to set up the arrangements. Like renowned assassins, those who hire the best sorcerers never know who the sorcerer actually is. Sorcerers do not make magic items for sale, as such items could be used by other sorcerers as a mystical link.

Many priests are minor nobles. Some have levels in the noble class but most merely have the Noble Blood feat from *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos* and take the scholar class. Often noble families train the first born to take over the family and the second male child is likewise prepared in case the first born male should perish or prove unworthy. The third sons and beyond are usually sent to the temples at a young age so as to not be a drain on the family resources. These sons are educated and brought up in the ways of the temple. Some maintain familial loyalties and allegiances but most abandon such things in favour of their chosen temple or religion.

Note that, in general, priests, whether of the scholar class or not, are not all sorcerers. Many are simply scribes and learned philosophers.

Much of a Zamorian priest's time serving the temple is taken up with religious and philosophical debate. These debates are treated with utmost seriousness by the Zamorians. Debates of this nature are deemed proof of religious knowledge, religious enthusiasm and religious belief. Temples split asunder as these debates become more and more serious, creating new cults based on the primary religion but emphasising differing aspects of the faiths. Many of these splits revolve around issues seemingly minor to an outsider yet are profound to the Zamorian believers. The nature of the gods, the nature of man, the role of government, the role of priests and even lifestyles of

priests and the masses all come under the critical scrutiny of the debating priesthoods. Bluff, Diplomacy and Intimidation play as much of a role in these debates as Knowledge skills.

The priests live lifestyles varying with income, desire and belief. In typical Zamorian fashion, most live a luxurious, hedonistic lifestyle. The priests use their influence and wealth to buy land, property and people. Many of the priests are also land-owners and several own businesses outside of the temples. Priests own most of the finer brothels in Shadizar, even those who decry hedonistic sexual pleasures outside of marriage. The higher the priest's rank, the better his living quarters and the more desirable his slaves are. The priests are spied upon by the king at most times for he fears the priests' influence over the people. The king keeps the priests in a state of discord whenever possible, so they spend their time in intrigue within the temple districts of their cities, leaving them little time to concern themselves with political issues.

The temples also hold the largest libraries in the city, though precious few of them are open to the public. Scholarly priests collect mouldering manuscripts and sagacious volumes of such rarity their worth is occasionally more than the temple housing them. Many of the temples employ book-finders who scour the bazaars of cities both great and small in lands far and near in a never-ending quest to find particular tomes for their masters.

The hermit (page 94), the druid (page 96), the cult leader (page 99), the observer (page 102), the temple warder (page 106) and the occultist (page 109) are perfect class combinations for Zamorian scholars.

ZAMORIAN SOLDIERS

The Zamorian army is adequate to defend the nation against small incursions but is hardly capable of sustaining any sort of protracted war or invasion. Their most powerful defences are their spy network and their priests and sorcerers. Zamora is regarded as an ancient and evil kingdom and the bordering kingdoms fear Zamora with good reason. Their assassins are without equal, striking swiftly from the dark places within palaces and castles. The priests of even stranger gods cast long shadows over the civilised world, casting fearsome spells to bring kingdoms shuddering to their knees in bleak supplication.

With such insidious defences, Zamora hardly needs a massive army to patrol its borders. Its troops exist to enforce the king's will on the population, to strike terror into the hearts of its citizens and to promote uniformity of political support. There are basically three opportunities for soldiering in Zamora: as a regular soldier, one of the royal guard or as part of a city's watch.

Regular Soldiers: Zamora's regular soldiers wear plain steel caps, bronze greaves, bucklers and leather jerkins studded with bronze buttons. Their primary weapon is the spear, although bows, pikes and short swords are also common. If the King of Zamora decides he needs more men in the army, he merely decrees it and it is done. He can order any man, woman or child to serve in his army for any length of time. Zamora lacks the hierarchy of the Hyborian nations, where civilised rules of precedence and fealty govern the lives of the people; if Tiridates orders something, it is carried out. Most of the regular army is stationed in whatever city the king is staying in, usually Shadizar or Arenjun.

Zamora's usual tactic against invading forces is to assassinate the commanders or curse the rulers of the kingdom sending its units across the border. The actual army is better suited to hunting down renegades, dissidents and criminals than they are at fighting opposing armies. They often travel in groups of five. Three are usually armed with bows and two are armed with pikes. All five bear short swords at their sides and bucklers at their backs when marching. Most Zamorian soldiers focus their skills on Intimidate and Search. The more ambitious and intelligent soldiers use their bonus skill points in Gather Information and Sense Motive in order to root out dissidents and earn promotions into the Royal Guard. In addition to combat feats, many Zamorian soldiers take Investigator and Persuasive as feat choices. The most common feats are: Combat Reflexes, Improved Disarm, Investigator and Persuasive. They are equipped with brigandine, steel helmets, bills (or spears), short swords and bucklers.

The regular army is usually commanded by foreign mercenaries, as the king trusts them more than Zamorian military leaders, who might be able to gather the power to usurp him. These commanders usually wear a polished bronze cuirass with a helmet sporting a towering horsehair crest. Most foreign mercenaries provide their own weapons. To earn a promotion to Zamora's armed forces, the mercenary must prove adept at finding criminals, dissidents and rebels. Skills such as Intimidate, Search, Gather Information and Sense Motive are highly valued in mercenary commanders. Feats enhancing those skills are likely to be taken by ambitious mercenaries with an eye for command. Skill at utilising small forces is also necessary as Zamora simply does not have a large standing army.

Royal Guard: The Zamorian royal guard, called the King's Own, are the elite of the regular army. They wear silvered breastplate armour and horse-hair crested helmets, wielding spears (or bills) and shields. Most of the royal guard are Zamorians who have proven singularly adept at finding rebels and criminals, as well as managing to establish the proper contacts and proffered the expected bribes at the right time to the right people. Royal Guardsmen are typically more intelligent than the standard soldier and most have ranks in Intimidate, Search, Gather Information, Sense Motive and

Diplomacy. Combat prowess is not particularly expected, as promotions tend to be greased by the application of coin and pushed forward by personal contacts speaking on behalf of the soldier seeking the promotion. Reputation and Charisma are important in order to gain this promotion. Common feats are Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Improved Disarm, Investigator, Negotiator, Persuasive and Steely Gaze.

The royal guard is commanded by King Tiridates and they tend to hold themselves separate from the regular army. Although most of the royal guard have a reputation for villainy, some are reputed for bravery. These are often chosen to personally accompany the king. The king also stations royal guards with people of importance or influence as a sign of his favour.

The City Watch: The watch (day watch, evening watch and night watch) militia is the police force of Shadizar that works for the magistrates. They are typically armed with bills. Their power, derived from a mandate from the king, is ample for maintaining order and conversely, for supporting crime. They number about 3% of the population. Typically, they work in eight hour shifts with most of the watch working in the evening or at night. Most of the watchmen on duty are on the streets; only about 20% of them are stationed in key points in the city.

In the ranks of those practising vice there is an unspoken rule that if one does not pay the watchmen then one will get run in sooner or later. Just as the King of Zamora is a despot, the watchmen have an almost despotic control over those in charge of Shadizar's vices and pleasures. Pay-offs to the watch have become part of the recognised necessities of life on the streets. Some pay with coin and others pay with their own bodies. The truly unfortunate are forced to pay with both. The watch consider these pay-offs as a right of their office and station and they act on this belief, using virtually any opportunity to transmute their power into cash. It is well known that if a person quarrels with one of the watch then that person has effectively ended her lifestyle. There is a strong sense of unanimity among the ranks of the watch and a slight to one of them will bring down the wrath of all of them. The soldiers have only to appear at the right place and start being overly inquisitive, to drive away customers. A member of the watch can make it impossible for the pleasure houses and vice dealers to do business simply by his importunate presence. Further, the soldiers also seem to have considerable means of gathering evidence to warrant the capture and imprisonment of offending parties. The most common feats are Weapon Focus (bill), Improved Disarm and Persuasive. They are outfitted with brigandine, steel helmets, bills, short swords and bucklers.

The brawler (page 111), master archer (page 114), the contemplative (page 123), the fop (page 116), the wasteland warrior (page 118), the assassin (page 125) and any of the

soldier multiclass opportunities presented in *Conan: The Free Companies* are all excellent class combinations for Zamorian soldiers.

ZINGARA

Zingara is a land torn apart and ruined by civil war. Historically a king ruled the land out of Kordava, but the elegant and bejewelled princelings and nobles, who usually fought petty battles among themselves and the Poitainians, rose up and destroyed themselves and their noble kingdom in flame and blood. The refined swordsmanship of the Zingarans unfortunately turned against itself. A Zingaran usually only leaves Zingara by force, be it force of arms or force of circumstance. Zingarans, by nature, are not explorers or colonists.

ZINGARAN NOBLES

Zingara is a feudal land, a monarchy in true Hyborian fashion, though Zingara is not a true Hyborian kingdom. Under a dazzlingly complex political system, dukes and counts rule fiefs in the name of the king in Kordava, although in most cases that fealty was, at best, nominal and somewhat confusing. The nobles of Zingara are a proud, individualistic race, not given to subservience and they rebel both openly and secretly. This continual backstabbing, political manoeuvring and social ladder-climbing brought about the final dissolution of Zingara as a bastion of civilization and good breeding. Today, Zingara is a faltering anarchy.

Manners and pleasures in Zingara are a testament to their elegance and sophistication. Knowledge (nobility) is usual for Zingaran nobles to have ranks in. The fine art of fencing is taught to all noblemen. Most noblemen take Weapon Focus (arming sword), Parry, Combat Expertise and Intricate Swordplay feats. Waving scented handkerchiefs, the nobility of Zingara plot and conspire against fellow nobles even as they talk elegantly of philosophy and civility. There is a movement in Zingara to move away from the old feudal system (which has clearly failed) to a republic. Zingarans try to dress well. Trunk-hose and doublets of silk with puffed and slit sleeves are common for the men. Cloaks hang from their shoulders and boots of the finest Kordavan leather adorn their feet.

Zingara's elite knights are just as skilled as their Poitainian enemies, and perhaps somewhat more numerous. However, given the difficulties in fielding even a single unit of knights it is unlikely that this numeric superiority will ever translate into a distinct military advantage. Their absolute numbers may be higher, but their lack of central authority means their full numbers will never take the field. Each knight wears plate armour and a great helm. They carry heavy lances, broadswords and large shields into battle. Most have the following feats:

MITRA

Mitra is the head of the Zingaran pantheon. This is interesting because in all other Hyborian nations, Mitra is the One True God. The melting pot of Zingara has also produced a melting pot of religions. Mitra, as the god of the last conquerors, now rules supreme over the other gods in a king-like role. The saints have vanished, but the legions of heaven and hell remain. A variant of Ishtar serves as Mitra's consort in a court that contains Shemitish and Pictish deities, all with portfolios of power in a complex fashion duplicating the complicated Zingaran court. It is in this arena the Zingaran priests move.

Requirements of Worship: Pay a tithe worth 1 sp/level/month to the local Zingaran temple.

Benefits of Worship: Atonement.

Requirements for Ordained Priesthood: Must lead the faithful in prayer. Must arbitrate fairly in disputes whenever asked.

Benefits of Ordained Priesthood: Standard, plus sorcery teaching is available (sea witchery, hypnotism).

Typical Punishments for Disloyal Priests: Usually excommunicated, but may be attacked by the worshippers of the Mitran pantheon as a result.

Improved Initiative, Mounted Combat, Trample, Weapon Focus (broadsword) and Weapon Focus (heavy lance).

ZINGARAN SCHOLARS

In general, the Zingarans fear magic and they fear sorcerers. Their legends are replete with stories about degenerate rituals of demonic debauchery, horrifying plagues and worse. Sorcerers in Zingara hide their talents from the people for fear of mobs with pitchforks, torches and nooses. Many scholars, however, do reside in Zingara as tutors, choosing to take bonus feats and skill points instead of new sorcery styles and advanced spells.

Scholars with noble blood tend to concentrate on the same skills as listed above for the noble class. Those who work as tutors take the appropriate Knowledge skills and the Profession (tutor) skill. Sorcerous scholars tend to be unique in their skill selections, although many focus on Sea Witchery or Weather Witching sorcery styles (both from *Conan: Pirate Isles*). Nature Magic is another common sorcery style for the Zingaran scholar.

The hermit (page 94), the druid (page 96), the cult leader (page 99), the observer (page 102), the temple warder (page 106), the navigator (page 104) and the occultist

(page 109) are all excellent class combinations for the Zingaran scholar.

ZINGARAN SOLDIERS

Soldiers dress in steel and satin, their armour and garments are always ornate and made of the best material that can be afforded, stolen or made. Royal soldiers dress in burgundy and gold, thin black moustaches are also common.

Zingara is a war-torn nation, ripped apart by civil wars. There is much work here for a soldier. The basic infantrymen are given hasty training with pikes to blunt the first charge of heavy cavalry before dropping their pikes and running. The basic infantryman wields a pike and a broadsword. He wears a leather jerkin topped with a steel cap. A few carry large shields strapped to their backs, but most do not bother; there is never enough time to sling them down before the pikes break and nobles in plate armour rage through the lines. They take ranks in Perform (guard mount) and Search. They are usually trained to have the following feats: Improved Initiative, Power Attack and Weapon Focus (pike).

In addition to the infantrymen, Zingara also trains arbalesters in Nemedian fashion. Zingaran arbalesters, however, are more focused on swordsmanship than archery. They are often trained by the Zingaran lords to have the Improved Initiative, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (arbalest) and Weapon Focus (arming sword) feats. Each arbalester carries an arbalest, 30 bolts and an arming sword. He wears a mail shirt covered with a surcoat showing his lord's crest. Arbalesters take ranks in Perform (guard mount), Spot and Search.

Those soldiers who excel are often elevated to the status of men-at-arms. They are trained in Mounted Combat and Ride-By Attack, in addition to whatever feats they learned as infantry or arbalesters. Weapon Focus (arming sword) is also common. Most have decent warhorses to ride as well as good mail hauberks and steel caps to ward off arrows. They do not use large shields. Zingaran men-at-arms ride into battle beside their noble leaders. Usually each knight will have around two men-at-arms supporting him. They take ranks in Ride and Handle Animal.

Secrets of the Nobles

Skills & Feats of the Nobility

THINK YOU KNOW what a noble is capable of? Of course, the nobles have power but what can they do with that power? Nobles have influence, but how far can that influence reach? Just when the villain thinks they have a noble beaten, the noble seems to find an extra reserve of political power to bring things to an unhappy conclusion for the villain. This chapter discusses how the noble can do this.

GENERAL OPTIONS

Nobles, while capable combatants, will never achieve the martial prowess barbarians and soldiers are capable of achieving. Still, a noble can afford the best armour and a horse, even at low levels, something a barbarian or soldier can rarely do. A noble's strength is in influence and leadership. The most capable of nobles will pick abilities, skills and feats to emphasise their influence and leadership. His Lead By Example and Rally abilities illustrate this strength. The noble, while not necessarily as capable as a soldier, can usually bring armies to his aid when needed, using his Ally or Family Ties abilities, as well as his Enhanced Leadership ability. This section discusses some advice and options concerning the creation of capable and effective nobles, especially regarding ability score, skill and feat choices. Bringing down a noble can be difficult if he is using his resources wisely.

ABILITY SCORES

Although most nobles will naturally want a high Charisma and will put their lowest score into Constitution, there are other ability scores that can be focused on.

STRENGTH

Aquilonian knights and more martial noblemen will want a high Strength score to maximise their melee combat skills. Like the soldier, a noble's Parry Defence is naturally stronger than his Dodge Defence. He will have a poor Initiative however, and will want to boost that with feats lest he never gets to bring his Strength into play. This noble will likely be a lord knight, proud and strong. His Parry is not as powerful as a soldier's, so he should bring a shield into play or at least purchase some seriously strong armour. His allegiances will be important, for he will use his martial skills to earn alliances, land, influence and power. Kings need strong and staunch defenders, knights capable of leading enemy crushing charges and this is such a man.

DEXTERITY

A noble who takes pride in his Dexterity will often focus on his ability to Ride and his ability with archery and/or finesse weapons. The noble is not particularly strong with his Dodge Defence, so that will be a weakness for the character since the noble who emphasises his Dexterity will never really be able to defend himself all that well compared to a statistically similar barbarian or pirate. The high Dexterity will help his Initiative score out slightly but he will still want to take some Initiative boosting feats such as Improved Initiative and Lightning Reflexes to compensate for his poor Reflex saves. Unless he also takes feats to boost his Dodge Defence, he should consider specialising in archery instead of finesse weapons and stay out of melee combat if possible. However, the dextrous noble should still carry a finesse weapon for those instances when he is backed into a corner and forced into hand-to-hand combat. Other nobles will include the swashbuckler type.

CONSTITUTION

The noble who emphasises his endurance will have higher than average hit points and a better Fortitude save than most other nobles but he will still lag behind the barbarians and soldiers of the world. His weak Fortitude save will be a liability for this character. Most nobles will put their worst statistic into this ability. Those who put their highest or second highest into this ability probably intend on multiclassing into something else. This ability does not enhance any of the noble's class skills. It also does not aid any of the class' strengths.

INTELLIGENCE

The intelligent noble is one who is interested in skills. By putting his highest or second highest statistic in this ability, he shows that he intends to survive via what or who he knows. He can take advantage of how cross-class skills work in *Conan the Roleplaying Game* in regards to points gleaned from a high Intelligence score. Knowledge skills are important to nobles, especially Knowledge (local) and Knowledge (nobility) and they help to establish networks.

WISDOM

The noble who chooses Wisdom for his highest or second highest statistic is bolstering an already strong

Will save, which is likely to be a good move. He has good instincts and should take skills based on Wisdom, such as Listen, Sense Motive and Spot. He will be a good politician, able to tell what people *really* want and use that information for his benefit. This noble is also well set should he decide to dabble in sorcery or collect sorcerous items. He will be most likely to avoid Corruption.

CHARISMA

This is probably the most natural score to emphasise for the noble. Many of the noble's class skills and abilities hinge on his Charisma score. The key to a noble's power often lies more in networking, influence and wealth than in martial prowess. The noble who cannot win friends and favours is not likely to ever become powerful short of using sorcery. If your noble wants to establish a noble house, this is the ability that will help. Likewise, most nobles become leaders in time. Having Charisma as the character's primary ability maximises his Enhanced Leadership, allowing more powerful cohorts and bringing on more numerous followers. Retainers, courtiers and men-at-arms are all part of the strength of this character class. Charisma aids a noble's wealth as well, as it is used to determine how much wealth he receives, as per the Wealth rule in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*. Charismatic nobles also make excellent swashbuckler-type warriors, especially those with high Dexterity scores to boot. These characters make fine diplomats, courtiers, commanders and court bards. Weapon Panache from *Conan: Shadizar – City of Wickedness* might be a good feat to take since it allows the character's Charisma bonus to be used in melee combat in lieu of Strength.

SKILLS

Nobles are fairly versatile in their skills, especially in a social setting. Players of noble-blooded characters are advised to keep maximum ranks in Knowledge (nobility), Knowledge (local) and Ride. Games Masters should encourage games that allow use of who the nobles know to accomplish social story goals. Being skilled garners less respect than knowing skilled people. Skill ranks will largely be spent in Knowledge (nobility), Diplomacy and Gather Information skills. The ability to know and influence people is highly regarded among the aristocracy. Characters who intend to engage in debates should put skill points into Bluff, Intimidate, Diplomacy or Perform (oratory). The character can make a skill check in one of those four skills and any debating opponents pick a skill and make their opposed roll. The highest roll wins the debate. Some additional uses for old skills are suggested here.

APPRAISE

Appraise does not have to apply only to physical objects but can also apply to intangibles such as trade

offers, treaties and political deals. With an Appraise check (DC 20) any hidden clauses or other consequences your character may need to know about can be made apparent. If you fail, the Games Master can give you inaccurate information.

DIPLOMACY

A noble can curry favours by making a Diplomacy check with a result of helpful, if the favour helps to advance the plot of an adventure. Favours should never negate an adventure. Depending on the size of the favour, the character may have to add the person to his list of allegiances until he repays the favour. A noble cannot take 10 or 20 when requesting a favour.

Also, Diplomacy can be made more interesting by the addition of a few new rules. The DC for any Diplomacy checks is modified by the relationship between the characters. Anyone who is intimate with the character or shares an implicit trust modifies any Diplomacy check by -10 . Friends and siblings modify the check by -7 to -9 , depending on the strength of the friendship. Characters that share an allegiance or are otherwise allies modify Diplomacy checks by -5 to -6 . Acquaintances with no particular negative history modify the character's DCs by -2 to -4 . Characters who have just met have no special modifiers. Acquaintances with a negative



history add +2 to +4 to the DCs. Outright enemies, but who otherwise have no personal relationship to the character (such as a priest of Set trying to use Diplomacy against a priest of Ibis), add a +5 or +6 to the DCs. A personal foe can add +7 to +9 to the Diplomacy DCs. An enemy who has sworn to personally do the character harm, an outright nemesis, adds +10 to the skill check DC.

In addition to relationship modifiers, personal benefits must always be weighed against the potential risks offered by the character using Diplomacy. If the best case scenario is likely and the reward for listening to the noble is great, then the DC is modified by -10. Basically it will be a win-win situation for little cost. If the reward is decent and the risk is reasonable and if all goes well, the subject of the Diplomacy check will be better off, then the DC is modified by -5. If the reward and risk are about square, or if the deal has no reward and no risk, then there is a +0 modifier. If the reward is small compared to the risk or if things will generally be bad for the subject (such as bribing a guard to release a prisoner; even though the guard gets money, his superiors will likely pin the blame on him), then there is a +5 to +9 modifier to the DC. If the deal offered is utterly horrible, and there is no conceivable way the subject could get ahead by accepting the deal, the Diplomacy DC is modified by +10. An example is offering a soldier a new pair of boots in exchange for assassinating King Conan.

These modifiers stack. For example, a priest of Set is trying to use Diplomacy to get a priest of Ibis to tell him where a local inn can be found, and the priest of Set offers to donate 1,000 sp to Ibis' temple in return for this information, the DC to change the priest of Ibis from hostile to friendly is 30 (DC 35 +5 because they are inherent enemies -10 because there is little risk to the priest of Ibis because he is not giving away secret information and great gain). If the priest of Set is trying to use Diplomacy to get a priest of Ibis to not report his presence, and he offered to donate 10 sp to Ibis' temple in return, the DC to change the priest of Ibis from hostile to friendly is 46 (DC 35 +5 because they are inherent enemies +6 because there is little reward but a lot of risk that the priest of Ibis will be reprimanded for helping the enemy if the priest of Set is later discovered by someone else).

GATHER INFORMATION

Not all information has to come from other people gleaned by your character's winning personality. Your character can also do research into old documents and records. You may still make a Gather Information check to do this, but the skill is modified by Intelligence instead of Charisma. The time spent, cost and DC is the same as a Charisma-based check.

PERFORM (VIRGINITY)

In the case of noble women, honour often relates to sexuality. Maintenance of virginity and/or exclusive monogamy equates to honour for women. There is more to virginity than sexual

inexperience. Virginity and chastity also include married women who remain sexually loyal to their husbands. Indeed, in many Hyborian nations, virginity is a form of performed, gendered identity. Essentially, a modest demeanour is a sign and proof of virginity. Girls who dress in pretty clothes and are free with their wit are often thought unchaste. If a virgin has frank discussions with men, she disgraces herself in the eyes of others. Any Aquilonian woman with even a single Corruption point is considered unchaste and lacking virginity, regardless of her sexual experiences or lack of them, *if* that Corruption is detected. Most Hyborian scholars locate virginity in the will of the mind, not in the body. Female Aquilonian characters may well be advised to take Iron Will as a feat or to take feats that hide Corruption. Most Hyborians feel that a woman can retain her chastity if her body is violated against her will and lose her chastity if she dresses in a lascivious dress or acts in a sexual manner, even if she does not engage in sexual intercourse. Hyborian noble women are taught to avoid certain occasions, sweet talk and fondling in order to overcome sexual drive and to retain honour and chastity. Many women take ranks in Perform (virginity) to always appear proper and virginal. Ranks in Perform (virginity) give a female character a +1 synergy bonus to Diplomacy checks per 5 ranks.

NOBLE ROLES

Another choice impacting skill selection is that of the role of the scholar or even his normal vocation. A king's counsellor has different skill sets than a noble whose honour and glory is found on the battlefield. Listed below are some options for noble roles, but these are not exhaustive of the number of roles a noble can play.

ADVISOR

Advisors and counsellors tend to emphasise their Wisdom scores as well as their Charisma scores. Their intuition is as important as their knowledge. Patient and insightful, these scholars usually take ranks in Concentration, Gather Information, Listen, Knowledge (any), Sense Motive and Spot. Feats include Investigator and Persuasive. Magistrates and judges also fit into this category. Prospero is an example of this sort of noble from Robert E. Howard's *Phoenix on the Sword*. Advisors will want Ally and Smear Others as special abilities. A few of the new social abilities later in this section are also appropriate.

DIPLOMAT

Diplomats are negotiators and persuaders, the masters of compromise, arbitration and secrets. Often they work in foreign lands, empowered by their leaders to negotiate treaties, keep the peace, start wars and otherwise exercise the authority of their liege in other lands. Common skills include Bluff, Diplomacy,



Gather Information, Intimidate, Knowledge (all types) and Sense Motive. Good feats for this sort of noble include Persuasive and Negotiator. Kerim Shah from Iranistan, mentioned in Howard's *The People of the Black Circle* is an example of this type of noble. Refuge (in case something goes wrong in the foreign land) and Savoir-Faire will help this character out. Be careful with Ally; if the ally falls from grace, the diplomat could quickly find himself in someone else's hot water. A few of the new social abilities later in this section are also appropriate.

ENTERTAINER

Many nobles are accomplished troubadours, harem girls and poets. These nobles usually take ranks in Perform (any) and take the Entertainer ability. The Performer feat is appropriate for these nobles and Charisma is usually the most emphasised ability score. Rinaldo is an example of this type of character who appears in Robert E. Howard's *Phoenix on the Sword*. In addition to the Entertainer social ability, many of these nobles like to have Refuge (especially if they like to make political points with their performances), Reputation and Savoir-Faire. A few of the new social abilities later in this section are also appropriate.

KNIGHT

Knights are militant nobles, known for their bravery and honour. Strength and Charisma are emphasised for this role. Common skills include Handle Animal, Knowledge (nobility) and Ride. Feats include mounted combat feats, although Mounted Archery is most appropriate for Hyrkanians, Turanians and the like. Hyborian knights rarely learn to shoot the bow from horseback. Count Trocero from Robert E. Howard's *The Hour of the Dragon* is an example of this kind of nobleman. The knight will almost always have a code of honour and/or several allegiances. His Reputation is always at stake and of the utmost importance. Ally and Reputation are important social abilities to gain. A few of the new social abilities later in this section are also appropriate.

RULER

Some nobles rule the kingdoms or provinces they are in. Rulers must have a high Charisma and must do what they can to boost their Reputation and Leadership scores. Skills need to include Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information and Sense Motive. Devi Yasmina from Howard's *The People of the Black Circle* is an example of this type of noble (her statistics are available in *Conan: The Road of Kings*). Having the *Ally* and *Family Ties* social abilities will be extremely advantageous. A few of the new social abilities later in this section are also appropriate.

FEATS

Players of noble blooded characters would do well to mix skill-boosting feats with combat enhancing feats. A well-rounded character should take feats such as Negotiator, Persuasive and Investigator, as well as Skill Focus feats. Also, look to the character's culture for guidance on what a noble is expected to be able to know and do. The noble has horrible Reflex saves, so feats boosting his Initiative may save his life from assassins.

LEADERSHIP

The value of the Leadership feat to nobles cannot be overstated. The ability to gather absolutely loyal followers and cohorts is immensely valuable. When a noble manoeuvres through seemingly endless mires of political intrigues, he often does not know who he can trust. Is that girl batting her eyelashes at him interested in his money, his politics or his life? Followers and cohorts provide a haven, a measure of safety. Followers can quickly become an army of defenders, the unshakable core of an army ready to go to war for him. Nobles can create armies of courtiers, spies, manuscript keepers, accountants, astrologers and the like, to boost his own influence in palaces and cities, giving him influence and power like no other character class. The noble is not the strongest combatant. The noble is not the most skilled character class. What the noble excels at however, is his ability to motivate others to perform tasks on his behalf.

REPUTATION

A noble's reputation is a concrete possession. It is all that he is as a noble, embodying his character and his career. Protecting his reputation is all important, a personal matter and a professional matter. As a noble, the character must always be aware of the impact of his actions and his words on everyone else. If someone attacks a noble's reputation and he does not defend himself, the slighted noble will have social problems. A loss of reputation could cast a noble out of the circle of the elite he moves amongst, thus casting him out of positions of power. A nobleman who is losing Reputation is a lesser man and everyone around him knows it. Winning a debate can give the character a bonus to Reputation. Losing a debate graciously does not result in a loss of Reputation (sometimes that can even increase it) but losing badly often make one's Reputation slide downward.

WEALTH

A noble's wealth is not something to just forget about. This is a key ability for the noble class, setting him apart from the other classes. With this, he can buy retainers, mercenary forces, armour, weapons, slaves, workers, horses and just about anything else, especially if he has a high Charisma score. Used wisely in conjunction with some of the social abilities, the Wealth ability can be a powerful force. Using wealth in conjunction with Ally or Family Ties can earn the character a circumstance bonus when making use of the ability.

SOCIAL ABILITIES

The noble receives a social ability from the list in *Conan the Roleplaying Game* or from the list below at 4th, 9th, 14th and 19th levels. All gained abilities must be supported by roleplay and cannot be chosen without the approval of the Games Master. At the Games Master's discretion, a noble may declare that he is spending his time off hunting instead of socialising, in which case he may choose a bonus feat from the following list instead of a social ability: Alertness or Skill Focus (Handle Animal, Ride or Survival).

FACE DOWN

Nobles can avoid a fight through sheer presence alone. Without saying so much as a word or lifting finger, nobles give off a strong message that they are not to be messed with. Even burly barbarians, who by rights should be the more intimidating of the two, often find themselves compelled to back down just by the hard look in the noble's eye. The force of the noble's personality drives home the belief that if he is harmed, far worse things will happen to the culprit than physical punishment alone. If combat has not already begun (which means no attack rolls have been made) a noble with this ability may attempt to face down a potential opponent. To do this, he makes an opposed Charisma ability score check with the adversary. He does not have to speak, though

at the Games Master's discretion, a suitable line or two could add a circumstance bonus to his check. The noble may add a cumulative +2 synergy bonus to the Charisma check for every five ranks of Intimidate he has. If the noble is successful, the potential enemy is disinclined to attack and will back off unless he has a pressing reason to attack the noble anyway. If the noble is attacked, the faced-down opponent suffers a -2 penalty to attack and damage rolls when attacking him. This ability only works on humanoid creatures with an Intelligence ability score higher than 6. It may not be used on more than one person at a time.

GIFT GIVING

The noble is an expert in the art of using gifts to achieve his ends. He is able to make the presentation of gifts seem natural and sincere, whereas in the hands of others the gift would seem an obvious bribe. He makes the gift seem not so much a bribe as just a bit of help from a generous person whom it would be helpful to get to know better. When the character incorporates the giving of a gift into a Charisma-based skill check, he may add a +2 circumstance bonus if the gift is appropriate (and an additional +2 if the gift is valuable). Appropriateness is determined by the Games Master. However, if the check fails despite the gift, the noble's attempt to curry favour goes very badly wrong and the recipient sees right through the manoeuvre. The recipient immediately becomes hostile and any future Charisma-based skill checks from the noble against that person are made at a -4 circumstance penalty.

INFORMATION NETWORK

The noble has a network of contacts and informants keeping him informed. When he needs information, this network provides it. The noble chooses a particular city to be the centre of his network, earning a +2 competence bonus to Gather Information checks within his network's reach. The noble uses his Gather Information skill without spending his own time and effort because lackeys do the legwork for him. This can take time, depending on how expansive the network becomes. It normally takes 1d12 hours. If the noble has 13 ranks in Knowledge (local), the range of the network expands from city-sized to encompass an entire province. Information about the city now takes 1d6 hours and provincial knowledge takes up to a week. If the noble has 17 ranks in Knowledge (local), the range of the network expands from the province to an entire nation. At this point, city-wide information takes 1d3 hours to gather, provincial information takes 1d3 days and national information takes one week to reach the noble's ear. If the noble has 22 ranks in Knowledge (local), the range of the network covers the whole of Hyboria. At this point, it takes but an hour to gather city information, a day to gather provincial information, 1d3 days to gather national information and

two weeks to gather continental information. Any loss of Reputation within the last month that has not been regained adds an additional hour/day/week to the time, as appropriate. This is an expensive ability, easily giving the Games Master an excuse to enforce the High Living rules against the noble (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*).

READ PEOPLE

The noble's ability to quickly read other people's mannerisms is almost perfect. Nuances of gesture and expression, even those invisible to most, catch his attention. He can take 20 on any Sense Motive check as a full round action or gain +4 on any Sense Motive check as a free action.

SECRET

The noble has information that would embarrass or endanger someone he wishes to influence. This gives him leverage over that person as long as it is not overused and nobody else finds out. The noble may choose a Non-Player Character he wishes to influence. He has learned a secret about that character (the Games Master will work out exactly what that secret is if necessary). Once per game session, the noble may invoke that secret to gain a +4 circumstance bonus on one Diplomacy or Intimidate check opposed by the target character. The noble may also choose to 'burn the evidence' in order to automatically succeed at a single Diplomacy or Intimidate check opposed by the target character. If this is done, the noble loses the benefit of this ability. The benefit is also lost if the secret controlled becomes public, worthless or irrelevant. This ability may be chosen multiple times to gain multiple secrets over the target character or over several different target Non-Player Characters. Having multiple secrets about a single target does not allow the noble to stack the bonus for a single roll, but allows the noble to use the benefit more than one time per session.

TRUSTED COUNSELLOR

The noble chooses an organisation, religion or government. The noble has routine access to sensitive information. Exactly what that information is depends on the organisation supplying it including, but not limited to, military secrets, trade secrets, personal secrets or political secrets. The noble must have some sort of relationship with the organisation or government chosen. Once per session, the noble automatically succeeds at a Gather Information check involving information available to the organisation chosen. The information arrives in half the usual time required for the check. The Games Master decides if the information is available.

USE WEAKNESS AS STRENGTH

The noble is accomplished at using the weaknesses of his opponents

to get the better of them. When making an opposed Charisma-Intelligence- or Wisdom-based check, the opponent must use the lowest of these three abilities as his modifier. For example, if a noble is attempting to bluff another character, and that character has 5 ranks in Sense Motive, 16 Wisdom (+3), 10 Intelligence (+0) and 8 Charisma (-1), the opponent character must add his -1 Charisma modifier instead of his Wisdom modifier when attempting to oppose the noble with this special ability.

ADDITIONAL REGIONAL FEATURES

Some races are not permitted to take noble as a 1st level class. They may, however, multiclass into it. The chart presented in *Conan the Roleplaying Game* includes regional features for those races allowed to take the class at 1st level. This chart presents Regional Features for those races that might multiclass into noble later.

Noble Regional Features

Region	Special Regional Feature
Aphaki	+1 bonus to attack rolls with scimitar +1 bonus to all Bluff and Sense Motive checks +1 bonus to all Fortitude saving throws
Cimmeria	+1 bonus to all Climb, Listen and Spot checks +1 bonus to all Will saving throws
Darfar	+1 bonus to attack rolls with bludgeoning weapons +1 bonus to all Perform (drums) checks
Himelian Mountains	+1 bonus to all Hide and Move Silently checks +1 bonus to hit points
Iranistan	+1 bonus to all Handle Animal, Intimidate, Ride and Sense Motive checks +1 bonus to attack rolls with sabres and tulwars
Nordheim	+1 bonus to damage rolls with any sword
Pictish Wilderness	+1 bonus to Tumble and Jump +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made against those of the Animal type
Southern Islander or Southern Black Kingdoms	+1 bonus to attack rolls with spears or javelins +1 bonus to all Perform (dance) checks +1 bonus to Dodge Defence when unarmoured

Secrets of the Scholars

Skills & Feats of the Learned

SCHOLARS ARE COMPLEX. They are priests, they are sorcerers, they are scribes, they are experts... they are just about anything they need to be. Many newcomers to *Conan the Roleplaying Game* are a bit stymied by the scholar class. Many players seem to want the character to be able to blast opponents left and right like a wizard in a standard roleplaying game. This is not the role of the scholar in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*. Magic in the Hyborian Age is far different than magic in the stereotypical fantasy game. Players who want to emulate standard spellcasters in *Conan the Roleplaying Game* need to make use of skills and alchemy to achieve their ends instead of sorcery.

GENERAL OPTIONS

Scholars use more than just a list of spells. They are defined by their choices, just as the soldier and noble are. Their ability score, background, skill and feat selections tend to be used in a game more often than their spells.

ABILITIES

Just where is your scholar going to put his highest ability statistics? When the character levels up and gains an ability score increase, which score is he going to increase? In most fantasy games, the choice is fairly simple but in *Conan the Roleplaying Game* the choice is more complex. Intelligence determines the character's skills, which often determine how useful the character is outside of spellcasting. A character's Wisdom score determines his base power point total, which limits the number and type of spells a character can ultimately cast. The scholar becomes a more reliable spellcaster with a higher Wisdom. A character's Charisma score impacts his Magic Attack Bonus, which is how saving throw DCs are determined. The scholar becomes a more effective spellcaster with a higher Charisma because fewer foes will be able to save successfully against his spells.

Keep in mind the nationality of a character in making these choices. A scholar from a barbaric culture will likely put his highest score into Charisma. Savages will not tolerate ineffective shamans and witchdoctors whose spells are deemed ineffective. A scholar from Nemedra will likely put his highest score into Intelligence because of the emphasis on education and knowledge there.

BACKGROUNDS

Sorcerers are not all cut from the same piece of cloth, nor are they even of the same quality. Sorcerers are rooted in their own histories and their own backgrounds. Choose the character's background carefully, as they offer potential story hooks from the start, providing instant motivations in some cases. Acolytes are nice because they offer almost automatic spells as well as ready-made allegiances. This background offers a quick motivating factor for the scholar – is he adventuring because his master demands it or he is running from his master? Independent scholars are nice because they have a lot of variety but finding new spells to learn can be problematic – although this can provide adventuring motivation. Pacts make for frightening backgrounds and usually make for frightful scholars, the type of men willing to sell their souls for power. Demon lords can demand an adventure or the scholar may adventure to hide from or dismiss his demonic patron. Lay priests offer similar benefits as the acolyte background, although they have the added benefit of social acceptability in many cases.

SKILLS AND FEATS

Skills are extremely important for a scholar in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*. Magic will not solve everything in this game like it will in many games. Some guidelines to keep in mind for magical atmosphere are tricks of description. Magic should have a surreal atmosphere; Conan tended to doubt magic when initially confronted with it. A *Conan the Roleplaying Game* scholar will use Spot and Sense Motive instead of an actual spell whenever possible; moreover, he will attribute what he learns to magic and who can gainsay him? A bit of subterfuge and a minor spell is essentially accomplished. A good Bluff check, and the opponent is distracted and believes he is witnessing magic when it is simply a skill in action. If alchemy can accomplish an effect, then there is no need to bother black demons and foul spirits. Use skills to take up the slack where the spells leave off.

A scholar's skill choices often depend on his sorcery styles. Some styles require certain skills to perform, others simply suggest skills to complement the style. Craft (alchemy) is recommended no matter what the character's style for the creation of alchemical items, which can save on precious spell points.

DIPLOMACY

A successful Diplomacy check changes Non-Player Character attitudes in respect to yourself and occasionally others. Detailed here is a new application of the Diplomacy skill.

Conversion: One of the most important duties of the priest is to induct new members into their cult. One way many cults establish their hierarchy is by promoting those who bring in the most new blood. With numbers come power and the priest who brings a cult power is handsomely rewarded. Thus, it is in the best interests of a priest to convert as many non-believers as he can. There are many ways to do this. Two popular methods are by using coercion (promising death/pain either in this life, the afterlife or both) or using bribery (promising a heavenly reward). In order to attempt a conversion, the priest needs an audience, a relatively quiet place to speak and about an hour's time.

If the priest meets the prerequisites for the conversion, he preaches the doctrine of his cult for an hour. He can also dedicate more time to the conversion, with each additional hour adding a cumulative +1 bonus to the eventual Diplomacy check (to a maximum bonus equal to his scholar level). Additional hours of dedicated preaching need not be performed concurrently, meaning the priest can spend days or even weeks paving the way for the final conversion check. Once the priest feels the time is right, he then attempts a Diplomacy check. In order for the check to succeed, the priest must change the target's attitude to Helpful, meaning the base DC of the check varies by the target's initial attitude, as well as other modifiers (see *Secrets of the Nobles*, page 50). If the target, or anyone within the group of targets, has 5 or more ranks in Sense Motive then the DC is increased by another 5. If the priest has tried and failed to convert the target (or anyone in the group) in the past, the DC is increased by a further 2. If the priest's Diplomacy check succeeds then he has converted his audience to his faith.

- ☒ **Multiple Converts:** It is possible for a priest to convert more than one person at a time. Extremely charismatic priests can sway throngs of people to their beliefs with impassioned sermons. It is, however, more difficult to convert a mass audience since the priest does not have the time to really bond with any one member of the audience. For every 10 people or portion thereof in the audience the DC of the check is increased by 2. Hitting the target DC when converting more than one person means 25% of the crowd (rounding down) is converted. For every 5 points by which the check succeeds, another 25% of the crowd is converted.

- ☒ **Results of Conversion:** New converts now claim the priest's god as their primary faith but this does not mean they worship the priest's god exclusively. In the Hyborian Age, most worshipers pay at least lip service to all gods. It does mean that the new convert will by default be Helpful to the priest who converted him, Friendly to any other priest of his new faith and Indifferent to all others who openly practise the faith. Of course, extenuating circumstances and the behaviour of the priest can cause the convert's attitude to change for the worse, as normal.
- ☒ **When to Ignore the Dice:** Under no circumstance can a conversion be forced upon a Player's character by means of a Diplomacy check, no matter how high the result. As always, only the Player has the right to decide what his character will or will not choose to believe in.
- ☒ **Building Up to Conversion:** Normally it is a good idea for a scholar to build up towards a conversion by first priming his audience. The best way to do this is with public preaching, as is popular in Zamora. In doing so, and with a successful Diplomacy check, he can slowly sway the crowd's attitude so it is more friendly to him and thus more receptive to the ideas of his cult. A priest cannot attempt to convert a crowd on the same day in which he has swayed their attitude through Diplomacy.
- ☒ **Perform (oratory):** A priest with 5 or more ranks in Perform (oratory) gains a +2 circumstance bonus to all attempts to use Diplomacy to sway a crowd towards conversion.

LEADERSHIP

The value of the Leadership feat to priests and scholars cannot be overstated. The ability to gather loyal followers and cohorts is immensely valuable. If the followers have at least one rank in Perform (ritual), the scholar can perform a Power Ritual (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*). They can quickly become an army of defenders, the unshakable core of a crusade. Priests can create armies of sages, lay priests, manuscript keepers, accountants, astrologers and the like to boost their influence in temples and cities, giving them influence and power no spell could easily replicate. Unlike standard fantasy roleplaying game wizards, scholars in *Conan the Roleplaying Game* must make more use of mundane resources such as followers and skills.

SORCERY STYLES COUNTERSPELLS

The counterspeller will want a powerful Charisma to make sure his wards can beat the opposed roll against enemy spellcasters. Along with high Charisma, the counterspeller will probably want peaceful means of resolving issues, so ranks in Diplomacy are likely. The character will also want to be alert for enemy spells, so ranks in Spot and Listen

are called for. Heal is another likely skill for this character. Alertness should definitely be among his feats to bolster his Spot and Listen.

CURSES

The hexer will want a powerful Charisma to boost his magic attack bonus. His skills should include a healthy dose of Bluff and Intimidate. Persuasive, Steely Gaze and Menacing Aura will also help the hexer, in addition to such feats as Hexer, Focused Magical Link and other sorcery feats. Craft skills can help in the construction of voodoo-like dolls. Of course, Craft (alchemy) is recommended for the construction of alchemical items.

DIVINATION

A high Wisdom will prove to be beneficial for the diviner character. Knowledge (arcana) is a must for the diviner of *Conan the Roleplaying Game*. In addition, the character will want recourse to Bluff, Gather Information, Listen, Spot and Sense Motive. By judicial application of these skills and a few skill enhancing feats, the character may make relevant 'prophecies' that seem magical in nature. This allows the character's reputation as an oracle to grow without having to waste precious spell points unnecessarily. The character can predict why people have come to him with Sense Motive (or overhear the reason for the visit with Listen) and deduce facts about a person with Spot. Any feat boosting those abilities is favoured by these spellcasters, such as Awareness, Negotiator, Persuasive and Skill Focus. Any failure in the use of these skills can be blamed on the alignment of the planets and stars.

HYPNOTISM

This character is a charmer by nature, magnetic and alluring. A high Charisma will help him complement his magic by allowing him to influence others without recourse to sorcery. Ranks in Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, Knowledge (local), Knowledge (nobility), Listen, Perform (ritual), Perform (any musical instrument), Spot and Sense Motive are all prime skills for a hypnotic sorcerer to have. Feats such as Leadership, Negotiator, Persuasive and Skill Focus are appropriate for this sorcerer. If he can get someone to do his bidding without having to resort to magic, he is ahead of his game.

NATURE MAGIC

Of course, Knowledge (nature) is going to be a natural choice for the character taking this style of sorcery. Craft (herbalism) is another natural selection. Many of these sorcerers are in tune with nature to a large degree and often take ranks in Climb, Handle Animal, Heal, Hide, Knowledge (geography), Listen, Move Silently, Spot, Survival and Swim. Some become hermits in the wild, taking on feral aspects,



losing the fine veneer of civilisation. Feats such as Animal Affinity, Leadership, Self-Sufficient, Stealthy and Track are common for these specialists.

NECROMANCY

Necromancers may want to take Hide and Move Silently if they plan to creep around in cemeteries. Ranks in Heal would be appropriate for those necromancers with a knowledge of the human body; the very practice of necromancy tends to make its practitioners knowledgeable about life and death, health and sickness. Intimidate would also be appropriate. Steely Gaze and Menacing Aura are very appropriate for this character type. Decipher Script is another useful skill; those who would defile tombs had better understand their secrets and Decipher Script is a means toward that end. Craft (alchemy) is also handy for a multitude of reasons, such as light and defence.

ORIENTAL MAGIC

A high Wisdom is called for here. These characters are intuitive as well as intelligent. Patient and insightful, these scholars usually take ranks in Concentration, Listen, Sense Motive and Spot.

PRESTIDIGITATION

These are the masters of Sleight of Hand. While this is not a class skill for scholars, it can be purchased as though it were via Intelligence bonus points. This is a good style for scholar/thieves.

SUMMONINGS

The summoner rarely sees the world as others do. He can summon a demon more powerful than all in Hell and can bargain with any being in Hyboria and beyond. He will almost always have high Diplomacy and Intimidate scores. Concentration may become important too, as demons are patient and know they can outlast most mortals; a summoner who cannot maintain his focus may get tricked. Speaking of

tricks, a competent summoner had better be able to Sense Motive extremely well. Knowledge (arcana), Perform (ritual) and Perform (song or musical instrument) are important here. The character will have to negotiate with demons and other corrupt souls, so a high Charisma will be beneficial to the summoner. The Negotiator, Persuasive and Summoner feats are helpful to the character with this sorcery style.

SCHOLARLY ROLES

Another choice impacting skill selection is that of the role of the scholar or his normal vocation. A king's counsellor has a different skill set from a scholar whose nose is buried in a Nemedian library. Here are some sample roles a scholar can play.

ADVISORS □ TUTORS

Advisors and counsellors tend to emphasise their Wisdom scores. Their intuition is as important to them as their knowledge. Patient and insightful, these scholars usually take ranks in Concentration, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Listen, Knowledge (any), Sense Motive and Spot. Feats include Investigator.

BARDS

Most of the Hyborian Age kingdoms have a written language, including savage Hyperborea, as evidenced by the runes written on the mammoth skulls guarding the passages into forbidden kingdoms. Only the most savage cultures, such as the Nordheimir, the Picts, the Cimmerians and the Black Kingdom tribesmen maintain an oral tradition. Cimmeria, for example, has a tradition of blind bards. Despite bordering advanced Aquilonia, Cimmeria is particularly obstinate in refusing to become a literate nation, fearing the written word as magic. This fear of literacy makes some Nemedian scholars wonder if Cimmerians intentionally blind their bards to prevent them from becoming literate or if the bardic occupation is some form of social welfare for those blinded by accident. Regardless, bards, skalds and other oral repositories of tradition and lore are the means these illiterate nations maintain their culture. These scholars will focus on Knowledge skills (as many as possible) and Perform skills (to convey their knowledge).

SCHOLARS

Buried in libraries, scholars are constantly embroiled in research. They are always looking for that which lies just beyond the known horizon. Inquisitive and often snobbish, they are analytical and knowledgeable, emphasising their Intelligence and those skills relying on Intelligence. They take ranks in Decipher Script, Gather Information, Knowledge (any) and Search.



Usually these scholars take more than just the three knowledge skills required by the class. Feats such as Knowledgeable and Investigator are appropriate for this type of role.

PRIESTS

Priests usually have ranks in Knowledge (local), Diplomacy, Gather Information, Bluff, Intimidate and Sense Motive. They need to have the power to move the masses. Perform skills and Sleight of Hand are also necessary to awe the masses.

REPUTATION

A scholar's Reputation is important. While not as crucial as it is to the noble, it is still vital for the character. If the scholar is known and recognised, he may be able to avoid casting a spell to attain his purpose. The Hyborian Age is not the standard fantasy milieu where wizards are dime a dozen and are treated without prejudice or fear. Sorcerers are fearsome people in the Hyborian Age, the ogres around which dozens of tales are spun. Without a high Reputation a scholar will not be sought out by the Black Ring for inclusion in their order.

SCHOLARLY COMBAT TACTICS

Scholars have weak hit points and weak Parry and Dodge Defences. How can they increase the odds of surviving the rigours of an adventure in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*? While many of the spells can be used offensively, several take full rounds to cast and many more are beyond the capabilities of low-level scholars. Here are some non-spell alternatives for scholarly combat.

WEAPONS

Scholars are proficient with all simple weapons. Look at the table of simple weapons in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*. That is a considerable collection of weapons, ranging from unarmed strikes to the stereotypical dagger, to the heavy mace, war spear (1d10 damage!) and staff, all the way to the hunting bow and sling. The hunting bow and the sling are possibly the best choices as they allow the character to attack at range. Both the bow and the sling do 1d8 damage, the hunting bow has greater range but a sling has a better critical damage multiplier. A few feats like Point Blank Shot and the character is ready to take on almost anyone. The character may want a heavy mace at his side for those rascals who get in close. Quick Draw may be a good choice of feat as well, in case the character needs to get his weapon out in a hurry. Without a shield, two-handed weapons are also valuable choices, such as the war spear and the staff. Of course, with multiclassing a scholar's choices concerning weapons increase.

ALCHEMICAL ITEMS

In *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, alchemical items replace standard fantasy combat spells. Acheronian demon-fire, flame-powder, Kothic demon-fire and lotus smoke are fairly standard fare. For low-level scholars, flame-powder is not that difficult to create, requiring 50 sp, 4 ranks in Craft (alchemy) and a Craft check (DC 15). *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos* presents additional alchemical items to help a scholar defend himself or his home, including the *hellfire puffball* used by the People of the Black Circle in Robert E. Howard's story of the same name.



DEFENSIVE BLAST

As a last ditch measure, the scholar can unleash all of his power points in an awesome blast that should take care of most of his enemies. If the scholar has at least 6 Power Points, he is likely to force a massive damage save from his foes in addition to potentially killing them from the raw damage.

FEATS

Strange as it may seem to include them here, feats such as Steely Gaze and Menacing Aura may stop attackers cold, allowing companions, cohorts or summoned monsters to dispatch a foe.

POWER IN THE STARS

The heavens play an important role in Hyborian age sorcery. A working knowledge of astrology is important to scholars. A scholar armed with astrology can attune his magic to the dynamics of heaven, looking for the best dates to cast certain spells and avoiding the inauspicious ones. While not as powerful as using the Cosmic Sorcery style from *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos*, knowing astrology can still benefit a scholar.

Power of Astrology Check: The power of astrology can be utilised by making a Knowledge (astrology) check (DC 15) or a Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 20), with success indicating the scholar enjoys the benefits and drawbacks on the stars for his sorcery for the rest of the day.

Solar Influences: The passage of the world around the sun can have an effect on certain spells and rituals. On equinoxes and solstices, a successful power of astrology check gives the character a +1 astrological bonus to Perform (ritual) per five points over the DC if the rituals are performed around noon. The month of the Vernal Equinox is ruled by the red planet and influences violent spells, raising their save DCs by +1 if cast on this date with a successful Power of Astrology check. The Summer Solstice is auspicious for hypnotisms and summonings, raising any save DCs for these spells by +1 if cast on this date with a successful Power of Astrology check.

Lunar Influences: The moon takes slightly over 29.53 days to orbit around the planet and return to the same phase, a period known to the scholars of the Hyborian age. The scholars are aware that the solar year is eleven days longer than twelve lunar cycles. The moon passes through new, crescent, half, gibbous and full phases. Rituals performed during various phases of the moons can create an astrological bonus if the Power of Astrology check is made. During the New Moon, Necromancy, Immortality and Summonings spells gain a +1 astrological bonus to Magic Attack

'Even the arts you call sorcery are governed by cosmic laws,' answered the man in the green turban. 'The stars direct these actions, as in other affairs. Not even my masters can alter the stars. Not until the heavens were in the proper order could they perform this necromancy.' With a long, stained fingernail he mapped the constellations on the marble-tiled floor. 'The slant of the moon presaged evil for the king of Vendhya: the stars are in turmoil, the Serpent in the House of the Elephant. During such juxtaposition, the invisible guardians are removed from the spirit of Bhunda Chand. A path is opened in the unseen realms and once a point of contact was established, mighty powers were put in play along that path.'

Robert E. Howard, *The People of the Black Circle*

rolls. During the Crescent Moon, Divination spells gain a +1 astrological bonus to Magic Attack rolls. During the Half Moon, Hypnotism and Nature Magic spells earn the +1 astrological bonus to Magic Attack rolls. During the Gibbous Moon, Counterspells and Oriental Magic gain the +1 astrological bonus to Magic Attack rolls. During the Full Moon, Curses and Prestidigitation spells earn the +1 astrological bonus to Magic Attack rolls.

ANCIENT TOMES

Most Hyborian texts are written on scrolls or stone/clay tablets. However, the sorcerous works of the era are usually described as 'iron-bound,' indicating they are actually books in the modern, bound sense. Of course, even this is disputed by scholars, some of whom believe these iron-bound 'books' are merely collections of scrolls kept within iron chests for protection. The Games Master is free to choose whichever interpretation pleases him – it is actually unimportant. That there exist collections of sorcerous knowledge is the most important piece of information. Most readers of the Conan sagas are familiar with the Books or Scrolls of Skelos, for example. Herein are listed some of the other known spellbooks of the Conan saga. Do not be afraid to tie these ancient tomes (or the other magic items listed in this volume and the other sourcebooks for the *Conan the Roleplaying Game* line) into an adventure or campaign. However, do not make these random treasures. If these items have no story-specific purpose, then they are wasted items. Once they have served their purpose, destroy or remove them. Also remember that there are false tomes floating around the Hyborian Age – a search for one of these tomes may involve finding several leads and testing them for authenticity.

BOOK OF THE DEATH GOD

The *Book of the Death God* is the holy book of the Azweri. In it are the religious rites of Yama the Demon King, the many-armed Great God of Death and Terror. Scarlet-clad shamans recite these ancient prayers and spells as they have for millennia. It includes a ceremony for marrying their horrible god to mortal women, a ceremony which allows the god-king of the Azweri to publicly consummate the wedding as a stand-in for the demon. The book discusses reincarnation and issues of karma, allowing the god-kings to enforce their will by claiming others deserve their fates because of unresolved issues from former lives. Any sort of divination is also considered to be predestined and unavoidable because of the text of this book.

A character who studies the *Book of the Death God*, which will take a week and require a Decipher Script check (as well as a Corruption save that will have the same DC as the character's Decipher Script check result), has a chance to discover new knowledge.



**Decipher Script
Check Result****Benefit**

12 or less	No benefit.
13-17	+2 Competence Bonus to all Knowledge (religion) checks for the next month.
18-22	+2 Competence Bonus to all Perform (ritual) checks for the next month.
23+	+2 Magical Attack Bonus to all Necromancy and Curse spells for the next month.

Manufacturing Costs: 48,000 sp; 4,800 xp; must own another *Book of the Death God* to copy from.

BOOKS OF SHUMA-GORATH

There are three iron-bound books of Shuma-Gorath, each secured with an insidious lock. A magical key is required to unlock the books, which is kept in Kheshatta in Stygia. More than a millennia before the sinking of Atlantis, the demon Shuma-Gorath settled on the mountain that would later be known as Mount Crom in Cimmeria. Shuma-Gorath is from the Outer Dark and appears as a giant eye surrounded by a multitude of tentacles. Sometimes the tentacles are portrayed as legs, other times they are portrayed as having lobster-like claws on the ends. He was kept sated by blood sacrifice, although he would destroy any shaman who sought to commune with him or dared to enter into a pact with him. He ruled over the humans of the area until a shaman from the north arrived, bringing with him the religion of Crom and three iron-bound books. The shaman confronted Shuma-Gorath and read from the books. When he finished the third book, Shuma-Gorath was imprisoned in the mountain and the shaman proclaimed the victory of Crom over the demon. The mountain was named Mount Crom.



By reading the books in order, the character can bind Shuma-Gorath or any other Demon Lord into a geographic feature. Also, by reading from all three books the character can summon Shuma-Gorath or other demon lords previously trapped by the books into a geographic feature (depending on where the ceremony is read). The character enters into a *greater demonic pact* (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*), whether he has the spell or not.

Manufacturing Costs: 48,000 sp; 4,800 xp; must own another *Book of Shuma-Gorath* to copy from.

**THE SECRETS OF
IMMORTALITY, ACCORDING
TO GUCHUPTA OF
SHAMBALLAH**

This arcane book discusses rituals and tortures designed to bring about immortality and the transference of *signum vitalis* from one body to another. Guchupta of Shamballah wrote down the secrets of immortality in this tome. The book has pages of parchment and is inscribed in a spidery hand in a language known only to scholars of the East. A character who studies the secrets, which will take a week and require a Decipher Script check as well as a Corruption save (DC equal to the Decipher Script check result), has a chance to discover new knowledge. Eastern scholars have a +2 competence bonus to the Decipher Script check.

Decipher Script**Check Result****Benefit**

18 or less	No benefit
19-23	+2 Competence Bonus to all Knowledge (arcana) checks for the next month.
24-28	The character gains the benefits of the Tormented Sacrifice feat for the next ritual he completes, even if he does not meet the prerequisites. If the character already has the feat, he gains 2 PP per hit point drained from the victim up to the character's maximum.
29-33	The character may cast <i>witch's vigour</i> within the next two hours even if he does not know the spell. There is a 30% chance of spell failure.
34+	The character may cast <i>eternal youth</i> on himself or another if cast within the next two hours, but the material component is a virgin of less than 13 years. There is a 50% chance of spell failure.

Manufacturing Costs: 47,000 sp; 4,700 xp; must own another copy of *The Secrets of Immortality, According to Guchupta of Shamballah* to transcribe from.

THE TOMES OF SABATEA OF THE GOLDEN PEACOCK

These 'evil-reeking' books of black magic, written in envenomed ink, discuss the uses of torture in magic and spellcasting. There are three volumes. A character who studies *The Tomes of Sabatea of the Golden Peacock*, which will take four weeks per volume and require a Decipher Script check as well as a Corruption save (DC equal to the Decipher Script check result), has a chance to discover new knowledge.

Volume I: The Tortures of the Golden Peacock

Decipher Script Check Result	Benefit
18 or less	No benefit, but the character becomes subject to the Rule of Obsession, in that he must take the Tormented Sacrifice feat at the next available opportunity unless he already has it.
19-23	+2 Competence Bonus to all Perform (ritual) checks for the next month.
24-28	The character gains the benefits of the Tormented Sacrifice feat for the next ritual he completes, even if he does not meet the prerequisites. If the character does not have the feat but is subject to the Rule of Obsession to obtain it, then he is temporarily relieved of the penalty. If the character already has the feat, he gains 2 PP per hit point drained from the victim up to the character's maximum.
29-33	All curses cast by the character for the next month have a +1 bonus to the Magic Attack roll and the victims suffer great pain whenever the curse afflicts them (for example, the victim of Lesser Ill-Fortune suffers pain whenever he has to make an attack roll, a saving throw, an ability check or a skill check).
34+	A character can use the book to cast <i>torment</i> (from <i>Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos</i>) even if he does not meet the prerequisites (casting time increases to 1 full round) or can learn it if he has an available slot and meets the prerequisites.

Manufacturing Costs: 56,000 sp; 5,600 xp each volume; must own a copy of *The Tortures of the Golden Peacock* to transcribe from.

Volume II: The Blood of the Golden Peacock

Decipher Script Check Result	Benefit
19 or less	No benefit, but the character becomes subject to the Rule of Obsession, in that he must take the Bleed Dry* feat at the next available opportunity unless he already has it.
20-23	Character gains a +2 competence bonus to Intimidate checks for the next month.
24-27	The character gains a +2 competence bonus to all Magic Attack Rolls for the next month for all spell cast involving human sacrifice.
28-31	The character gains the benefits of the Bleed Dry feat for the next ritual he completes, even if he does not meet the prerequisites. If the character does not have the feat but is subject to the Rule of Obsession to obtain it, then he is temporarily relieved of the penalty. If the character already has the feat, he treats all victims as if they had +20 hit points more than they actually had for his next sacrifice only.
32+	Character can cast <i>draw forth the heart</i> or <i>agonising doom</i> from the book even if he does not meet the prerequisites, but immediately gains a point of Corruption and it takes a full round action to cast, or can learn either if he has available slots and meets the prerequisites.

*Feat found in *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos*.

Manufacturing Costs: 104,000 sp; 10,400 xp each volume; must own a copy of *The Blood of the Golden Peacock* to transcribe from.

Volume III: The Poisons of the Golden Peacock

Decipher Script Check Result	Benefit
21 or less	No benefit but the character becomes subject to the Rule of Obsession, in that he must take the Loathsome Weapon feat* at the next available opportunity unless he already has it.
22-27	+4 Competence Bonus to all Craft (herbalism or alchemy) checks for the next month
28-33	The character can increase the potency of any poison concocted in the next month, increasing its save DCs by +2.
34-39	The character can increase the potency of any poison concocted in the next month, increasing its save DCs by +4 and any victim slain by the poison is treated by the sorcerer as if he had ritually sacrificed him with the Tormented Sacrifice feat.
40+	Character can cast <i> dread serpent</i> from the book even if he does not meet the prerequisites, but it takes a full round action to cast.

*Feat found in *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos*.

Manufacturing Costs: 159,000 sp; 15,900 xp each volume; must own a copy of *The Poisons of the Golden Peacock* to transcribe from.

THE SCROLL OF AMENDARATH

The *Scroll of Amendarath* is an astrological work detailing the correct positioning of planets and stars and giving instructions on the casting of horoscopes. Reading this work and making a Decipher Script check (DC 12) gives a scholar a +2 bonus on Power of Astrology checks (see page 59) for a month.

Manufacturing Costs: 4,000 sp; 400 xp; must own a copy of the *Scroll of Amendarath* to transcribe from.

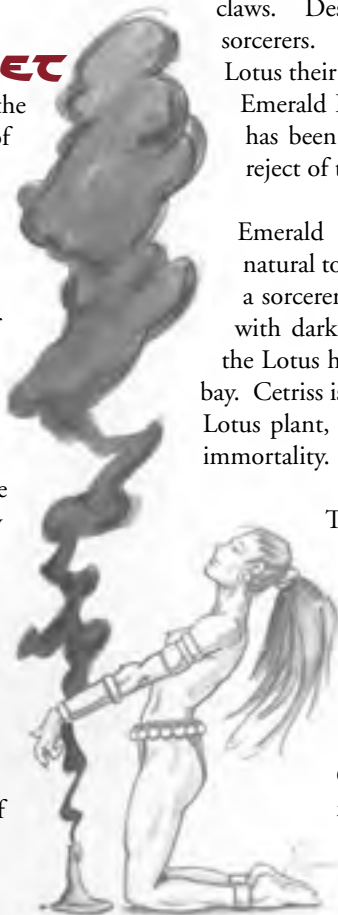
ALCHEMICAL, HERBAL □ MAGICAL ITEMS

These items are not all magical in the usual sense of the word. Some are merely mysterious but are based on knowledge that only sorcerers tend to have, such as alchemy and certain similar crafts. However, to the ignorant, any of these items will be regarded as sorcerous. The rules and suggestions for buying and selling magical, herbal and alchemical items found in *Conan the Roleplaying Game* hold true for these items as well.

BLACK CANDLE OF SET

Thin, greasy plumes of smoke rise from the burning of these black candles. The tallow of these candles is rendered from the body of a virgin strangled with her mother's hair and made woman after death by her father. Each candle burning while casting a spell within 10 feet of it gives the caster a +1 circumstance bonus to his Magic Attack roll. The use of these candles puts a sorcerer in danger of Corruption (the item has a Magic Attack bonus of +2 per candle for determining the save DC). Burning more than two candles at once has a tendency to upset the magical balance of a given area and causes any spell cast to be considered a Mighty spell if it is not already for determining runaway magic results.

Manufacturing Cost: 10,000 silver pieces per candle, which should cover the cost to secure a virgin from a kidnapper, as well as the father and mother, plus the cost to compel the father to defile his daughter's body, plus the cost of rendering down the body.



DISTILLATE OF BLACK LOTUS

Created by the priests of Keshan, these are glass balls containing a weak distillate of Black Lotus. When the ball is broken, fumes are released, rendering any who breathe them unconscious. It can be thrown with a range increment of 5 feet. Its cloud of fumes has a volume of 3,375 cubic feet (15 feet by 15 feet by 15 feet). The fumes dissipate after 2d4 minutes in still air. The fumes dissipate in a matter of 2d6 rounds outdoors in still air. Wind dissipates the fumes faster. Those breathing the fumes must make a Fortitude save (DC 21) or fall unconscious for 1d6 hours. Its secondary effect is dizziness and sickness, resulting in 1d4 Con damage.

Cost: Black Lotus, 1,875 sp. *Raw Materials:* ½ dose of black lotus. *Requirements:* Craft (alchemy) 10 ranks, Craft (herbalism) 8 ranks.

EMERALD LOTUS

Emerald Lotus is an iridescent, green plant with a sharp, musky odour and it is one of the most addictive substances in the world. It effectively ages those addicted to it, making them appear at least twice their real age. Their skin hangs loose, their hair turns white, their hands turn into twisted claws. Despite this, the Lotus is a wondrous gift to sorcerers. Its addicts claim that with enough Emerald Lotus their power will be limitless. The black seeds of the Emerald Lotus were lost before the fall of Acheron but has been found again recently by a twisted Stygian, a reject of the Black Ring.

Emerald Lotus, unlike other forms of Lotus, is not natural to the world. The Emerald Lotus was created by a sorcerer of Old Stygia named Cetriss, who bargained with dark gods for its secret. The sorcerous power of the Lotus helped the seers of Old Stygia keep Acheron at bay. Cetriss is said to have decided there was little use in his Lotus plant, so he abandoned it to seek out the secrets of immortality.

Taking a dose of Emerald Lotus, either as a straight powder or as a powder mixed with wine, doubles a sorcerer's power point total, taking his power point totals even beyond his normal maximum limits. Extra power points fade away according to the rules in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*. It also doubles a sorcerer's Charisma bonus to his Magical Attack rolls for 1d2 hours after taking it. Unfortunately, it is also a poison. Characters ingesting it must

make a Fortitude save (DC 22) or take hallucinations as initial damage and 1d2 Con damage as secondary damage. After taking it, a sorcerer must make another Fortitude save (DC 25) or become physically addicted. Further, regardless of the success or failure of the Fortitude save, the sorcerer must make a Will save (DC 25) or become psychologically addicted, taking a rank in Corruption (Corruption save DC 25 to negate) or suffering madness (if the Corruption save is made). Addicts tend to have greenish stains on their tongues and teeth. The drug has an Extreme addiction rating (see *Conan: Shadizar – City of Wickedness* for addiction rules). If an addicted character goes for more than one day without at least a teaspoon of Emerald Lotus he will suffer 1d8 Dex, 1d8 Wis, 1d6 Con and 1d6 Str damage per day (Fort save 25 + 5 per day without drug) until he receives his drug, recovers or dies. If a character makes two successive Fort saves, he has fought off his addiction.

The Emerald Lotus is a vampiric fungus, feeding off the blood of creatures. Its thorns feed off the blood of corpses, animal or human, and without blood, the plant will die. It can slowly ambulate, scuttling like a crab. Its whip-like, thorny branches are animate and can attack like the twisting limbs of an octopus. It is said to undergo blood-madness, which is not unlike the feeding frenzy Vilayet sharks fly into when they smell blood.

Cost: 5,000 sp per dose.

ISHITI'S AMULET

The amulet of Ishiti is a remarkable item. It is a ruby fetish cut in a bizarre shape with an eye in the centre. The snake pendant seems to burn from within with the unimagined powers of Set. It provides a sorcerer with a *burst barrier*-like power, acting just like the spell, except it does not silence any noises and the Strength check is made as though he were a Gargantuan creature (+4 size bonus to Strength checks) with a Strength equal to (scholar level) x 8. It can also heal wounds by touch, healing a character as if he had two full days of rest (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game* for healing rules). The amulet can even resurrect the dead if they have only been dead for less than an hour, bringing any dead character to 1 hit point, fully healing any wounds in the process of resurrection. The spell can also summon serpents from the mouths of liars, as a *greater summon beast* spell, including the power point cost. The snake comes from a lying character's mouth. The character must have been caught in a lie by the sorcerer within five rounds of activating this power.

A target is entitled to attempt a Fortitude saving throw to resist the effect based on the sorcerer's Magic Attack Roll. A failed saving throw indicates death.

If successful, he is instead stunned for one

"Your father and I studied together under the auspices of Thoth Amon, the mightiest magician alive, in his domain in Stygia, and his guidance brought out the natural powers we had inherited from our father. Unfortunately, Eshe's gift was greater than mine and our patron saw fit to share his secrets with your father, not me. He even gave Eshe a snake amulet containing the fire of Ishiti, Snake Demoness of Set. With this he could summon Ishiti at will."

Bruce Jones, 'Isle of the Dead', *Conan the Barbarian* #138

round. A stunned character may not act, nor may he use Dodge Defence or Parry Defence. Attackers get a +2 bonus on attack rolls against a stunned opponent.

Manufacturing Costs: 67,500 sp and 6,750 XP *Requirements:* Craft (alchemy) 15 ranks; spell required *greater demonic pact (Ishiti)*.

KESHAN HELLFIRE AMULET

This amulet is the size of a hen's egg and the colour of tarnished brass. A single serpentine rune is inscribed in black upon the amulet. A wire noose holds the amulet around the neck of a victim. When the words, '*Hie Vakallar-Ftagn,*' are spoken and a single Power Point expended, the wire constricts until the amulet is snug around the person's neck. If the second phrase, '*Hie Vakallar-Nectos,*' is spoken (or if the victim tries to remove the amulet himself), the amulet will flare with white incandescence and a sharp sizzling sound. A Power Point does not need to be expended for the second phrase. A wave of heat can be felt as far as five feet away as the blaze of nigh-intolerable brilliance engulfs the amulet. The amulet will melt into a molten stream of liquid metal, usually killing the victim immediately. The molten ball does 10d6 points of damage to the victim. The words, '*Hie Nostratos-Valkallar,*' and another Power Point expenditure will release the amulet safely. Also, the expenditure of another Power Point renders a sorcerer immune to its damage if it should be used against a sorcerer who knows of it.

Manufacturing Costs: 7,500 sp and 750 XP *Requirements:* Craft (alchemy) 15 ranks; spell required *summon elemental*.

Sorcery Styles

Sorcery Style	Spells	Prerequisites
Curses	Cursed Unto the Last Generation*	<i>Lesser ill-fortune</i> , Permanent Sorcery
Divination	Homunculus Communication	<i>Astrological prediction</i> , <i>sorcerous news</i> , Knowledge (arcana) 13 ranks
Nature Magic	Snake Arrow	<i>Summon beast</i> , Knowledge (nature) 5 ranks
Necromancy	Legions of the Dead*	<i>Raise corpse</i> , Magical Attack Bonus +10
	Simulacrum*	<i>Raise corpse</i> , <i>animate statue</i> , Permanent Sorcery, Magical Attack Bonus +10
	Summon Essence	<i>Raise corpse</i> , Magical Attack Bonus +2
	Usurpation of the Soul	<i>Raise corpse</i> , Magical Attack Bonus +6
	Zukala's Jest*	<i>Raise corpse</i> , <i>draw forth the soul</i>

*This spell can have severe repercussions on a campaign world and is subject to Runaway Magic (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*).

RED LOTUS BLOSSOMS

The temple harlots of Idris wear only red lotus blossoms in their hair. This has the effect of rendering men and women stupefied. Any one other than Idris' temple harlots, who have a limited immunity, who smells the blossom's perfume at close range (within 10 feet) must make a Will saving throw (DC 25) or be unable to take any non-sexual actions. Anyone under the influence of Red Lotus is considered entranced for the purposes of other spells.

Cost: 1,100 sp per dose.

RED LOTUS RESIDUE

The temple harlots keep red lotus residue under their long, sharp fingernails to dig into the men and women who kiss them. If a harlot inflicts at least 4 hit points of damage with her unarmed strike, a character must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 20) or be unable to take any non-sexual actions. Anyone under the influence of red lotus is considered entranced for the purposes of other spells.

Cost: 1,500 sp per dose.

WHITE LOTUS POWDER

This powder, made from the rare white lotus, paralyzes when breathed in and blinds if it gets in the eyes. When thrown, it creates a cloud around a person. He must make a Fortitude save (DC 27) or suffer 3d6 Dexterity damage plus paralysis and blindness. The drug does 1d4 secondary Constitution damage. The paralysis and blindness last for 1d4+2 hours.

Cost: 1,000 sp per dose.

WHITE LOTUS POLLEN

The pollen from the white lotus is a counter-reagent to black lotus, negating its effects, regardless of the actual type of black lotus instantly. It has no effect on any other form of lotus.

Cost: 800 sp per dose.

NEW ADVANCED SPELLS

Magic is not healthy work for man. It is driven by success, marred by impermanence, heightened by obsession, dominated by masters and poisonous to the soul. The universe cries out against the use of magic and too much abuse will create a backlash of power as the universe tries to right itself.

CURSED UNTO THE LAST GENERATION

PP Cost: As per original spell x5 points

Components: As per original spell, plus F

Casting Time: As per original spell + one full round

Range: As per original spell

Effect: As per original spell

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: As per original spell

Prerequisites: *Lesser ill-fortune*, Permanent Sorcery

Magic Attack Roll: As per original spell

This spell creates effects that travel down the family line, afflicting generation after generation with the same malady. The spell cast in conjunction with this curse is so potent its effects are passed on down from parent to child. If the duration of the original spell is still in effect when one of its targets parents a child, the child is automatically affected by the spell as though he was originally in the area of effect or targeted by the spell's original casting. The child receives a saving throw against the original DC of the spell. This happens every time one of the original targets has a child, no matter how often they have offspring. Depending on how powerful the spell is, these offspring may also pass the spell onto their children.

HOMUNCULUS COMMUNICATION

PP Cost: 2 Points

Components: V, S, F

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 1,000 miles plus 500 miles/scholar level.

Effect: See below

Duration: Concentration, up to 10 minutes plus 1 minute/scholar level

Saving Throw: None

Prerequisites: *Astrological prediction*, *sorcerous news*, Knowledge (arcana) 13 ranks

By using a fluid-filled, glass simulation of a human womb, within which floats the misshapen body of one unborn, two sorcerers can communicate at a distance. Each sorcerer must have one of these pellucid wombs. The originator of the communication casts the spell, which attracts the attention of the other sorcerer. After casting this spell the homunculus within twitches in agony as the pitiful jaws in its deformed face creak painfully open, echoing the voice of the distant sorcerer as he answers the 'call'. As each sorcerer speaks, the other hears the words via the gurgling distortion of his homunculus' voice. The homunculus must be able to hear the sounds in order to transmit them. It has a Listen modifier of +2 if a check is needed for it to hear and transmit something. The homunculus curls into a foetal position when the communication is ended, signalling to the other party that the conversation is over.

Focus: The focus of the spell is the womb simulation and its contained monstrosity. This item is crafted as a magic item (see the *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos* for rules on crafting magic items) and the homunculus is an aberration created as per the rules in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*. The caster need not be the crafter of the focus. The Lords of the Black Ring occasionally supply one of these items for priests stationed outside of Stygia. This focus costs 50,000 sp and 5,000 XP to create each one.

LEGIONS OF THE DEAD

PP Cost: 2 Points/5 corpses

Components: V, S, F

Casting Time: 1 full round

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft. per scholar level)

Effect: Up to 5 corpses/scholar level

Duration: Concentration + 1d6 hours

Saving Throw: See below

Prerequisites: *Raise corpse*, Magical Attack Bonus +4

This spell works as a more powerful version of *raise corpse* (*Conan the Roleplaying Game*), allowing a veritable army of undead

to rise and work for the sorcerer. The undead follow the sorcerer's verbal commands until the spell expires, when the undead become lifeless corpses again.

SIMULACRUM

PP Cost: 20 Points

Components: V, S, M, F, Magical Link

Casting Time: 5 minutes

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./scholar level)

Effect: 1 slightly larger than life-size clay statue (unfired)

Duration: Mortal

Saving Throw: None

Prerequisites: *Raise corpse*, *animate statue*, Permanent Sorcery, Magical Attack Bonus +8

To begin this spell, the sorcerer must either construct or have constructed a clay replica of the person to be duplicated, built slightly larger than the person and its mouth must be open. This clay replica must have magical links, including hair, fingernail pairings, sweat, blood and seed (or menses), worked arduously into the clay. When the effigy is ready, but before it is fired, three vials, a strip of parchment and a quill pen must be used to prepare the next item. The first vial must contain the blood of the person to be duplicated, mixed with various tinctures to keep it liquid. The pen is dipped into the blood and the person's name is written across the parchment. A sprinkling of powder from the second vial dries the blood on the parchment instantly. The third vial has the sorcerer's blood. The pen is dipped into this and the sorcerer's name is written on the parchment in larger script, overlaying that of the victim's name. A sprinkling again from the second vial dries the blood. Now the verbal component begins as the parchment is folded into a precise pattern and placed into the open mouth of the clay statue. Then, using chalks from Stygia (these usually have to be smuggled as Stygians do not use these as trade items or sell them on any sort of market), the sorcerer scribes an incomplete pentagram around the feet of the statue, drawing a star within a pentagon within a circle. Foul black candles are then placed on the points where the shapes touch. Each candle is lit and the pentagram is completed. The final words of power are spoken. The flames from the candles grow and eventually bend inward, arcing over the statue. When the tongues of flame touch, lighting strikes down and hits the clay. If the construct proves not to be a masterwork construct, it will burst into flames and be destroyed. Otherwise, at the end of the incantation, the candles are consumed and the statue is but dry and cracked. The statue will then tremble and crumble. The clay will fall away, leaving a living, breathing duplicate of the person targeted. It will know its name and it will obey the sorcerer's commands, having the same Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma as the duplicated character. The simulacrum will be inhumanly fast (+10 to the original's Dexterity and speed) and superhumanly strong (+20 to the original's Strength). Its skin will be tough (natural DR 16). The duplicate will be half the level of the original (minimum 1st level). However, fire

will destroy it in an instant; its oils are extremely flammable, so the duplicate will fear fire and stay away from it. The subject who was copied must remain alive. If the copied subject dies, the simulacrum loses its levels, mental abilities (Int, Wis and Cha) and all skills and feats.

SNAKE ARROW

PP Cost: 1 point + (see below)

Components: S, F

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Effect: One viper /casting

Duration: Until touched by someone other than the caster

Saving Throw: Fort negates poison damage

Prerequisites: *Summon beast*, Knowledge (nature) 5 ranks

Magic Attack Roll: Sets Fort save DC

With a twisting motion, a living viper is stretched into a scale-covered arrow. The envenomed arrow is then shot toward a foe, dealing poison as well as appropriate damage for the type of bow used if it strikes (regular attack roll for the character). The poison requires a Fortitude save (DC set by Magic Attack roll). Initial and secondary damage is 1d6 temporary Constitution. The poison damage can be made more potent with the expenditure of additional Power Points, with each point spent adding 1 point of Constitution damage. The extra expenditure must be made at the casting before the



saving throw is rolled by the victim. The arrow will return to being a mere viper if withdrawn from the wound. The focus item is a small viper. The viper still needs to eat and drink, so making a multitude of these with the Permanent Sorcery feat will be difficult.

SUMMON ESSENCE

PP Cost: 5 Points per jar of blood

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 full round/jar of blood

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./scholar level)

Effect: Up to 1 jar of blood/scholar level

Duration: Magic Attack roll sets the duration in hours

Saving Throw: See Below

Prerequisites: *Raise corpse*, Magical Attack Bonus +2

Magic Attack Roll: Sets the duration in hours

Jars of blood are placed within a circle. With a piece of blue chalk, the sorcerer marks ancient Khitan ideograms for the four seasons equidistantly about the circle. Then the sorcerer draws the ideograms for the four humours, then the four elements, all without breaking the ancient chant. Finally the symbol for life is drawn and the symbol of death is drawn over the symbol of life. A chill will rise in the air as the sorcerer chants this spell until his breath comes out in puffs of white and his voice takes on a hollow timbre. Mist will roll over the circle and in the centre of the mist argent and azure lightning will flash. The stone jars will disintegrate into sand and the earth will drink the blood. The sorcerer must then, with every fibre of his being, use the power of his will to complete the summoning, making a Will save (DC 12), otherwise the essences resist the summoning. If successful, the earth will crack and break and hands, withered and mottled, will claw at the surface. Drawn by the sorcerer's chant, horrible entities will dig their way from the bowels of the earth. These things are stumpy and misshapen, their skin a mottled mouldy grey-green colour. These are the summoned corporeal manifestations of the essences of murdered men and women. There is no distinction between male and female. They are hairless with opalescent eyes that have seen the grave from inside. Their lipless mouths emit a cacophony of howls and lamentations. The sorcerer may end the chant once they are all summoned, one essence per stone jar, and when the chanting stops, they will await orders from the sorcerer. They have statistics as ghouls except that they can turn incorporeal and can function as spies or guards.

USURPATION OF THE SOUL

PP Cost: 4/HD of victim

Components: V, S, magical link

Casting Time: 2 rounds

Range: Touch or Evil Eye

Target: One creature

Duration: 1 hour/level or until you return to your body
Saving Throw: Will negates; see text
Prerequisites: *Raise corpse*, Magical Attack Bonus +6
Magic Attack Roll: Sets DC for target's saving throw

By casting *usurpation of the soul*, you place your soul in a nearby body, forcing its soul into submission. You may move back to your own body (thereby returning the trapped soul to its body), which ends the spell. When you transfer your soul upon casting your body is, as near as anyone can tell, dead.

Attempting to possess a body is a full-round action. It is blocked by *warding* or similar protective spells. You possess the body and force the creature's soul into submission unless the subject succeeds on a Will save. Failure to take over the host leaves your life force in your own body and the target automatically succeeds on further saving throws if you attempt to possess its body again.

If you are successful, your life force occupies the host body and the host's life force is suppressed. You keep your Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, level, class, base attack bonus, base save bonuses, defence, and mental abilities. The body retains its Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, hit points, natural abilities and automatic abilities. A body with extra limbs does not allow you to make more attacks (or more advantageous two-weapon attacks) than normal. You cannot choose to activate the body's extraordinary or supernatural abilities. The creature's spells and spell-like abilities do not stay with the body.

As a standard action, you can shift freely from a host to another host if within range, returning any usurped souls back in control of their bodies. The spell ends when you shift from a host to your own body. If the host body is slain, you return to your body, if within range, and the life force of the host departs (it is dead). If the host body is slain beyond the range of the spell, both you and the host die.

If the spell ends while you are in a host, you return to your body (or die, if it is out of range of your current position) and the usurped soul takes control of its own body, remembering only nightmarish images of the experience. Destroying either body ends the spell.

Focus: A magical link to the prospective hosts

ZUKALA'S JEST

PP Cost: Power Points gained from *draw forth the Soul* plus 2 PP

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 2 rounds

Range: Touch

Target: One creature

Duration: Mortal



Saving Throw: None

Prerequisites: *Raise corpse*, *draw forth the soul*

After drawing forth a soul from a victim using the *draw forth the soul* spell, the sorcerer can then mould the soul into a female child so beautiful that men will sell their own souls to possess her. She will cause problems wherever she goes as men fight for her or do whatever she asks. Unless magically aged, she will grow at a human rate and die a natural death between 40 and 60 years old (unless her creator dies first) but will never physically age beyond 16 to 18 in appearance. Her Charisma will begin at 30, although her other attributes are determined normally. The girl also gains the Smouldering Glance supernatural ability.

Smouldering Glance (Su): She can cause an irrational lust in another being just by looking at it. This ability can be used a number of times per day equal to her Charisma modifier. She makes a ranged touch attack against a living creature within 30 feet. The creature must make a Will save (DC 10 + her Hit Dice + her Charisma modifier) or find itself utterly captivated. This is a mind-affecting charm.

The material component is not really a material, but the bodiless soul drawn from another victim. She generally has no residual memories of the soul's former life but, at the Games Master's discretion, may recover those memories or may experience them as dreams.

Note: The girl created from this spell can be made permanent as per the rules in *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos*, otherwise she dies 1d10 minutes after the sorcerer who created her dies.

Secrets of the Soldiers

Skills & Feats of the Warrior

IN SOME RESPECTS, the soldier is the easiest character class to portray in a game. He does not need to worry much about spells or Corruption, or spend a lot of time on skills. However, he does gain a plethora of feats and the few skill points he does get need to be spent wisely. This section offers some advice on how to narrow down the seemingly endless choices offered to the soldier.

GENERAL OPTIONS

There is more to a soldier than attack rolls. He must make wise skill choices and wise feat choices. Also, the player needs to choose where to increase his soldier's ability scores and where to put his soldier's highest score upon character generation.

ABILITY SCORES

Obviously, one of the strong points of the soldier is the sheer number of feats he earns. He can complete feat chains faster than any other character type to earn powerful feats and combat manoeuvres. What kind of feats should a soldier take? His attributes can make the nearly infinite choices a little more defined. There are feats that play off certain abilities. Player should decide early what kind of soldier they wish to portray.

STRENGTH

Most soldiers emphasise Strength as their primary ability score. These are almost always melee fighters. Feats for melee fighters should focus on Strength more than finesse. His best defence is going to rally around the Parry Defence, which makes Strength paramount. The whole Power Attack chain is an excellent choice for soldiers. He needs to be able to punch through armour and deal as much damage as possible with each and every strike. Most Player Character soldiers should take the Leadership feat in order to have cohorts and followers so his Formation Combat ability can come into play more often. Quick Draw is another powerful feat, especially for the soldier who is at a severe disadvantage when caught off-guard. Other feats of interest include Athletic, Breaker*, Cleave, Fighting-Madness, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical, Improved Overrun, Improved Sunder, Parry, Power Bull Rush*, Reckless Attack* and Riposte*. A two-handed weapon maximises the Strength bonus to damage, helping to achieve massive damage against

foes and putting the Cleave feat to good use. From *Conan: The Road of Kings*, Greater Overrun, Kick Down the Door, No Prisoners and Superior Overrun are appropriate feats. From *Conan: The Free Companies*, choose Disciple of Infantry. From *Conan: Shadizar – City of Wickedness*, consider taking Brutal Attack and Crush Your Enemy.

DEXTERITY

Finesse soldiers are at an immediate disadvantage on the battlefield, especially when facing pirates, barbarians and nomads. Their Reflex save is weak, Dodge mediocre and initiative abysmal. For a finesse soldier, feats such as Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes and Combat Expertise are vital. Combining the Mobility feat with the Tumble skill is a good feat/skill synergy to take. Ranks in Tumble will also help when fighting defensively. Having ranks in Jump and Balance will also pay off. The finesse fighter needs to be able to move around regardless of terrain or obstacles. In addition to the four feats already mentioned, the character should consider taking Agile, Anticipate the Move*, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Fleet-Footed, Greater Two-Weapon Combat, Improved Grapple, Light-Footed, Off-Hand Weapon Expert*, Run, Two-Weapon Defence, Weapon Focus, Web of Death and Whirlwind Attack. Taking at least one level in thief will help the character with his Reflex save and his Initiative, plus give him a needed boost in skills, as well as giving the character the Sneak Attack ability. Two-weapon fighting is an excellent option for this kind of soldier. From *Conan: The Road of Kings*, Savage Dance and Warning Shot are appropriate. From *Conan: Across the Thunder River*, the character might take Into the Fray. From *Conan: Shadizar – City of Wickedness*, the character should consider Acrobatic Attack. From *Conan: Aquilonia – Flower of the West*, Unexpected Charge is a good choice.

CONSTITUTION

These soldiers train themselves to withstand damage instead of avoiding it. Like the Strength soldier, these rocks wear the best armour and do not worry about speed or Dexterity limitations. These soldiers make excellent guards and protectors, willing to stand in the way, trusting to their bodies to withstand the assaults they are about to take. They have a high Constitution, which provides high hit points as well as a high Fortitude

save, which will prove necessary as they will likely be making massive damage saves more often than other soldiers. This soldier is not concerned with fancy attacks or bashing through opponents quickly. He is a living wall designed to give his companions time to escape or to dispatch the enemy with their own attacks. Feats will include Diehard, Endurance, Improved Bull-Rush, Improved Grapple, Hard as Rock*, Run, Self-Sufficient, Tough as Nails* and Toughness. He should put skill points in Concentration and Intimidate. This character should use a one-handed weapon and a shield. From *Conan: The Free Companies*, Take the Charge is an appropriate feat choice.

INTELLIGENCE

The soldier who trusts to his brains more than his strength or speed is a strategist. He can take advantage of how skills work in *Conan the Roleplaying Game* in regards to points gleaned from a high Intelligence score. He evaluates the situation, recognising an enemy's weakness and exploiting it. Knowledge (warfare) detailed in *Conan: The Free Companies* is a must for this character. Search is another common skill. He will take feats such as Analyst, Combat Expertise, Diligent, Exotic Weapon Proficiencies, Improved Critical, Improved Disarm, Improved Feint, Investigator, Riposte* and Skill Focus feats. From *Conan: Across the Thunder River*, Culling the Weak and Sense Weakness are appropriate feats. From *Conan: The Free Companies*, appropriate feats include Aide de Camp, Battle Leader, Battle Tactics, Master of the Art and Tactical Mind. From *Conan: Shadizar – City of Wickedness*, consider taking Acrobatic Attack, Predator's Eye, Sizing Up the Foe and To Think is to Act.

WISDOM

This soldier is a master of the forces within and without himself, with an awareness of his own mind and body as well as of his surroundings. Often highly moral, this soldier usually has a code of honour. They tend to be calm and quiet, coming across as an expert even when they are not. Unusually aware of his surroundings, this soldier takes ranks in Spot, Listen and Sense Motive. Feats include Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Master, Combat Reflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiencies, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Negotiator, Skill Focus (any), Track, Weapon Focus (any) and Web of Death. From *Conan: Shadizar – City of Wickedness*, take Leave No Witnesses, Perceptive Defence, Predator's Eye and Sizing Up the Foe.

CHARISMA

This is the soldier who fights with flair and panache. His focus is on Formation Combat because he can get people to work together. He is the born leader who could inspire people to follow him to the pits of Zandru's Hells. He is destined to appear

in songs and tales for years to come because of his heroism, although it is likely the tales will not really take his combat skills into account. His Reputation is usually high, which may or may not help him in battle. He will take ranks in Bluff, Diplomacy and Intimidate. He will want to take Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Feint, Improved Initiative, Insulting*, Intricate Swordplay, Iron Will, Leadership, Menacing Aura, Mobility, Negotiator, Persuasive, Skill Focus, Steely Gaze, Synergist*, Weapon Focus and Whirlwind Attack feats. From *Conan: Across the Thunder River*, the character can take Into the Fray. From *Conan: The Road of Kings*, Look What I Can Do! and Warning Shot are appropriate. From *Conan: The Free Companies*, appropriate feats include Aide de Camp, Battle Leader, Battle Tactics, Motivational Speaker and Roaring Rage. From *Conan: Shadizar – City of Wickedness*, consider taking Confident, Silence, Fool! and Weapon Panache.

*Indicates a new feat detailed in this volume.

SKILLS

Soldiers are limited on skill selection; they receive the fewest number of skill points of all the classes. Also, since Intelligence is not usually one of the prime abilities for a soldier, he does not often get bonus skill points. The soldier also has the fewest choices in class skills. Obviously, a soldier's strength does not rely on his skills; his strengths are defence and feats. The soldier is a specialist and his narrow choice of skills reflects that specialisation. The soldier relies on his comrades-in-arms for survival. If possible, use Intelligence bonus skill points to take ranks in Spot, Listen and Sense



Motive. Soldiers are designed to go up against similarly armoured and armed soldiers, not finesse warriors or thieves. Ranks in those three skills help to prevent the soldier from being caught flat-footed and quickly dispatched.

Otherwise, when choosing skills, the character will want to focus on a few skills. He will not be a jack-of-all-trades; he must become a specialist. The soldier's skill selection should follow the line of feats the character will take. If the soldier is intending to be a mounted warrior, then he should put skill points in Ride and Handle Animal. If the character intends to be infantry, then Climb and Jump should receive the points. If the character intends to be an archer, then Spot and Craft (bowmaking) should receive the points. If the character intends to be a light weapon fighter, then some ranks in Tumble (preferably making use of Intelligence bonus points, otherwise purchase as a cross-class skill) will be advisable. For those who intend on doing a lot of guard duty, then Spot and Listen become paramount. Always put some skill points into Sense Motive to avoid being bluffed by thieves. A thief's sneak attack will often trigger a massive damage save, so a few skill points there may go a long way.

PERFORM (GUARD MOUNT)

Guard mount is an exacting Hyborian ritual where the men assigned guard duty are assembled for inspection by the first sergeant then taken to the parade ground for inspection by the sergeant major, then turned over to the officer of the day for assignment (Perform (guard mount) DC 10) to pass inspection. Failure indicates some sort of punishing detail assignment. The best-turned-out man (determined by the highest Perform (guard mount) check) is selected to be the officer's orderly for the day (a coveted position, for it allows the soldier to lounge in the officer's quarters when not carrying messages, to hang around the kitchens and the hired girls there, and exempts him from fatigue or guard duties that day) and the others are assigned their guard stations around the fort. Soldiers should have ranks in Perform (guard mount) to simulate the various marches, parades and inspections the soldiers are put through. 5 ranks in Perform (guard mount) confers a +2 synergy bonus to Knowledge (warfare).

SENSE MOTIVE

As a full round action, a character can determine who the weakest member of a group is with a successful Sense Motive check (DC 15). The term 'weakest' has been left intentionally ambiguous to allow the Games Master to make a determination that fits the situation. In combat this might mean the lowest Hit Die opponent but in a social situation it might be someone with poor social skills or someone easily swayed. When dealing with sorcery, it could be the person with the worst will save.

FIGHTING STYLES

Does your soldier prefer reach weapons like the Gundermen or does he prefer ranged weapons like the Bossonians? Here are some ideas to consider. Some of these ideas can be utilised for barbarians, borderers, nobles and nomads as well, although they will have a more difficult time achieving many of these feats to truly master these styles.

DEFENSIVE AGGRESSORS

This soldier believes in treading the safer side of combat, becoming a living parapet, shielding himself behind as much armour as possible. He is a protection enthusiast when it comes to battle, yet quite fearless when sheltered beneath layers of metal and fighting with a one-handed weapon in order to make use of a shield. These characters usually have ranks in Concentration, Craft (armoursmithing) and Search. They usually choose from the following feats: Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Diehard, Dodge, Endurance, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Improved Shield Bash*, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Overrun, Iron Will, Mobility, Lightning Reflexes, Parry, Power Attack, Toughness and Web of Death. They may also take the *Conan: The Free Companies* feat, Take the Charge



DUAL LIGHT MELEE WEAPONS

For soldiers with speed and agility (see Dexterity ability options in previous section), being mobile and able to strike multiple times is sometimes preferable to gambling all they have on one single heavy stroke. They will often have ranks in Balance, Jump and Tumble. This soldier will usually choose from the following feats: Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Fleet-Footed, Greater Two-Weapon Combat, Greater Weapon Focus (any), Greater Weapon Specialisation (any), Improved Grapple, Improved Initiative, Light-Footed, Mobility, Off-Hand Weapon Expert*, Quick Draw and Two-Weapon Defence, Weapon Focus (any), Weapon Specialisation (any) and Whirlwind Attack. From *Conan: The Road of Kings*, Savage Dance is appropriate.

MOUNTED COMBAT

Mounted soldiers like to move quickly. They are heavy assailants, quick skirmishers, fast scouts or harassing guerrillas. They take ranks in Handle Animal and Ride. Their feats include Animal Affinity, Cleave, Great Cleave, Greater Weapon Focus (any one-handed weapon, lance or bow), Greater Weapon Specialisation (any one-handed weapon, lance or bow), Improved Critical, Improved Initiative, Mounted Archery (if Hyrkanian or Turanian), Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge, Skill Focus (ride), Trample, Weapon Focus (any one-handed weapon, lance or bow) and Weapon Specialisation (any one-handed weapon, lance or bow). From *Conan: The Free Companies*, Disciple of Cavalry, Live in the Saddle, Master of Cavalry and Reap the Whirlwind are additional appropriate feats. They may often be able to take advantage of the higher ground rule.

HEAVY MELEE WEAPONS

This soldier strides onto the battlefield hefting the largest weapon and wearing the thickest armour. Opponents usually just try to stay out of his way, knowing that if they try to approach and pierce his armour, he is likely to crush them with his powerful swings. He usually fights with two-handed weapons taking ranks in Climb, Intimidate and Survival. His feats include, Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (any two-handed weapon), Endurance, Great Cleave, Greater Weapon Focus (any two-handed weapon), Greater Weapon Specialisation (any two-handed weapon), Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Reckless Attack*, Toughness, Weapon Focus (any two-handed weapon) and Weapon Specialisation (any two-handed weapon). From *Conan: The Free Companies*, he may choose Disciple of Infantry and Master of Infantry.



RANGED WEAPONS

Bossonian bowmen, Ophirean crossbowmen, Iranistani slingers, Kushite spearmen and Pictish axe-throwers are all examples of soldiers who train to be virtuosos with ranged weapons. They are capable of slaying at a distance, killing while remaining untouchable. These soldiers concentrate their skills in Craft (bowmaking) and Spot. They take feats such as Eagle's Eye*, Far Shot, Greater Weapon Focus (any bow, crossbow or sling), Greater Weapon Specialisation (any bow, crossbow or sling), Improved Critical (any bow, crossbow or sling), Improved Precise Shot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Reload, Rapid Shot, Shot on the Run, Sniper's Eye*, Weapon Focus (any bow, crossbow or sling) and Weapon Specialisation (any bow, crossbow or sling). During the Hyborian Age, usually only nomads or Turanian soldiers learn Mounted Archery. From *Conan: Across the Thunder River*, choose Out of Thin Air. If the character is going to be throwing weapons instead of using a bow, crossbow or sling, the character should consider Quick Draw and two weapon fighting feats as well. From *Conan: The Road of Kings*, Warning Shot is appropriate. From *Conan: The Free Companies*, Disciple of Archery and Master of Archery.

REACH WEAPONS

There are experts in reach weapons who have the role of keeping the enemy from advancing and holding them at bay. In addition, these experts can function as excellent support troops, striking targets from behind better armoured

allies without getting in the way. The reach weapon expert usually has ranks in Intimidate, Spot and Balance. He takes Anticipate the Move*, Cleave, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (any reach weapon), Great Cleave, Greater Weapon Focus (any reach weapon), Greater Weapon Specialisation (any reach weapon), Gunderland Pike and Shield Fighting, Improved Critical, Improved Disarm, Improved Feint, Improved Trip, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (any reach weapon), Weapon Specialisation (any reach weapon) and Web of Death. From *Conan: Across the Thunder River*: Greater Feint is a good choice of feat. From *Conan: The Free Companies*, Take the Charge is an appropriate feat choice. Pressing Attack from *Conan: Aquilonia – Flower of the West* is another feat option.

UNARMED COMBAT

This soldier fights with his hands only. His favourite tactic is to render opponents helpless, either by taking their weapons or throwing them to the ground. He can often gain an element of surprise because he does not have to draw a weapon or otherwise look threatening before his attack. This soldier will often take ranks in Balance, Jump and Tumble. His feats include Archer's Bane, Brawl, Crushing Grip, Defensive Martial Arts, Greater Two-Weapon Fighting, Greater Weapon Focus (unarmed), Greater Weapon Specialisation (unarmed), Improved Critical, Improved Disarm, Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, Improved Trip, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (unarmed) and Weapon Specialisation (unarmed). Also, he may take the following feats from *Conan: Across the Thunder River*: Greater Grapple. Also, from *Conan: The Road of Kings*, Unarmed Throw is an excellent choice. Further, two feats from *Conan: Shadizar – City of Wickedness* are appropriate: Slippery and To Think is to Act.

*Indicates a new feat detailed in this volume.

BATTLEFIELD TACTICS

Once the soldier is on the battlefield, what is he to do? What are his strengths and what are his weaknesses? This section details some ideas on how to take advantage of a soldier's strengths (such as his Parry Defence) and how to bolster his weaknesses (such as Initiative and feints).

PARRY DEFENCE

Soldiers have an average Dodge bonus and an excellent Parry bonus. Soldiers have a huge advantage because of this arrangement. Parry is based on Strength and so is melee combat ability. Also parry is not limited by armour, so the soldier can wear heavy armour without penalty to his strongest defence. Further, shields add directly to the Parry Defence, being more useful for the soldier than for the barbarian

because the barbarian's best defence is Dodge, which the shield does not modify. Thus, a heavily armoured soldier has an impressive Parry plus an impressive Damage Reduction to keep himself alive. With this, he can avoid the massive death save that will take out unarmoured combatants. Feats such as Combat Expertise can make a soldier even more difficult to hit. Reflexive Parry is also well advised for a soldier. Players wanting a soldier based around Dexterity would do well to find ways to bump up the soldier's Dodge Defence in order to make him the equal of a Strength-based soldier.

FORMATION COMBAT

Soldiers may want to take the Leadership feat so they can take advantage of formation combat more often. They will need a leadership score of at least 14 so they can have one 3rd level follower and a cohort to fight in formation with. If the soldier is not of a high enough level to take the leadership feat (or if he cannot reach the score of 14) then he should consider hiring a pair of mercenaries to fight at his side. Charisma is helpful to Player Character soldiers. A penalty in Charisma hurts the Player Character's chances of actually using this class ability.

INITIATIVE

Initiative for a soldier is important. In *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, initiative is tied in with the Reflex save and soldiers have weak Reflex saves, resulting in weak initiatives. Improved Initiative and Lightning Reflexes can save the life of a soldier, preventing anyone from attacking him before his defences are up.

READING AN OPPONENT

Soldiers are experts at combat tactics and fighting techniques; their intense training enables them to recognise an opponent's fighting style to look for and exploit weaknesses. Soldiers can make a Sense Motive check (DC 10 + target's character level or Hit Dice) as a full-round action to study an opponent's movements, adding their base attack bonus to the check to symbolise their combat knowledge. The opponent must be engaged in combat for the character to read his style. During this round the character must do nothing else but study his target; he can move only with a five-foot step and perform no other action, although he can defend himself normally.

For every five points that the character's check exceeds the DC, he gains a +1 competence bonus to one of the following: attack rolls, Dodge Defence, Parry Defence, skill checks or saving throws. Failing the roll by less than five points is without penalty, but failing by more than five points will cause the character to suffer a -1 incompetence penalty to attack rolls, Dodge Defence, Parry Defence, skill checks and saving throws. The bonus or penalty lasts until the end of the character's

current encounter with the target. The bonus cannot be increased by a second attempt at reading the same opponent. A soldier may only read one opponent at a time.

COMBAT MANOEUVRES

The following are specialised combat manoeuvres that may be performed by anyone who meets their requirements. Unless otherwise stated, a character may only perform one of the following Combat Manoeuvres per turn and in melee combat.

BLOCK AND COUNTER

You can intercept your opponent's attack and react to it.

Prerequisites: Intricate Swordplay, Parry, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Any one of the following feats: Improved Disarm or Improved Trip or Weapon Specialisation (arming sword or broadsword)

Circumstance: You declare you are using the Combat Expertise feat, subtracting from your attack rolls to increase your Parry Defence.

Effect: If an attack misses by 5 points or more, you gain an immediate attack of opportunity in the form of a disarm (if you have Improved Disarm), trip (if you have Improved Trip) or additional melee attack (if you have Weapon Specialisation). The counter-attack spends one of your attacks of opportunity. The penalty to attack from the Combat Expertise *does* apply to the counter attack.

COMBAT ROTATION

You have learned to dive into the midst of melee combat to take the place of allies, thus relieving them from the fight and allowing them to retreat.

Prerequisites: Mobility, base attack bonus +3 or higher, Formation Combat.

Circumstance: An ally must be within five feet of you, engaged in combat and you may not be threatened.

Effect: You may change places with any ally within 5 feet who is currently engaged in melee combat.

This is a

standard action on your part and does not generate an attack of opportunity either on yourself or your ally. This occurs during your Initiative of the round and does not affect that of your ally's in any way. Combat Rotation may not be used if the ally is unwilling to give up his position in the combat or if you are already threatened by an enemy.

SWINGING ATTACK

You swing on a hanging object, such as a vine or rope, and attack someone.

Prerequisites: Climb 5 ranks, Dexterity 13.

Circumstance: You start your move hanging onto a rope or other hanging object.

Effect: There are three possible effects. You can initiate a bull rush, which will not provoke an attack of opportunity but will add a +1 bonus to the Strength check for every five feet you move. You can instead initiate a melee attack, gaining a +1 bonus for higher ground and suffering no attack of opportunity for swinging by the defender. You may instead opt to knock the target off his feet, making a trip attack with a +1 bonus to the opposed roll for every five feet travelled. The trip attack does not provoke an attack of opportunity. The trip also deals the target 1d6 points of nonlethal damage. If you are tripped during your own trip attempt, you are pulled off your rope and take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage, falling five feet away from your opponent. In order to dismount next to the target, you must make a Tumble check (DC 15) or fall prone. Otherwise you hold onto the rope until your next action.



Fine Feats

Tricks & Talents of Hyboria's Elite

ALL CHARACTERS WITHIN the *Conan Role Playing Game* will select at least one feat at 1st level, and more as they rise in levels. Feat selection is a crucial part of customising each character and care should be taken to choose feats that complement the character's class features, racial traits and other capabilities.

ANALYST (GENERAL)

Prerequisites: Int 13, Combat Expertise.

Benefits: After 1 round of combat, you can designate one opponent and try to figure out his fighting style. You use a move action and make an Intelligence check (DC 15) with a bonus equal to half your level. If the check succeeds, for the rest of the combat you add your Intelligence modifier to all attack rolls against that opponent as you notice weaknesses in his fighting style.



ANTICIPATE THE MOVE (GENERAL)

Warriors with this feat have learned to anticipate their opponent's next move, leaving them no options for escape.

Prerequisites: Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Initiative, base attack bonus +6 or higher.

Benefits: The character may designate a new opponent each round. If that opponent takes a five foot step, the character may choose to immediately follow him with his own five foot step even if he has already moved this round.

Normal: You may only take a five foot step on your own turn and only if you take no other movement that turn.

BREAKER (GENERAL)

You specialise in breaking things.

Prerequisites: Str 13, Improved Sunder.

Benefit: You ignore 2 points of hardness from any object you want to break.

COMBAT MASTER (GENERAL)

The combat master can observe a combat situation and attune himself to its ebbs and flows.

Prerequisites: Wis 13, Spot 5 ranks, Listen 5 ranks, Sense Motive 5 ranks, Alertness.

Benefit: As a full-round action, you observe the combat around you and make a Wisdom check (DC 20) with a bonus equal to half your character level. If the check succeeds, for the rest of the combat, you add your Wisdom modifier to all attack rolls for the duration of the encounter. You can attune to combat a number of times per day equal to your Wisdom modifier.

DANGEROUS INSINUATIONS (GENERAL)

You know how to appeal to an audience's worst nature. Your words provoke fear and anger, turn friend against friend and even inspire hatred.

Prerequisites: Cha 13.

Benefit: You receive a +2 competence bonus to Bluff, Diplomacy and Perform checks when inciting distrust and paranoia.

EAGLE EYE (GENERAL)

Your eyes are keen, your aim true. While other archers and throwers only strike with precision at short distances, you can attack at any range.

Prerequisites: Dex 15, Alertness, Point Blank Shot.

Benefits: Point blank distance is considered to be 60 feet for you when you use ranged attacks. This means you gain the benefits of Point Blank Shot and other, similar feats and special abilities (such as sneak attack) when making ranged attacks to a distance of 60 feet or less.

Normal: Feats and special abilities that only work at point blank range apply only when the target is within 30 feet or less.

GREATER TWO- WEAPON COMBAT (GENERAL)

Prerequisites: Dex 19, Improved Two-Weapon Combat, Two-Weapon Fighting, base attack bonus +11 or higher.

Benefit: You get a third attack with your off-hand weapon, albeit at a -10 penalty.

Special: A soldier may select Greater Two-Weapon Combat as one of his soldier bonus feats.

GREATER UNARMED STRIKE (GENERAL)

Your martial arts skills are unmatched for power.

Prerequisites: Str 13, Improved Unarmed Strike, Power Attack.

Benefit: Your unarmed damage increases by one die type.

Thus, normal unarmed damage goes from 1d4 to 1d6 and characters with the Brawl feat move from 1d6 to 1d8.

Special: A Khitan or Vendhyan can take this feat multiple times. Its effects stack. Each time it is taken, the die type increases, up to a maximum of 1d12.

HARD AS ROCK (GENERAL)

You are capable of shrugging off damage.

Prerequisites: Con 13, Toughness, Concentration 5 ranks.

Benefit: You ignore an amount of damage equal to your Constitution modifier from one type (bludgeoning, slashing or piercing). You also take a -2 Dodge penalty to your Dodge Defence because your body loses some mobility.

INSPIRED LEADER (GENERAL)

Followers flock to you. You excel in recruiting and inspiring cohorts and followers.

Prerequisites: Cha 13, Leadership.

Benefit: You gain a +2 modifier to your Leadership and Reputation scores. You may also have two cohorts.

INSULTING (GENERAL)

You attack a target through insults and goading.

Prerequisites: Cha 13.

Benefit: You speak with a barbed tongue as an attack action and make a Charisma check adding half your soldier level; the target makes an opposed Will saving throw and, if you win, the target is dazed (unable to act, can defend normally) for 1 round. The target must have an Intelligence score of 3 or higher to be susceptible, must be within 30 feet and must be able to hear and understand you.

OFF-HAND WEAPON EXPERT (GENERAL)

Skilled in the use of off-hand weaponry, a secondary weapon can be just as lethal as any other when in your hands.

Prerequisites: Dex 13, base attack bonus +4 or higher.

Benefit: When you strike an opponent with a second weapon in your off-hand, you may add your normal Strength bonus to the damage roll.

Normal: When a character deals damage with a weapon in their off-hand, they add only one-half of their normal Strength bonus.

PARAGON OF LOYALTY (GENERAL)

You are a shining example of loyalty and you are a great influence to those who share your allegiances.

rolls. This number may not exceed your base attack bonus. The penalty on your Defence and the bonus on damage apply until your next action. The use of Reckless Attack may be combined with the Power Attack feat.

RIPOSTE (GENERAL)

You may attempt to turn a successful parry into an additional attack against your opponent.

Prerequisites: Parry, base attack bonus +6 or higher.

Benefit: If you are using your Parry Defence and an opponent misses you this round, you may make a free melee attack against the opponent you parried. The attack is at your highest base attack bonus and all normal modifiers apply. No matter how many times an opponent misses you due to your Parry Defence, you can make no more than one riposte per round.

SCAN THE CROWD (GENERAL)

You practice looking for threats in crowded situations.

Benefit: When you look for a possible threat in a group of five or more people, you receive a +2 competence bonus to all Spot and Sense Motive checks.

SNAP JUDGEMENT (GENERAL)

You can quickly read another person's mannerisms.

Prerequisites: Diplomacy 5 ranks, Listen 5 ranks, Sense Motive 5 ranks, Spot 5 ranks.

Benefit: You gain a +4 competence bonus to Sense Motive checks, +6 if you possess any levels of the noble class or have the Noble Blood feat from *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos*.

SNIPER'S EYE (GENERAL)

You have a keen eye and know just how to take advantage of an ambush.

Prerequisites: Dex 13, Alertness, Point Blank Shot.

Benefits: You gain a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls when attacking with a ranged weapon. In order to gain the benefits of this feat, you must be firing at an opponent who is within point blank range (usually 30 feet) and who is flat-footed or otherwise denied his Dexterity bonus.

Special: A soldier or nomad may select this feat as a soldier or nomad bonus feat.



Prerequisites: You must have an Allegiance to someone or something.

Benefits: You receive a +4 competence bonus to Diplomacy checks when dealing with or speaking to characters who share at least one Allegiance with you.

POWER BULL RUSH (GENERAL)

You know how to use weight in a charge to your advantage.

Prerequisites: Improved Bull Rush.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus to melee damage when charging and a +5 bonus to the opposed Strength check when the character initiates a Bull Rush.

RECKLESS ATTACK (GENERAL)

You go wild in close combat, heedless of danger as you channel every ounce of your skill into slaying your enemies as quickly as possible. Your attacks become crazed and there are few opponents who can withstand the reckless power of your blows.

Prerequisites: Str 15, Power Attack.

Benefit: On your action, before making attack rolls for a round, you may choose to subtract a number from your Defence and add the same number to all melee damage



SYNERGIST (GENERAL)

You have a knack for getting people to work together.

Prerequisites: Cha 13, Formation Combat.

Benefit: If you spend a full round directing your allies and make a Charisma check (DC 15) you provide all of your allies within 30 feet with a +2 bonus on their attacks. The bonus lasts for a number of rounds equal to your Charisma modifier. You may use this a number of times per day equal to your Charisma modifier.

TOUGH AS NAILS (GENERAL)

Some individuals simply refuse to fall unconscious, no matter how much or how hard you batter them.

Prerequisites: Diehard.

Benefit: You are unaffected by nonlethal damage caused by melee weapons, grapples or unarmed strikes. Weather-related nonlethal damage, drowning nonlethal damage, and so on, affect you normally.

Special: This revised version of Tough as Nails supersedes the version appearing in *Conan: The Road of Kings*.

TRUE HORSEMAN (GENERAL)

You trust your horse's instincts more than your own, using them to guide your reactions.

Prerequisites: Dex 13, Ride 5 ranks.

Benefit: You may make a Ride check and use the result in place of any Reflex saving throw when mounted. This benefit applies both to you and your mount. Also, the number of ranks you have in Ride replaces your Reflex save modifier in regards to Initiative.

UNARMED MULTI-ATTACK (GENERAL)

Your barrage of unarmed attacks is very hard to avoid.

Prerequisites: Improved Unarmed Strike, Greater Weapon Focus (unarmed), Improved Two-Weapon Combat, Two-Weapon Combat, Weapon Focus (unarmed), base attack +11 or higher.

Benefit: When you perform your full attack action with nothing but unarmed attacks, the base attack bonuses for your second, third and (if available) fourth attacks with both primary and offhand attacks are reduced by -2 instead of -5. After performing this attack, the character is fatigued for the rest of the encounter. For example, a 14th level soldier has a base attack bonus of +14/+9/+4; with the Unarmed Multi-Attack feat, the bonus becomes +14/+12/+10. The resulting full attack sequence, including all off-hand attacks provided by the Improved Two-Weapon Combat feat would be +12/+10/+8 for each hand (totalling +12/+12/+10/+10/+8/+8) before applying ability modifiers and the bonuses from Weapon Focus and Greater Weapon Focus.

By Right of Birth

Noble Multiclassing Options

THE NOBLE CLASS is a versatile concept in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*. The skill rules in *Conan the Roleplaying Game* further permit customisation by allowing any skill points gained from high Intelligence scores to be spent on any skill as though it were a class skill. Still further, nobles can take levels in other classes to complement their own social mastery or further expand their skills and special qualities. This chapter presents possible ways to combine the noble with the rest of the classes presented in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, giving advice on feat and racial choices and other options available when the character gains new abilities from new levels in alternative classes.

This book assumes that the character's main focus is the noble aspect, taking levels in other classes to alter their basic noble concept slightly. Other character classes taking levels in noble to compliment their primary focus will be covered in later chapters or in other *Conan the Roleplaying Game* supplements. The advancement rates offered herein are not to be taken as the final word on the subject but merely as guidelines to meet a particular character concept.

NOBLE SAVAGE (NOBLE/BARBARIAN)

Occasionally barbarian tribes make off with noble captives, raising the children as members of their own tribes. When these characters return to civilisation they find themselves in a foreign land, fitting in nowhere. They are torn between their noble heritage and birthright and their barbaric upbringing. Even though they now live in their birth society, the call of the wild still sings in their hearts and they must occasionally strip the veneer of civilisation and dive into the forests, mountains or savannahs of childhood barbarian life until they feel the need to return to civilisation. They will always be seen as outsiders but will often be admired for their strength and endurance.

STRENGTHS

A noble savage gains a number of benefits from adding barbarian levels to his noble class.

- ❖ **Crimson Mist:** This helps the savage in Terror-fraught situations.



- ❖ **Improved Combat Capability:** The noble savage has an overall better base attack bonus than a straight classed noble.
- ❖ **Improved Hit Dice:** The barbarian's d10 hit dice gives the noble savage better average hit points than a similarly levelled noble.
- ❖ **Strong Dodge Bonus:** After a slow start, the noble savage is better at dodging blows than most nobles of the same character level.
- ❖ **Stronger Fort and Ref Saves:** The noble savage is more durable and more reflexive than a straight-classed noble, allowing him a better chance to survive massive damage and have a better Initiative.
- ❖ **Trap Sense:** The barbarian's ability to sense traps helps him in enemy territories.
- ❖ **Versatility:** This barbarian power helps the noble when he loses his temper in a social setting, allowing him to club a snide nobleman with a plate or goblet if needed.

The Noble Savage (Noble/Barbarian)

Level	Class	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	Noble 1	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+2	Title, Rank Hath Its Privileges, Wealth, (character feat)
2 nd	Barbarian 1	+1	+0	+0	+2	+2	+2	Track, Fearless, Versatility (-2 penalty)
3 rd	Noble 2	+2	+0	+1	+2	+2	+3	Special Regional Feature +1, (character feat)
4 th	Barbarian 2	+3	+1	+1	+3	+3	+3	Bite Sword, Crimson Mist, (single ability increase)
5 th	Noble 3	+4	+2	+1	+4	+4	+3	—
6 th	Barbarian 3	+5	+3	+2	+4	+4	+4	Trap Sense +1, Endurance, (character feat, all ability increase)
7 th	Noble 4	+6/+1	+3	+3	+4	+4	+5	Social Ability
8 th	Barbarian 4	+7/+2	+4	+3	+5	+5	+5	Uncanny Dodge, (single ability increase)
9 th	Noble 5	+8/+3	+4	+3	+5	+5	+5	Lead By Example +2, (character feat)
10 th	Barbarian 5	+8/+3	+4	+3	+5	+5	+5	Mobility, (all ability increase)
11 th	Noble 6	+9/+4	+5	+4	+6	+6	+6	Enhanced Leadership
12 th	Barbarian 6	+10/+5	+6	+5	+7	+7	+7	Trap Sense +2, Diehard (character feat, single ability increase)
13 th	Noble 7	+11/+6/+1	+6	+5	+7	+7	+7	Special Regional Feature +2
14 th	Barbarian 7	+12/+7/+2	+7	+5	+7	+7	+7	Versatility (no penalty), (all ability increase)
15 th	Noble 8	+13/+8/+3	+8	+6	+7	+7	+8	(Character feat)
16 th	Barbarian 8	+14/+9/+4	+9	+7	+8	+8	+8	Improved Uncanny Dodge, (single ability increase)
17 th	Noble 9	+15/+10/+5	+9	+7	+9	+9	+8	Social Ability
18 th	Barbarian 9	+15/+10/+5	+9	+7	+9	+9	+9	Trap Sense +3, (character feat, all ability increase)
19 th	Noble 10	+16/+11/+6/+1	+9	+8	+9	+9	+10	Lead By Example +4
20 th	Noble 11	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+8	+9	+9	+10	Do You Know Who I Am? (single ability increase)

WEAKNESSES

The noble savage character has a few weaknesses.

- ☒ **Weak Parry Bonus:** The noble savage is much less capable of parrying attacks than a single-class noble.
- ☒ **Weaker Will Save:** The noble savage is less strong-willed than most nobles of the same character level, diminishing the usefulness of the Crimson Mist ability.

RECOMMENDED OPTIONS

As the character combines noble with barbarian levels, there are some options he can take to optimise the mixture of both classes' abilities.

- ☒ Appropriate social abilities for the noble savage include *Refuge*, which would be his adopted barbaric homeland, and *Reputation*, as his return to society would be the talk of the town.
- ☒ With the first level of barbarian, the character should take ranks in the Background Skills of the adoptive barbarian race. For example, a Pictish-raised Hyborian

would take ranks in Jump, Hide and Tumble upon taking his 2nd level.

RACES

Characters combining the noble and barbarian classes can come from almost any country, but there are those who stand as exemplars and exceptions to this.

- ☒ Cimmerians, Darfari, Himelian Tribesmen, Wazuli, Bossonians, Kushites, Northern Black Kingdom tribesmen, Ghanata, Nordheimir, Picts, Southern Islanders or Southern Black Kingdom tribesmen do not make suitable noble savages. All of these races have noble as a prohibited class at 1st level and do not have the social conditions necessary to bring about a class of noble savages.

VARIANT RULES

The following rules variants are intended for multiclass noble/barbarians only and reflect the special training an exile might receive in the course of his adventuring career.

- ☒ **Class Skills:** Upon achieving 1st level in barbarian, the noble savage adds Jump, Move Silently and Climb to his noble class skill list. Upon achieving 2nd level as a noble,

the noble savage adds Knowledge (nobility) and Sense Motive to his barbarian class skill list.

- ❖ **Call of the Wild:** The savage passions of the deep forest still beat within the character's breast. He gains a +2 circumstance bonus to all Diplomacy and Sense Motive checks made toward barbarians and nomads. Additionally, he gains a +1 racial bonus to all Tumble and Jump checks. This is taken in place of Bite Sword. The character must have the Special Regional Feature of the noble class.
- ❖ **Special Regional Feature:** The Games Master may allow the character to pick a barbarian weapon and/or skill for the Regional bonus of the noble class.

EXILE (NOBLE/BORDERER)

Not everyone who lives on the fringes of civilisation in the guise of the borderer does so because they love the frontier or because they have wanderlust and need to explore the uncharted wildernesses. Some take up the mantle of the borderer because they must. They have been driven from their homes and their noble titles. They are exiles. These nobles may have fallen into extreme disfavour (or worse, their families may have done so, resulting in the exile of an entire House) or their fief may have been destroyed by barbarians or rivals, leaving them without land and labour.

Those nobles who are exiles follow the borderer class not because they want to but because they must in order to survive. They are charismatic and driven leaders, skilled warriors who wander the outskirts of the frontier, gathering soldiers and followers to their banner in hopes of reclaiming

their heritage. The driving passion of the exile is the need to recover what was lost or to preserve what little remains of his birthright. He will actively participate in adventures that will either advance his quest or boost his Reputation as a warrior and a leader.

Alternatively, the exile can be the reluctant noble, fleeing to the frontier to avoid a destiny he fears he cannot live up to or one he considers too abhorrent to even consider accepting. Exiles of this sort are often conflicted, simultaneously yearning for the role they abandoned while running from it as fast and as far as they can.

STRENGTHS

An exile gains a number of benefits from adding borderer levels to his noble class, the following being the most important for the role of the exiled nobleman:

- ❖ **Combat Style:** The borderer's combat styles offer the noble some additional feats he may not otherwise qualify for.
- ❖ **Favoured Terrain:** The exile gains bonuses to Dodge Defence as well as circumstance bonuses to several useful skills.
- ❖ **Feats:** The borderer class offers a few bonus feats to aid the character concept of an exile.
- ❖ **Improved Combat Advancement:** The exile has a better chance to hit opponents than a straight class noble. Also, the borderer's d10 Hit Dice gives the exile more hit points every other level (on average) than a straight class noble.
- ❖ **Improved Dodge:** The exile has a slightly stronger dodge bonus than a straight-class noble. When combined with favoured terrain bonuses, this becomes a clearer strength.
- ❖ **Much Stronger Fort Save:** The exile is tough and rigorous. He has a much tougher Fortitude save than a straight-class noble.
- ❖ **Much Stronger Reflex Save:** The exile is also quick on his feet, boasting a much stronger Reflex save progression than the straight-class noble.

WEAKNESSES

The exile has the following weaknesses.

- ❖ **Weak Will Saves:** Exiles have a slower Will save progression than a straight-classed noble.

RECOMMENDED OPTIONS

As the character combines borderer and noble levels, there are some options he can take to optimise the mixture of both classes' abilities.

- ❖ Most exiled nobles start out their careers in hiding, so ranks in Hide and Survival are most



The Exile (Noble/Borderer)

Level	Class	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	Noble 1	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+2	Title, Rank Hath Its Privileges, Wealth, (character feat)
2 nd	Borderer 1	+1	+0	+0	+2	+2	+2	Track, Favoured Terrain +1
3 rd	Borderer 2	+2	+1	+1	+3	+3	+2	Combat Style, (character feat)
4 th	Noble 2	+3	+1	+2	+3	+3	+3	Special Regional Feature +1, (Single ability increase)
5 th	Borderer 3	+4	+1	+2	+3	+3	+4	Endurance
6 th	Noble 3	+5	+2	+2	+4	+4	+4	(Character feat, all ability increase)
7 th	Borderer 4	+6/+1	+3	+3	+5	+5	+4	Favoured Terrain +2
8 th	Noble 4	+7/+2	+3	+4	+5	+5	+5	Social Ability, (single ability increase)
9 th	Borderer 5	+8/+3	+3	+4	+5	+5	+5	Improved Combat Style, (character feat)
10 th	Noble 5	+8/+3	+3	+4	+5	+5	+5	Lead By Example +2, (all ability increase)
11 th	Borderer 6	+9/+4	+4	+5	+6	+6	+6	Diehard
12 th	Noble 6	+10/+5	+5	+6	+7	+7	+7	Enhanced Leadership, (character feat, single ability increase)
13 th	Borderer 7	+11/+6/+1	+5	+6	+7	+7	+7	Second Favoured Terrain +1, Guide
14 th	Noble 7	+12/+7/+2	+5	+6	+7	+7	+7	Special Regional Feature +2, (all ability increase)
15 th	Borderer 8	+13/+8/+3	+6	+7	+8	+8	+7	Favoured Terrain +3, (character feat)
16 th	Noble 8	+14/+9/+4	+7	+8	+8	+8	+8	(Single ability increase)
17 th	Borderer 9	+15/+10/+5	+7	+8	+8	+8	+9	Swift Tracker
18 th	Noble 9	+15/+10/+5	+7	+8	+9	+9	+9	Social Ability, (character feat, all ability increase)
19 th	Borderer 10	+16/+11/+6/+1	+8	+9	+10	+10	+9	Bonus Feat
20 th	Noble 10	+17/+12/+7/+2	+8	+10	+10	+10	+10	Lead By Example +4

appropriate. He will probably have ranks in Diplomacy and Knowledge (nobility).

- Some appropriate feats for an exile might be: Animal Affinity, Dodge, Endurance, Iron Will, Leadership, Negotiator, Persuasive, Quick Draw, Skill Focus (any Charisma based skill) and Weapon Focus.

RACES

Characters combining the noble and borderer classes can come from almost any country, but there are those who stand as exemplars and exceptions to this.

- Hyborians (save for Gundermen, Hyperboreans and Argosseans) are excellent choices for an exile because both classes are favoured. Bossonians are not likely to have exiled nobles, however, because noble is a prohibited class. Taurans make excellent exiles; borderer is a favoured class for Taurans.
- The tall Chaga make a nice racial type for an exile. Living in the wilds of Kush, their nobles may have to have above average survival abilities. Noble is a favoured class for the Chaga.
- Hawk-nosed Stygian exiles usually use the archery Combat Style. They have noble for a favoured class and often live in the deserts of Stygia or down in Kush. Others make their

way to Zamboula and may live among Zuagir or *Kozaki* tribes.

- Vendhyan exiles may find themselves living among the Iranistani or the Himelian hillmen. They should take ranks in skills that emulate those lifestyles. Those among the Iranistani should take at least two ranks in Appraise, Intimidate and Sense Motive and might take the Iranistani Crossbow combat style presented in *Conan: Hyboria's Fiercest*. Those among the hillmen should take at least two ranks in Climb, Hide and Move Silently.
- Cimmerians, Darfari, Himelian Tribesmen, Wazuli, Bossonians, Kushites, Northern Black Kingdom tribesmen, Ghanata, Nordheimir, Picts, Southern Islanders or Southern Black Kingdom tribesmen do not make suitable exiles. All of these races have noble as a prohibited class at 1st level and do not have the social conditions necessary to bring about a class of exiled nobles.

VARIANT RULES

The following rules variants are intended for multiclass noble/borderers only and reflect the special training an exile might receive in the course of his adventuring career.

- Class Skills:** Upon achieving 1st level in borderer, the exile adds Knowledge (geography), Move Silently and Search to his noble class skill list. Upon achieving 2nd

level as a noble, the exile adds Diplomacy and Sense Motive to his borderer class skill list.

- ❖ **Guided by Destiny:** The exile truly believes that he is destined to restore the legacy of his forefathers and so he works tirelessly towards achieving that aim. Once per day the exile can re-roll any failed attack roll, saving throw or skill check; in order to use this ability, the exile must declare that he is using it immediately after the results of the first roll are known. The new check is made with the same bonuses as the failed check and the new result must be accepted, whether the re-roll is successful or not.

CAVALIER (NOBLE/NOMAD)

The cavalier is a noble who has added nomad levels to his class. The cavalier is a master of civilised mounted combat, rivalling knights and other mounted soldiers or nobles. Cavaliers train in mounted combat and chivalry. They are not mere armoured cavalry. Cavaliers are unrivalled mounted knights, noblemen who are far more at home on their horses than most knights. The character places honour and bravery above his own life. Only noblemen can become cavaliers for such honour does not belong to a mere commoner.

STRENGTHS

A cavalier gains a number of benefits from adding nomad levels to his noble class, the following being the most important for the role of the noble:

- ❖ **Much Stronger Fortitude Save:** The cavalier is tough and rigorous. He has a much tougher Fortitude Save than a straight-class noble.
- ❖ **Much Stronger Reflex Save:** The cavalier is also quick on his feet, boasting a much stronger Reflex Save progression than the straight-class noble.



- ❖ **Improved Combat Advancement:** The cavalier has a better chance to hit opponents than a straight class noble. Also, the nomad's d10 Hit Dice gives the cavalier more hit points every other level (on average) than a straight class noble.
- ❖ **Favoured Terrain:** The cavalier gains bonuses to Dodge Defence as well as circumstance bonuses to several useful skills.
- ❖ **Nomad Charge:** The cavalier can charge his mount with greater skill than a straight class noble mounted on a horse.
- ❖ **Improved Dodge:** The cavalier has a slightly stronger dodge bonus than a straight class noble. When combined with favoured terrain bonuses, this becomes a clearer strength.
- ❖ **Feats:** The nomad class offers a few bonus feats to aid the character concept of a mounted noble warrior.

WEAKNESSES

The cavalier has a few weaknesses:

- ❖ **Slower Will Save:** The cavalier has a slightly slower progression of Will saves than a single classed noble, breaking even for many levels.

RECOMMENDED OPTIONS

As the character combines barbarian and nomad levels, there are some options he can take to optimise the mixture of both classes' abilities.

- ❖ The cavalier needs his mount, so he should choose some skills that create synergies with other skills and feats to protect his mount. An excellent combination is to put 5 ranks in Handle Animal, maximise his Ride skill and take Mounted Combat and Skill Focus (Ride) for feats. The Mounted Combat feat allows a character to negate a successful melee hit against his mount by making a Ride check. Putting 5 ranks into Handle Animal gives the cavalier a +2 synergy bonus in Ride. Taking the Skill Focus (Ride) gives the character a further +3 bonus to the Ride check. By taking Animal Affinity, the Ride check gains another +2 bonus. By 2nd level, a cavalier could be making Ride checks at +12, not counting Dexterity or any further racial bonuses.
- ❖ Take feats to enhance the character's mounted capabilities. Mounted Combat, Animal Affinity, Weapon Focus (heavy lance) and Improved Critical (heavy lance) are all useful feats for the mounted warrior.
- ❖ Cavaliers often take Weapon Focus in two or three of their preferred weapons, usually broadswords, arming swords, scimitars, heavy lances and light maces.
- ❖ Cavaliers should have a code of honour. The codes of honour presented in *Conan the Roleplaying Game* and other supplements all suffice.

The Cavalier (Noble/Nomad)

Level	Class	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	Noble 1	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+2	Title, Rank Hath Its Privileges, Wealth, (character feat)
2 nd	Nomad 1	+1	+0	+0	+2	+2	+2	Track, Favoured Terrain +1, Born to the Saddle
3 rd	Noble 2	+2	+0	+1	+2	+2	+3	Special Regional Feature +1, (character feat)
4 th	Nomad 2	+3	+1	+2	+3	+3	+3	Bonus Feat, (single ability increase)
5 th	Noble 3	+4	+2	+2	+4	+4	+3	—
6 th	Nomad 3	+5	+2	+2	+4	+4	+4	Endurance, (character feat, all ability increase)
7 th	Noble 4	+6/+1	+2	+3	+4	+4	+5	Social Ability
8 th	Nomad 4	+7/+2	+3	+4	+5	+5	+5	Nomad Charge +1, Favoured Terrain +2, (single ability increase)
9 th	Noble 5	+7/+2	+3	+4	+5	+5	+5	Lead By Example +2, (character feat)
10 th	Nomad 5	+8/+3	+3	+4	+5	+5	+5	Mobility, (all ability increase)
11 th	Noble 6	+9/+4	+4	+5	+6	+6	+6	Enhanced Leadership
12 th	Nomad 6	+10/+5	+5	+6	+7	+7	+7	Diehard, (character feat, single ability increase)
13 th	Noble 7	+11/+6/+1	+5	+6	+7	+7	+7	Special Regional Feature +2
14 th	Nomad 7	+12/+7/+2	+5	+6	+7	+7	+7	Bonus Feat, (all ability increase)
15 th	Noble 8	+13/+8/+3	+6	+7	+7	+7	+8	(Character feat)
16 th	Nomad 8	+14/+9/+4	+7	+8	+8	+8	+8	Favoured Terrain +3, (single ability increase)
17 th	Noble 9	+14/+9/+4	+7	+8	+9	+9	+8	Social Ability
18 th	Nomad 9	+15/+10/+5	+7	+8	+9	+9	+9	Second Favoured Terrain +1, (character feat, all ability increase)
19 th	Noble 10	+16/+11/+6/+1	+7	+9	+9	+9	+10	Lead By Example +4
20 th	Nomad 10	+17/+12/+7/+2	+8	+10	+10	+10	+10	Improved Mobility (single ability increase)

RACES

Characters combining the noble and nomad classes can come from almost any country, but there are those who stand as exemplars and exceptions to this.

- ☒ Hyborians are well suited for the whole concept of chivalrous cavaliers, as both classes can be treated as favoured classes. Poitanians, Aquilonians, Brythunians and Nemedians especially are suited for this character concept.
- ☒ Turanians and Hyrkanians are excellent candidates for the cavalier combination. The nomad is the favoured class for these races, plus they have bonuses to archery and have Ride and Survival as Background Skills.
- ☒ Likewise the Shemites make renowned cavaliers. Again, nomad is the favoured class and Ride and Survival are Background Skills. Their bonuses with bows and Spot checks only increase their abilities with this class combination.
 - ☒ Cimmerians, Darfari, Himelian Tribesmen, Wazuli, Bossonians, Kushites, Northern Black Kingdom tribesmen, Ghanata, Nordheimir, Picts, Southern Islanders or Southern Black Kingdom tribesmen do not make suitable cavaliers. All of these races have noble as a prohibited class at 1st level and do not have the social conditions necessary to bring about a class of cavaliers.

VARIANT RULES

The following rules variants are intended for multiclass noble/nomads only and reflect the special training a cavalier might receive in the course of his adventuring career.

- ☒ **Indomitable Mount:** Upon gaining 6th noble level, instead of Enhanced Leadership, the character may elect to take Indomitable Mount. Any mount trained by the character has been inured to war and combat. Whilst the character is riding such a mount, it is considered to have the Improved Initiative feat and benefits from a bonus to its saving throws equal to the character's Charisma modifier. The character must have Nomad Charge +1 to take this ability instead of Enhanced Leadership. Cavaliers tend to be more interested in their deeds of bravery and in their horses to be much concerned about being exceptional leaders or developing networks of social allies.

NOBLE OF THE COAST (NOBLE/PIRATE)

Sometimes nobles find themselves unable to rule at home, so they take to ruling a kingdom of ships and pirates, sometimes commanding large fleets as an admiral of sorts. These characters believe they are meant to rule because they

are born into a position of authority. This is at odds with most pirate concepts of leadership, who prefer to be led by the strongest or the oldest. As Bêlit shows, if a noble can prove his leadership is profitable, then leadership is more assured. However, the noble of the coast is not that strong of a combatant, so, like Bêlit, one should have a powerful first mate to defend the character's claims to authority. Charisma is the important attribute here – the character must inspire his followers to follow his lead. Bêlit's charisma was such that her horde thought her a goddess. This is the height to which these characters aspire.

STRENGTHS

The noble gains a number of benefits from adding pirate levels to his noble class, the following being the most important for the role of the noble of the coast:

- ❖ **Improved Saving Throws:** The lord of the seas has improved Fortitude and Reflex saving throws.
- ❖ **Seamanship:** This helps the noble with his weaker defence when on ships.
- ❖ **Ferocious Attack:** The initial boost to Initiative, melee attacks and damage gives the noble of the coast the edge over a standard noble. The additional attack gained later is another advantage the noble of the coast has over the land noble.
- ❖ **To Sail a Road of Blood and Slaughter:** The free action *coup de grace* gives this noble the ability to kill fallen opponents quickly.



- ❖ **Sneak Attack:** Although less useful than the sneak attacks of the mastermind option (see page 91), this is a powerful ability given to the noble of the coast at mid-levels.
- ❖ **Hit Dice:** The pirate and the noble both have d8 Hit Dice, so the noble does not dilute his hit points by taking levels in pirate.

WEAKNESSES

The noble dilutes his combat ability by taking up pirate levels, adding the following weaknesses:

- ❖ **Slower Base Attack Bonus Progression:** The noble of the coast has a slower rate of progression for base attack bonus than a straight class noble. He is best used as a charismatic leader. Even the renowned Queen of the Black Coast, Bêlit, rarely joined in on attacks, using Conan for her combat needs.
- ❖ **Weaker Will Save:** The noble of the coast has a weaker Will save than straight-classed nobles.

RECOMMENDED OPTIONS

As the character combines noble and pirate levels, there are some options he can take to optimise the mixture of both classes' abilities.

- ❖ Call the character something appropriate. Bêlit called herself the Queen of the Black Coast. A moustached Zingaran duke with a fleet of ships trading with the Picts and preying on those trying to do so without his permission may call himself the Duke of the Pictish Coasts or a dusky-skinned Stygian privateer may call himself the Prince of the Stygian Coast.
- ❖ Useful feats for the nobles of the coast include Improved Bull Rush. Bull rushing opponents off the edge of ships is an excellent choice of tactic, especially if the opponent is heavily armoured. Athletic is another good choice of feat, bolstering both Climb and Swim checks. Weapon Focus is a good feat to use, especially in conjunction with a finesse weapon. Use feats from *Conan: Pirate Isles*, such as Hard Hands. If your character is Zingaran, take Freebooter's Fortune at 1st level so the character qualifies for Up the Rigging, Wave Dance and Viper's Speed later.
- ❖ The character should try to get the prerequisites for as many combat manoeuvres from *Conan: Pirate Isles* as he can. Also, taking ranks in Jump, Tumble and Swim, increase the character's Reputation, as do feats such as Improved Grapple, Leadership and Combat Reflexes.
- ❖ The noble of the coast should take the Leadership feat as soon as possible (6th character level). Filling a ship full of followers and a cohort gives the character a more reliable crew

The Noble of the Coast (Noble/Pirate)

Level	Class	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	Noble 1	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+2	Title, Rank Hath Its Privileges, Wealth, (character feat)
2 nd	Pirate 1	+0	+0	+0	+2	+2	+2	Seamanship +1, Ferocious Attack
3 rd	Noble 2	+1	+0	+1	+2	+2	+3	Special Regional Feature +1, (character feat)
4 th	Pirate 2	+2	+1	+2	+3	+3	+3	Pirate Code, To Sail a Road of Blood and Slaughter, (single ability increase)
5 th	Noble 3	+3	+2	+2	+4	+4	+3	—
6 th	Pirate 3	+4	+3	+2	+4	+4	+4	Sneak Attack +1d6, Sneak Subdual, (character feat, all ability increase)
7 th	Noble 4	+5	+3	+3	+4	+4	+5	Social Ability
8 th	Pirate 4	+6/+1	+4	+4	+5	+5	+5	Uncanny Dodge, (single ability increase)
9 th	Noble 5	+6/+1	+4	+4	+5	+5	+5	Lead By Example +2, (character feat)
10 th	Pirate 5	+6/+1	+4	+4	+5	+5	+5	Mobility, (all ability increase)
11 th	Noble 6	+7/+2	+5	+5	+6	+6	+6	Enhanced Leadership
12 th	Pirate 6	+8/+3	+6	+6	+7	+7	+7	Sneak Attack +2d6, Seamanship +2 (character feat, single ability increase)
13 th	Noble 7	+9/+4	+6	+6	+7	+7	+7	Special Regional Feature +2
14 th	Pirate 7	+10/+5	+7	+6	+7	+7	+7	Bite Sword, Ferocious Attack, (all ability increase)
15 th	Noble 8	+11/+6/+1	+8	+7	+7	+7	+8	(Character feat)
16 th	Pirate 8	+12/+7/+2	+9	+8	+8	+8	+8	Improved Uncanny Dodge, Poison Resistance +1, (single ability increase)
17 th	Noble 9	+12/+7/+2	+9	+8	+9	+9	+8	Social Ability
18 th	Pirate 9	+12/+7/+2	+9	+8	+9	+9	+9	Sneak Attack +3d6, (character feat, all ability increase)
19 th	Noble 10	+13/+8/+3	+9	+9	+9	+9	+10	Lead By Example +4
20 th	Noble 11	+14/+9/+4	+10	+9	+9	+9	+10	Do You Know Who I Am? (single ability increase)

than one manned by complete strangers and new recruits.

- ☒ The noble of the coast should strive to get the Navigation feat as soon as possible (9th character level). Most pirate kings and queens usually act as pilot of their ships, reluctant to permit anyone else to determine the ship's course.

RACES

Characters combining the noble and pirate classes can come from almost any country, but there are those who stand as exemplars and exceptions to this.

- ☒ Hyborians treat all class combinations as favoured classes and can use Adaptability and their choices of Background Skills to great benefit. Bossonians cannot take this multiclass as both noble and pirate are prohibited to them at 1st level. Argosseans or Barachans, however, make excellent nobles of the coast as pirate is a favoured class for them.

- ☒ Pirate is a favoured class for the dark-haired Zingarans, who also have a bonus to sneak attacks, giving the Zingaran noble of the coast a powerful advantage over low-level nobles of the coast of other races.

- ☒ Bêlit was a Shemite noble of the coast called the Queen of the Black Coast. The Shemites' bonus to Appraise may come in handy, as well as their bonuses with the bow, which stack with the Special Regional Feature of the Shemite noble.

- ☒ The black-hearted Stygian noble families have vested interest in maintaining some level of control over trade passing between the Black Coast and the Hyborian nations of the decadent West. Noble is a favoured class of the Stygians.

- ☒ Vendhya has a lot of coastal land and noble is a favoured class for the people of this mysterious land.

- ☒ Cimmerians, Darfari, Himelian tribesmen, Wazuli, Bossonians, Kushites, Northern Black Kingdom tribesmen, Ghanata, Nordheimir, Picts, Southern Islanders or Southern Black Kingdom tribesmen do not make suitable coastal nobles. All of these races have noble as a prohibited class at 1st level and do not have the social conditions necessary to bring about a class of coastal nobles.

VARIANT RULES

The following rules variants are intended for multiclass noble/pirates only and reflect the special training a noble

of the coast might receive in the course of his adventuring career.

- ❖ **Class Skills:** Upon achieving 1st level in pirate, the noble of the coast adds Profession (sailor), Tumble and Use Rope to his noble class skill list. Upon achieving 2nd level as a noble, the noble of the coast adds Diplomacy and Sense Motive to his pirate class skill list.
- ❖ **Robust:** The noble of the coast is more weathered and robust than sedentary nobles who live perfumed lives in mansions. He gains a number of hit points equal to his pirate level as soon as he selects this ability. Thereafter, the noble of the coast gains +1 hit points with each level of pirate he gains, including levels past 10th character level. This replaces a social ability.

DILETTANTE (NOBLE/SCHOLAR)

The dilettante is a noble who decides to do more than dabble in sorcery but is not so anti-social as to divest himself of his social standing and lifestyle. He is not an expert at sorcery but acts as though he is, his arrogance might cause him to present himself as though a master of the Black Ring, although many mid-level acolytes of that darksome order would laugh to hear such absurd claims. Non-spellcasting dilettantes often portray themselves as quite the expert on any given subject, as though they were true scholars in their field. The dilettante's wealth is spent on esoteric and rare tomes many straight class scholars can only dream about owning. He not only knows about some of the world's largest collections and libraries, he usually has the connections to gain access to these collections and libraries. As with any noble, his network of connections is one of his greatest strengths and this is no less so for the noble/scholar. He is no mere hedge-wizard or crass barbarian shaman, but blooded from one of Hyboria's finest families.

STRENGTHS

The noble gains a number of advantages by taking levels in scholar. Usually such nobles are exiled or killed when their sorceries are discovered.

- ❖ **Skill Points:** The dilettante has far more skill points than a straight-class noble. By taking the +2 skill points option in lieu of advanced spells, this strength is even further bolstered.
- ❖ **Improved Will Saves:** The dilettante is strongly wilful. The bonus Iron Will feat gained at 9th level adds to the dilettante's ability to resist manipulation.



- ❖ **Spells:** Nobles do not normally cast spells, so the scholar's spellcasting ability is a definite strength.
- ❖ **Higher Magic Attack Bonus:** Although not the equal of a single classed scholar, the dilettante's magic attack bonus is higher than a straight class noble.
- ❖ **Base Power Points:** The dilettante is simply more powerful than a noble who merely dabbles in the occult arts.

WEAKNESSES

Levels in scholar dilute the noble's combat ability, adding the following weaknesses:

- ❖ **Defence Values:** The dilettante is severely hampered in his ability to defend himself compared to the straight class noble.
- ❖ **Slow Fort and Ref Saves:** Although by 20th level the dilettante's Fortitude and Reflex saves are identical to a 20th level noble, the saves have an extremely slow start and are, at lower levels, much weaker than a similarly levelled noble.
- ❖ **Corruption Risk:** Depending on spell choices, the character is at a much higher risk of Corruption than most nobles, which can impair some of the class' strongest attributes and abilities.

RECOMMENDED OPTIONS

As the character combines noble and scholar levels, there are some options he can take to optimise the mixture of both classes' abilities:

- ❖ The character needs to put his strongest statistic into Charisma. Not only does this aid his noble abilities but also his Magic Attack Bonus. His magic attack is weaker than a straight-class scholar but a high Charisma mitigates this somewhat.
- ❖ Most dilettantes have an *Independent* background. Most masters want a more focused, reclusive acolyte or lay priest than the dilettante is able to offer. The *Pact* background is the second most used background for this type of character, although the instant Corruption point can start the process that will eventually hurt some of the noble's ability to function in society – although that does not deter the power-hungry noble willing to grasp at straws to succeed in his highly competitive social environment.
- ❖ *Ally, Family Ties, Refuge* and *Reputation* are probably going to be the most useful social skills for

The Dilettante (Noble/Scholar)

Level	Class	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Magic Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	Noble 1	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+2	Title, Rank Hath Its Privileges, Wealth, (character feat)
2 nd	Scholar 1	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+4	New Sorcery Style, Scholar, Background, Base Power Points, Knowledge Is Power
3 rd	Noble 2	+1	+0	+1	+0	+0	+0	+5	Special Regional Feature +1, (character feat)
4 th	Scholar 2	+2	+0	+1	+1	+0	+0	+6	+1 Power Point, New Sorcery Style, (single ability increase)
5 th	Noble 3	+3	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+6	—
6 th	Scholar 3	+4	+2	+2	+1	+2	+2	+6	Advanced Spell, Bonus Spell, (character feat, all ability increase)
7 th	Noble 4	+5	+2	+3	+2	+2	+2	+7	Social Ability
8 th	Scholar 4	+6/+1	+2	+3	+3	+2	+2	+8	Advanced Spell, New Sorcery Style, (single ability increase)
9 th	Noble 5	+6/+1	+2	+3	+3	+2	+2	+8	Lead By Example +2, (character feat)
10 th	Scholar 5	+6/+1	+2	+3	+3	+2	+2	+8	Advanced Spell, Iron Will, (all ability increase)
11 th	Noble 6	+7/+2	+3	+4	+3	+3	+3	+9	Enhanced Leadership
12 th	Scholar 6	+8/+3	+4	+5	+4	+4	+4	+10	Advanced Spell, +1 Power Point, Increased Maximum Power Points (triple), (character feat, single ability increase)
13 th	Noble 7	+9/+4	+4	+5	+4	+4	+4	+10	Special Regional Feature +2
14 th	Scholar 7	+10/+5	+4	+5	+4	+4	+4	+10	Advanced Spell, Bonus Spell, (all ability increase)
15 th	Noble 8	+11/+6/+1	+5	+6	+5	+4	+4	+11	(Character feat)
16 th	Scholar 8	+12/+7/+2	+6	+6	+6	+4	+4	+12	Advanced Spell, New Sorcery Style, (single ability increase)
17 th	Noble 9	+12/+7/+2	+6	+6	+6	+5	+5	+12	Social Ability
18 th	Scholar 9	+12/+7/+2	+6	+7	+6	+6	+6	+12	Advanced Spell, (character feat, all ability increase)
19 th	Noble 10	+13/+8/+3	+6	+8	+6	+6	+6	+13	Lead By Example +4
20 th	Scholar 10	+14/+9/+4	+6	+8	+7	+6	+6	+14	Advanced Spell, +1 Power Point, (single ability increase)

the dilettante. These will aid him in escaping persecution or finding new spells.

- ☒ A dilettante may use his enhanced leadership ability to begin a small cult or use them as a network to gain access to dark sorcerous libraries and collections.

RACES

Characters combining the noble and scholar classes can come from almost any country, but there are those who stand as exemplars and exceptions to this.

- ☒ Although Hyborians are suited for all class combinations, as all classes are treated as favoured classes, there are some excellent alternatives.

- ☒ An ivory-skinned Stygian noble from the ancient families has the scholar and noble as a favoured class as well as a racial bonus to using Stygian bows. Stygians have a natural

sorcerous bent and can really take advantage of this class combination. Corruption does not bother them or those in their society. One of the Stygian noble's Special Regional Features is a +1 bonus to all Magic Attack Rolls, mitigating one of the weaknesses of this class combination.

- ☒ Chaga characters have the noble class as a favoured class. Their worship of Set, along with their Kushite superstitions and witchcraft make them excellent dilettantes. Their racial bonus feat as well as their racial bonus to Perform (ritual) creates a powerful dilettante, allowing them to take advantage of both their racial bonuses and their favoured class bonuses as no other race save the Stygians. In addition to the racial bonus to Perform (ritual), Chaga gain a Special Regional bonus to that skill as a noble benefit.
- ☒ A yellow-skinned Khitan has the scholar as a favoured class and has Background Skills in Knowledge. The Khitan dilettante also has racial bonuses to Knowledge

checks and a bonus feat to help mitigate some of the disadvantages of not choosing a straight-classed scholar path. One of the Khitan Special Regional Features is a +1 to all Magic Attack Rolls, mitigating one of the weaknesses of this class combination.

- ❖ A learned Pelishtim has scholar as a favoured class. They also gain useful circumstance bonuses in several skills and have excellent bonuses with bows, helping the character succeed with ranged weapons. Having any one Knowledge skill in addition to Knowledge (arcana) as a Background Skill is also an advantage for choosing a Pelishtim dilettante character. Many learn the Immortality sorcery style from *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos*.
- ❖ Brown-skinned Vendhyan sophisticates have noble as a favoured class and many learn esoteric mysteries and strange sorceries from weird religious temples and ascetic prophets living as hermits in caves. Many learn the ancient arts of astrology, eventually taking the Cosmic Sorcery style from *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos*.
- ❖ Cimmerians, Darfari, Himelian tribesmen, Wazuli, Bossonians, Kushites, Northern Black Kingdom tribesmen, Ghanata, Nordheimir, Picts, Southern Islanders or Southern Black Kingdom tribesmen do not make suitable dilettantes. All of these races have noble as a prohibited class at 1st level and do not have the social and economic conditions necessary to bring about a class of dilettantes.

VARIANT RULES

The following rules variants are intended for multiclass noble/scholars only and reflect the special training a dilettante might receive in the course of his adventuring career.

- ❖ **Class Skills:** Upon achieving 1st level in scholar, the dilettante adds Knowledge (any), Search and Decipher Script to his noble class skill list. Upon achieving 2nd level as a noble, the dilettante adds Diplomacy and Spot to his scholar class skill list.
- ❖ **Wealth of Knowledge:** The dilettante has money to spend on the best tomes, the best locations and the best tutors. He feasts on books and uncovers forgotten knowledge with a passion few dabblers will ever achieve. When the character takes his 2nd scholar level he may take Wealth of Knowledge in lieu of a new sorcery style (the character must have the Wealth class feature). He gains the Skill Focus feat for any one Knowledge skill. In addition, he gains two skill ranks to donate to Knowledge skills. These two ranks may be spent on the same Knowledge skill or may be split across two different ones. The dilettante can never violate the maximum allowable skill ranks with these bonus ranks.

PROFESSIONAL KNIGHT (NOBLE/SOLDIER)

The knight is the mounted warrior riding down the hill to plough through hordes of infantry soldiers. They take their responsibilities seriously and are always ready to take up arms in the service of their liege lord. Early in Hyborian history, anyone who fought on horseback was a knight, even if he was a peasant or other commoner. As time went on, knights became more specialised, becoming mounted warriors who wore armour, wielded lances in addition to swords, maces or axes and who specialised in the massed cavalry charge. Active knights seek glory through combat, prestige won through war. Glory to a knight is a public testimony of martial prowess. Winning or losing a battle is a separate issue from winning glory. So long as an individual knight had an opportunity for winning glory, the knight is satisfied, regardless of winning or losing the battle. Plunder is also part of glory; carrying off piles of loot is glorious, showing the depths of an enemy's defeat and allowing the knight to distribute gifts to his followers and friends.

The younger sons of the nobility have little wealth and virtually no share in their family's estates. Options tend to be limited for the younger sons. Some enter into the clergy to support themselves, others become 'hearth sons,' directionless members of an older sibling's household swearing oaths never to marry. Others take up arms and become professional men-at-arms, hungering for the glories of the battlefield and travelling from tournament to tournament.

STRENGTHS

A professional knight gains a number of benefits from adding soldier levels to his noble class.

- ❖ **Dodge and Parry:** Both dodge and parry has a slow start but overall both scores are improved compared to a straight-class noble.
- ❖ **Fortitude Save:** Professional knights have an improved overall Fortitude save. They are tough and have a better chance to survive massive damage than straight class nobles.
- ❖ **Hit Dice:** The soldier has a higher Hit Die than the noble, giving the professional knight a few more hit points per level on average than a straight-class noble.
- ❖ **Bonus Feats:** A professional knight has far more feats than a straight-class noble.
- ❖ **Formation Combat:** A professional knight learns to fight in formation. This can be very effective if used in tandem with Special Regional Bonuses.



WEAKNESSES

A professional knight has a few drawbacks when adding soldier levels to his noble class.

- ❖ **Will Saves:** Slower initial and overall Will saves are the result of mixing these two classes. Knights are used to taking orders from feudal superiors and being subordinated. They are higher than some on the social ladder but lower than others, giving them a better Will than a simple soldier but a weaker Will than most nobles who manage to avoid military service to their liege lords.
- ❖ **Skill Points:** The soldier class has far fewer skill points per level than the noble, diluting the noble's skill base somewhat.

RECOMMENDED OPTIONS

As the professional knight combines soldier and noble levels, there are some options he can take to optimise the mixture of both classes' abilities.

- ❖ The professional knight is primarily a mounted warrior, so ranks in Ride and Handle Animal are appropriate for this character.
 - ❖ Appropriate feats for a Hyborian Age knight include: Animal Affinity, Cleave, Great Cleave, Greater Weapon Focus, Greater Weapon Specialisation, Improved Critical, Improved Initiative, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-

by Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample, Weapon Focus and Weapon Specialisation.

- ❖ Take *Heavy Cavalry* as the first Formation Combat style.
- ❖ Take Weapon Focus and Specialisation feats for weapons the character also gains a Special Regional Feature bonus for, to maximise the benefit of that noble feature.

RACES

Characters combining the noble and soldier classes can come from almost any country, but there are those who stand as exemplars and exceptions to this.

- ❖ Although Turanian and Hyrkanian nobles certainly would take Mounted Archery feats, few Hyborian nobles learn to shoot the bow from horseback.
- ❖ Swaggering Hyborian renegades make some of the best professional knight characters because both classes are favoured. Tawny-haired Gundermen and gaunt Hyperboreans make only slightly lesser professional knights.
- ❖ Vendhyan Kshatriyan knights are feared throughout the known world. They have both noble and soldier as favoured classes and are almost always specialised with the lance.
- ❖ Khitan professional knights often choose Dodge or Improved Unarmed Strike as their racial bonus feat. Dodge helps with the slow defence advancement the character has at low levels.
- ❖ War-like Meadow Shemite and Pelishtim characters do not call themselves professional knights. They call themselves *asshuri*. They have soldier as a favoured class.
- ❖ Tall, hawk-faced Stygian professional 'knights' usually favour the chariot over mounts. These nobles fight with heavy bows from the backs of their chariots.
- ❖ Swarthy Zingaran professional knights with bristling black moustaches and fiery tempers prefer the broadsword and a shield combination to a lance.
- ❖ Cimmerians, Darfari, Himelian tribesmen, Wazuli, Bossonians, Kushites, Northern Black Kingdom tribesmen, Ghanata, Nordheimir, Picts, Southern Islanders or Southern Black Kingdom tribesmen do not make good professional knights. All of these races have noble as a prohibited class at 1st level and do not have the social and economic conditions necessary to bring about a class of professional knights.

VARIANT RULES

The following rules variants are intended for multiclass noble/soldiers only and reflect the special training a professional knight might receive in the course of his adventuring career.

- ❖ **Professional Soldier:** The knight is permitted to add his noble and soldier levels together to meet the soldier level prerequisites of the following feats: Greater Weapon Specialisation and Weapon Specialisation. Thus a 2nd level noble/2nd level soldier knight character can take

The Professional Knight (Noble/Soldier)

Level	Class	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	Noble 1	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+2	Title, Rank Hath Its Privileges, Wealth, (character feat)
2 nd	Soldier 1	+1	+0	+0	+2	+0	+2	Bonus Feat
3 rd	Noble 2	+2	+0	+1	+2	+0	+3	Special Regional Feature +1, (character feat)
4 th	Soldier 2	+3	+1	+2	+3	+0	+3	Bonus Feat (single ability increase)
5 th	Noble 3	+4	+2	+2	+4	+1	+3	—
6 th	Soldier 3	+5	+2	+3	+4	+2	+4	Formation Combat, (character feat, all ability increase)
7 th	Noble 4	+6/+1	+2	+4	+4	+2	+5	Social Ability
8 th	Soldier 4	+7/+2	+3	+5	+5	+2	+5	Bonus Feat, (single ability increase)
9 th	Noble 5	+7/+2	+3	+5	+5	+2	+5	Lead By Example +2, (character feat)
10 th	Soldier 5	+8/+3	+3	+5	+5	+2	+5	(All ability increase)
11 th	Noble 6	+9/+4	+4	+6	+6	+3	+6	Enhanced Leadership
12 th	Soldier 6	+10/+5	+5	+7	+7	+4	+7	Bonus Feat, (character feat, single ability increase)
13 th	Noble 7	+11/+6/+1	+5	+7	+7	+4	+7	Special Regional Feature +2
14 th	Soldier 7	+12/+7/+2	+5	+8	+7	+4	+7	Formation Combat, (all ability increase)
15 th	Noble 8	+13/+8/+3	+6	+9	+7	+4	+8	(Character feat)
16 th	Soldier 8	+14/+9/+4	+7	+10	+8	+4	+8	Bonus Feat, (single ability increase)
17 th	Noble 9	+14/+9/+4	+7	+10	+9	+5	+8	Social Ability
18 th	Soldier 9	+15/+10/+5	+7	+10	+9	+6	+9	(Character feat, all ability increase)
19 th	Noble 10	+16/+11/+6/+1	+7	+11	+9	+6	+10	Lead By Example +4
20 th	Soldier 10	+17/+12/+7/+2	+8	+12	+10	+6	+10	Bonus Feat, (single ability increase)

Weapon Specialisation if he has the appropriate Weapon Focus feat.

- ❖ **Class Skills:** Upon achieving 1st level in soldier, the professional knight adds Search to his noble class skill list. Upon achieving 2nd level as a noble, the knight adds Diplomacy, Knowledge (nobility) and Spot to his soldier class skill list.

MASTERMIND (NOBLE/THIEF)

The mastermind is the master of forward planning. Knowledge and intelligence are the hallmarks of this criminal. He prefers to think his way into a situation of his choice or out of a situation of another's choice, rather than to force his way through situations with sword and armour. He is the antithesis of Conan the Cimmerian; the product of corrupt civilisations whereas Conan is the product of pure barbarism, a thinking man whereas Conan is an instinctive man, a man of great plans and great ambitions whereas Conan is a man of swift action and swift needs. A mastermind is the spider at the centre of a great web of plots, schemes and intrigues, the black thing lurking at the centre of a great network of criminal activity. At low levels, the mastermind is keenly aware of his limitations but quickly grow to intense arrogance as higher levels are attained. In their minds they are geniuses, undervalued prodigies who quickly grow frustrated at the perceived stupidity of those surrounding them.

STRENGTHS

By taking levels of thief in addition to his noble class, the mastermind maximises his ability to strike with near impunity. Some of the most important benefits drawn from this combination of classes follow:

- ❖ **Special Abilities:** The special abilities of the thief class adds some interesting variety to the noble class.
- ❖ **Hit Dice:** Both noble and thief share a d8 Hit Die, so the ability to take damage is not diminished by this class combination.
- ❖ **Improved Reflex Saves:** The mastermind relies on his reflexes more than a standard noble and adding thief levels to the barbarian has the benefit of increasing the Reflex saves at the cost of slightly diminishing Fortitude saves. This also has the added advantage of improving his Initiative, which is useful in light of his sneak attack ability.
- ❖ **Sneak Attack:** The mastermind strikes fast, hard and precise. He often has time for one attack before he must flee, thus the sneak attack is perfect for the mastermind, providing the noble with a devastating attack.
- ❖ **Slightly Increased Dodge Bonus:** Although he gets a horribly slow start, at high levels, the mastermind enjoys a slightly better Dodge Defence bonus than a straight class noble.
- ❖ **Skills:** The thief's large skill base provides the noble with the

means to hide and scurry effectively. He also has more defensive options, especially with the Tumble skill.

WEAKNESSES

The mastermind suffers from the following weaknesses:

- ❖ **Decreased Parry Bonus:** The mastermind, more concerned with offence than defence, has a slightly lower Parry bonus than a straight class noble. His Dodge bonus, however, is only slightly slowed.
- ❖ **Base Attack:** The base attack bonus of the thief and the noble is weak and combining the classes further weakens it, thus lowering the character's chance to hit a target.
- ❖ **Fort Saves:** The character's Fortitude saves are slightly diminished compared to a straight class noble but his Reflex saves are improved.
- ❖ **Will Saves:** The character's Will saves are diminished compared to a straight-class noble.
- ❖ **Armour Restrictions:** In order to best utilise the thief skills, including Light-Footed, the character must limit his armour options, especially if the Evasion special ability is chosen.

RECOMMENDED OPTIONS

As the character combines thief with noble levels, there are some options he can take to optimise the mixture of both classes' abilities.

- ❖ Intelligence is the primary requisite score for this character concept. His arrogance about his intelligence almost forces him to put ability increases into that score.
- ❖ Characters with this class combination concept should put ranks into Disable Device, Forgery, Intimidate, Knowledge (any) and Search. Any skill featuring Intelligence is appropriate for this character concept.
- ❖ Feats such as Alertness, Diligent, Investigator, Knowledgeable, Persuasive and Negotiator are appropriate for the mastermind. Leadership is also recommended as it allows one to create a quick network of criminals for use.
- ❖ Take special abilities such as Skill Mastery to maximise his ability to use skills, the hallmark of this class combination.

RACES

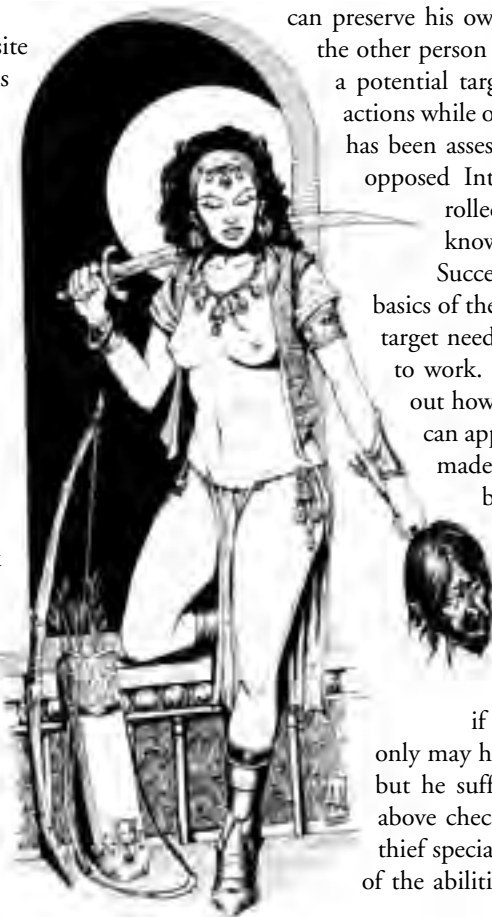
Characters combining the noble and thief classes can come from almost any country, but there are those who stand as exemplars and exceptions to this.

- ❖ Enigmatic Vendhyans and stealthy Zamorians make excellent masterminds. The noble class is favoured for the Vendhyans; they also seem mysterious, which adds an element of the exotic to this concept. The thief class is favoured for Zamorians.
- ❖ Cimmerians, Darfari, Himelian tribesmen, Wazuli, Bossonians, Kushites, Northern Black Kingdom tribesmen, Ghanata, Nordheimir, Picts, Southern Islanders or Southern Black Kingdom tribesmen do not make good masterminds. All of these races have noble as a prohibited class at 1st level and several have penalties to Intelligence, the primary score of this class combination.

VARIANT RULES

The following rules variants are intended for multiclass noble/thieves only and reflect the special training a mastermind might receive in the course of his adventuring career.

- ❖ **Pre-empt:** The mastermind anticipates the actions of others. His ingenuity is such that he can think himself into another person's mindset, using what he can assess of another person's character to make an educated guess at what they will do next before they even know what they will do. By staying one jump ahead of others, he can preserve his own skin, or exploit a mistake before the other person makes it. The character may study a potential target for three rounds and may take actions while observing the target. Once the target has been assessed, the mastermind may make an opposed Intelligence check, which should be rolled secretly, as the character will not know how well he has done at this point. Success means that he has worked out the basics of the other person's combat tactics. The target need not be engaged in combat for this to work. Once the mastermind has worked out how the other person is likely to act, he can apply a +1 insight bonus to attack rolls made against that person and a +1 insight bonus to his defence (parry or dodge) when defending against attacks made by that person. He may also apply the +1 insight bonus on any Charisma-based skill checks used against the target. These benefits last for 24 hours; if the mastermind fails the check, not only may he not attempt it again for 24 hours, but he suffers a -1 insight penalty to all the above checks, attacks and defences. This is a thief special ability and is taken instead of one of the abilities offered in *Conan the Roleplaying*



The Mastermind (Noble/Thief)

Level	Class	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	Noble 1	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+2	Title, Rank Hath Its Privileges, Wealth, (character feat)
2 nd	Thief 1	+0	+0	+0	+0	+2	+2	Sneak Attack Style, Sneak Attack +1d6/+1d8, Trap Disarming
3 rd	Noble 2	+1	+0	+1	+0	+2	+3	Special Regional Feature +1, (character feat)
4 th	Thief 2	+2	+1	+2	+0	+3	+3	Eyes of the Cat, (single ability increase)
5 th	Noble 3	+3	+2	+2	+1	+4	+3	—
6 th	Thief 3	+4	+2	+2	+2	+4	+4	Sneak Attack +2d6/+2d8, Trap Sense +1, (character feat, all ability increase)
7 th	Noble 4	+5	+2	+3	+2	+4	+5	Social Ability
8 th	Thief 4	+6/+1	+3	+4	+2	+5	+5	Sneak Attack Style, Light Footed, (single ability increase)
9 th	Noble 5	+6/+1	+3	+4	+2	+5	+5	Lead By Example +2, (character feat)
10 th	Thief 5	+6/+1	+3	+4	+2	+5	+5	Sneak Attack +3d6/+3d8, (all ability increase)
11 th	Noble 6	+7/+2	+4	+5	+3	+6	+6	Enhanced Leadership
12 th	Thief 6	+8/+3	+5	+6	+4	+7	+7	Trap Sense +2, Special Ability, (character feat, single ability increase)
13 th	Noble 7	+9/+4	+5	+6	+4	+7	+7	Special Regional Feature +2
14 th	Thief 7	+10/+5	+5	+6	+4	+7	+7	Sneak Attack +4d6/+4d8, (all ability increase)
15 th	Noble 8	+11/+6/+1	+6	+7	+4	+7	+8	(Character feat)
16 th	Thief 8	+12/+7/+2	+7	+8	+4	+8	+8	Sneak Attack Style, Poison Use, (single ability increase)
17 th	Noble 9	+12/+7/+2	+7	+8	+5	+9	+8	Social Ability
18 th	Thief 9	+12/+7/+2	+7	+8	+6	+9	+9	Sneak Attack +5d6/+5d8, Trap Sense +3 (character feat, all ability increase)
19 th	Noble 10	+13/+8/+3	+7	+9	+6	+9	+10	Lead By Example +4
20 th	Noble 11	+14/+9/+4	+8	+9	+6	+9	+10	Do You Know Who I Am? (single ability increase)

Game. It only works against targets with an Intelligence ability score of 6 or higher. This may also be taken in lieu of Eyes of the Cat or Light-Footed, but the character must have at least 2 levels of noble.

❖ **Patient Concentration:** The mastermind prefers to tackle difficult tasks by taking time and going slowly. He may take three rounds to attempt a Skill or ability score check that normally takes one round or less, during which time he must not be distracted. If something happens to distract him, he must make a Concentration check according to the usual rules (see *Conan the Roleplaying Game*). This additional time grants him a +2 circumstance bonus to the skill check. If circumstances allow, the character may take 20 and benefit from the +2 circumstance bonus but this, again, takes three times as long as it usually would. He suffers a –2 penalty on Spot and Listen checks while concentrating on a task in this manner. This is a thief special ability and is taken instead of one of the abilities offered in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*. This may also be taken in lieu of Eyes of the Cat or Light-Footed, but the character must have at least 2 levels of noble.

❖ **Planner:** Prior to a combat or skill related dramatic situation, the mastermind can develop a plan of action

to handle the situation. Using this talent requires preparation. A mastermind cannot use this talent when surprised or otherwise unprepared for a particular situation. The mastermind makes an Intelligence check (DC 10) with a bonus equal to his combined noble and thief levels. The result of the check provides the character and/or his allies with a circumstance bonus according to the Planner Intelligence Checks table. The character cannot take 10 or 20 when making this check. The bonus can be applied to all attack rolls made by the mastermind and his allies but the bonus only lasts for the first three rounds, after which the combat conditions change and the bonus is reduced by 1 point (to a minimum of +0) for every additional round the situation continues. This ability can be taken instead of an application of additional sneak attack damage.

Planner Intelligence Checks

Check Result	Bonus
9 or lower	+0 (check failed)
10-14	+1
15-24	+2
25 or higher	+3

By Keen Intellect

Scholar Multiclassing Options

THE SCHOLAR CLASS is a versatile concept in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*. The skill rules in *Conan the Roleplaying Game* further permit customisation by allowing any skill points realised from high Intelligence scores to be spent on any skill as though it were a class skill. Still further, scholars can take levels in other classes to compliment their own combat mastery or further expand their skills and special qualities. This chapter presents possible ways to combine the scholar with the rest of the classes presented in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, presenting advice on feat and racial choices and other options available when the character gains new abilities from new levels in alternative classes.

This book assumes that the character's main focus is the scholar aspect, taking levels in other classes to alter their basic scholar concept slightly. Other character classes taking levels in scholar to compliment their primary focus will be covered in later chapters or in future *Conan the Roleplaying Game* supplements. The advancement rates offered herein are not to be taken as the final word on the subject but merely as guidelines to meet a particular character concept.

With all of these scholar options, the player needs to be aware of the number one weakness associated with multiclassing a scholar: he will not reach the heights of sorcerous power a pure scholar will achieve. This is a severe disadvantage that must be weighed carefully. Also, many of the classes in *Conan the Roleplaying Game* are martial classes that use Strength, Dexterity and Constitution as primary scores, while the scholar focuses on the mental and spiritual scores of Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma. This may make ability score allocation difficult as the disparate classes have different needs.

HERMIT (SCHOLAR/BARBARIAN)

The hermit thrives on solitude. Civilisation disgusts him. Only in the wild can he commune with the true spirits of nature and power. He is a survivalist who does not want to deal with nosy neighbours or intrusive militia who brand him a heretic or a witch. Some are little more than half-naked madmen living in the wild while others are

ascetics who prefer dwelling in a mountain cave than in a castle.

STRENGTHS

A hermit gains a number of benefits from adding barbarian levels to his scholar class.

- ❖ **Base Attack Bonus:** The hermit's base attack bonus is higher than a straight classed scholar of the same character level.
- ❖ **Fortitude & Reflex Saves:** The hermit has a much improved rate of Fortitude and Reflex saves. The hermit is well-equipped to survive the rigours of wilderness life compared to the straight class scholar.
- ❖ **Hit Points:** The barbarian's d10 Hit Dice improves the overall average hit points of the hermit, giving him more hit points on average than a similarly levelled straight class scholar.
- ❖ **Stronger Dodge:** The hermit is more capable of dodging blows than a straight classed scholar.



Hermit (Scholar/Barbarian)

Level	Class	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Magic Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	Scholar 1	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+2	New Sorcery Style, Scholar, Background, Base Power Points, Knowledge Is Power, (character feat)
2 nd	Barbarian 1	+1	+0	+0	+0	+2	+2	+2	Track, Fearless, Versatility (–2 penalty)
3 rd	Scholar 2	+2	+0	+0	+1	+2	+2	+3	+1 Power Point, New Sorcery Style, (character feat)
4 th	Barbarian 2	+3	+1	+0	+1	+3	+3	+3	Bite Sword, Crimson Mist, (single ability increase)
5 th	Scholar 3	+4	+2	+1	+1	+4	+4	+3	Advanced Spell, Bonus Spell
6 th	Barbarian 3	+5	+3	+2	+1	+4	+4	+4	Trap Sense +1, Endurance, (character feat, all ability increase)
7 th	Scholar 4	+6/+1	+3	+2	+2	+4	+4	+5	Advanced Spell, New Sorcery Style
8 th	Barbarian 4	+7/+2	+4	+2	+3	+5	+5	+5	Uncanny Dodge, (single ability increase)
9 th	Scholar 5	+7/+2	+4	+2	+3	+5	+5	+5	Advanced Spell, Iron Will, (character feat)
10 th	Barbarian 5	+8/+3	+4	+2	+3	+5	+5	+5	Mobility, (all ability increase)
11 th	Scholar 6	+9/+4	+5	+3	+4	+6	+6	+6	Advanced Spell, +1 Power Point, Increased Maximum Power Points (triple)
12 th	Barbarian 6	+10/+5	+6	+4	+4	+7	+7	+7	Trap Sense +2, Diehard, (character feat, single ability increase)
13 th	Scholar 7	+11/+6/+1	+6	+4	+4	+7	+7	+7	Advanced Spell, Bonus Spell
14 th	Barbarian 7	+12/+7/+2	+7	+4	+4	+7	+7	+7	Versatility (no penalty), (all ability increase)
15 th	Scholar 8	+13/+8/+3	+8	+5	+5	+7	+7	+8	Advanced Spell, New Sorcery Style, (character feat)
16 th	Barbarian 8	+14/+9/+4	+9	+6	+6	+8	+8	+8	Improved Uncanny Dodge, (single ability increase)
17 th	Scholar 9	+14/+9/+4	+9	+6	+6	+9	+9	+8	Advanced Spell
18 th	Barbarian 9	+15/+10/+5	+9	+6	+6	+9	+9	+9	Trap Sense +3, (character feat, all ability increase)
19 th	Scholar 10	+16/+11/+6/+1	+9	+6	+7	+9	+9	+10	Advanced Spell, +1 Power Point
20 th	Scholar 11	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+7	+7	+9	+9	+10	Advanced Spell, Bonus Spell (single ability increase)

WEAKNESSES

The hermit character has a few weaknesses.

- ❖ **Slightly Weaker Parry Bonus:** The hermit is less able to parry than a full-classed scholar.
- ❖ **Skills:** The barbarian class does not have as many skill points as the scholar class, diluting one of the strengths of the scholar class.
- ❖ **Weak Magical Attack Bonus:** The hermit has a weaker Magic Attack Bonus than a straight classed scholar. His isolation has harmed his ability to interact with others.
- ❖ **Weak Will Save:** The hermit's resolve is put to the test less often than a scholar who must deal with the distractions of civilisation and population, thus his Will save is slightly lower than a straight classed scholar.

RECOMMENDED OPTIONS

As the character combines scholar with barbarian levels, there are some options he can take to optimise the mixture of both classes' abilities.

- ❖ The hermit structure makes ability score decisions difficult. The barbarian is a physical character, relying on Strength, Dexterity and Constitution to survive. The scholar is a mental character, relying on his Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma for skills and magical might. A weakness in any of these attributes can be the death of this character. Wisdom is probably one of the best abilities to have a

high score in, however. It is the base attribute for the Survival skill and it is the base attribute for determining total Power Points. Reclusive hermits are known to be wise, so this fits well with the entire character concept.

- Survival is an essential skill for the hermit, determining how well the character can track. Hermits often need to find water, track food, track enemies and a thousand other tasks requiring this skill in order to live their solitary lifestyle.

RACES

Characters combining the scholar and barbarian classes can come from almost any country, but there are those who stand as exemplars and exceptions to this rule.

- Hyborians make the best hermits, as both classes are favoured by the adaptive Hyborian race. The Adaptability and Background Skill options of the Hyborians also work heavily in favour of this combination.
- Acheronians are a wonderful choice for this class combination. Many of the people descended from the ancient Acheronians live still in the hills and backwoods of Nemed, some living as little more than barbarians. Scholar is their favoured class and a few still know the ancient secrets and can call blasphemous creations out of the darkness to serve them in their lonely huts deep within the hidden places of Nemed.
- Himelian tribesmen and Wazuli hermits dwell in the frozen heights of the Himelian mountains. They function as shamans and oracles for the various tribes.
- Khitan hermits who dwell high in the bare black mountains of forbidden Pathenia, shave their heads, worship Erlik and use ten-foot bronze trumpets in their dark ceremonies. Scholar is a favoured class for this race and many practice the Summoning sorcery school, priding themselves on the various demons they can summon, boasting they can summon demons more fierce than all in Hell.
- Nordheimir hermits dwell high on the icy mountains of Nordheim. Barbarian is a favoured class for this race. Most will take ranks in Climb and function as oracles.
- Pictish hermits live deep in the Pictish wilderness, usually in dank swamps or other powerful places where the tribes are afraid to linger for long. The Wizard of the Swamp featured in L. Sprague de Camp's completion of Howard's *Wolves on the Border* is an example of a Pictish hermit. Barbarian is a favoured class for this race. *Conan: Across the Thunder River* has additional spells for Picts.
- Wise Pelishtim hermits come from a society of people who are both warrior and sorcerer, so this class concept works well for them. They can dwell anywhere in any kingdom, for they are known wanderers. Ultimately, they favour the Immortality sorcery style from *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos*.

- Kushite, Northern and Southern Black Kingdom hermits dwell either in their own

small kraals or in tree houses deep in the jungles. They function socially as shamans but dwell apart from other tribes. Many have metalworking skills. Barbarian is a favoured class for these tribesmen.

- A dusky-skinned Stygian hermit usually dwells deep in the Stygian desert. Scholar is a favoured class for the Stygians. They hunt with the powerful Stygian bow and many of them are quite mad.
- Although neither of these classes are favoured for Vendhyans, this character concept works well for them, as they are known to have hermits living in caves along the fringes of the Himelians. They are astrologers by nature and often have the Cosmic Sorcery style from *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos*.
- Cimmerians do not make appropriate hermits because they are prohibited from taking the scholar class at 1st level.

VARIANT RULES

The following rules variants are intended for multiclass scholar/barbarians only and reflect the special training a hermit might receive in the course of his adventuring career.

- Arcane Sustenance:** The hermit depends on nothing during his periods of isolation. Instead of tapping into his primeval nature with Crimson Mist he learns Arcane Sustenance, feeding from his Power Points in place of food. He can deplete himself of four Power Points at the beginning of a day and gain needed sustenance. He does not need to eat or drink during that day, although he still needs to sleep. He can take this ability in lieu of Crimson Mist. The character must have base Power Points from either the Dabbler feat or the scholar class.
- Class Skills:** Upon achieving 1st level in barbarian, the hermit adds Hide, Spot and Survival to his scholar class skill list. Upon achieving 2nd level as a scholar, the hermit adds Knowledge (geography), Knowledge (nature) and Heal to his barbarian class skill list.
- Self Sufficient:** The character is self-sufficient and can take the Self-Sufficient feat in lieu of Bite Sword.

DRUID

(SCHOLAR/BORDERER)

The druids are warrior priests. They are drawn to the natural world and its supernatural spirit; walking the forests and wildernesses of Hyboria with confidence and entering the cities of men with an aura of shadowed mystery and unknown power. Few can fail to notice a druid – his aspect and charisma alone mark him as dangerous. He appears when tidings are bad and leaves when his work is done. He cannot be found when others seek him for their own ends but never fails to show when his own needs match the needs of others. Although the only widely known culture of druids is with the Ligureans in the Pictish wilderness, other druids

walk Hyboria in solitude, interpreting the mysteries of environments they believe to be steeped in magic, placating dark nature spirits with grim ceremonies and gruesome rituals of fire and blood. Their religion calls them to drench their altars with blood and even their divination spells often call for them to consult the entrails of human beings. In addition to their arcane roles in the rituals of barbarians, the druids are often called upon as judges and the guardians of tradition. They function as teachers and the repositories of ancient, present and future lore. Many druids believe the gods worshipped by civilised man, including Mitra, Ishtar and Bel, are weak concepts at best, born from the pretentious babble of ruminating philosophers who know nothing of sex, birth or death. They believe their gods, their spirits, are older and vaster than the puny gods of the Hyborians.

STRENGTHS

A druid gains a number of benefits from adding borderer levels to his scholar class, the following being the most important for the role of the druid:

- ❖ **Base Attack Bonus:** The druid's base attack bonus is higher than a straight classed scholar of the same character level. A Hyborian Age druid is expected to be a warrior, as well as a spiritual leader.
- ❖ **Combat Style:** The borderer's combat styles offer the scholar combat feats the scholar often does not qualify for, making the druid more combat-ready than many straight class scholars.
- ❖ **Fortitude & Reflex Saves:** The druid has a much improved rate of Fortitude and Reflex saves. The druid is well-equipped to survive the rigours of wilderness life compared to the straight class scholar.
- ❖ **Hit Points:** The borderer's d10 Hit Dice gives the druid more hit points on average than a similarly levelled straight classed scholar.
- ❖ **Slightly Improved Parry and Dodge Bonus:** Druids are slightly better at parrying and dodging than an equivalent level scholar after the 4th character level.

WEAKNESSES

The druid inhibits his sorcerous ability by taking up borderer levels, adding the following weaknesses.

- ❖ **Skills:** The borderer class does not have as many skill points as the scholar class, diluting one of the strengths of the scholar class.
- ❖ **Weak Magical Attack Bonus:** The druid has a weaker Magic Attack Bonus than a straight classed scholar. His martial and woodland training has weakened his ability to influence others supernaturally compared to a scholar who has done nothing but study the black arts of sorcery.
- ❖ **Weak Will Save:** The druid's resolve is put to the test less often than a scholar who must deal with people who fear him because his people already respect his very word and



his very presence, thus his Will save is slightly lower than a straight classed scholar.

RECOMMENDED OPTIONS

As the character combines borderer and scholar levels, there are some options he can take to optimise the mixture of both classes' abilities.

- ❖ Druids tend to focus on Counterspells, Divination, Hypnotism and Nature Magic sorcery styles. Some are astrologers by nature and include the Cosmic Sorcery style from *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos*.
- ❖ Druids are trained by other druids, so the *Acolyte* or *Lay Priest* backgrounds are the most appropriate, depending on the culture giving rise to the druid.
- ❖ Wisdom, Intelligence and Charisma are the primary scores for the druid. They must be judges, stores of knowledge and personally magnetic to succeed as druids. Wisdom helps them in making judgements about people (Sense Motive) and in survival (Survival). Intelligence dominates the number of skills they have as well as how much knowledge they have stored (Knowledge (any)). Charisma aids their weak Magic Attack Bonus so their spells do not fail – a druid whose spells routinely fail is felt to be out of touch with the gods and spirits he is supposed to be in communication with. His three highest statistics should be in these abilities.

The Druid (Scholar/Borderer)

Level	Class	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Magic Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	Scholar 1	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+2	New Sorcery Style, Scholar, Background, Base Power Points, Knowledge Is Power, (character feat)
2 nd	Borderer 1	+1	+0	+0	+0	+2	+2	+2	Track, Favoured Terrain +1
3 rd	Scholar 2	+2	+0	+0	+1	+2	+2	+3	+1 Power Point, New Sorcery Style, (character feat)
4 th	Borderer 2	+3	+1	+1	+2	+3	+3	+3	Combat Style, (single ability increase)
5 th	Scholar 3	+4	+2	+2	+2	+4	+4	+3	Advanced Spell, Bonus Spell
6 th	Borderer 3	+5	+2	+2	+2	+4	+4	+4	Endurance, (character feat, all ability increase)
7 th	Scholar 4	+6/+1	+2	+2	+3	+4	+4	+5	Advanced Spell, New Sorcery Style
8 th	Borderer 4	+7/+2	+3	+3	+3	+5	+5	+5	Favoured Terrain +2, (single ability increase)
9 th	Scholar 5	+7/+2	+3	+3	+3	+5	+5	+5	Advanced Spell, Iron Will, (character feat)
10 th	Borderer 5	+8/+3	+3	+3	+3	+5	+5	+5	Improved Combat Style, (all ability increase)
11 th	Scholar 6	+9/+4	+4	+4	+4	+6	+6	+6	Advanced Spell, +1 Power Point, Increased Maximum Power Points (triple)
12 th	Borderer 6	+10/+5	+5	+5	+4	+7	+7	+7	Diehard, (character feat, single ability increase)
13 th	Scholar 7	+11/+6/+1	+5	+5	+4	+7	+7	+7	Advanced Spell, Bonus Spell
14 th	Borderer 7	+12/+7/+2	+5	+5	+4	+7	+7	+7	Second Favoured Terrain +1, Guide, (all ability increase)
15 th	Scholar 8	+13/+8/+3	+6	+6	+5	+7	+7	+8	Advanced Spell, New Sorcery Style, (character feat)
16 th	Borderer 8	+14/+9/+4	+7	+7	+6	+8	+8	+8	Favoured Terrain +3, (single ability increase)
17 th	Scholar 9	+14/+9/+4	+7	+7	+6	+9	+9	+8	Advanced Spell
18 th	Borderer 9	+15/+10/+5	+7	+7	+6	+9	+9	+9	Swift Tracker, (character feat, all ability increase)
19 th	Scholar 10	+16/+11/+6/+1	+7	+7	+7	+9	+9	+10	Advanced Spell, +1 Power Point
20 th	Borderer 10	+17/+12/+7/+2	+8	+8	+7	+10	+10	+10	Bonus Feat, (single ability increase)

RACES

Characters combining the scholar and borderer classes can come from almost any country, but there are those who stand as exemplars and exceptions to this.

- ❖ A Hyborian is an excellent choice for a druid because both classes are favoured. Hyborian druids do not have a place in Hyborian social orders and hierarchies and, if present, would have a godlike presence around the Hyborians.

- ❖ Serpentine Acheronians walk the wild lands of Nemed, forgotten by the Hyborians who conquered their lands so long ago, yet these scions of an elder age know the truth of the land and can call the wilderness to rise up and defend their hidden communities.

- ❖ A Tauran druid has borderer as his favoured class. He would likely be mistrusted by his people and may worship Bori instead

of Mitra. Otherwise Tauran druids will be treated as any Hyborian druid.

- ❖ Pelishtim druids recall the days of the wanderings of the Sons of Shem. They believe the natural energies of the world grant them eternal life. Many strive for the Immortality sorcery style from *Conan: The Scrolls of Skelos*.

- ❖ Hawkish Stygian druids draw upon the living power of the Styx or the natural magic of the deserts for their sorcery.

- ❖ The white-skinned Ligureans (see *Conan: Across the Thunder River*) of the Pictish wilderness are a good racial choice for a druid. They dress in white, travel with staves and carry golden sickles tucked into their belts as an emblem of their rank. Even the greatest and most bloodthirsty of the Pict warchiefs dare not to harm one of the druids. Some say the Picts fear the Ligurean druids. These druids appear to be impartial to the feuding,

neither aiding nor hindering the violent squabbles raging throughout the Pictish wilderness. However, they are not impartial to the activities of black magic, particularly magic wrought by the priests of Set. This attitude may come down from racial memories of Acheron and their treatment of the Picts and the early Ligureans, or from actual oral traditions handed down through the generations. L. Sprague de Camp also indicates that the Ligurean druids are familiar with Mitran symbols and wards. This knowledge likely came from centuries of warring with the Bossonians. Ligurean druids often take the two-weapon fighting style (with a spear and sickle) or the *Ligurean Staff Fighting* combat style detailed in the variant rules offered for this class combination.

- ❖ Cimmerians do not make appropriate druids because they are prohibited from taking the scholar class at 1st level.

VARIANT RULES

The following rules variants are intended for multiclass scholar/borderers only and reflect the special training a druid might receive in the course of his adventuring career.

- ❖ **Class Skills:** Upon achieving 1st level in borderer, the druid adds Spot and Survival to his scholar class skill list. Upon achieving 2nd level as a scholar, the druid adds Knowledge (nature), Heal and Sense Motive to his borderer class skill list.
- ❖ **Ligurean Staff Fighting Combat Style:** The Ligureans of the Pictish wilderness often travel with a staff and they are experts at its use in combat. Ligureans selecting this combat style instead of two-weapon fighting or archery receive the following benefits: At 2nd borderer level, the druid is treated as having the Weapon Focus (staff) feat. At 5th borderer level, the druid is treated as having the Stunning Attack feat when attacking with a staff, even if he does not meet the usual prerequisites for that feat. The feat is altered to function with the staff for the druid, although not for the other weapons listed with the feat in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*. At 11th borderer level, the druid is treated as having the Improved Critical (staff) feat, even if he does not meet the usual prerequisites for that feat.

CULT LEADER (SCHOLAR/NOBLE)

People always seem to want to believe in something and the cult leader is there to make sure people believe in something that will help him personally. The cult leader is a scholar who has, through the force of his personality, accumulated a measure of wealth and social stability, becoming a faux noble, granting himself the title of High Priest, using the resources of his 'religion' for his wealth and taking advantage of the privileges accorded to him by an unsuspecting population. He is a

master of charismatic rhetoric, using trickery, showmanship and patter to fake miracles or otherwise persuade the masses to obey him. He presents his new religion as a revelation the world has been awaiting with anxious breath. He may even write 'ancient' texts that offer prophecies he or his chosen god can fulfil. Many cults are based around a person, claiming the person is the living avatar, the son of or the chosen of an existing deity. Some of these cults, such as the cults of Tarim or Bori, eventually achieve legitimacy. Other cults are based around specific practises; sex cults are examples of this sort of cult. Still others are based around an object, often linking with a pre-existing religion of an established deity. These cults claim to possess the hand of a saint, the shroud of a god or other such holy relic.

Many cult leaders form religious colonies, areas cut off from the world as much as possible because of the belief that the world is less enlightened than the cult leader and his followers. These areas are as self-sufficient as possible and often prescribe a code of dress for their members based on the cult leader's ideas of the right way to live. Heads may be shaved or hair may be grown long, members may have to cover their bodies entirely or even appear constantly naked. Some may require certain colours to be worn to indicate rank in the society while others emphasise a society without stratification, so everyone dresses the same. Most of these societies are xenophobic and all are stricter than the surrounding society from whom the followers are drawn in some way or another.

STRENGTHS

The scholar gains a number of advantages by taking levels in noble.

- ❖ **Improved Will Saves:** The cult leader is more wilful than a straight class scholar. The bonus Iron Will feat gained at 9th level adds to the cult leader's ability to resist manipulation.
- ❖ **Noble Abilities:** The cult leader has access to a title, rank, wealth, leading by example, social abilities, special regional features and enhanced leadership, all of which serves to better his position in society and further dupe the masses.
- ❖ **Slightly Better Parry Bonus:** After a slow start, the cult leader is better at parrying than a straight classed scholar.

WEAKNESSES

Levels in noble dilute the scholar's sorcerous ability in addition to the following weaknesses:

- ❖ **Low Base Attack Bonus:** The cult leader is not a fighting man. His base attack bonus is lower than a straight class scholar.
- ❖ **Skills:** The noble class does not have as many skill points as the scholar class, diluting one of the strengths of the scholar class.



- ❖ **Weak Dodge Bonus:** The cult leader is not as effective at dodging as a straight classed scholar.

RECOMMENDED OPTIONS

As the character combines noble and scholar levels, there are some options he can take to optimise the mixture of both classes' abilities:

- ❖ New cult leaders often have the *Independent* or *Pact* backgrounds but cult leaders of established or variant cults may have the *Lay Priest* background.
- ❖ Cult leaders live and die by their Charisma score. This is their primary attribute and should be increased whenever possible.
- ❖ Taking the Leadership or Priest feat as soon as possible is a good idea instead of waiting for it as a bonus feat from the noble class. The cohort and followers granted by the Leadership feat become his most loyal cultists, providing the cult leader with some credibility.
- ❖ The cult leader should take ranks in Bluff, Knowledge (religion), Perform (acting), Perform (ritual), Perform (any other) and Sleight of Hand. Any feats to increase these skills are also recommended, as well as feats designed to increase overall Power Points, such as Ritual Sacrifice.
 - ❖ Some recommended social abilities include: *Comeliness*, because one should appear trustworthy

and religious and appearance can play a part here; *Smear Others*, because it is always good to tear down opponents and critics of one's new cult; and *Entertainer*, which helps the character's ability to perform, alter people's attitudes and ruin the reputations of his critics.

- ❖ Many high level cult leaders have numerous aliases, each taken on as their cults become discredited or disbanded.

RACES

Characters combining the scholar and noble classes can come from almost any country, but there are those who stand as exemplars and exceptions to this.

- ❖ Although Hyborians are suited for all class combinations, as all classes are treated as favoured classes, there are some excellent alternatives. Although Bossonians cannot take noble at 1st level, they can at 2nd. This would be interesting because Aquilonia would not want to see a Bossonian claiming to be noble and would likely hunt him down.
- ❖ A degenerate Acheronian makes a darkly frightening cult leader. His glittering eyes, towering height and racial bonuses make him an impressive leader of any ancient religion or new religious movement.
- ❖ A Khitan has the scholar as a favoured class and has Background Skills in Knowledge. The Khitan cult leader also has racial bonuses to Knowledge checks and a bonus feat to help mitigate some of the disadvantages of this class combination. A Khitan would possibly have an advantage in Hyborian lands because of his exotic background. Many perceive the Khitans to be more aware of reality than others. Others would despise them for their foreign background.
- ❖ A Stygian has both the scholar and the noble as a favoured class and makes for an excellent if stereotypical cult leader. They will gain bonus feats faster than other races with this combination and will make powerful and corrupt cult leaders.
- ❖ Chaga are also a good choice for this class combination. Already isolated in culture, they are also a splinter group from Stygia and its religion.
- ❖ A Pelishtim is another appropriate choice for a cult leader. They tend to emphasise immortality as a race but a cult leader may well be a variation on this.
- ❖ Vendhyans have the noble class as a favoured class but cannot appropriately multiclass into the noble caste within their own homeland. As a foreigner, however, it is easy to dupe non-Vendhyans into believing they are better than they are in a social sense and can make decent cult leaders. They are seen as mysterious and exotic by Westerners.
- ❖ Cimmerians do not make appropriate cult leaders because they are prohibited from taking the scholar class at 1st level. Even noble is prohibited to a Cimmerian at 1st level. Cimmerians are not overly religious and they fear the gods. Their culture simply does not have what it

The Cult Leader (Scholar/Noble)

Level	Class	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Magic Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	Scholar 1	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+2	New Sorcery Style, Scholar, Background, Base Power Points, Knowledge Is Power, (character feat)
2 nd	Noble 1	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+4	Title, Rank Hath Its Privileges, Wealth
3 rd	Scholar 2	+1	+0	+0	+1	+0	+0	+5	+1 Power Point, New Sorcery Style, (character feat)
4 th	Noble 2	+2	+0	+1	+1	+0	+0	+6	Special Regional Feature +1, (single ability increase)
5 th	Scholar 3	+3	+1	+2	+1	+1	+1	+6	Advanced Spell, Bonus Spell
6 th	Noble 3	+4	+2	+2	+1	+2	+2	+6	(Character feat, all ability increase)
7 th	Scholar 4	+5	+2	+2	+2	+2	+2	+7	Advanced Spell, New Sorcery Style
8 th	Noble 4	+6/+1	+2	+3	+3	+2	+2	+8	Social Ability, (single ability increase)
9 th	Scholar 5	+6/+1	+2	+3	+3	+2	+2	+8	Advanced Spell, Iron Will, (character feat)
10 th	Noble 5	+6/+1	+2	+3	+3	+2	+2	+8	Lead By Example +2, (all ability increase)
11 th	Scholar 6	+7/+2	+3	+4	+4	+3	+3	+9	Advanced Spell, +1 Power Point, Increased Maximum Power Points (triple)
12 th	Noble 6	+8/+3	+4	+5	+4	+4	+4	+10	Enhanced Leadership, (character feat, single ability increase)
13 th	Scholar 7	+9/+4	+4	+5	+4	+4	+4	+10	Advanced Spell, Bonus Spell
14 th	Noble 7	+10/+5	+4	+5	+4	+4	+4	+10	Special Regional Feature +2, (all ability increase)
15 th	Scholar 8	+11/+6/+1	+5	+6	+5	+4	+4	+11	Advanced Spell, New Sorcery Style, (character feat)
16 th	Noble 8	+12/+7/+2	+6	+7	+6	+4	+4	+12	(Single ability increase)
17 th	Scholar 9	+12/+7/+2	+6	+7	+6	+5	+5	+12	Advanced Spell
18 th	Noble 9	+12/+7/+2	+6	+7	+6	+6	+6	+12	Social Ability, (character feat, all ability increase)
19 th	Scholar 10	+13/+8/+3	+6	+7	+7	+6	+6	+13	Advanced Spell, +1 Power Point
20 th	Scholar 11	+14/+9/+4	+7	+8	+7	+6	+6	+13	Advanced Spell, Bonus Spell, (single ability increase)

takes to create a zealot or even a faux-zealot who inspires heightened religious fervour in others.

VARIANT RULES

The following rules variants are intended for multiclass scholar/nobles only and reflect the special training a cult leader might receive in the course of his adventuring career.

☒ **Class Skills:** Upon achieving 1st level in noble, the cult leader adds Diplomacy and Spot to his scholar class skill list. Upon achieving 2nd level as a scholar, the cult leader adds Decipher Script and Forgery to his noble class skill list.

☒ **Perform (rhetoric):** This application of the Perform skill allows the cult leader to capture the attention of a crowd of bystanders. With a successful Perform (rhetoric) check (DC 15 + 1 for every two Non-Player Characters in the crowd) he captures the attention of those nearby who are not engaged in pressing business. Each one caught up in the cult leader's speech must make a Will save (DC

10 + cult leader's combined scholar and noble levels + Charisma modifier) to voluntarily leave the area before the cult leader has finished speaking. The power of a cult leader's rhetoric is not greater than the instinct for self-preservation. Captivated onlookers may leave the area without making saving throws if their own safety or that of a dependent is threatened. If used against specific Player Characters or Non-Player Characters, the Perform (rhetoric) check is opposed to the character's Sense Motive check. A character gains a +1 synergy bonus for every five ranks of Knowledge (religion) possessed.

OBSERVER

(SCHOLAR/NOMAD)

The observer is a scholar who has added nomad levels to his class. He is a spy and an explorer, eager to visit any place in the world – or at least peek at it. Observers are master explorers who hunt and track, able to fight from horseback with weapons or spells.

STRENGTHS

An observer gains a number of benefits from adding nomad levels to his scholar class, the following being the most important for the role of the scholar:

- ❖ **Base Attack Bonus:** The observer's base attack bonus is higher than a straight classed scholar of the same character level.
- ❖ **Favoured Terrain:** The observer gains bonuses to Dodge Defence as well as circumstance bonuses to several useful skills.
- ❖ **Fortitude & Reflex Saves:** The observer has a much improved rate of Fortitude and Reflex saves. The observer is well-equipped to survive the rigours of wilderness life compared to the straight class scholar.
- ❖ **Nomad Charge:** The observer can charge his mount with greater skill than a straight class scholar mounted on a horse.
- ❖ **Slightly Improved Parry and Dodge Bonus:** Observers are slightly better at parrying and dodging than equivalent level scholars after the 4th character level.

WEAKNESSES

The observer has a few weaknesses:

- ❖ **Skills:** The nomad class does not have as many skill points as the scholar class, diluting one of the strengths of the scholar class.
- ❖ **Weak Magical Attack Bonus:** The observer has a weaker Magic Attack Bonus than a straight classed scholar. His martial and horseman training has weakened his ability to influence others supernaturally compared to a scholar who has done nothing but study the black arts of sorcery.
- ❖ **Weak Will Save:** The observer's resolve is weaker than a straight classed scholar.

RECOMMENDED OPTIONS

As the character combines scholar and nomad levels, there are some options he can take to optimise the mixture of both classes' abilities.



- ❖ The observer should focus first on the Divination sorcery style. Nature Magic should be his next sorcery style. *Animal Ally* is a useful spell as it can summon a loyal horse ally.
- ❖ The observer needs his mount, so he should choose some skills that create synergies with other skills and feats to protect his mount. An excellent combination is to put 5 ranks in Handle Animal, maximise his Ride skill and take Mounted Combat and Skill Focus (Ride) for feats if scholar is a favoured class. The Mounted Combat feat allows a character to negate a successful melee hit against his mount by making a Ride check. Putting 5 ranks into Handle Animal gives the observer a +2 synergy bonus in Ride. Taking the Skill Focus (Ride) gives the character a further +3 bonus to the Ride check. By taking Animal Affinity, the Ride check gains another +2 bonus. By 2nd level, a observer could be making Ride checks at +12, not counting Dexterity or any further racial bonuses.
- ❖ Take feats to enhance the character's mounted capabilities. Mounted Combat, Mounted Archery, Animal Affinity, Weapon Focus (heavy lance) and Improved Critical (heavy lance) are all useful feats for the mounted warrior.
- ❖ Heal and Survival are both good skills for the observer, who must not only care for himself but also his mount.

RACES

Characters combining the scholar and nomad classes can come from almost any country, but there are those who stand as exemplars and exceptions to this.

- ❖ Hyborians are well suited observers, as both classes can be treated as favoured classes.

The Observer (Scholar/Nomad)

Level	Class	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Magic Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	Scholar 1	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+2	New Sorcery Style, Scholar, Background, Base Power Points, Knowledge Is Power, (character feat)
2 nd	Nomad 1	+1	+0	+0	+0	+2	+2	+2	Track, Favoured Terrain +1, Born to the Saddle
3 rd	Scholar 2	+2	+0	+0	+1	+2	+2	+3	+1 Power Point, New Sorcery Style, (character feat)
4 th	Nomad 2	+3	+1	+1	+2	+3	+3	+3	Bonus Feat, (single ability increase)
5 th	Scholar 3	+4	+2	+2	+2	+4	+4	+3	Advanced Spell, Bonus Spell
6 th	Nomad 3	+5	+2	+2	+2	+4	+4	+4	Endurance, (character feat, all ability increase)
7 th	Scholar 4	+6/+1	+2	+2	+3	+4	+4	+5	Advanced Spell, New Sorcery Style
8 th	Nomad 4	+7/+2	+3	+3	+3	+5	+5	+5	Nomad Charge +1, Favoured Terrain Bonus +2, (single ability increase)
9 th	Scholar 5	+7/+2	+3	+3	+3	+5	+5	+5	Advanced Spell, Iron Will, (character feat)
10 th	Nomad 5	+8/+3	+3	+3	+3	+5	+5	+5	Mobility, (all ability increase)
11 th	Scholar 6	+9/+4	+4	+4	+4	+6	+6	+6	Advanced Spell, +1 Power Point, Increased Maximum Power Points (triple)
12 th	Nomad 6	+10/+5	+5	+5	+4	+7	+7	+7	Diehard, (character feat, single ability increase)
13 th	Scholar 7	+11/+6/+1	+5	+5	+4	+7	+7	+7	Advanced Spell, Bonus Spell
14 th	Nomad 7	+12/+7/+2	+5	+5	+4	+7	+7	+7	Bonus Feat, (all ability increase)
15 th	Scholar 8	+13/+8/+3	+6	+6	+5	+7	+7	+8	Advanced Spell, New Sorcery Style, (character feat)
16 th	Nomad 8	+14/+9/+4	+7	+7	+6	+8	+8	+8	Favoured Terrain +3, (single ability increase)
17 th	Scholar 9	+14/+9/+4	+7	+7	+6	+9	+9	+8	Advanced Spell
18 th	Nomad 9	+15/+10/+5	+7	+7	+6	+9	+9	+9	Second Favoured Terrain +1, (character feat, all ability increase)
19 th	Scholar 10	+16/+11/+6/+1	+7	+7	+7	+9	+9	+10	Advanced Spell, +1 Power Point
20 th	Nomad 10	+17/+12/+7/+2	+8	+8	+7	+10	+10	+10	Improved Mobility, (single ability increase)

- ☒ Turanians and Hyrkanians are excellent candidates for the observer combination. The nomad is the favoured class for these races, plus they have bonuses to archery and have Ride and Survival as Background Skills.
- ☒ Khitans also make good observers. Khitan observers usually ride the steppes and deserts around the fringes of Khitai, often keeping an eye on the Hyrkanians. Many are actually spies in Hyrkanian encampments, encouraging movement away from Khitai by subtle means. Scholar is a favoured class for the Khitans.
- ☒ The Ghanata are well known as expert riders and they also make fantastic observers. Like the Hyrkanians, nomad is a favoured class of the Ghanata, plus Ride and Survival are Background Skills. Furthermore, the Ghanata gain a racial bonus to Ride and circumstance bonuses to Spot and Survival.
- ☒ Likewise the Shemites make renowned observers. Again, nomad is the favoured class and Ride and Survival are Background Skills. Their bonuses with bows and

Spot checks only increase their abilities with this class combination. Pelishtim observers have scholar as a favoured class.

- ☒ Dusky-skinned Stygian observers often ride into Shem, Turan, Iranistan and south into the Black Kingdoms. Scholar is a favoured class for these worshippers of Set.
- ☒ Cimmerians do not make appropriate observers because they are prohibited the scholar class at 1st level. Even nomad is prohibited to Cimmerians at 1st level.

VARIANT RULES

The following rules variants are intended for multiclass scholar/nomads only and reflect the special training an observer might receive in the course of his adventuring career.

- ☒ **Class Skills:** Upon achieving 1st level in nomad, the observer adds Handle Animal, Spot and

Survival to his scholar class skill list. Upon achieving 2nd level as a scholar, the observer adds Intimidate and Perform to his nomad class skill list.

- ❖ **Favoured Terrain Sorcery:** Upon gaining 5th scholar level, the character can select Favoured Terrain Sorcery instead of Iron Will. The character can apply the bonus for the nomad's favoured terrain to his Magic Attack Bonus when in his favoured terrain.
- ❖ **Horse Synergy:** Upon gaining 7th nomad level, the character can select Horse Synergy instead of the bonus feat normally gained at this time. If the character has the *Animal Ally* spell and summons a horse as his ally, he can add both nomad and scholar levels together to determine the abilities of his horse ally, instead of the corresponding scholar level.

NAVIGATOR (SCHOLAR/PIRATE)

Navigators are those sailors who specialise in dealing with life on board ships, the seas and the weather. They protect the craft they are aboard and use their magic to calm the waves or generate wind in desperate situations. Navigators do not waste their spells on mundane needs. They know how to work a ship and love hearing the cracks of the sails and smelling the salt of the sea. They often serve as mates, knowing much about geography and navigation. They explore uncharted islands and are often cartographers. Players using this class combination are strongly encouraged to use the spells and feats found in *Conan: Pirate Isles*, a powerful resource for pirate or ship-based campaigns.

STRENGTHS

The scholar gains a number of benefits from adding pirate levels to his scholar class, the following being the most important for the role of the navigator:

- ❖ **Combat and Defence:** The navigator fights better and defends himself better than a straight class scholar.
- ❖ **Ferocious Attack:** The initial boost to Initiative and melee attacks and damage gives the navigator the edge over a standard scholar. The additional attack gained later is another advantage the navigator has over the land scholar.
- ❖ **Saving Throws:** The navigator has impressive saving throws, especially Fortitude and Reflex saves.
- ❖ **Seamanship:** This helps the scholar with his defence when on a ship.
- ❖ **Sneak Attack:** Although less useful than the sneak attacks of the occultist option, this is a powerful ability given to the navigator at mid-levels.
 - ❖ **To Sail a Road of Blood and Slaughter:** The free action *coup de grace* gives this scholar the ability to kill fallen opponents quickly.

- ❖ **Virtual Feats:** The pirate class offers many virtual feats such as Uncanny Dodge, Mobility, Improved Uncanny Dodge.

WEAKNESSES

The scholar dilutes his sorcerous ability by taking up pirate levels, adding the following weaknesses:

- ❖ **Skills:** The pirate class does not have as many skill points as the scholar class, reducing one of the strengths of the scholar class.
- ❖ **Weak Magical Attack Bonus:** The navigator has a weaker Magic Attack Bonus than a straight classed scholar. His shipboard training has weakened his ability to influence others supernaturally compared to a scholar who has done nothing but study the black arts of sorcery.
- ❖ **Weak Will Save:** The navigator's resolve is focused elsewhere.

RECOMMENDED OPTIONS

As the character combines scholar and pirate levels, there are some options he can take to optimise the mixture of both classes' abilities.

- ❖ Navigators should consider taking the Weather Witching and Sea Witchery sorcery styles from *Conan: Pirate Isles*.
- ❖ Take the Navigation feat as soon as possible; do not wait to get it as a free feat from the pirate class.



The Navigator (Scholar/Pirate)

Level	Class	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Magic Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	Scholar 1	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+2	New Sorcery Style, Scholar, Background, Base Power Points, Knowledge Is Power, (character feat)
2 nd	Pirate 1	+0	+0	+0	+0	+2	+2	+2	Seamanship +1, Ferocious Attack
3 rd	Scholar 2	+1	+0	+0	+1	+2	+2	+3	+1 Power Point, New Sorcery Style, (character feat)
4 th	Pirate 2	+2	+1	+1	+2	+3	+3	+3	Pirate Code, To Sail a Road of Blood and Slaughter, (single ability increase)
5 th	Scholar 3	+3	+2	+2	+2	+4	+4	+3	Advanced Spell, Bonus Spell
6 th	Pirate 3	+4	+3	+2	+2	+4	+4	+4	Sneak Attack +1d6, Sneak Subdual, (character feat, all ability increase)
7 th	Scholar 4	+5	+3	+2	+3	+4	+4	+5	Advanced Spell, New Sorcery Style
8 th	Pirate 4	+6/+1	+4	+3	+3	+5	+5	+5	Uncanny Dodge, (single ability increase)
9 th	Scholar 5	+6/+1	+4	+3	+3	+5	+5	+5	Advanced Spell, Iron Will, (character feat)
10 th	Pirate 5	+6/+1	+4	+3	+3	+5	+5	+5	Mobility, (all ability increase)
11 th	Scholar 6	+7/+2	+5	+4	+4	+6	+6	+6	Advanced Spell, +1 Power Point, Increased Maximum Power Points (triple)
12 th	Pirate 6	+8/+3	+6	+5	+4	+7	+7	+7	Sneak Attack +2d6, Seamanship +2, (character feat, single ability increase)
13 th	Scholar 7	+9/+4	+6	+5	+4	+7	+7	+7	Advanced Spell, Bonus Spell
14 th	Pirate 7	+10/+5	+7	+5	+4	+7	+7	+7	Bite Sword, Ferocious Attack (additional attack), (all ability increase)
15 th	Scholar 8	+11/+6/+1	+8	+6	+5	+7	+7	+8	Advanced Spell, New Sorcery Style, (character feat)
16 th	Pirate 8	+12/+7/+2	+9	+7	+6	+8	+8	+8	Improved Uncanny Dodge, Poison Resistance +1, (single ability increase)
17 th	Scholar 9	+12/+7/+2	+9	+7	+6	+9	+9	+8	Advanced Spell
18 th	Pirate 9	+12/+7/+2	+9	+7	+6	+9	+9	+9	Sneak Attack +3d6, (character feat, all ability increase)
19 th	Scholar 10	+13/+8/+3	+9	+7	+7	+9	+9	+10	Advanced Spell, +1 Power Point
20 th	Scholar 11	+14/+9/+4	+10	+8	+7	+9	+9	+10	Advanced Spell, Bonus Spell, (single ability increase)

- ❖ Ship crews tend to be superstitious and may blame a sorcerer on board for misfortune. A high Charisma is called for to sway ship opinions from this conclusion. A high Dexterity would also be a good choice.
- ❖ Useful feats for the Navigator include Improved Bull Rush. Bull rushing opponents off the edge of ships is an excellent choice of tactic, especially if the opponent is heavily armoured. Athletic is another good choice of feat, bolstering both Climb and Swim checks. Weapon Focus is a good feat to use, especially in conjunction with a finesse weapon. Use feats from *Conan: Pirate Isles*, such as Hard Hands. If your character is Zingaran, take Freebooter's Fortune at 1st level so the character qualifies for Up the Rigging, Wave Dance and Viper's Speed later.
- ❖ Take skills that improve the class features of the pirate, such as combining Tumble with Mobility.

RACES

Characters combining the scholar and pirate classes can come from almost any country, but there are those who stand as exemplars and exceptions to this.

- ❖ Hyborians treat all class combinations as favoured classes and can use Adaptability and their choices of Background Skills to great benefit. Argosseans or Barachans have further racial bonuses to make this an attractive choice, although pirate is the only favoured class in this combination.
- ❖ A knowledgeable Khitan navigator could make an excellent character. Nature Magic and Weather Witching (from *Conan: Pirate Isles*) would be likely sorcery styles, as well as the Oriental Magic style. Scholar is a favoured class for this race.
- ❖ Although a Himelian tribesman, an Æsir, a Gunderman, a Tauran or a Hyperborean can

technically follow this path, such a character is extremely unlikely. Their homelands are not seafaring kingdoms.

- ❖ A Pelishtim navigator has scholar for a favoured class. He would likely focus on Curses and Sea Witchery (from *Conan: Pirate Isles*).
- ❖ A Southern Islander navigator can sometimes be found among pirate crews. Pirate is a favoured class for this race. Weather Witching (from *Conan: Pirate Isles*), Nature Magic and Necromancy are likely sorcery styles.
- ❖ Set-worshipping Stygians make fearsome navigators. They often have Sea Witchery and Necromancy sorcery styles.
- ❖ Zingaran navigators have pirate as a favoured class. They would likely keep their sorcery a secret.
- ❖ Cimmerians do not make appropriate navigators because they are prohibited from taking the scholar class at 1st level. Even pirate is prohibited to them at 1st level.

VARIANT RULES

The following rules variants are intended for multiclass scholar/pirates only and reflect the special training a navigator might receive in the course of his adventuring career.

- ❖ **Class Skills:** Upon achieving 1st level in pirate, the navigator adds Tumble and Use Rope to his scholar class skill list. Upon achieving 2nd level as a scholar, the navigator adds Knowledge (nature), Decipher Script and Sense Motive to his pirate class skill list.

TEMPLE WARDER (SCHOLAR/SOLDIER)

There are some scholars trained in the arts of war by their orders, scholars who play the parts of inquisitors, enforcers and heretic slayers. With the threat of runaway magic and official persecution, most arcane societies and religious cults in the Hyborian Age know the value of a strong warrior devoted to their cause, religious assassins or even temple guards who can use magic and weaponry to defend their masters and their way of life.

Those temple warders who take up the inquisitor role spend their time rooting out and destroying corruption within their ranks or their society. These are the holy terrors of their order, whispered about in darkened alcoves, the avenging force of the upper echelons that exert their will upon the lower ranks. They are hard men, trained in intimidation and terror. Charisma and Wisdom are vital to these characters for they are detectives, judges and juries all in one person. They tend to brooding and dark, prone to constantly question others, always on the look out for corruption and betrayal.

Those who embark on the enforcer path are those devoted to taking drastic and violent action to safeguard the sanctity of their temple or arcane order. Their tactics involve retributive strikes against blasphemers and thieves. They are skilled in the arts of war and of intimidation. The spells in *Conan: The Free Companies* are appropriate for this sort of character. They tend to be single-minded and predisposed to lash out quickly with violence. Intelligence and Strength (or Dexterity if the character is given to ranged attacks) are often primary attributes.

The heretic hunter deals with the threat of splinter groups and religious insurgents. He hunts down heretical cults giving no mercy or quarter. He is proactive, often infiltrating the worst of society to root out cults and thwart their activities. He hates blasphemers and religious free-thinkers. He is the master of the witch-hunt and often has knowledge with which to battle outsiders. Intelligence and Charisma are his most important attributes.

STRENGTHS

A temple warder gains a number of benefits from adding soldier levels to his scholar class.

- ❖ **Bonus Feats:** The soldier's bonus feats can be a great advantage to a scholar.
- ❖ **Combat and Defence:** The temple warder fights better and defends himself better than a straight class scholar.
- ❖ **Formation Combat:** The scholar now can fight in formation.
- ❖ **Fortitude Saves:** The temple warder is solid and enduring. He has better Fortitude saves than a straight classed scholar.

WEAKNESSES

A temple warder has a few drawbacks when adding soldier levels to his scholar class.

- ❖ **Disparate Roles:** The soldier requires physical attributes while the scholar emphasises the mental and personal attributes. This may make ability score allocation difficult. Compromises in both combat and sorcery strength may have to be made. He will not be as strong a combatant as a straight-classed soldier nor as strong a sorcerer as a straight classed scholar.
- ❖ **Skills:** The soldier class does not have as many skill points as the scholar class, diluting one of the strengths of the scholar class. This is a major weakness of this class in view of the other weaknesses.
- ❖ **Weak Magical Attack Bonus:** The temple warder has a weaker Magic Attack Bonus than a straight classed scholar.
- ❖ **Weak Will Save:** The temple warder's resolve is focused elsewhere.

RECOMMENDED OPTIONS

As the temple warder combines soldier and scholar levels, there are some options he can take to optimise the mixture of both classes' abilities.

- ❖ The mix of roles mentioned in the Weaknesses section of this class combination requires compromise in either combat strength or sorcerous power, and likely both will be weakened. The temple warder will not be as strong a fighter as a pure soldier nor as magically viable as a pure scholar. He needs to use tactics and skills to take up the slack. Intelligence is probably going to be his most important attribute.
- ❖ If the character's role is to be a witch or heretic hunter, the character should probably take the Counterspells sorcery style early as he may have to fight sorcerers quite often. Ranks in Disguise, Gather Information, Intimidate, Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (religion) and Sense Motive would be helpful.



- ❖ If the character's role is that of an inquisitor, he needs Divination sorcery styles to help him root out corruption in his temple or in society as a whole. Ranks in Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise, Gather Information, Intimidate and Sense Motive will be helpful in this role. Feats such as Alertness, Deceitful, Investigator, Negotiator, Persuasive and Skill Focus (any of the previous skills) are recommended.
- ❖ If the character's role is that of an enforcer, he needs the Curses or Summoning sorcery styles to aid him in brutally destroying those who would defile the sanctity of his arcane or religious order. Enforcers should concentrate their skill points in Concentration, Intimidate, Jump and Ride. Feats such as Cleave, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Improved Unarmed Strike, Mounted Combat, Power Attack and Weapon Focus are recommended.

RACES

Characters combining the scholar and soldier classes can come from almost any country, but there are those who stand as exemplars and exceptions to this.

- ❖ Hyborians are easily fanatical enough to make a temple warder – and they are good at it. Both classes are favoured for the Hyborian temple warder. Many are assigned to Mitran temples, despite the peaceful message of the religion. For some, a message of peace must be reinforced with violence, bigotry, hypocrisy and/or hatred.
- ❖ Bossonians, Hyperboreans and Gundermen favour the soldier class, so many of their religions are military in tone, including their Mitran and Bori-based religions.
- ❖ Almond-eyed Khitan temple warders tend to protect ancient relics, sites and people, travelling hundreds or thousands of miles in pursuit of those who defile their temples. Many favour unarmed combat styles. The scholar class is the favoured class for this race.
- ❖ Meadow Shemite temple warders are ferocious defenders of their various faiths. Soldier is the favoured class for this race. Many are charged with rooting out pockets of Set cults found in the hidden places of Shem.
- ❖ Pelishtim temple warders are to be feared. Both soldier and scholar are favoured by this militant and sorcerous race. They fight for the cults of Pteor, Adonis, Ashtoreth, Derketo and Ishtar.
- ❖ Stygian temple warders are often trained by the state to enforce the official religion and the mandates of the theocracy. Scholar is a favoured class for this race.
- ❖ Zingarans, who favour the soldier class, tend to produce inquisitors. The culture is so mired in civil wars, the inquisitors are used to find out who amongst the people are traitors. This is a surprise, as few would expect a Zingaran inquisition.
- ❖ Cimmerians do not make appropriate temple warders because they are prohibited from taking the scholar class at 1st level.

The Temple Warder (Scholar/Soldier)

Level	Class	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Magic Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	Scholar 1	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+2	New Sorcery Style, Scholar, Background, Base Power Points, Knowledge Is Power, (character feat)
2 nd	Soldier 1	+1	+0	+0	+0	+2	+0	+2	Bonus Feat
3 rd	Scholar 2	+2	+0	+0	+1	+2	+0	+3	+1 Power Point, New Sorcery Style, (character feat)
4 th	Soldier 2	+3	+1	+1	+2	+3	+0	+3	Bonus Feat (single ability increase)
5 th	Scholar 3	+4	+2	+2	+2	+4	+1	+3	Advanced Spell, Bonus Spell
6 th	Soldier 3	+5	+2	+3	+2	+4	+2	+4	Formation Combat, (character feat, all ability increase)
7 th	Scholar 4	+6/+1	+2	+3	+3	+4	+2	+5	Advanced Spell, New Sorcery Style
8 th	Soldier 4	+7/+2	+3	+4	+3	+5	+2	+5	Bonus Feat (single ability increase)
9 th	Scholar 5	+7/+2	+3	+4	+3	+5	+2	+5	Advanced Spell, Iron Will, (Character feat)
10 th	Soldier 5	+8/+3	+3	+4	+3	+5	+2	+5	(All ability increase)
11 th	Scholar 6	+9/+4	+4	+5	+4	+6	+3	+6	Advanced Spell, +1 Power Point, Increased Maximum Power Points (triple)
12 th	Soldier 6	+10/+5	+5	+6	+4	+7	+4	+7	Bonus Feat (character feat, single ability increase)
13 th	Scholar 7	+11/+6/+1	+5	+6	+4	+7	+4	+7	Advanced Spell, Bonus Spell
14 th	Soldier 7	+12/+7/+2	+5	+7	+4	+7	+4	+7	Formation Combat, (all ability increase)
15 th	Scholar 8	+13/+8/+3	+6	+8	+5	+7	+4	+8	Advanced Spell, New Sorcery Style, (character feat)
16 th	Soldier 8	+14/+9/+4	+7	+9	+6	+8	+4	+8	Bonus Feat (single ability increase)
17 th	Scholar 9	+14/+9/+4	+7	+9	+6	+9	+5	+8	Advanced Spell
18 th	Soldier 9	+15/+10/+5	+7	+9	+6	+9	+6	+9	(Character feat, all ability increase)
19 th	Scholar 10	+16/+11/+6/+1	+7	+9	+7	+9	+6	+10	Advanced Spell, +1 Power Point
20 th	Soldier 10	+17/+12/+7/+2	+8	+10	+7	+10	+6	+10	Bonus Feat (single ability increase)

VARIANT RULES

The following rules variants are intended for multiclass scholar/soldiers only and reflect the special training a temple warder might receive in the course of his adventuring career.

☒ **Heretic Hunter:** Instead of choosing a Formation Combat style, the temple warder may choose Heretic Hunter, which allows him to add his Wisdom modifier to all saving throws against spells cast by someone he knows is not of his own religion. He simply will not submit to a heretic's power. He very much believes in his own gods and masters and suffers an equivalent penalty to all of his saves if someone he believes to be of his own faith casts a spell at him. The character must have the Counterspells sorcery style to qualify for this ability.

☒ **Righteous Fury:** Instead of choosing a Formation Combat style, the temple warder may choose Righteous Fury, which allows him to administer justice to those who break the laws of his masters with a fearsome and terrible rage. He can attempt to demoralise all enemies within 30 feet of him once per combat as

a free action using an Intimidation check. If the enemies are known opponents of his god or have inflicted injury or insult upon his temple (attacking the character does not count as an insult or injury to the temple as a whole), then he may add his Wisdom bonus to the Intimidate check and all opponents who are overcome are shaken for a number of rounds equal to his Wisdom modifier. The character must have the Curses sorcery style to qualify for this ability.

☒ **Devilishly Subtle:** Instead of choosing a Formation Combat style, the temple warder may choose Devilishly Subtle. The temple warder has advanced training in persuasive techniques to supplement his already formidable presence. Choose a Charisma based skill (other than Handle Animal) and add the character's Wisdom bonus as a competence bonus to all skill checks involving that skill. The character must have 13 or higher Charisma and the Divination sorcery style to qualify for this ability. This ability can be taken more than once, with each application taking the place of a Formation Combat style and applying to a different Charisma-based skill.

OCCULTIST (SCHOLAR/THIEF)

The occultist is a master of secrets, things men were not meant to know. Skilled and knowledgeable, the occultist is a tomb robber and a hermit seeker. He finds that which has been lost and hides that which has been found.

STRENGTHS

By taking levels of thief in addition to his scholar class, the occultist maximises his ability to strike terror into his opponents. Some of the most important benefits offered to the scholar from this combination of classes follow:

- ❖ **Eyes of the Cat:** The ability to see in the dark is invaluable to the occultist.
- ❖ **Improved Reflex Saves:** The occultist relies on his reflexes more than a standard scholar and adding thief levels to the scholar has the benefit of increasing Reflex saves at the cost of diminishing Fortitude saves. This also has the added advantage of improving his Initiative, which is useful in light of his sneak attack ability.
- ❖ **Sneak Attack:** The occultist strikes fast and hard. He often has time for one attack before he must flee, thus the sneak attack is perfect for the occultist fighter, providing the scholar with a truly devastating attack.
- ❖ **Skills:** The thief's large skill base matches that of the scholar, meaning the scholar does not have to dilute his skill base with multiclassing, which is often the case when a scholar multiclasses.

WEAKNESSES

In addition to diluting the scholar's combat ability by taking thief levels, the occultist also suffers from the following weaknesses:

- ❖ **Base Attack:** The base attack bonus of the occultist is not as strong as the scholar's, thus slightly lowering the character's chances to hit a target.
- ❖ **Fortitude & Will Saves:** The character's Fortitude and Will saves are slightly diminished compared to a straight class scholar but his Reflex saves are improved.

RECOMMENDED OPTIONS

As the character combines scholar with thief levels, there are some options he can take to optimise the mixture of both classes' abilities.

- ❖ The sneak attack is the supreme advantage of combining scholar and thief levels. Scholar bonus feats should be chosen so that they complement the sneak attack's chance to hit and damage an opponent. These range from the simple attack bonus feats like Weapon Focus and Point Blank Shot (which conveniently has the same maximum range as ranged sneak attacks), to more sophisticated manoeuvres like Improved Feint to create opportunities



for sneak attacks rather than having to wait for them to happen. Improved Initiative and Lightning Reflexes both improve Initiative, which increases the odds of successfully making a sneak attack.

- ❖ Choose feats that work well with the thief skills, such as combining Mobility with Tumble or Skill Focus (Bluff) with the Bluff skill. Alertness and Stealthy are also good feats to choose.
- ❖ An occultist should exploit the options for high Dexterity and concentrate ability increases that way. Choose light, finesse weapons to get around armour or opt for ranged attacks.
- ❖ The Counterspells sorcery style is probably the best style for the occultist to learn at first. He may need to ward off the spells of long-dead mages as he enters their crypts and sanctuaries.
- ❖ Take special abilities such as *Sorcerous Protection* and *Skill Mastery*.

RACES

Characters combining the scholar and thief classes can come from almost any country, but there are those who stand as exemplars and exceptions to this.

- ❖ This class, like all class combinations, is perfectly suited for Hyborians, who treat all classes as favoured classes for purposes of determining bonus feats.
- ❖ Khitans, who favour the scholar class, make interesting occultists, probing deep in the jungles of

The Occultist (Scholar/Thief)

Level	Class	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Magic Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	Scholar 1	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+2	New Sorcery Style, Scholar, Background, Base Power Points, Knowledge Is Power, (character feat)
2 nd	Thief 1	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+2	+2	Sneak Attack Style, Sneak Attack +1d6/+1d8, Trap Disarming
3 rd	Scholar 2	+1	+0	+0	+1	+0	+2	+3	+1 Power Point, New Sorcery Style, (character feat)
4 th	Thief 2	+2	+1	+1	+2	+0	+3	+3	Eyes of the Cat, (single ability increase)
5 th	Scholar 3	+3	+2	+2	+2	+1	+4	+3	Advanced Spell, Bonus Spell
6 th	Thief 3	+4	+2	+2	+2	+2	+4	+4	Sneak Attack +2d6/+2d8, Trap Sense +1, (character feat, all ability increase)
7 th	Scholar 4	+5	+2	+2	+3	+2	+4	+5	Advanced Spell, New Sorcery Style
8 th	Thief 4	+6/+1	+3	+3	+3	+2	+5	+5	Sneak Attack Style, Light Footed, (single ability increase)
9 th	Scholar 5	+6/+1	+3	+3	+3	+2	+5	+5	Advanced Spell, Iron Will, (character feat)
10 th	Thief 5	+6/+1	+3	+3	+3	+2	+5	+5	Sneak Attack +3d6/+3d8, (all ability increase)
11 th	Scholar 6	+7/+2	+4	+4	+4	+3	+6	+6	Advanced Spell, +1 Power Point, Increased Maximum Power Points (triple)
12 th	Thief 6	+8/+3	+5	+5	+4	+4	+7	+7	Trap Sense +2, Special Ability, (character feat, single ability increase)
13 th	Scholar 7	+9/+4	+5	+5	+4	+4	+7	+7	Advanced Spell, Bonus Spell
14 th	Thief 7	+10/+5	+5	+5	+4	+4	+7	+7	Sneak Attack +4d6/+4d8, (all ability increase)
15 th	Scholar 8	+11/+6/+1	+6	+6	+5	+4	+7	+8	Advanced Spell, New Sorcery Style, (character feat)
16 th	Thief 8	+12/+7/+2	+7	+7	+6	+4	+8	+8	Sneak Attack Style, Poison Use, (single ability increase)
17 th	Scholar 9	+12/+7/+2	+7	+7	+6	+5	+9	+8	Advanced Spell
18 th	Thief 9	+12/+7/+2	+7	+7	+6	+6	+9	+9	Sneak Attack +5d6, Trap Sense +3, (character feat, all ability increase)
19 th	Scholar 10	+13/+8/+3	+7	+7	+7	+6	+9	+10	Advanced Spell, +1 Power Point
20 th	Thief 10	+14/+9/+4	+8	+8	+7	+6	+10	+10	Special Ability, (single ability increase)

their shrouded land to seek out strange ruins from cultures long dead.

- ❖ Pelishtim occultists hail from a culture steeped in arcane lore. The occultist often acquires lost lore sought by other Pelishtim scholars. Scholar is a favoured class for the Pelishtim.
- ❖ Stygian occultists often raid the tombs and pyramids of their own culture as well as the tombs of other societies to find long-lost secrets. Scholar is the favoured class of the Stygians.
- ❖ Zamorian occultists are often employed by the various cults and temples of Zamora to find relics and texts for the priests of those religions. Thief is the favoured class of the Zamorian people and they excel at stealing the secrets of other mages, living or dead.
- ❖ Cimmerians do not make appropriate occultists because they are prohibited from taking the scholar class at 1st level.

VARIANT RULES

The following rules variants are intended for multiclass scholar/thieves only and reflect the special training an occultist might receive in the course of his adventuring career.

- ❖ **Class Skills:** Upon achieving 1st level in thief, the occultist adds Escape Artist, Spot and Open Lock to his scholar class skill list. Upon achieving 2nd level as a scholar, the occultist adds Concentration and Craft (alchemy) to his thief class skill list.
- ❖ **Sneak Attack Spell:** Upon gaining 7th scholar level, the character can select Sneak Attack Spell instead of a new Advanced Spell. This is an effect that affects touch attack or evil eye spells. Whenever the target of the occultist's touch attack or evil eye spell is flat-footed or denied his Dexterity bonus to Defence, the character's spell will inflict the character's sneak attack damage on top of any other spell effect.

By Disciplined Might

Soldier Multiclassing Options

THE SOLDIER CLASS is a versatile concept in *Conan the Roleplaying Game* as well as one of the most customisable classes. They gain ample bonus feats chosen from a wide selection. The skill rules in *Conan the Roleplaying Game* further permit customisation by allowing any skill points realised from high Intelligence scores to be spent on any skill as though it were a class skill. Still further, soldiers can take levels in other classes to compliment their own combat mastery or further expand their skills and special qualities. This chapter presents possible ways to combine the soldier with the rest of the classes presented in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*, presenting advice on feat choices and other options available when the character gains new abilities from new levels in alternative classes.

This book assumes that the character's main focus is the soldier aspect, taking levels in other classes to alter their soldier concept slightly. Other character classes taking levels in soldier to compliment their primary focus will be covered in other *Conan the Roleplaying Game* supplements. The advancement rates offered herein are not to be taken as the final word on the subject but merely as guidelines to meet a particular character concept.

Conan: The Free Companies features alternative ideas for these class combinations. Games Masters and players are encouraged to make use of that notable resource to enhance the soldier class even further in their campaigns. Note that all of these combinations work exceptionally well for Hyborians, who treat all class combinations as favoured classes.

BRAWLER (SOLDIER/BARBARIAN)

Often little more than the tavern bully, picking on the weak or the different, the brawler specialises in unarmed combat, earning his living by championing his favourite tavern. He is often hired as a bouncer, able to take out or pacify mobs and break up bar fights. Often

recognised as the toughest man in town, the brawler's main asset is his durability. They are often hired out as strong-arms and enforcers. Their disciplined loyalty, coupled with their ferocious fighting ability, is much sought after by the various merchants and nefarious criminal organisations throughout Hyboria.

STRENGTHS

A Brawler gains a number of benefits from adding barbarian levels to his soldier class.

- ❖ **Versatility:** The barbarian ability to use whatever is at hand is useful for brawlers, who may be forced to use nearly anything, such as wine bottles, ale flacons, tables or chairs, to deal with an opponent.
- ❖ **Continued Advancement:** The barbarian and the soldier share the same base attack bonus so the character's combat capacity does not diminish.
- ❖ **Virtual Feats:** Endurance, Uncanny Dodge, Mobility and Diehard are all useful feats for the brawler, especially without the need to spend precious feat slots on them. Track is less useful, so see the variant rules for an idea on how to customise this class combination slightly.
- ❖ **Reflex Save:** Brawlers have improved Reflex saves.
- ❖ **Fortitude Save:** Brawlers are tough and have a better Fortitude save than a straight class soldier. This better increases his chances against massive damage and other tests of endurance.
- ❖ **Skills:** The barbarian has twice the skill points of a soldier; this allows the brawler to learn more skills than the average soldier.

WEAKNESSES

A brawler has a few drawbacks when adding barbarian levels to his soldier class.

- ❖ **Dodge and Parry:** Slower initial Dodge and Parry bonuses; overall dodge will be slightly higher for the brawler, but parry will be considerably lower. His mode of attack tends to leave him wide open. The brawler is less capable of defending himself than

a straight class soldier or barbarian. However, his reputation depends on his ability to take hits and keep attacking.

- ✦ **Formation Combat:** The barbarian nature of the brawler slows down the character's ability to learn Formation Combat styles compared to a straight class soldier. Also, due to the loner nature of this class combination, the Formation Combat ability will rarely come into play for a brawler.

RECOMMENDED OPTIONS

As the brawler combines soldier and barbarian levels, there are some options he can take to optimise the mixture of both classes' abilities. The character should strive to have at least a 17 Strength by 9th level.

- ✦ Brawlers tend to emphasise Strength and Constitution above all other abilities.
- ✦ If the character has less than 13 Intelligence, an appropriate feat progression for this build might be: 1st level: Brawl, Improved Unarmed Combat; 3rd level: Improved Grapple, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike); 6th level: Power Attack; 7th level: Improved Bull Rush; 9th level: Crushing Grip; 11th level: Combat Reflexes; 12th level: Reckless Attack (see page 77); 15th level: Stunning Attack or Weapon Focus (grapple), Improved Critical (unarmed strike or grapple); 18th level: Cleave, Great Cleave.
- ✦ If the character has at least 13 Intelligence by 6th level, an appropriate feat progression for this build might be: 1st level: Brawl, Improved Unarmed Combat; 3rd level: Improved Grapple, Dodge; 6th level: Combat Expertise; 7th level: Combat Reflexes; 9th level: Crushing Grip; 11th level: Whirlwind Attack; 12th level: Stunning Attack; 15th level: Improved Disarm, Improved Trip; 18th level: Power Attack, Reckless Attack (see page 77).
- ✦ If one or more of these classes are favoured, the character should consider taking the following feats: 1st favoured level: Toughness; 5th favoured level: Carouser; 10th favoured level: Great Fortitude or Tough as Nails.
- ✦ Brawlers should put ranks in Intimidate every level. It is a class skill for both soldier and barbarian. The character usually knows a lot about his locality, so he often has a few ranks in Knowledge (local), taken when he moves up levels of soldier. When he moves up in barbarian levels, other than Intimidate, Bluff and

Spot are wise choices to increase. Brawlers are not really wilderness survivalists, so ranks in Survival are rarely taken. If the character has an Intelligence bonus or is willing to buy cross-class skills, taking ranks in Tumble is well-advised.

- ✦ If the character is of the appropriate race, Fighting-Madness should be taken.
- ✦ Iron Will is a good option for a character feat. Both the soldier and the barbarian have poor Will saves, so bolstering this weakness will save the party from future frustrations by making sure their brawler does not fail Terror checks or Will saves against magical attacks, especially *domination* or similar Hypnosis spells. Further, succeeding on a Will save against Terror triggers the barbaric Crimson Rage ability, so bolstering the Will save makes this ability much more reliable.

RACES

Characters combining the soldier and barbarian classes can come from almost any country, but there are those who stand as exemplars and exceptions to this.



The Brawler (Soldier/Barbarian)

Level	Class	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	Soldier 1	+1	+0	+0	+2	+0	+0	Bonus Feat, (character feat)
2 nd	Barbarian 1	+2	+0	+0	+4	+2	+0	Track, Fearless, Versatility (–2 penalty)
3 rd	Soldier 2	+3	+1	+1	+5	+2	+0	Bonus Feat, (character feat)
4 th	Barbarian 2	+4	+2	+1	+5	+3	+1	Bite Sword, Crimson Mist, (single ability increase)
5 th	Soldier 3	+5	+2	+2	+6	+4	+1	Formation Combat
6 th	Barbarian 3	+6/+1	+3	+3	+6	+4	+2	Trap Sense +1, Endurance, (character feat, all ability increase)
7 th	Soldier 4	+7/+2	+4	+4	+7	+4	+2	Bonus Feat
8 th	Barbarian 4	+8/+3	+5	+4	+8	+5	+2	Uncanny Dodge, (single ability increase)
9 th	Soldier 5	+9/+4	+5	+4	+8	+5	+2	(Character feat)
10 th	Barbarian 5	+10/+5	+5	+4	+8	+5	+2	Mobility, (all ability increase)
11 th	Soldier 6	+11/+6/+1	+6	+5	+9	+6	+3	Bonus Feat
12 th	Barbarian 6	+12/+7/+2	+7	+6	+10	+7	+4	Trap Sense +2, Diehard, (character feat, single ability increase)
13 th	Soldier 7	+13/+8/+3	+7	+7	+10	+7	+4	Formation Combat
14 th	Barbarian 7	+14/+9/+4	+8	+7	+11	+8	+4	Versatility (no penalty), (all ability increase)
15 th	Soldier 8	+15/+10/+5	+9	+8	+11	+8	+4	Bonus Feat, (character feat)
16 th	Barbarian 8	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+9	+11	+8	+5	Improved Uncanny Dodge, (single ability increase)
17 th	Soldier 9	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+9	+12	+8	+5	—
18 th	Soldier 10	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11	+10	+12	+9	+6	Bonus Feat, (character feat, all ability increase)
19 th	Barbarian 9	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11	+10	+13	+9	+6	Trap Sense +3
20 th	Barbarian 10	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12	+10	+14	+10	+6	Improved Mobility, Damage Reduction 1/–, (single ability increase)

- ❖ Hyborians in general make some of the best brawlers and ‘iron men’, since both classes are treated as favoured.
- ❖ Cimmerians, Himelian tribesmen, Kushites, Nordheimer, Picts, Southern Black Kingdoms tribesmen and Darfari are renowned for their barbaric ferocity and make infamous brawlers. They have barbarian as a favoured class, so they will not gain favoured class feats as quickly as a Hyborian but they have other traits that put them in good standing with this type of class combination, such as racial bonuses to Strength or Constitution scores.
- ❖ Gundermen, Hyperboreans, Meadow Shemites, Pelishtim and Vendhyans also make decent brawlers, as soldier is a favoured class for them. However, these races, except for the Hyperboreans, do not gain an ability bonus helpful to the character concept of the brawler. Hyperboreans gain a +2 bonus to Constitution, making them ideal brawlers.
- ❖ Zingarans also treat soldier as a favoured class but they have a penalty to Constitution that hurts the overall character concept. A Zingaran brawler should take some feats to increase his Fortitude save and/or hit points.

VARIANT RULES

The following rules variants are intended for multiclass soldier/barbarians only and reflect the special training a brawler might receive in the course of his adventuring career.

- ❖ **Toughness:** Upon attaining 1st level barbarian, the character can elect to take Toughness instead of Track, even if he does not meet the prerequisites. Brawlers rarely bother to track down anyone, they just hit whoever is closest at hand and are able to absorb damage well.
- ❖ **Iron Man:** Upon attaining 2nd barbarian level, if the character has the Brawl and Improved Unarmed Combat feats, the character can substitute Tough as Nails (page 78) instead of Bite Sword, even if the character cannot meet the prerequisites. He is a freak of nature known as an Iron Man as described by Robert E. Howard in stories such as *Men of Iron*, *The Iron Man*, *They Always Come Back* and *Fists of the Desert*.

- ❖ **Surprise Strike:** Upon gaining 3rd soldier level, the character may elect to take Surprise Strike instead of a Formation Combat style. Brawlers usually act alone and they are adept at laying opponents out in the midst of a brawl long before they are aware of his presence. The brawler gains the sneak attack +1d6 feature of the thief or pirate. This bonus stacks with any other sneak attack already gained. It can be taken again whenever the character earns another Formation Combat style, adding another +1d6 to the damage bonus of the sneak attack.

MASTER ARCHER (SOLDIER/BORDERER)

Master archers are more than experts with the bow, they are artists. They are terrors on the battlefield, capable of targeting enemies at range while remaining untouchable. The first enemies know of their attention is an arrow through the heart. Some of these archers, especially the Bossonians, become so skilled with their bows they are attributed supernatural powers – some can even shoot enemies heard but not seen. Speed or cover rarely bother high level master archers for their accuracy is almost superhuman. They often remain behind the frontline soldiers in an army or adventuring party, raining down a hail of arrows upon enemies like a vengeful sky-god hurling lightning bolts.

STRENGTHS

A master archer gains a number of benefits from adding borderer levels to his soldier class.

- ❖ **Fortitude & Reflex Saves:** The master archer has a much improved rate of Fortitude and Reflex saves. The master archer is well-equipped to survive the rigours of wilderness travel compared to the straight class soldier.
- ❖ **Skills:** The borderer has a better skill selection than the soldier and offers a few more skill points per level. The skill selection is aimed at survival and stealth.
- ❖ **Combat Style and Free Feats:** The character can choose a combat style and receive free feats.
 - ❖ **Continued Advancement:** The borderer and the soldier share the same base attack bonus so the character's combat capacity does not diminish.
 - ❖ **Favoured Terrain:** The borderers advantage in certain terrain is an asset to the soldier in the wild.

WEAKNESSES

The master archer character has a few weaknesses.

- ❖ **Weak Parry Bonus:** The master archer is much less capable of parrying attacks than a single class soldier.
- ❖ **Slow Dodge Bonus:** The master archer has a slower dodge through most of the levels, but by the time he is 20th level, he is just as capable of dodging a blow as a single class soldier.
- ❖ **Slow Will Save Progression:** Especially at lower levels, the Will save progression for the master archer is slow.
- ❖ **Feats:** The borderer gains a few free feats, but they are fixed, which limits the character's options related to his particular fighting style.
- ❖ **Armour Restriction:** The borderer cannot wear medium or heavy armour and still enjoy his many special features, which is a problem for combat oriented master archers.



RECOMMENDED OPTIONS

As the character combines soldier with borderer levels, there are some options he can take to optimise the mixture of both classes' abilities.

- ☒ The borderer's combat style presents a chance for the character to gain feats he might not normally qualify for, provided he is willing to wear only light or no armour. The archery style is the best choice for the Hyborian Age master archer. It offers more possibilities for completion through soldier bonus feats and imposes fewer penalties to attack options. In addition, the Weapon Focus/Specialisation options for bows include regular and high-strength versions, something that does not hold true for different kinds of swords.
- ☒ A potential feat progression for this type of character is: 1st level: Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot; 3rd level: Ranged Finesse; 4th level: Weapon Focus; 6th level: Weapon Specialisation; 7th level: Far Shot; 9th level: Improved Critical; 10th level: Eagle Eye; 12th level: Improved Precise Shot; 14th level: Greater Weapon Focus; 15th level: Archer's Bane; 18th level: Alertness, Sniper's Eye; 20th level: Greater Weapon Specialisation.
- ☒ Characters should try to maximise their Spot skills as one can only hit a target if one can see a target. Search is another good skill to keep high.
- ☒ Given the fact that borderers must wear light or no armour to enjoy their class's benefits, as well as the slow Dodge and Parry progression, soldier bonus feats should go towards defensive measures such as Dodge, Parry and Combat Expertise.
- ☒ A high Dexterity is desirable not only because of the bonus to Dodge Defence, but also to meet the prerequisites of feats that complement both of the borderer's combat styles. Finesse weapons are a good option when the character has a mid- or high-Dexterity score.

RACES

Characters combining the soldier and borderer classes can come from almost any country, but there are those who stand as exemplars and exceptions to this.

- ☒ Hyborians make the best master archers, as both classes are favoured by the adaptive Hyborian race. The adaptability and Background Skill options of the Hyborians also works heavily in favour of this combination with that race. A Tauran, a sub-race of Hyborian, also works well. Soldier is not a favoured

class but borderer is. Also, the racial features of Taurans work favourably for the master archer character, offsetting the slower gain of favoured class feats. Argosseans and Barachans are the worst choices for a master archer character out of all Hyborian races.

- ☒ Bossonians, another Hyborian subrace, are almost perfect for this class combination. Although soldier is the only favoured class, the bonuses to attack rolls and proficiency with Bossonian longbows without having to purchase an exotic weapon proficiency make this an ideal race for a master archer.
- ☒ Hyrkanians, although this combination is not favoured for them, make excellent snipers and the soldier/borderer combination enhances the natural talents of this race. Hyrkanians and Turanians should fit Mounted Archery into the feat progression somewhere early.
- ☒ Shemites are another good racial choice for this character concept if the character remains in the appropriate terrain to gain the racial bonuses. Meadow Shemites and Pelishtim also make good master archers.
- ☒ Vendhyans and Zingarans also have soldier as a favoured class, making this multiclass a good choice for them.

VARIANT RULES

The following rules variants are intended for multiclass soldier/borderers only and reflect the special training a master archer might receive in the course of his adventuring career.

- ☒ **All Seeing Aim:** The master archer can pick out targets hiding behind concealment or darkness with ease, even if he cannot see the target (but he must still be aware of the target). With a successful Listen check, he can aim at the target as though it has, at best, soft cover. Although he cannot shoot through a tree, wall or other serious impediment, he can shoot over these things often enough. If he hears someone on the other side of a wall, he can shoot up and over the wall and potentially hit the target. He ignores darkness, blindness, invisibility and most concealment/cover in the same manner. His arrows must still follow the laws of physics, however. This ability replaces the Formation Combat ability at 11th soldier level. The character must have the archery combat style from the borderer class and 5 ranks in Listen to take this ability.

The Master Archer (Soldier/Borderer)

Level	Class	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	Soldier 1	+1	+0	+0	+2	+0	+0	Bonus Feat, (character feat)
2 nd	Borderer 1	+2	+0	+0	+4	+2	+0	Track, Favoured Terrain +1
3 rd	Borderer 2	+3	+1	+1	+5	+3	+0	Combat Style, (character feat)
4 th	Soldier 2	+4	+2	+2	+6	+3	+0	Bonus Feat, (single ability increase)
5 th	Borderer 3	+5	+2	+2	+6	+3	+1	Endurance
6 th	Soldier 3	+6/+1	+2	+3	+6	+4	+2	Formation Combat, (character feat, all ability increase)
7 th	Soldier 4	+7/+2	+3	+4	+7	+4	+2	Bonus Feat
8 th	Borderer 4	+8/+3	+4	+5	+8	+5	+2	Favoured Terrain +2, (single ability increase)
9 th	Soldier 5	+9/+4	+4	+5	+8	+5	+2	(Character feat)
10 th	Borderer 5	+10/+5	+4	+5	+8	+5	+2	Improved Combat Style, (all ability increase)
11 th	Soldier 6	+11/+6/+1	+5	+6	+9	+6	+3	Bonus Feat
12 th	Soldier 7	+12/+7/+2	+5	+7	+9	+6	+3	Formation Combat, (character feat, single ability increase)
13 th	Borderer 6	+13/+8/+3	+6	+8	+10	+7	+4	Diehard
14 th	Soldier 8	+14/+9/+4	+7	+9	+11	+7	+4	Bonus Feat, (all ability increase)
15 th	Borderer 7	+15/+10/+5	+7	+9	+11	+7	+4	Second Favoured Terrain +1, guide, (character feat)
16 th	Borderer 8	+16/+11/+6/+1	+8	+10	+12	+8	+4	Favoured terrain +3, (single ability increase)
17 th	Soldier 9	+17/+12/+7/+2	+8	+10	+12	+9	+5	—
18 th	Soldier 10	+18/+13/+8/+3	+9	+11	+13	+9	+5	Bonus Feat, (character feat, all ability increase)
19 th	Soldier 11	+19/+14/+9/+4	+9	+12	+13	+9	+5	Formation Combat
20 th	Soldier 12	+20/+15/+10/+5	+10	+13	+14	+10	+6	Bonus Feat, (single ability increase)

☒ **Do Not Threaten Me:** The master archer is completely at home with ranged combat. He does not provoke an attack of opportunity when firing his weapon inside a threatened area. Instead of taking a Formation Combat style at 3rd, 7th or 11th soldier level, he may take this ability. He must have the archery Combat Style from the borderer class to take this ability.

☒ **Master Aim:** The master archer is able to place his arrows in the most critical locations when he attacks. With this ability he may add 1d6 points of damage to all successful attacks he makes with his bow so long as he does not move, make a move equivalent action or take a five foot step. Instead of taking a Formation Combat at 3rd, 7th or 11th soldier level, he may take this ability. He must have the archery Combat Style from the borderer class to take this ability.

☒ **Shoot the Opening:** When armed with a bow, the master archer threatens an area around him of 20 feet. He may take attacks of opportunity as normal against any target within this area with his bow. Instead of taking a Formation Combat style at 3rd, 7th or 11th soldier level, he may take this ability. He must

have the archery Combat Style from the borderer class and the Quick Draw feat to take this ability.

FOP (SOLDIER/NOBLE)

The fop is skilled in intricate and fast swordplay, courting pretty maidens and living a wealthy lifestyle while doing as little real labour as possible. Many are actually poor and have few noble connections to start with but the fop is adept at beguiling others into believing he is a man of distinction, class and breeding. Most commonly encountered in the more civilised nations, such as Aquilonia, Nemedra, Ophir, Corinthia, Brythunia and Turan, these men are drawn to the trappings and status of the higher social classes, thinking themselves the equal of those they swindle. Some spend their days preying on rich widows with the sole intention of gaining gold and jewels. They quickly learn the skills of duelling in order to protect their 'good' name and to earn the respect of the nobility, who generally consider skill at arms to be the hallmark of a true noble. Fops who are adventuring are usually those who have conned the wrong noble family and are forced to disappear for a time.

STRENGTHS

A fop gains a number of benefits from adding noble levels to his soldier class, the following being the most important for the role of the soldier:

- ❖ **Special Regional Feature:** Most of the racial regional bonuses for the noble class include attack bonuses for certain weaponry. This may slightly offset some of the combat dilution that occurs with this mixture of classes.
- ❖ **Wealth:** Most soldiers are poor, fops are not; they have managed to con someone out of their money. They do, however, have a need to purchase the best armour and shields because of their weak dodge and parry bonuses.
- ❖ **Improved Will Saves:** Fops are trained to be strong-willed. They have approximately twice the Will bonus of a straight soldier of the same level.

WEAKNESSES

The fop dilutes his combat ability by taking up noble levels, adding the following weaknesses.

- ❖ **Game Master Permission:** In order to multiclass into the noble class at 2nd level, the Player needs the Games Master's permission.



- ❖ **Slower Base Attack Bonus Progression:** Fops are not as well trained in combat as the typical frontline soldier. Although the special regional feature of the noble class offsets this weakness somewhat, it is undeniable that the noble-born fop is less able to launch an attack than a straight class soldier of equal level.
- ❖ **Hit Dice:** The noble's d8 Hit Die is less than the soldier's d10, creating a character with slightly fewer hit points on average per level.
- ❖ **Weak Dodge Bonus:** Fops are less capable of dodging attacks than single class soldiers of equal level.
- ❖ **Weak Parry Bonus:** Fops are also less able to parry blows than a single classed soldier.
- ❖ **Weak Fortitude Saves:** Fops are less able to endure hardship and physical stress than a line soldier.
- ❖ **Slow Reflex Saves:** Fops do not react to danger as quickly as a line soldier at most levels, breaking even at 20th level.

RECOMMENDED OPTIONS

As the character combines soldier and noble levels, there are some options he can take to optimise the mixture of both classes' abilities.

- ❖ To compensate for the weak parry and dodge bonuses, fops tend to have the best armour available.
- ❖ Most fops prefer to be mounted, so ranks in Ride and feats such as Mounted Combat and Mounted Archery are appropriate.
- ❖ A fop should put ranks into Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise, Forgery, Intimidate and Perform (acting) in order to influence the nobility into believing his lies. Feats such as Deceitful, Negotiator and Persuasive are appropriate for a fop character.
- ❖ Martial feats such as Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Intricate Swordplay, Mobility, Parry, Striking Cobra, Weapon Focus, Weapon Specialisation and Web of Death are also appropriate for a fop. If Zingaran, take Zingaran Surprise.
- ❖ The gift-giving Social Ability presented on page 53 is especially appropriate for a fop.

RACES

Characters combining the soldier and noble classes can come from almost any country, but there are those who stand as exemplars and exceptions to this.

The Fop (Soldier/Noble)

Level	Class	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	Soldier 1	+1	+0	+0	+2	+0	+0	Bonus Feat, (character feat)
2 nd	Noble 1	+1	+0	+0	+2	+0	+2	Title, Rank Hath Its Privileges, Wealth
3 rd	Soldier 2	+2	+1	+1	+3	+0	+2	Bonus Feat, (character feat)
4 th	Noble 2	+3	+1	+2	+3	+0	+3	Special Regional Feature +1, (single ability increase)
5 th	Soldier 3	+4	+1	+3	+3	+1	+4	Formation Combat
6 th	Noble 3	+5	+2	+3	+4	+2	+4	(Character feat, all ability increase)
7 th	Soldier 4	+6/+1	+3	+4	+5	+2	+4	Bonus Feat
8 th	Noble 4	+7/+2	+3	+5	+5	+2	+5	Social Ability, (single ability increase)
9 th	Soldier 5	+8/+3	+3	+5	+5	+2	+5	(Character feat)
10 th	Noble 5	+8/+3	+3	+5	+5	+2	+5	Lead By Example +2, (all ability increase)
11 th	Soldier 6	+9/+4	+4	+6	+6	+3	+6	Bonus Feat
12 th	Noble 6	+10/+5	+5	+7	+7	+4	+7	Enhanced Leadership, (character feat, single ability increase)
13 th	Noble 7	+11/+6/+1	+5	+7	+7	+4	+7	Special Regional Feature +2
14 th	Soldier 7	+12/+7/+2	+5	+8	+7	+4	+7	Formation Combat, (all ability increase)
15 th	Noble 8	+13/+8/+3	+6	+9	+7	+4	+8	(Character feat)
16 th	Soldier 8	+14/+8/+4	+7	+10	+8	+4	+8	Bonus Feat, (single ability increase)
17 th	Noble 9	+14/+8/+4	+7	+10	+9	+5	+8	Social Ability
18 th	Soldier 9	+15/+9/+5	+7	+10	+9	+6	+9	Lead By Example +4, (character feat, all ability increase)
19 th	Soldier 10	+16/+10/+6	+8	+11	+10	+6	+9	—
20 th	Soldier 11	+17/+11/+7	+8	+12	+10	+6	+9	Bonus Feat (single ability increase)

- ❖ A Hyborian is an excellent choice for a fop because both classes are favoured.
- ❖ Gundermen, Hyperboreans, Meadow Shemites, Pelishtim and Zingarans also make good fops, as soldier is a favoured class for them.
- ❖ Although a Vendhyan has soldier for a favoured class, this class concept does not really work within the kingdom of Vendhya itself because of its caste system.
- ❖ Although Stygians have noble as a favoured class, it is hard for a non-noble to infiltrate the true nobility of Stygia because of the skin colour. The nobles are largely ivory-skinned, while the common classes are dusky-hued. However, an expatriated Stygian could easily foist this charade in the West, posing as a foreign prince.

VARIANT RULES

The following rules variants are intended for multiclass soldier/nobles only and reflect the special training a fop might receive in the course of his adventuring career.

- ❖ **Multiple Identities:** Instead of taking a Formation Combat style at 3rd, 7th or 11th soldier level, he may take Multiple Identities. He must have the Rank Hath Its Privileges ability to take this in place of Formation Combat. The fop with this ability is able to maintain several alternate identities and aliases, each with separate Reputation scores (see Aliases in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*). Each alternate identity must be given a suitable background and distinctive appearance by the Player. The fop is so used to adopting each of these alternate personae that all Disguise and Bluff checks he makes relating to the persona have a +4 competence bonus.

WASTELAND WARRIOR

(SOLDIER/NOMAD)

Nomads in Hyboria lead a violent life. Their tribes and clans fight amongst themselves constantly. They fight outsiders constantly and they fight those who dwell in cities. If they are not raiding they are hunting. Their lives are spent on horseback and their battles are fought from horseback. However, some nomads are more warlike and skilled than others. These wasteland warriors are



incredible horsemen and cavalymen, shooting their arrows from horseback while galloping straight at their enemies, then doing a pivot and continuing to shoot their arrows back over their horses' tails as they gallop away. They are often so skilled that they have several arrows in the air at once, all in a line, flying to strike their foe. Many are also skilled with lassos, using them to snare their enemies and drag them to their deaths. When it is all said and done, the nomads of the Hyborian Age are violent and the wasteland warriors are among the most aggressive of them.

STRENGTHS

A wasteland warrior gains a number of benefits from adding nomad levels to his soldier class, the following being the most important:

- ❖ **Stronger Fortitude Save:** The wasteland warrior is tough and rigorous.
- ❖ **Stronger Reflex Save:** The Wasteland Warrior is also quick on his feet, boasting of a much stronger Reflex save progression than the straight class soldier.

- ❖ **Continued Advancement:** The nomad and the soldier share the same base attack bonus so the character's combat capacity does not diminish.
- ❖ **Favoured Terrain:** The wasteland warrior gains bonuses to Dodge Defence as well as circumstance bonuses to several useful skills.
- ❖ **Nomad Charge:** The wasteland warrior can charge his mount with greater skill than a straight class soldier mounted on a horse.
- ❖ **Mobility:** Because the wasteland warrior has a weaker Parry bonus progression than a straight class soldier, the Mobility bonus feat, especially if used with some ranks in Tumble, helps to protect the character.

WEAKNESSES

The wasteland warrior has a few weaknesses:

- ❖ **Weak Parry Bonus Progression:** The wasteland warrior is less capable of parrying a blow than a single classed soldier.
- ❖ **Slower Will Save:** The wasteland warrior has a slightly slower progression of Will saves than a single classed soldier, breaking even for many levels.
- ❖ **Feats:** The nomad gains a few free feats, but they are fixed, which limits the character's options related to his particular fighting style.

RECOMMENDED OPTIONS

As the character combines soldier and nomad levels, there are some options he can take to optimise the mixture of both classes' abilities.

- ❖ The wasteland warrior needs his mount, so he should choose some skills that create synergies with other skills and feats to protect his mount. An excellent combination is to put 5 ranks in Handle Animal, maximise his Ride skill and take Mounted Combat and Skill Focus (Ride) for feats. The Mounted Combat feat allows a character to negate a successful melee hit against his mount by making a Ride check. Putting 5 ranks into Handle Animal gives the wasteland warrior a +2 synergy bonus in Ride. Taking Skill Focus (Ride) gives the character a further +3 bonus to the Ride check. By taking Animal Affinity, the Ride check gains another +2 bonus. By 2nd level, a wasteland warrior could be making Ride checks at +12, not counting Dexterity or any further racial bonuses.

The Wasteland Warrior(Soldier/Nomad)

Level	Class	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	Soldier 1	+1	+0	+0	+2	+0	+0	Bonus Feat, (character feat)
2 nd	Nomad 1	+2	+0	+0	+4	+2	+0	Track, Favoured Terrain +1, Born To The Saddle, (-2 penalty)
3 rd	Soldier 2	+3	+1	+1	+5	+2	+0	Bonus Feat, (character feat)
4 th	Nomad 2	+4	+2	+2	+6	+3	+0	Bonus Feat, (single ability increase)
5 th	Soldier 3	+5	+2	+3	+6	+4	+1	Formation Combat
6 th	Nomad 3	+6/+1	+2	+3	+6	+4	+2	Endurance, (character feat, all ability increase)
7 th	Soldier 4	+7/+2	+3	+4	+7	+4	+2	Bonus Feat
8 th	Nomad 4	+8/+3	+4	+5	+8	+5	+2	Nomad Charge +1, Favoured Terrain +2, (single ability increase)
9 th	Soldier 5	+9/+4	+4	+5	+8	+5	+2	(Character feat)
10 th	Nomad 5	+10/+5	+4	+5	+8	+5	+2	Mobility, (all ability increase)
11 th	Soldier 6	+11/+6/+1	+5	+6	+9	+6	+3	Bonus Feat
12 th	Nomad 6	+12/+7/+2	+6	+7	+10	+7	+4	Diehard, (character feat, single ability increase)
13 th	Soldier 7	+13/+8/+3	+6	+8	+10	+7	+4	Formation Combat
14 th	Nomad 7	+14/+9/+4	+6	+8	+10	+7	+4	Bonus Feat, (all ability increase)
15 th	Soldier 8	+15/+10/+5	+7	+9	+11	+7	+4	Bonus Feat, (character feat)
16 th	Nomad 8	+16/+11/+6/+1	+8	+10	+12	+8	+4	Favoured Terrain +3, (single ability increase)
17 th	Nomad 9	+17/+12/+7/+2	+8	+10	+12	+8	+5	Second Favoured Terrain
18 th	Soldier 9	+18/+13/+8/+3	+8	+11	+12	+9	+6	(Character feat, all ability increase)
19 th	Nomad 10	+19/+14/+9/+4	+9	+12	+13	+10	+6	Improved Mobility
20 th	Soldier 10	+20/+15/+10/+5	+10	+13	+14	+10	+6	Bonus Feat, (single ability increase)

- ☒ Take feats to enhance the character's mounted capabilities. Mounted Combat, Mounted Archery, Animal Affinity, Weapon Focus (heavy lance) and Improved Critical (heavy lance) are all useful feats for the mounted warrior.
- ☒ Heal and Survival are both good skills for the wasteland warrior, who must not only care for himself but also his mount.
- ☒ *Conan: Hyboria's Fiercest* features several mounted combat manoeuvres appropriate to this class combination.

- ☒ The Ghanata are well known as expert riders and they also make fantastic wasteland warriors. Like the Hyrkanians, nomad is a favoured class of the Ghanata, plus Ride and Survival are Background Skills. Further, though, the Ghanata gain a racial bonus to Ride and circumstance bonuses to Spot and Survival.
- ☒ Likewise the Shemites make renowned wasteland warriors. Again, nomad is the favoured class and Ride and Survival are Background Skills. Their bonuses with bows and Spot checks only increase their abilities with this class combination.

RACES

Characters combining the soldier and nomad classes can come from almost any country, but there are those who stand as exemplars and exceptions to this.

- ☒ Hyborians are well suited wasteland warriors, as both classes can be treated as favoured classes.
- ☒ Turanians and Hyrkanians are excellent candidates for the wasteland warrior multiclass option. The nomad is the favoured class for these races, plus they have bonuses to archery and have Ride and Survival as Background Skills.

VARIANT RULES

The following rules variants are intended for multiclass soldier/nomads only and reflect the special training a wasteland warrior might receive in the course of his adventuring career.

- ☒ **Turanians:** Games Masters may allow Turanians to have both soldier and nomad as favoured classes. They were once Hyrkanians, but have settled in their conquered land, using soldiers and turning their backs on a nomadic lifestyle, yet they remain accomplished horsemen and masters of mounted archery. This is an excellent class combination for a

Turanian and allowing them bonus feats at 1st, 5th and 10th character levels is appropriate if this multiclass progression is maintained by the character.

SEA HAWK (SOLDIER/PIRATE)

A sea hawk is a pirate who has taken his skills to the limit with flair and panache. His wit is as sharp as his blade, a born leader who inspires his followers to follow him into the mouth of Hell if need be. They tend to be compulsive liars and are often the mouthpiece of the party. They are normally charismatic, outspoken and will do everything with flair and flash. Their combat skills are more honed than a traditional pirate and they are capable of inspirational feats of combat skill.

STRENGTHS

The soldier gains a number of benefits from adding pirate levels to his soldier class, the following being the most important for the role of the sea hawk:

- ❖ **Saving Throws:** The sea hawk has impressive saving throws, especially Fortitude and Reflex saves.
- ❖ **Seamanship:** This helps the soldier with his weaker defence when on ships.
- ❖ **Ferocious Attack:** The initial boost to Initiative, melee attacks and damage gives the sea hawk the edge over a standard soldier. The additional attack gained later is another advantage the sea hawk has over the land soldier.
- ❖ **To Sail a Road of Blood and Slaughter:** The free action *coup de grace* gives this soldier the ability to kill fallen opponents quickly.
- ❖ **Sneak Attack:** Although less useful than the sneak attacks of the assassin option, this is a powerful ability given to the sea hawk at mid-levels.
- ❖ **Virtual Feats:** Although the sea hawk has fewer bonus feats than a straight class soldier, the pirate class offers many virtual feats in trade, such as Uncanny Dodge, Mobility, Improved Uncanny Dodge and Improved Mobility.

WEAKNESSES

The soldier dilutes his combat ability by taking up pirate levels, adding the following weaknesses:

- ❖ **Slower Base Attack Bonus Progression:** Although the sea hawk has a slower rate of progression for base attack bonus than a straight line soldier, the sea hawk does progress faster than a pirate, making this a foe of considerable power when set against pirates.



- ❖ **Hit Die:** The pirate's d8 Hit Die reduces the soldier's ability to endure long battles or sustain damage.
- ❖ **Fewer bonus feats:** The sea hawk has fewer bonus feats than a straight class soldier. Mobility and Uncanny Dodge mitigate this loss somewhat.

RECOMMENDED OPTIONS

As the character combines soldier and pirate levels, there are some options he can take to optimise the mixture of both classes' abilities.

- ❖ Charisma is important for this character concept. This character should have at least 13 Charisma. He should take some ranks in Bluff, Diplomacy and Intimidate.
- ❖ Useful feats for the Sea hawk include Improved Bull Rush. Bull rushing opponents off the edge of ships is an excellent choice of tactic, especially if the opponent is heavily armoured. Athletic is another good choice of feat, bolstering

The Sea Hawk (Soldier/Pirate)

Level	Class	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	Soldier 1	+1	+0	+0	+2	+0	+0	Bonus Feat, (character feat)
2 nd	Pirate 1	+1	+0	+0	+4	+2	+0	Seamanship +1, Ferocious Attack
3 rd	Pirate 2	+2	+1	+1	+5	+3	+0	Pirate Code, To Sail a Road of Blood and Slaughter, (character feat)
4 th	Soldier 2	+3	+2	+2	+6	+3	+0	Bonus Feat, (single ability increase)
5 th	Soldier 3	+4	+2	+3	+6	+4	+1	Formation Combat
6 th	Pirate 3	+5	+3	+3	+6	+4	+2	Sneak Attack +1d6, Sneak Subdual, (character feat, all ability increase)
7 th	Soldier 4	+6/+1	+4	+4	+7	+4	+2	Bonus Feat
8 th	Pirate 4	+7/+2	+5	+5	+8	+5	+2	Uncanny Dodge, (single ability increase)
9 th	Soldier 5	+8/+3	+5	+5	+8	+5	+2	(Character feat)
10 th	Pirate 5	+8/+3	+5	+5	+8	+5	+2	Mobility, (all ability increase)
11 th	Soldier 6	+9/+4	+6	+6	+9	+6	+3	Bonus Feat
12 th	Pirate 6	+10/+5	+7	+7	+10	+7	+4	Sneak Attack +2d6, Seamanship +2, (character feat, single ability increase)
13 th	Soldier 7	+11/+6/+1	+7	+8	+10	+7	+4	Formation Combat
14 th	Pirate 7	+12/+7/+2	+8	+8	+10	+7	+4	Bite Sword, Ferocious Attack (additional attack), (all ability increase)
15 th	Soldier 8	+13/+8/+3	+9	+9	+11	+7	+4	Bonus Feat, (character feat)
16 th	Pirate 8	+14/+9/+4	+10	+10	+12	+8	+4	Improved Uncanny Dodge, Poison Resistance +1, (single ability increase)
17 th	Pirate 9	+14/+9/+4	+10	+10	+12	+8	+5	Sneak Attack +3d6
18 th	Soldier 9	+15/+10/+5	+10	+10	+12	+9	+6	(Character feat, all ability increase)
19 th	Pirate 10	+16/+11/+6/+1	+11	+11	+13	+10	+6	Improved Mobility, Navigation
20 th	Soldier 10	+17/+12/+7/+2	+12	+12	+14	+10	+6	Bonus Feat, (single ability increase)

both Climb and Swim checks. Weapon Focus is a good feat to use, especially in conjunction with a finesse weapon. Use feats from *Conan: Pirate Isles*, such as Hard Hands. If your character is Zingaran, take Freebooter's Fortune at 1st level so the character qualifies for Up the Rigging, Wave Dance and Viper's Speed later.

- ❖ Other feats appropriate for this character concept is Dodge, Improved Feint, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Leadership, Negotiator, Persuasive and Skill Focus (any).
- ❖ Try to get the prerequisites for as many combat manoeuvres from *Conan: Pirate Isles* as the character can. Take ranks in either Jump or Tumble, take ranks in Swim, increase the character's Reputation, take feats such as Improved Grapple and Combat Reflexes.
 - ❖ Take skills that improve the class features of the pirate, such as combining Tumble with Mobility.

RACES

Characters combining the soldier and pirate classes can come from almost any country, but there are those who stand as exemplars.

- ❖ Although Hyborians treat all class combinations as favoured classes and can use Adaptability and their choices of Background Skills to great benefit, the Zingarans are also a good choice of race for this combination. Both soldier and pirate are favoured classes for the Zingarans and the Zingarans have a bonus to sneak attack, giving the Zingaran sea hawk a powerful advantage over low-level sea hawks of other races.

VARIANT RULES

The following rules variants are intended for multiclass soldier/pirates only and reflect the special training a sea hawk might receive in the course of his adventuring career.

- ❖ **Insulting:** The sea hawk can taunt a target as an attack action, making an Intimidate check versus an opposed Will save. If the sea hawk wins, the target is dazed (unable to act but can defend normally) for

1 round. The target must have an Intelligence score of 3 or higher to be susceptible to this trick, must be within 30 feet of the character and must be able to hear and understand him. This ability can be taken in lieu of sneak subdual.

- ❖ **Combat Synergist:** The sea hawk has a knack for getting people to work together. He spends a full round directing his allies and makes a Charisma check (DC 15); success means the character provides any of his allies within 30 feet with a +2 bonus on their attack. The bonus lasts for a number of rounds equal to the character's Charisma modifier. The sea hawk may use this ability a number of times per day equal to his Charisma modifier. This replaces one Formation Combat style and the character must have at least two levels of pirate to take this option.
- ❖ **Leader:** The sea hawk can inspire his allies, bolster them and improve their chances of success. An ally must listen to and observe the sea hawk for a full round for the inspiration to take effect. The sea hawk makes a Charisma check (DC 15); success means the character provides all his allies within 30 feet with a +2 morale bonus on their skill checks and saving throws. The bonus lasts for a number of rounds equal to the character's Charisma modifier. The sea hawk cannot inspire himself. This ability can be taken in lieu of Poison Resistance. The character must have at least one Formation Combat ability to take Leader.

CONTEMPLATIVE (SOLDIER/SCHOLAR)

Contemplatives focus on becoming masters of their own mind and body. They are the definition of the martial artist, a warrior who is supremely aware of his surroundings and the dark forces hiding there. Contemplatives study combat, study their bodies, study their weapons and study their techniques. They have quiet and calm demeanours and often appear as accomplished experts regardless of their actual skill. They develop their intuitions, physical abilities and analytical skills beyond those of normal men and women.

STRENGTHS

The soldier gains a number of advantages by taking levels in scholar.

- ❖ **Skill Points:** The contemplative has far more skill points than a straight class soldier, able to round out



the knowledge and skill base of any given military unit. By taking the +2 skill points option in lieu of advanced spells, this strength is even further bolstered.

- ❖ **Improved Reflex & Will Saves:** The contemplative has better Reflex and Will saves than a straight class soldier, which helps his Initiative as well. The bonus Iron Will feat gained at 9th level adds to the contemplative's ability to resist manipulation.

WEAKNESSES

Levels in scholar dilute the soldier's combat ability, adding the following weaknesses:

- ❖ **Low Base Attack Bonus:** The contemplative is not a fighting man. His base attack bonus is lower than that of a straight class soldier making him a less effective combatant.
- ❖ **Hit Die:** The scholar's d6 Hit Die is far inferior to the soldier's d10, diminishing the contemplative's ability to survive prolonged combat.

The Contemplative (Soldier/Scholar)

Level	Class	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Magic Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	Soldier 1	+1	+0	+0	+0	+2	+0	+0	Bonus Feat, (character feat)
2 nd	Scholar 1	+1	+0	+0	+0	+2	+0	+2	New Sorcery Style, Scholar, Background, Base Power Points, Knowledge Is Power
3 rd	Scholar 2	+2	+0	+0	+1	+2	+0	+3	+1 Power Point, New Sorcery Style, (character feat)
4 th	Soldier 2	+3	+1	+1	+2	+3	+0	+3	Bonus Feat, (single Ability Increase)
5 th	Soldier 3	+4	+1	+2	+2	+3	+1	+4	Formation Combat
6 th	Scholar 3	+5	+2	+3	+2	+4	+2	+4	Advanced Spell, (character feat, All Ability Increase)
7 th	Soldier 4	+6/+1	+3	+4	+2	+5	+2	+4	Bonus Feat
8 th	Scholar 4	+7/+2	+3	+4	+3	+5	+2	+5	Advanced Spell, New Sorcery Style, (single ability Increase)
9 th	Scholar 5	+7/+2	+3	+4	+3	+5	+2	+5	Advanced Spell, Iron Will, (character Feat)
10 th	Soldier 5	+8/+3	+3	+4	+3	+5	+2	+5	(All ability increase)
11 th	Soldier 6	+9/+4	+4	+5	+3	+6	+3	+6	Bonus Feat
12 th	Scholar 6	+10/+5	+5	+6	+4	+7	+4	+7	Advanced Spell, +1 Power Point, Increased Maximum Power Points (Triple), (character feat, single ability increase)
13 th	Soldier 7	+11/+6/+1	+5	+7	+4	+7	+4	+7	Advanced Spell
14 th	Scholar 7	+12/+7/+2	+5	+7	+4	+7	+4	+7	Formation Combat, (all ability increase)
15 th	Soldier 8	+13/+8/+3	+6	+8	+5	+8	+4	+7	Advanced Spell, New Sorcery Style, (character feat)
16 th	Scholar 8	+14/+9/+4	+7	+9	+6	+8	+4	+8	Bonus Feat, (single ability increase)
17 th	Scholar 9	+14/+9/+4	+7	+9	+6	+9	+5	+8	Advanced Spell
18 th	Soldier 9	+15/+10/+5	+7	+9	+6	+9	+6	+9	(Character feat, all ability increase)
19 th	Scholar 10	+16/+11/+6/+1	+7	+9	+7	+9	+6	+10	Advanced Spell, +1 Power Point
20 th	Soldier 10	+17/+12/+7/+2	+8	+10	+7	+10	+6	+10	Bonus Feat, (single ability increase)

☒ **Defence Values:** The contemplative is severely hampered in his ability to defend himself compared to the straight class soldier.

RECOMMENDED OPTIONS

As the character combines soldier and scholar levels, there are some options he can take to optimise the mixture of both classes' abilities:

- ☒ During character creation, the player should consider selecting a high Intelligence in order to maximise the benefit of having a large skill selection. This also allows the character to increase skills that are not class skills for the soldier when taking levels of soldier, as bonus Intelligence skill points may be spent on any skill as though it were a class skill.

☒ Appropriate feats include Acrobatic, Alertness, Archer's Bane, Blind-Fight, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Crushing Grip, Defensive Martial Arts, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency, Greater Critical, Improved Critical, Improved Disarm, Improved Grapple, Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Improved Trip, Improved Unarmed Strike, Menacing Aura, Mobility, Negotiator, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Reflexive Parry, Skill Focus (any), Sleep Mastery, Steely Gaze, Stunning Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (any), Weapon Specialisation (any), Web of Death and Whirlwind Attack.

☒ A potential feat progression for a contemplative focused on unarmed strikes is: 1st level: Improved Unarmed Strike, Weapon Focus (Unarmed Strike); 3rd level: Combat Reflexes; 4th level: Dodge; 6th level: Web of Death; 7th level: Combat Expertise; 9th level: Mobility; 11th level: Stunning Attack; 12th level: Whirlwind Attack; 15th level: Improved Disarm;

16th level: Improved Trip; 18th level: Weapon Specialisation (unarmed strike); 20th level: Power Attack. Other progressions can be developed for contemplatives who specialise in grapples or exotic weapons.

- ✦ If your character is a Khitan or Vendhyan, then choose Defensive Martial Arts as a favoured class feat.

RACES

Characters combining the soldier and scholar classes can come from almost any country, but there are those who stand as exemplars and exceptions to this.

- ✦ Although Hyborians are suited for all class combinations, as all classes are treated as favoured classes, there are some excellent alternatives.
- ✦ A Khitan has the scholar as a favoured class and has Background Skills in Knowledge. The Khitan contemplative also has racial bonuses to Knowledge checks and a bonus feat to help mitigate some of the disadvantages of this class combination.
- ✦ A Stygian has the scholar as a favoured class as well as a racial bonus to using Stygian bows.
- ✦ A Pelishtim makes one of the best contemplatives in the world, as both soldier and scholar are favoured classes. They also gain useful circumstance bonuses in several skills and have excellent bonuses with bows, helping the character succeed with ranged weapons. Having any one Knowledge skill in addition to Knowledge (arcana) as a Background Skill is also an advantage for choosing a Pelishtim contemplative character.

VARIANT RULES

The following rules variants are intended for multiclass soldier/scholars only and reflect the special training a contemplative soldier might receive in the course of his adventuring career.

- ✦ **Intuitive Master:** The contemplative can observe the combat situation around him as a full-round action, attuning himself to its ebbs and flows. The character makes a Wisdom check (DC 20) with a bonus equal to half his combined soldier and scholar levels. If the check succeeds, for the rest of the combat the contemplative adds his Wisdom modifier to all attack rolls for the duration of the encounter. He can take this ability as a Formation Combat style, but the character must have the Knowledge is Power class ability.

ASSASSIN (SOLDIER/THIEF)

The soldier/thief is not just a hired killer – he is employed by governments, criminal organisations and militias to infiltrate and kill high-ranking enemy officials or officers. He is trained in espionage and infiltration. He knows how to slip past guards and enter fortresses and castles. He is a master of the shadowy art of stealth and silent assassination. Spurned by some, coveted by others, the assassin is a necessary evil in Hyboria and his services will long be sought after.

STRENGTHS

By taking levels of thief in addition to his soldier class, the assassin maximises his ability to strike terror into his opponents. Some of the most important benefits offered to the soldier from this combination of classes follow:

- ✦ **Eyes of the Cat:** The ability to see in the dark is invaluable to the assassin.
- ✦ **Improved Reflex Saves:** The assassin relies on his reflexes more than a standard soldier and adding thief levels has the benefit of increasing the Reflex saves at the cost of diminishing Fortitude saves slightly. This also has the added advantage of improving his Initiative, which is useful in light of his sneak attack ability.
- ✦ **Sneak Attack:** The assassin strikes fast and hard. He often has time for one attack before he must flee, thus the sneak attack is perfect for the assassin, providing him with a truly devastating attack.
- ✦ **Skills:** The thief's large skill base provides the soldier with the means to hide and scurry effectively. He also has more defensive options, especially with the Tumble skill.

WEAKNESSES

The assassin also suffers from the following weaknesses:

- ✦ **Decreased Parry Bonus:** The assassin, more concerned with offence than defence, has a slightly lower Parry bonus than a straight class soldier. His Dodge bonus however, is only slightly lowered.



- ❖ **Hit Die:** The thief's d8 Hit Die is smaller than the soldier's d10, reducing his ability to soak up damage in combat.
- ❖ **Base Attack:** The base attack bonus of the thief is not as strong as the soldier's, thus lowering the character's chances to hit a target.
- ❖ **Fort Saves:** The character's Fortitude saves are slightly diminished compared to a straight class soldier but his Reflex saves are improved.
- ❖ **Feats:** The character will have fewer bonus feats than a straight class soldier but the thief does offer several virtual feats in lieu of the bonus feats.
- ❖ **Armour Restrictions:** In order to best utilise the thief skills, including Light-Footed, the character must limit his armour options, especially if the Evasion special ability is chosen.

RECOMMENDED OPTIONS

As the character combines soldier with thief levels, there are some options he can take to optimise the mixture of both classes' abilities.

- ❖ The sneak attack is the supreme advantage of combining soldier and thief levels. Soldier bonus feats should be chosen so that they complement the sneak attack's chance to hit and damage an opponent. These range from the simple attack bonus feats like Weapon Focus and Point Blank Shot (which conveniently has the same maximum range as ranged sneak attacks), to more sophisticated manoeuvres like Improved Feint to create the chances for sneak attacks rather than waiting for them to happen. Improved Initiative and Lightning Reflexes both improve Initiative, which increases the odds of successfully getting a sneak attack. Improved Feint also enhances the capabilities of gaining a sneak attack later in combat.
- ❖ Choose feats that work well with the thief skills, such as combining Mobility with Tumble or Skill Focus (Bluff) with the Bluff skill. Alertness and Stealthy are also good feats to choose.
- ❖ An assassin should exploit the options for high Dexterity and concentrate ability increases that way. Choose light, finesse weapons to get around armour or opt for ranged attacks.
- ❖ Soldiers simply do not have a lot of skill points but thieves do and the mixture dilutes the assassin's overall skills somewhat. Pick up a few skills according to the character concept. Assassins should take ranks in Hide and Move Silently, as well as Tumble, Spot and Listen. Ranks in Bluff increase the odds of sneak attacks. Ranks in Climb allow the character access to difficult-to-reach places. Disguise, Diplomacy, Intimidate and Perform (acting) work well for infiltration. Characters with a high score in Intelligence will be able to treat some of those thief skills as class skills in *Conan the Roleplaying Game*.

RACES

Characters combining the soldier and thief classes can come from almost any country, but there are those who stand as exemplars and exceptions to this.

- ❖ This class, like all class combinations, is perfectly suited for Hyborians, who treat all classes as favoured classes for purposes of determining bonus feats.
- ❖ Bossonians treat soldier as a favoured class and have racial bonuses to attack rolls with Bossonian longbows. The Bossonian character can choose two of the assassin's preferred thief skills as Background Skills at 1st level, giving the character an interesting edge from the beginning.
- ❖ Gundermen also treat the soldier as a favoured class and can also choose thief skills for Background Skills.

The Assassin (Soldier/Thief)

Level	Class	Base Attack Bonus	Base Dodge Bonus	Base Parry Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	Soldier 1	+1	+0	+0	+2	+0	+0	Bonus Feat, (character feat)
2 nd	Thief 1	+1	+0	+0	+2	+2	+0	Sneak Attack Style, Sneak Attack +1d6/+1d8, Trap Disarming
3 rd	Soldier 2	+2	+1	+1	+3	+2	+0	Bonus Feat, (character feat)
4 th	Thief 2	+3	+2	+2	+3	+3	+0	Eyes of the Cat, (single ability increase)
5 th	Thief 3	+4	+2	+2	+4	+3	+1	Sneak Attack +2d6/+2d8, Trap Sense
6 th	Soldier 3	+5	+2	+3	+4	+4	+2	Formation Combat, (character feat, all ability increase)
7 th	Thief 4	+6/+1	+3	+4	+4	+5	+2	Sneak Attack Style, Light-Footed
8 th	Soldier 4	+7/+2	+4	+5	+5	+5	+2	Bonus Feat (single ability increase)
9 th	Thief 5	+7/+2	+4	+5	+5	+5	+2	Sneak Attack +3d6/+3d8, (character feat)
10 th	Thief 6	+8/+3	+5	+6	+6	+6	+3	Trap Sense +2, Special Ability, (all ability increase)
11 th	Soldier 5	+9/+4	+5	+6	+6	+6	+3	—
12 th	Soldier 6	+10/+5	+6	+7	+7	+7	+4	Bonus Feat, (character feat, single ability increase)
13 th	Thief 7	+11/+6/+1	+6	+7	+7	+7	+4	Sneak Attack +4d6/+4d8
14 th	Soldier 7	+12/+7/+2	+6	+8	+7	+7	+4	Formation Combat, (all ability increase)
15 th	Thief 8	+13/+8/+3	+7	+9	+7	+8	+4	Sneak Attack Style, Poison Use, (character feat)
16 th	Soldier 8	+14/+9/+4	+8	+10	+8	+8	+4	Bonus Feat, (single ability increase)
17 th	Thief 9	+14/+9/+4	+8	+10	+9	+8	+5	Sneak Attack +5d6/+5d8, trap sense +3
18 th	Soldier 9	+15/+10/+5	+8	+10	+9	+9	+6	(Character feat, all ability increase)
19 th	Thief 10	+16/+11/+6/+1	+9	+11	+9	+10	+6	Special Ability
20 th	Soldier 10	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+12	+10	+10	+6	Bonus Feat, (single ability increase)

- ☒ Hyperboreans have soldier as a favoured class and a bonus to Intimidate.
- ☒ The Meadow Shemite and Pelishtim gain a racial bonus to Bluff and to attack and damage rolls with bows.
- ☒ Zamorians have thief as a favoured class and a +2 bonus to Dexterity.
- ☒ Zingarans have soldier for a favoured class and a bonus to sneak attacks, giving the character a sneak attack at 1st level. Zingarans also have a racial bonus to attack rolls with broadswords and arming swords.

VARIANT RULES

The following rules variants are intended for multiclass soldier/thieves only and reflect the special training an assassin might receive in the course of his adventuring career.

- ☒ **Death Attack:** If an assassin studies his victim for 3 rounds and then makes a sneak attack with a weapon that successfully deals damage, the sneak attack has the additional effect of possibly either paralyzing

or killing the target (assassin's choice). While studying the victim, the assassin can undertake other actions so long as his attention stays focused on the target and the target does not detect the assassin or recognise the assassin as an enemy. If the victim of such an attack fails a Fortitude save (DC 10 + the assassin's combined soldier and thief class levels) against the kill effect, he dies. If the saving throw fails against the paralysis effect, the victim is rendered helpless and unable to act for 1d6 rounds plus 1 round per level of the assassin. If the victim's saving throw succeeds, the attack is just a normal sneak attack. Once the assassin has completed the 3 rounds of study, he must make the death attack within the next 3 rounds. If a death attack is attempted and fails (the victim makes his save) or if the assassin does not launch the attack within 3 rounds of completing the study, 3 new rounds of study are required before he can attempt another death attack. This is a new thief special ability, which can be taken instead of a Formation Combat style.

OPEN GAME LICENSE Version 1.0a

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc ('Wizards'). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a) 'Contributors' means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) 'Derivative Material' means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) 'Distribute' means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) 'Open Game Content' means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) 'Product Identity' means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) 'Trademark' means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) 'Use', 'Used' or 'Using' means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) 'You' or 'Your' means the licensee in terms of this agreement.

2. The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may

only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.

3. Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.

4. Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.

5. Representation of Authority to Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.

6. Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.

7. Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.

8. Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.

9. Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorised version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.

10. Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.

11. Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.

12. Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.

13. Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.

14. Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.

15. COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Open Game License v 1.0a Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

Modern System Reference Document Copyright 2002, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors Bill Slavicsek, Jeff Grubb, Rich Redman, Charles Ryan, based on material by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, Peter Adkison, Bruce R. Cordell, John Tynes, Andy Collins, and JD Wiker.

System Reference Document Copyright 2000-2003, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Rich baker, Andy Collins, David Noonan, Rich Redman, Bruce R. Cordell, based on original material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

Dynasties and Demagogues Copyright 2003, Trident, Inc. dba Atlas Games, Author Chris Aylott

Path of the Sword, Copyright 2002, Fantasy Flight Publishing, Inc.

Rokugan, Copyright 2001, Alderac Entertainment Group

<http://www.giantitp.com/Func0010.html>, Copyright 2003, Rich Burlew

Conan the Roleplaying Game is (C) Conan Properties International LLC.

Hyboria's Finest: Nobles, Scholars & Soldiers is (C) 2005 Conan Properties International LLC. CONAN(R), CONAN THE BARBARIAN(R) and related logos, character, names, and distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks of Conan Properties International LLC unless otherwise noted. All Rights Reserved. Mongoose Publishing Ltd Authorized User.

CONAN[®]

HYBORIA'S FINEST NOBLES, SCHOLARS & SOLDIERS

THE WORLD IS ENTERING AN AGE OF IRON, AN AGE OF WAR AND IMPERIALISTIC AMBITION; SOME STRONG MAN MIGHT DO WELL SHOULD HE RISE ABOVE THE RUINS OF NATIONS AS A SUPREME CONQUEROR, FOR SELDOM DO WE RUINED MEN KNOW WHAT IS GOOD FOR US; ALWAYS ARE WE BESET WITH DOUBTS AND FEARS, WE ARE SO LOWLY THAT RARELY CAN WE DISCERN OUR OWN PATH. ONLY THE FINEST CAN SET OUR FEET UPON THE PATH TO PARADISE.

The Hyborian Age is a world of courts and kings, war and wealth, power and corruption. Yet in this grim world of discipline and deceit nobles, scholars and soldiers revel and excel. Nobles wield wealth and influence, treading the jewelled thrones of the land, hovering around the perfumed courts and palaces of the Hyborian Age like flies around a carcass. Scholars master knowledge and alchemy as they delve deep into books and tombs, seeking answers to riddles most men shudder to even think of. Soldiers are the lords of the battlefield, mastering their weapons to a degree few can ever hope to attain.

Each has their arena of expertise; each a specialist in their field and yet they are commonly uncomfortable and ineffective outside of them.

The fine are those elevated characters, raised above the common man, who inspire such men to greatness or crush these humble souls beneath their heel.

This book discusses how the various cultures of Conan's age look at the noble, scholar and soldier classes. Giving advice on those skills and feats that emphasise each culture's iconic interpretations of those three classes, revealing the secrets of Hyboria's Finest. Including information, tips and rules, including new regional features and social abilities spells and arcane items, and a plethora of new combat styles and manoeuvres, this book allows you create entirely individual nobles, scholars and soldiers.

U.S. \$24.95

MGP
7715

OGL



MONGOOSE
PUBLISHING

