



## CULT OF TAMIT

### INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Mystery Cults series for the Amazons vs Valkyries adventure setting. The religious cults presented here are just a few of the hundreds that exist in this setting. Some are dedicated to chthonic gods that are almost forgotten, while others worship new deities, such as Alexander the Great. These cults are most common in Greece and the Greek colonies, but also exist in Egypt, Persia, Rome, and Carthage. Even in less civilized lands druids, witch doctors, and other religious leaders join together, keep secrets, pursue common goals, and organize themselves in a hierarchy.

### **Content Warning!**

This file contains disturbing content that is not suitable for all audiences. This content includes:

- Extreme violence/cruelty
- Sexual references

**A**MAZONS  
vs  
**V**ALKYRIES

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## MYSTERY CULTS

Mystery cults are secret societies that exist within religious institutions. Like other secret societies, their existence is well known, but their rituals, lore, and objectives are concealed. Only the initiated are allowed access to these secrets.

**Levels of Initiation.** Cult membership is divided into a hierarchy of at least twenty degrees or ranks. Some cults have more than sixty ranks. Only the high priestess (or priest) is privy to all the cult's secrets.

**Exclusivity.** None of these cults require their members to disavow or deny other deities and cults. In fact, many people are simultaneously members of multiple cults.

**Cult Secrets.** Only the initiated know the true name of the cult's deity, and they are forbidden to speak it to anyone outside the cult. At each level of initiation, a different true name is revealed to the member with only the high priestess knowing the actual true name of the deity. Mystery cults also harbor many other secrets and esoteric lore. Some examples are listed on the table below.

**Initiation Fees.** Although membership in most cults is open to everyone, initiation rites have fees. These fees offset the cost of the ritual and help support the temple and its ambitions. The amount of the fee increases with each degree and depends on many factors, including how much the applicant can afford and how much the cult leaders desire the new member.

**Initiation Times.** Most cults conduct initiations once per year. Common dates include the first full Moon after the Winter Solstice, the Spring Equinox, and the Summer Solstice. The process usually involves preliminary ritual purification, eating sacred foods, and confessing of wrong doing. This takes at least three days and sometimes up to two weeks. The actual ceremony begins at sundown and continues until sunrise. During the ritual, the initiates consume psychoactive substances and venture into a deep cavern where they have unnerving encounters with deities and demons.

**Membership Advantage.** Besides access to secret lore and powerful associates, being a cult member has other perks. Membership can mean that your business wins a lucrative contract from a trade guild or local magistrate. It could mean that your child is educated by an expensive Greek tutor, or your competitor suffers a tragic setback.

**Leadership and Members.** Cult hierarchies are separate from temple priesthoods. While most leadership positions within the cults are occupied by priestesses (or priests), not all temple priestesses are members of the mystery cult. Likewise, most cult members are not priestesses or employed by the temple; they are private citizens, lawyers, merchants, stage actors, lords, scribes, and princesses.

### NPCs Only!

The Cult of Moloch is for DMs to create heinous villains for players to defeat. Players should not play paladins with this oath.

### D20 Secret Lore

- |    |  |
|----|--|
| 1  | Facts about mythical events                    |
| 2  | Location of an entrance to the Underworld      |
| 3  | Location of a gate to another dimension        |
| 4  | Location of a prison holding a demon or deity  |
| 5  | Formula for creating magical items             |
| 6  | Rare spells                                    |
| 7  | Facts about other planes in the multiverse     |
| 8  | Facts about a mythical beast                   |
| 9  | Facts about distant lands                      |
| 10 | The true ambitions of a major political figure |
| 11 | Archaic or extinct language(s)                 |
| 12 | Secret of navigating the tunnels of Europa     |
| 13 | Lore of a lost or forgotten civilization       |
| 14 | Location of a legendary magic item             |
| 15 | Clues or answer to a puzzle or riddle          |
| 16 | Location of a sacred site                      |
| 17 | Lore about a humanoid or monstrous race        |
| 18 | Lore of a lost, magic-like technology          |
| 19 | Location of a magical island                   |
| 20 | Lore about the Amazons Vs Valkyries conflict   |



## THE CULT OF TANIT

**Domains:** Fertility, Life, the Moon, and War

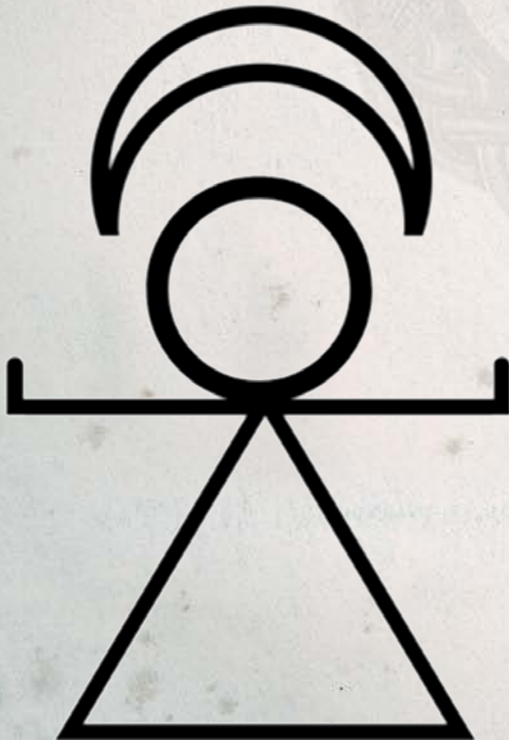
**Location:** Carthage, Egypt, Spain, Malta, Sardinia

**Cult Secrets:** Seduction, midwifery, martial training

As the chief deity of Carthage, Tanit rules their pantheon along with her consort Ba'al-Hammon, god of the sky.

Although she has a consort and is considered a symbol of fertility and sexuality, Tanit is often thought to be a virginal mother goddess. She is also known to be fierce when needed, riding a lion and wielding a spear as she charges into battle to protect the city and people she rules.

Tanit has no children, but takes it upon herself to protect all of the warriors of Carthage as though they emerged from her own body; for that reason, her symbol is commonly found on their shields as they invoke their mother's protection and blessings for the fight ahead.



Members of the cult tend to have a more free attitude toward seduction, but not toward the act of sex itself. While it is fine to seduce someone, whether it be for pleasure or for a purpose, many cult members will draw the line before they actually have sex with a partner. Cult members may even choose to follow the path of Tanit—seduce, take a consort, but never consummate the relationship or have children of their own.

### THE TEMPLES

Tanit's main temple is located in Carthage, and is accompanied by a cemetery for children. Smaller temples can be found throughout Egypt, Spain, Malta, and Sardinia, though they are often hidden.

It is in these temples that the most objectionable (to the [Great Mother](#), at least) activity associated with Tanit's worship takes place: child and animal sacrifice.

Inscribed on the wall of the Great Temple of Carthage are the words: "To our Lady, Tanit, and to our lord, Ba'al-Hammon, that which was vowed: Life for Life, blood for blood, a lamb for a substitute."

It is under this chilling inscription that members of the cult bring either their firstborn child or a lamb to be slaughtered, charred, and then placed in an urn and left at the feet of the Goddess.

### RELATIONSHIP WITH THE GREAT MOTHER

Tanit is one of the ancient goddesses, and as such, she demands complete loyalty from her followers. Her need for human sacrifice is something that the Great Mother cannot abide, especially because Tanit requires the sacrifice of young children to be satisfied.



## INITIATION

Initiation rites are typically held on the winter solstice, the longest night of the year. However, the goddess may intervene and allow a particularly worthy applicant to be initiated immediately, rather than waiting for the annual ceremony.

## FESTIVALS

Tanit is not strongly associated with any festivals, but there are some significant days of celebration for her worshippers.

**The Crescent Moon.** The crescent moon serves as a potential substitute for the initiation ceremony for the cult of Tanit (see “The Winter Solstice” below).

**The Full Moon.** This is when all firstborn children brought into this world during this moon cycle are brought to the temple of Tanit and sacrificed, unless a lamb can be given in their stead.

**The Winter Solstice.** The Winter Solstice is the longest night of the year, the night when the moon is at its most powerful. As such, this is the night when the cult of Tanit welcomes new initiates into their folds. They believe that, under the strong moonlight, Tanit smiles and shines her approval upon them.

There is an exception to this. If the Winter Solstice falls on a new moon, the cult will wait until the next crescent moon to hold the initiation ceremony so that Tanit may see who they are inducting into their ranks.

**Victory in Battle.** The night after Carthaginian soldiers experience a victory in battle, they hold a celebration giving thanks to Tanit, their mother and patron, for blessing them with the strength, courage, and fortitude that was needed to defeat their enemies.

## OATH OF THE MOON'S BOND

Tanit's most devoted warriors swear the Oath of the Moon's Bond under the light of the moon. They vow to never balk from doing what they're told, regardless of the order, and to live their life in accordance with the tenets of their mother, Tanit.

### TENETS OF THE MOON'S BOND

The tenets of the Oath of the Moon's Bond were detailed centuries ago and do not change.

**Obey Without Question.** Orders will be given, and you will obey them, no matter your personal opinion or feelings.

**Make Any Sacrifice.** Anything that is worth doing will require a sacrifice; do not be afraid to give up your possessions or loved ones to accomplish your goals.

**Accept Fair Substitutes.** Your demands are to be met, but you are also expected to accept what you see as a different, yet still equal, offer if one is made.

### CHANNEL DIVINITY

When you take this oath at 3<sup>rd</sup> level, you gain the following Channel Divinity options:

**Commanding Weapon.** As an action, you can use your Channel Divinity to imbue one weapon that you are holding with the power of the goddess. For 1 minute, you add your Charisma modifier to attack rolls made with the weapon (with a minimum bonus of +1). The weapon also emits a dim light, as though it has become a shard of the moon, for a 20-foot radius. If the weapon is not already magical, it becomes magical for the duration of this Channel Divinity ability.

You can end this effect on your turn as part of any other action. If you are no longer holding or carrying the weapon, or if you fall unconscious, this effect ends.



**Divine Mastery.** As an action, you can use your Channel Divinity to obey any order that Tanit has issued to you. As a bonus action, you may select a single skill or tool, and for the next 10 minutes, you may become proficient in it. Instead of using its usual ability modifier, you would use your Charisma to determine success or failure.

You can end this effect on your turn as part of any other action. If you fall unconscious, this effect ends.

### OATH OF THE MOON'S BOND SPELLS

You gain oath spells at the paladin levels listed.

Paladin Level	Spells
3	<i>divine favor, command</i>
5	<i>augury, magic weapon</i>
9	<i>magic circle, revivify</i>
13	<i>guardian of faith, death ward</i>
17	<i>geas, necromantic surge</i>

### AURA OF PROTECTION

Starting at 7<sup>th</sup> level, Tanit works to actively hinder those who would cause you to fail to complete your orders. While you are conscious, hostile creatures within 10 feet of you have disadvantage on their first attack roll of each turn.

At 18<sup>th</sup> level, the range of this aura increases to 30 feet.

### RETURN TO BATTLE

Starting at 15<sup>th</sup> level, you can use a reaction to use Lay on Hands on yourself when you fall to 0 hit points.

### AVATAR OF THE MOON

At 20<sup>th</sup> level, you have come to truly know the ways of Tanit. You have made many sacrifices to get here and thus the goddess smiles upon you. As an action, you are able to become the earthly representation of Tanit, gaining the following benefits for 1 minute:

- You automatically succeed on all Wisdom and Charisma saving throws.
- Hostile creatures within 30 feet of you cannot take the Dash or Disengage actions.
- Roll 2 additional damage die for each critical hit that comes from your melee weapon attacks.

Once you take this action, you can't use it again until you complete a long rest.





## APPENDIX I: NEW MAGIC ITEM

### TANIT'S EMBLEM

*Shield (leather, metal, or wood), rare, requires attunement by a paladin*

Carthaginian soldiers often carry shields with Tanit's symbol emblazoned upon them for good luck and blessings in battle. However, some of these shields are magical and when attuned by a paladin, they manifest special powers, including:

- +1 bonus to AC (+2 total for leather or +3 total for metal or wood)
- Hostile creatures within 10 feet must succeed on a Charisma saving throw against the shield bearer's spell save DC or have disadvantage against the shield bearer on their first attack roll of each turn.

## APPENDIX II: NEW SPELL

### NECROMANTIC SURGE

*5<sup>th</sup> level necromancy*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Self (60-foot cone)

**Components:** V, S, M (a)

**Duration:** Instantaneous

A blast of necromantic power erupts from your hands. Each creature in a 60-foot cone must make a Constitution saving throw. A creature takes 8d6 necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

If the target fails the saving throw, its hit point maximum is reduced for 1 hour by an amount equal to the necrotic damage it took. Any effect that removes a disease allows a creature's hit point maximum to return to normal before that time passes.

A creature killed by this spell becomes a withered husk.

**At Higher Levels.** When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 6<sup>th</sup> level or higher, the damage increases by 1d6 for each slot level above 5<sup>th</sup>.

## CREDITS

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