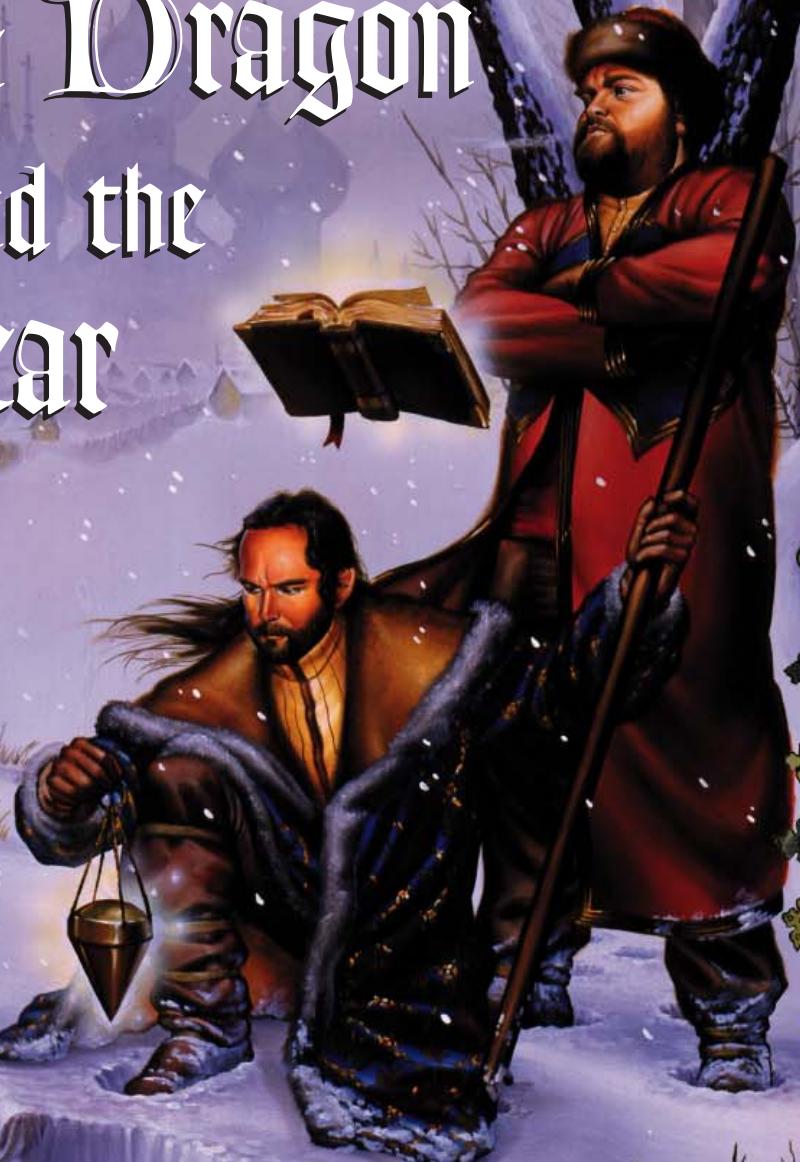


Arts Magica

The Dragon and the Bear

THE NOVGOROD TRIBUNAL
BY SIMEON SHOUL



The Dragon and the Bear™

THE NOVGOROD TRIBUNAL

For use with *Ars Magica™ Fourth Edition*

by Simeon Shoul

The Dragon and the Bear

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About the Author

Simeon Shoul was corrupted by heroic fantasy fiction and *Dungeons and Dragons* at the age of eleven and his youth was squandered in a state of roleplaying delinquency. During his late twenties he was briefly rehabilitated (mostly because he was living 4,000 miles away from all the roleplayers he knew) but on returning to London in 1992 soon fell back into bad company and contracted the far more insidious *Ars Magica* habit, which he has yet to kick. Sadly, he remains addicted to drawing maps and spending most of his free time pretending to be somebody (anybody) else. He got interested in Medieval Russia because of a morbid fascination with the great disasters of history, of which the Mongols were a sterling example. From there he was lead into a consideration of the development of Poland as a nation and from there into a study of the Teutonic Knights and from there into an examination of the pagan pantheons of Eastern Europe and from there . . . well, suffice it to say that tragically there is no end to this downward spiral in sight. Mr. Shoul has not yet paid his debt to society, and in all likelihood never will.

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Dawn did not find Malincka in a good mood. The night had been dark as the bottom of a coal sack, overcast, windy, and bitterly cold. She had gotten very little sleep. Stanic, Marya, and Milosch had curled up together to share body warmth, but her dignity forbade her that simple comfort. Huddled amidst the stacked bales at the end of the jetty, she had wrapped her thin cloak around herself as tightly as possible and shivered the night away.

She had been tempted to try conjuring up a little warmth, but common sense had warred with discomfort and finally won. Fire was not her strength. It tended to get away from her, and the bales they were sheltering within seemed to be mostly furs . . .

The light of the sun rising over the edge of the bales touched her hand and brought a sudden unexpected warmth. Slowly, easing the stiffness from her back and shoulders, she stood.

The wind had died. The waters of Lake Ilmen were placid and gleaming. A thin mist, lit to shimmering gold by the sun, was drifting slowly along the shore. To the north Novgorod was out of sight, hidden by a range of low hills. Yesterday had been a nightmare of mud trails and vanishing tracks, but she'd thought it all worthwhile just to get away from the city. All winter, pent up inside those massive, water-stained, wooden walls. The stink of forty thousand people crammed together, the reek of urine in the streets fighting with the ever-present odor of cabbage; boiled cabbage, fried cabbage, cabbage stuffed with horribly dubious meat, cabbage mixed with wheat meal into a gruel . . . she spat over the side of the jetty, then paused.

There was a noise, something that didn't fit amidst the dawn quiet of the lakeside; a creaking, rhythmic and steady, quiet splashing, a man's voice calling a stroke.

The boat swept out of the mist — high-prowed, wide-beamed, long banks of oars sweeping it forward. For a second they were plunged deeply into the water, kicking up a froth, and then the boat was drifting, so easily, alongside the jetty. From the prow a man threw out a rope, another spun out from the rear. "To shore!" someone barked.

Men dropped to the planking in an ordered rush; bales were grabbed, hoisted, boosted up over the side of the ship. Behind her she heard her companions rising, Marya and Milosch querulous and protesting, Stanic annoyed at being disturbed, cursing at the boatmen, which won him nothing but laughter.

"Please, where is the captain?" She asked carefully, of a man busy hauling a bale to the edge of the jetty.

"Vladim Ilyich," he jerked his head sharply to the right. "Asking the water's blessing."

He was at the very end of the jetty, staring out across the lake, oblivious to the turmoil behind him. Big, broad-shouldered, red haired, wearing a thick fur jerkin, and bare armed. Malincka shivered, how could he stand the chill? He was praying.

She had spent a year back in Hungary and a winter in Novgorod, patiently mastering the Russian tongue. But she had to strain to make out his speech. The accent was all deep gutturals, rumbling cadence, and there were words she did not understand. They seemed . . . *old*.

He was praying to the waters. And more, praying to the *boat*. Talking to it, why, as if it were an animal, a steed! She blinked, fascinated. Four months in that den of Christian intolerance to the north had convinced her that every mortal soul in Russia was as God-blighted as the worst bigots Hungary had to offer. But this?

"Swim swiftly for me, Fflyfodd, part the waters..."

She shivered. There were places near Buda were a man could be burnt for less.

He finished. Turned. He was wearing a crucifix, and his eyes were a blue so pale it was almost gray. "Well?" A gruff voice, hoarse from many years of shouting orders.

"Captain Vladim Ilyich?"

"Yes."

"My name, it is Malincka Capcek, I am going south, yes? These bales you take for Pressil Sakadovich? I am going along with them. You see? And my people, my servants. As well."

She pulled the contract out from her wallet. A stiff, thrice-folded sheet of vellum. She held it out for the captain, and steeled herself. It usually happened at this point.

He plucked the paper from her hand, unfolded it, squinted down at it.

Nothing. He hadn't stepped back. Hadn't frowned. His mouth hadn't hardened in that half-nervous, half-disgusted fashion she'd seen so often. He was staring at the paper, lightly tracing the contours of the pale wax seal at the bottom, nodding slowly.

"Well, I know Sakadovich's seal. And I can read the numbers. You pay Sakadovich, I take you south," he squinted at the vellum. "My cargo share is two extra bales. Good." He didn't smile really, it was more of a grimace; one more thing to bother a busy man. He pushed

the contract back into her hands. "Get on board, your place is at the prow, stay out of the way of the lookouts and the rowers."

"Certainly."

He was turning away, when suddenly he stopped, staring at her. Now it would come, the first tinge of suspicion, of unease. . . .

"You walked?" He was staring at her feet, her boots, the hem of her dress, mud streaked to the knees, and her cloak, stiff with caked, half dried muck.

"You walked?" He was grinning.

"Yes, of course," she bristled. "Yesterday. The contract, it says I am to travel from the north Ilmen jetty."

"From Novgorod? You walked? In the spring thaw, to Ilmen?"

"Certainly. Yes. I walked. A guide, I hire him. What should I do?"

"Hah!" he was laughing now. "You walked! No one walks. The rivers pretty lady. Always by the rivers! Sakadovich should have put you on a boat at the Novgorod docks. All day, in the mud, hah!"

She stifled her fury, jaw clamped rigidly, fists bunched beneath her cloak. Fifteen years. Fifteen years of drudgery so she could be gulled by a fat merchant, tramp through mud, shiver under an open sky and then get laughed at by a hairy, ignorant, illiterate, semi-pagan piece of mundane dross! No more.

She wove the spell quickly, keeping the gestures small and the words soft.

The laughter choked in his throat. His eyes widened. She held his gaze with her own, her chin high.

"Lady . . ." he mumbled. "Lady. I didn't mean . . ." he bowed. "No offense. No insult meant." He bowed again and his voice had descended into that other dialect, and she couldn't understand one word in three.

"Lady." He stood upright again, his face serious. "Fflyfodd is honored to bear you. I did not know you were Volkhv. Forgive me. You were wise to hide in that place where you've been. But me you can trust." He offered her his hand. "You eat from the captain's kettle. Fflyfodd travels swiftly and my men are strong, good rowers. It is good to be on the rivers in spring, you will see." He escorted her back along the side of the ship. "Ho! Steps for the lady!" His men hurried to pile up bales so she could step up into the vessel. "We will be on the Lovar by noon. And then to the Dvina, and the Dnieper. The rivers are fast in the spring." She stood on the decking now, amidst a rising pile of bales and coils of rope, row-

ers' benches, sacks and casks and netting. He bowed to her again while Stanic, his mail at last donned, ushered Marya and Milosch up the rude stairway behind them.

"Vladim Ilyich, Vadimsson, welcomes you aboard Fflyfodd, lady. As you travel with us our voyage will surely be swift and easy. You!" he snapped at Milosch, "take those things up front, and you," Marya gave a squeak of apprehension, "wash your lady's boots!"

Then he was gone, back to the jetty, growling orders around him like an irate bear.

"Mistress?" Stanic was at her shoulder. "You've, ah, taken on a glamor, I see?" His voice said, without saying it, that this was not a clever thing to have done, not at the start of a long river voyage, in a foreign country, among wild lands and strange men. "But, did you do anything else to him?" Stanic had been a senior officer back in Czeckslo, but getting old, and not likely to retain his rank much longer. As her bodyguard he was adequate, but she valued him more for his experience of magi and the Order's ways, and his knowledge of travel in distant lands.

With a last flurry of shouts and whistles, the men began tumbling back on board, scrambling to take their places on the benches. Courteous nods and waves ushered the passengers up to the bow.

"No," she said, slipping with relief back into Hungarian. "Nothing. I only meant to stop him laughing at me." She met Stanic's gaze steadily, aware nonetheless that she was blushing slightly. "A maga of the Order should command respect."

He nodded. "She should. But that man gave you far more than respect. Why?" He shook his head wryly. "What manner of people are these?"

The captain gave a long call and the mooring ropes were flung aboard, the last man on the jetty took the widening gap with a leap and a shout. Slowly, the laden ship wallowed out from the shore.

"Oars out!" The captain yelled. "On my mark!" The oars rose. "Stroke!" The blades bit the water, muscles cording in shoulders and backs as the men pulled.

"I don't know." She murmured, taking a seat on the railing. Nearby a sailor, little more than a boy really, was busily coiling the mooring rope; he flashed a grin at her, all white teeth and dark hair. "I have no idea at all."

The boat was surging ahead now, the water foaming at the prow with every stroke. Ilmen was blue beneath the sky as the shore slid past, and soon the men were singing.



Chapter 1

Introduction

Welcome to the Novgorod tribunal! *The Dragon and the Bear* is a supplement to *Ars Magica* Fourth Edition, providing detailed background on the lands of Poland, Russia, and beyond. This background includes a terrific variety of national, religious, magical, dynastic, and Hermetic struggles that will provide the raw stuff of epic conflict upon which a good saga thrives.

Saga Starting Date

The recommended starting date for a Novgorodian saga is 1220 AD, but this assumes that your saga begins with a summer covenant. Spring covenants will probably lack sufficient time to develop the strengths necessary to meet the challenge of the terrible Mongol invasions of 1237-41. A troupe wishing to play a spring covenant should consider rolling back the start date to 1200.

Novgorodian Place Names

The word “Novgorod” names both a city and a tribunal. In order to avoid confusion, we reserve the simple use of the word Novgorod to mean the city of that name, while the tribunal is always referred to as “the Novgorod tribunal,” “the tribunal,” “the tribunal of Novgorod,” or some other such formula.

There is also a possible difficulty in regard to certain other Russian place names. There were, for instance, two prominent Russian cities called Vladimir. We distinguish these cities by using their full titles, for instance, “Vladimir-in-Volinia.” Readers should also be alert to the confusion that can arise between Pereyaslavl the northern city, and Pereyaslavl the southern principality.

The Novgorod Tribunal

The Novgorod Tribunal is the Hermetic geographic designation of a vast swathe of eastern Mythic Europe. There are a dozen principalities within this area: Novgorod itself, Suzdalia, Smolensk, Polotsk, Volinia, Kiev, Chernigov, Ryazan, Pereyaslavl, Galicia, and Pinsk-Turov, as well as the Kingdom of Poland (see the tribunal map at the end of the book).

Despite the great size of this territory, the tribunal is numerically weak, with only six covenants. It is also young, with a history little more than two centuries old. Furthermore, it has the misfortune to be situated in a land that is riven by more conflicts than any other in Christendom. Whatever issue can be fought about, *will* be fought about, be it tribal, social, religious, dynastic, diplomatic, or military. All too often the tribunal of Novgorod has found itself squarely in the middle of things and scrambling to preserve, if not its independence, then at least its survival.

The theme of most Novgorodian sagas will, thus, be conflict. Peace is fleeting, conflict eternal, and though the land is rich and full of opportunity, such opportunities are only bought at the price of bitter compromise.

What then, are these conflicts?

Always there has been the ebb and flow of nomad invasions, bursting out of Asia, sweeping over the south Russian plains, and thundering into Europe. Throughout the

middle ages these assaults were continual: first the Huns, then the Avars, the Khazars, the Magyars, and the Patzinak Turks. By the early 13th century a nomadic tribe called the Cumans dominates the south Russian steppe, raiding ruthlessly around Kiev, Chernigov, and Pereyaslavl.

Then there are the native people of this land, the Slavs, whose tradition of religion and magic is over two thousand years old. Two hundred years ago they suffered forced Christian conversion at the hands of their monarchs. These early kings were not weak men, but they were intent upon alignment with the great powers of their time, Byzantium and the Holy Roman Empire, the Patriarch of Constantinople and the Pope of Rome. The native priest/magicians resisted vigorously and there are still many secret gatherings of pagan worshippers.

There are the Old Gods of the Slavs, who are suffering a slow and bitter decline. Their

battle is grim, angry, and ultimately futile but nonetheless passionate. Around these Old Ones a host of faeries has mustered — the spirits of sky, land, and water — contending against a seemingly relentless fall into the Christian night.

There has been political and dynastic conflict of mighty fathers foolishly rearing broods of bickering sons. Every crack in the solidarity of the Russian and Polish royal houses has been endlessly explored, bringing about envy and family rancor, military adventurers and land-hungry younger brothers, nomadic raids and foreign wars.

And, in time, there will be the Mongols, the last of the nomadic conquerors and the worst. Inspired by the towering genius of Genghis Khan, they will fight for total world domination, carrying their vision forward through three blazing generations of relentless conquest before dynastic conflict brings them down. Their thrust against Europe will





shatter the Slavs, crush Russia beneath a foreign yoke for two hundred years, and raid prosperous Poland into a burning wasteland.

In all of this, the Order of Hermes is a small factor: a few score secretive practitioners virtually lost in a sea of strife. Their entry into Russia and Poland was only possible after the Christian conversion, and their tenure has been rocked by internal dissension and external pressures. Soon, it seems, matters will grow tragically worse, for as the 13th century begins two great traditions within the House of Bjornaer come clamoring viciously to the surface. On one side, the Wilderists demand the right to defend land and animals against mundanes. On the other the Harmonists preach a radical integration.

rivers, and via a host of tributaries, to the Black sea and Caspian. For centuries before the Vikings descended on the Slavs to hammer together the first Russian kingdom, trade swam along a fifteen-hundred mile network of rivers.

And trade made cities. Though the Novgorod tribunal encompasses a mighty wilderness, the rivers have grown great cities: Novgorod in the north, city of merchants by the shore of lake Ilmen; Kiev in the south, "the Mother of Russian cities" on its hills above the Dnieper; and Vladimir, capital of Suzdal, its glory great but its reign brief.

Misconceptions

What popular notions of Russian and Polish culture do we need to discard?

Forget about St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Warsaw. None of these cities is of any significance in our period.

Throw out ideas about the Cossacks, they don't come along until the 15th century.

Reject all images of cities, fortresses, and palaces made of stone. From peasant's cot to city wall to royal road, everything, bar, at a relatively late date, the senior cathedrals and great city gates, was built of ornately-carved, beautifully-worked wood.

Think of small rural communities of thirty, forty, or fifty people; this is the Zadrugya, the "great family." Fathers and mothers, groups of brothers with their families, or collections of close cousins, banded together to work the land. In the original Slavic culture, groups of Zadrugya made up a clan. Groups of clans made up loose-knit tribes. This was the base upon which the Slavic princedoms were built.

Think of trade; think of rivers. From the Baltic one can travel south along the Dvina, Nieman, Oder, Vistula, Velkat, and Volkov, from the Volkov to the Volga, from the Nieman to the Dnieper and from these two

Geography and Climate

Russia is divided latitudinally into a series of climatic zones.

In the most extreme north there are small fringes of arctic waste.

South of the arctic waste lies a broad belt of taiga. This includes the great bulk of Siberia and sweeps just far enough south and west to clip the edge of the gulf of Finland. The taiga is harsh and windswept, modestly forested with conifers and populated by the hardiest animals and people. The taiga enjoys a brief spring and summer, during which growth is explosive and the local populations boom.

To the south of the taiga is the great forest belt, a dense mixture of conifers and deciduous woodlands. These are the primeval forests of Europe. The forest forms a solid bulwark sweeping east from the Baltic to the Urals, and from as far north as the Baltic and Finnish coasts, down to the environs of Kiev and the Carpathians. All of Poland is in the forest belt. Settlement within the forest concentrates along the rivers which form natural highways. The animal population of the forests is rich with deer, boar, bear, moose, aurochs, and wolf.

South of the forests is a mixed zone, the forest-steppe, a band of plain and pasture interspersed with substantial wooded valleys. Kiev lies on the northern edge of this zone.

South of the forest-steppe lies the true steppe. This is the nomad road from the east, plain and pasture stretching from the Carpathian mountains for thousands of miles, through Mongolia and on to the Pacific coast. The steppe begins about eighty miles south of Kiev and runs due south until it reaches the Black sea. It is characterized by extraordinarily rich black soil.

General Climatic Conditions

There is no significant geographical barrier between Siberia, with its arctic influences, and European Russia. The Ural mountains are the only real highland, and they are old and worn. They are not high enough to block the frigid northern winds that sweep south and west in the fall. In consequence, Russian and Polish winters are very harsh.

In the arctic waste winter never relents.

In the taiga wintry conditions persist for six months of the year. Spring and summer flash past in a limited four months leading into a brief, cold autumn.

The forest regions have winter, with heavy snows, for a good five months. Rivers freeze solid enough to sleigh on (making travel easier than usual). Spring comes with a ferocious thaw and flood leading to a modest summer and a long, cool autumn, with conditions improving marginally as one travels south. Around the latitude of Kiev one can expect really harsh weather to last only about four months.

Finally, the forest-steppe and steppe have only a three-month winter, though the long reach of the arctic winds blowing south can turn even the Crimea into a snow-locked fastness.

Travel

Travel in Russia follows the rivers. They form an interlocking grid, with well-established portages "bridging" the intervening strips of land. Most roads are abominable. Little more than muddy ruts in spring and

autumn and dusty pathways in the summer, they vanish under winter's snows. Conditions in Poland are similar, but the river network is less naturally useful, and as German influence increases in the 13th century, roads gradually improve.

Wilderland

Low population and moderate levels of agriculture have had little effect on the overall vitality of the environment, nor have they remotely tamed it. Away from the heavily settled river valleys the traveler will swiftly find himself lost in a frontier land of sparsely settled dells and trackless woods. One wilderness area of particular interest is the Pripet Marsh. This lies about a hundred miles to the northwest of Kiev, and out of it flows the Pripet River. There is no other area of freshwater marsh in Europe that remotely approaches the size of the Pripet: nearly 200 miles east to west and 150 north to south of reed bed and waterway, wandering channels, and vanishing rivers. The Pripet, like the northern forests, is primal wilderness, rich with mystery and hidden dangers.



Natural Resources

The Russian and Polish lands are rich in a wide variety of natural resources. Timber is the paramount building material; furs, amber, honey, wax, and slaves are the prime trade goods. Iron ore is available in the swamps and shallow marshes. The rivers overflow with fish, as do the many large and small lakes, while game of all kinds is readily available in forest and plain.

This is the land over which the magi of the Novgorod tribunal are pleased to hold mystical sway. In the following chapters we will delve more deeply into the character of the people who live here, and of the drama, pageant, toil, and tragedy of their lives.



Caution

This is not a historical or geographical text book. It contains a lot of information in both these areas, and a considerable amount of effort has been undertaken to make sure that most of this information is accurate. However, in the interests of storytelling and roleplaying, various deliberate fabrications have been worked into the material. Use of this text as the basis for any scholarly endeavor is therefore strongly discouraged.

Other *Ars Magica* Texts

Complementary use of two *Ars Magica* texts needs a little thought.

Hedge Magic offers troupes a variety of minor European magical traditions. One of these, the spirit master, is northeastern and pagan. Players should note that the spirit master character type is specific to pagan Lithuanians, Pomeranians, Livonians, and Prussians. Spirit masters may well be found in both Poland and Russia, but they are not native Slavic magic users, and are therefore not common in these areas. Details of the major Slavic magical/religious tradition are found in Chapter 3 of this book.

You'll also find details about Vedun, Slavic Cunning Folk, in this work (see pages 76-77). They are very similar to standard Cunning Folk, and you'll need *Hedge Magic* to use these characters in your saga.

Shamans, the Third Edition supplement, demands a few tricky decisions. A variety of statements made in that book imply that the Shaman character type was native to the Slavic lands as well as to the nomadic steppe-dwellers. This work takes the position that this is a misreading of the historical reality. The Slavs were a settled agricultural people. Most of their gods related to agricultural fertility, and their priests were known as Volkhy (which now form a new character type, detailed in Chapter 3). Shamans, on the other hand, are typically found in mobile,

non-agricultural cultures, who live by a mixture of herding, hunting, and gathering.

In a few other places, *Shamans* makes some statements about Slavic culture that this book contradicts. If it will not upset an established saga or especially cherished character, troupes playing in the Novgorod tribunal are urged to give precedence to this picture of Slavic culture.

However, *Shamans* is obviously the earlier publication, and many troupes may find themselves already playing games in which established Shaman characters are integral to Slavic communities. Your troupe may find itself in one of the following three situations:

- 1) You have completely accepted *Shamans*'s view of Slavic society. In this case ignore the Volkhy character class and make what use you can of the historical and cultural information in Chapters 2 and 3.
- 2) You have one or two Shaman characters and have established Slavic backgrounds for them. In this case, you may assume that your Shaman characters come from communities who descend from earlier nomadic invaders like the Avars, Huns, and Patzinaks. They have been buried amid the Slavs for centuries, and taken on many Slavic habits, but they still practice their own magic and religion. Hence, you have a Shaman character from a "Slavic" community.
- 3) You have one Shaman character, with no specific background. Re-define the character as coming from a nomadic culture, and follow the rules on Slavic society in this book.

A new Shaman character type, based on the Third Edition material found in *Shamans* but fully revised for the Fourth Edition, is presented in this book (see Appendix I, which begins on page 168). A troupe with existing Shaman characters will have to determine whether to continue on with the Third Edition Shaman rules, to translate the old characters to the new rules presented in this book, or to do something else entirely.



The forest went beyond anything she had imagined. Mile upon mile and day after day. It could have been boring. As monotonous as a book of a thousand pages. But it wasn't. Oh no. It was powerful. Dark and vivid, mantling the land like some great, crouching beast. And old. Had she ever seen trees so old? Of such girth? Such height?

Each evening when they moored, she would walk a little way. Under the eaves of the wood.

It felt alive. On every side the trees were budding, new green pushing aside old dead growth. She would put her hands on the trunks, whisper her incantations, feel the life, stirring inside, deeply buried, yes, but powerful and rising urgently now to meet the spring.

At night she dreamed of trees, and green eyes laughing. When she woke it almost seemed to her she could hear the forest breathing, deeply, like a man freshly woken from sleep. But men seemed small beside the forest, and fleeting. After twelve days on the river they reached the Dnieper portage, and she learned that they were neither. It was a gorge, a chasm hewn through the wood.

First though, there was a wide busy beach, scored with the marks of a thousand keels, and the trampling of ten times as many men and horses. The oarsmen drove Fflyfodd up the bank, grounding her hard and high, before stripping out everything: cargo, spars, oars, cordage, and food.

"Now," the captain grinned at her, "we work!"

There was a team of hired horses, and men to move the rollers from stern to stem. There were other boats moving by then. Several already slipping into the forest ahead, their crews pulling on cables, while the horses, their heads down, strained and stamped.

"Thirty seven miles, lady, to Dnieper!" The captain grinned. He had a cable as thick as his wrist over one shoulder. "Five days, in good weather, with good horses."

"Are there many routes? Through the wood?"

"Oh yes. All the villages on this stretch. This one is longer than some, but the ground is smooth, better for hull."

"How many boats go through? Each year?"

"Who counts? Ask a village man, they might know. Hundreds? Thousands? The routes are old, oh yes!"

She turned away. The route *was* old. The stumps where the trees had been felled were rotting away into the ground, swamped with fungus and bracken. Between the looming walls of the wood the boats spread out like

a line of ducklings, sliding down deep, well-worn grooves, the noise of their passage a mixture of rumble and moist, wooden squeak.

They stopped that night at a permanent encampment. Shacks and tents and wagons assembled into a wide circle around a dozen firepits. There were at least twenty ships drawn up nearby, and several hundred travelers. Near the largest group of huts a table had been set out, and here sat a stout official in sleek furs, with mail-clad guards and a scribbling clerk at his side.

"The prince's man," a squat, dark little fellow commented when she asked what the official was about.

"Which prince?"

"Who cares? Not me. These Russians, too many princes. Now in Great Bulgar, we are sensible folk, terribly sensible. We have only one prince, our Khan, you see? He gives us our law, all the same law, good Muslim law too, and he leads us in battle, and he sets the taxes lightly, oh yes. Now isn't that sensible? These Russians," he spat on the ground, "too many princes."

"But what is he doing?"

"Tax. Portage tax. This man, he's not boyar, oh no. A man of the Druzhina, put here by his prince, to take tax on the goods on the portage. Let's hope his prince has a right to do it! If not there'll be trouble!"

There was often trouble, the little man told her, one prince claiming the portage rights, another disputing it. Sometimes shipments were simply seized, and what could a good, sensible Muslim man from Great Bulgar, who'd only come to trade a little fur and wax do, eh?

She met southerners there, for the first time. Kievans coming north, five Greeks with a coffle of slaves, and even a group of Cumans, bow-legged and glum to find themselves walking, heading north searching for a war; mercenaries. By the time the captain had done his business with the prince's man her head was spinning and she was glad to retire to her small tent.

It was past moonrise when he came out of the shadows before her tent. A very tall man, but very thin, every rib showing where his long robe hung open.

"Malincka Capcek?" His voice was smooth, and very soft.

"Yes. You are?"

"Captain Ilyich told me kin of mine was here." His face was smooth, if lean, and with high cheekbones. He tilted his head, studying her. "I see he was not quite wrong."

"Your pardon? I don't understand."

"No. No matter. A happy accident. This helps me, very much. You have solved a riddle for me." He nodded slowly. "They tell me you are traveling south?"

"Yes."

"I would not advise you to continue. You won't find what you're seeking there."

She was amazed at his effrontery. "What I am seeking? What do you mean?"

"I mean that the south is not the place for you. It is fine land. But you won't find what you need there."

"And where, pray tell, will I find it?"

He shook his head, seemingly puzzled. "I . . . don't know. I see I was given only a small part to play . . . it is very . . . vexing." He sighed. "My master is sometimes unkind. But seldom wrong."

She'd had enough. She was tired. She had been meditating, she had been disturbed . . . enough. She wove the spell quickly. Let him bumble off into the woods for all she cared, the day had been a hard march after nearly two weeks of idling on ship.

"No," he said, and though her spell made no sound as it shattered at his feet the impact of it sent her stumbling backward. For a brief moment she felt another spell burning on her tongue, a strong one, something to make him crumble and mewl . . . she held it back.

"Better." He smiled. "We do not need to be enemies, Malincka Capcek. And you should not go south. You won't find what you need there. But if you come with me, well, maybe you will."

"Where?"

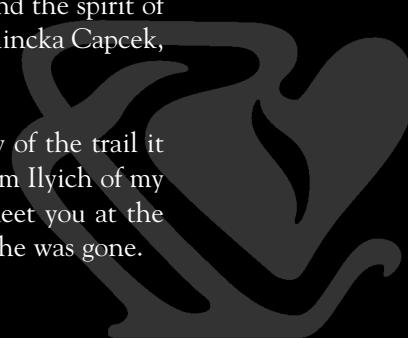
He gestured over his shoulder. To the east, into the forest.

"Who *are* you?"

"Will you cast stronger spells with my name? I've heard the Latin witches can do this thing. Well, I won't tell you. But I am Volkhv, I am Volkhv and the spirit of my master is with me. Come with me Malincka Capcek, I am a blazed tree on your trail."

"What trail?"

He laughed. "What does a tree know of the trail it marks? I leave in the morning. Ask Vladim Ilyich of my trust. If you wish to go with me I will meet you at the gray pine, south of the camp." And then he was gone.





Chapter 2

The Slavs

This chapter covers three areas: Russia, Poland, and the Baltic states. Russia is examined up to 1235, Poland to 1241. At these points their histories were savagely interrupted by the Mongol invasions. The invasions so completely change Russia that it is only sensible to treat the second half of the century after the Mongols have been discussed in detail. Poland was less seriously affected, but still badly damaged. Chapter 6 addresses the Mongols, their invasions, and the aftermath.

The Baltic states, however, are discussed right up to the end of the century. Their history is relatively uninterrupted and easily discussed as a whole.

The Slavs

As previously mentioned, the early Slavs lived in small village communities, each composed of several Zadrugya (the “great family”), each made up of a group of brothers or male cousins, with their wives, children, and a few elderly relatives. A dozen or so villages would form a clan and several clans a tribe. Each tribe had a chieftain, usually elected, and a council of elders.

The early Slavs lived at a typical iron-age level of agriculture and craftwork. Technology has improved by the 13th century and the cities have grown up, but the agricultural basis of rural life remains much the

same: hunting, bee-keeping, fishing, cereal and root crop cultivation, and stock breeding. Wood was the paramount building material. Rural dwellings followed one of two patterns. The northern house was a heavy log cabin (izba), often dug into the ground. The southern was a frame house (klet or khata), the walls filled with clay and stucco. All wooden structures and objects were richly decorated with carving and painting. The other principle arts of the Slavs, both ancient and medieval, were weaving, furriery, tanning, and ceramics.

Religion and Magic

The Slavs were Sun and Earth worshippers. They had many gods, most of whom shared attributes of Fire, Sun, and Fertility. Not all tribes chose to worship the same gods, but at the root of the Slavic religion was the simple notion that the world passed through an annual cycle of birth, growth, decay, death, and then rebirth.

This cycle was easily seen in the waxing and waning of the sun’s power and the turn of the seasons. Accordingly the Slavs marked the solstices and equinoxes with elaborate rituals. They especially celebrated the turn of midwinter (when the Sun was reborn), the coming of spring (the return of fertility) and the harvest season. Furthermore, they believed that the universe was organized around a mighty World Tree, an Oak, which

pierced the three levels of existence: Heaven, Earth, and Hell.

What follows is a list of the major deities of the Slavs, with a few notes on their important attributes. For more detail see Appendix II, which begins on page 177.

Major Slavic Gods...

Svarog: King of the gods; a sun god of cosmic light, sun, and fire

Mati-Syra-Zemlya: Mother Moist Earth; nature and the world

Perun: God of thunder, lightning, and war

Svarozhich: A god of fire; one of Svarog's sons

Dazhbog: A sun god; junior to Svarog; god of creative light, sun, and fire

Khors: The physical, astronomical sun

Stribog: God of wind and air

Iarilo: An aspect of Dazhbog, a fertility god; particularly influential in springtime

Volos: God of poetry, oracles, money, commerce, and cattle; many attributes

Mokosh: Goddess of liberation and redemption; one of the few female divinities

...and Others

The Slavs worshipped three other sorts of beings.

- **Ancestors:** The dead watched over the clan's fortunes, encouraged their descendants, and were often "feasted" by the sacrificial burning of food.
- **Natural Objects:** Particular rocks, trees, ponds, rivers, and lakes, all of whom possessed spirits (that is, faeries), many of them benevolent. There were spirits in the home and wilder, more mysterious spirits in the wilds.
- **Animals:** Deer and horses were popular totems, but any creature could serve as a spiritual protector.

The Volkhvy

The priests of the ancient Slavs were called Volkhvy (plural: Volkhvy). They performed ritual sacrifices, gave prophecies, and practiced surgery. They were also gifted sorcerers. They could shapechange, travel vast distances in an instant, and hide themselves in conjured mists. Any tribal council of elders was composed mostly of Volkhvy.

Magic of the Living World

To the Slavs the world and the objects within it were alive, and sacred.

To the Slavs there was nothing, *literally* nothing, that didn't partake in some measure of divinity: every tool, every ear of rye or barley, every animal, every drop of rain. And *any* activity could be assisted by knowledge of the proper incantations. A craftsman, it was thought, did not of himself perform his work. Instead, from his tools, he evoked their fundamental magic and encouraged them to do the work themselves.



History

The Slavs were never conquered by Rome or Charlemagne, and their known history begins around 850 AD. At this time they had broken into three groups. In the Balkans were the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes; in the northwest were the Poles and Czech-Slovaks. The last and largest group of Slavs were the eastern branch. These tribes, at least two dozen, inhabited European Russia, Byelorussia, and the Ukraine. Other important groups in the region included a variety of pagan Baltic tribes, particularly the Pomeranians, Prussians, and Lithuanians.



Russia: Building the Nation

In Russia in 850 AD, the Khazars were the dominant power. The latest of the nomad hordes, they had settled in the northern Caucasus two centuries earlier and built their capital, Itil of the seven districts, in the delta of the Volga river. They had soon evolved into a trading people. Goods flowed across their lands from the Orient and Russia to the crowded bazaars of the middle east and the great markets of Byzantium. The Khazars extracted tribute from many of the Slavic tribes.

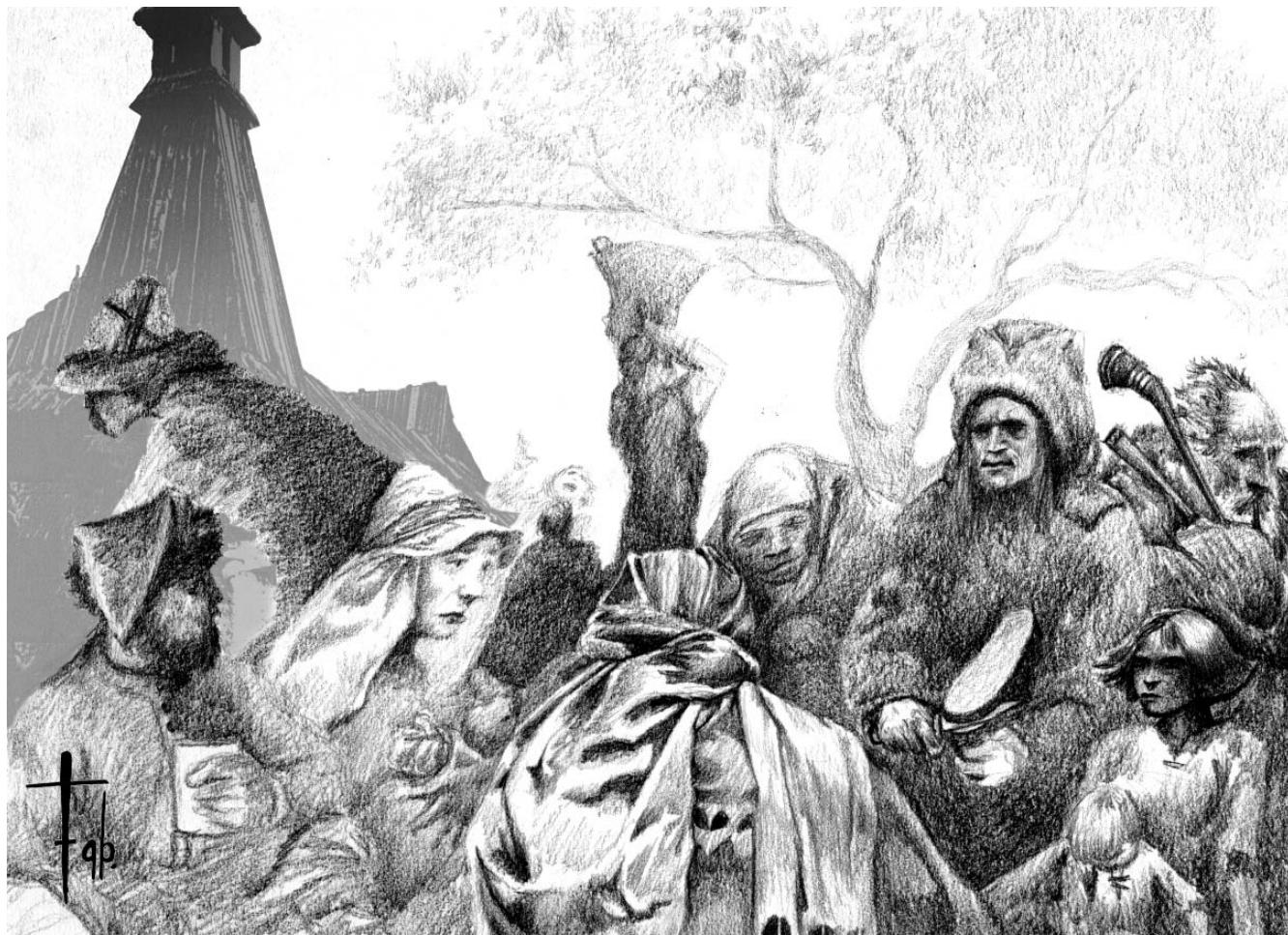
In more recent times a new group of

nomads had arrived from the Finnish wastes, and allied with the Khazars. These were the Magyars and they lived due south of Kiev.

The third power in Russia were the Volga Bulgars. This was a Muslim state, less aggressive than the Khazars, but a unified realm, unlike the "Russian" tribes.

It was this situation into which the Vikings burst. The next two centuries were to be the Viking era. Brilliant mariners, they ruled the seas and would soon besiege Paris, seize London, and raid in Spain, Italy, and Germany.

In Russia they came down the rivers. They knew no mercy and acknowledged no boundaries to their ambitions. The Slavs called these savages Varangians, and in the course of a few decades they had penetrated the heart of Russia, with widely scattered bases as far south as the Crimea.



Calling of the Varangians

The Varangians tormented the northern tribes. Resolving not to tolerate these invaders, the Slovenes, Krivichians, and Merians banded together and expelled them. Then, however, the victors fell to squabbling among themselves. Some order and rule were plainly needed to protect them from new bands of raiders, but what was to be done? The solution was simple. The tribes sent a message to Sweden. "Come," they said to the Swedish princes, "and set some good man over us, that there be peace in our land."

The man who answered this "calling of the Varangians" was the renowned Viking prince Rurik. He very swiftly established his rule in all the lands about the city of Novgorod, and the tribes paid him tribute. Though Rurik was fully occupied in the north, he also wanted to set up some authority in the south. Accordingly, around 859, he sent two lieutenants, Askold and Dir, to Kiev. They seized the city from the local Magyar warlord and began negotiations to gain passage down the Dnieper to the Black Sea. Their target was Constantinople.

Aided by mercenary bands of Varangians, and by Scandinavian settlers in the eastern Crimea (Tmutorokan), Askold and Dir succeeded in gathering over 200 ships and attacked in the summer of 861. By strength of arms and ruthlessness the invaders managed to besiege Constantinople.

Distraught, the people of the city turned to their Patriarch, Photius, who besought God's mercy. In solemn procession, he led the assembled citizens to the harbor and washed in the water the Robes of the Virgin Mary. At once the sky darkened with massive storm clouds and the sea rose. When the skies cleared the whole shoreline was littered with shattered Varangian hulls.

Askold and Dir, with a few destitute followers, returned to Kiev. A treaty followed with Byzantium, and missionaries came to the south, establishing the first "Russian" see in Tmutorokan in 866.

In 873 Rurik died. He had never ruled a united land, only held a tenuous overlordship in the north. However, the failure of the southern war had brought trade in its wake, encouraging prosperity. Kiev was growing, and Novgorod was now at the head of a great chain of commerce.

First Unity

With Rurik dead his distant cousin Oleg, foster father to Rurik's infant son Igor, ascended the Novgorodian throne. Oleg had been born in Livonia and was tutored in his youth in the Volkhv arts. He was young and ambitious and guided by a council of Volkhv "doctors." Swiftly, Oleg set out to bring Russia together under one rule. In 878 he moved on the south, the northern tribes and many Varangians marching with him. He took first Smolensk then Lyubech, and finally Kiev which, Oleg declared, would be his capital, henceforth to be known as the Mother of Russian Cities.

The next decade or so of Oleg's reign was heavy with challenges. In each region he dispersed Varangian garrisons and established set tributes to be paid when the prince passed through. Near Kiev, Oleg subdued the strongest Slavic tribes, the Radimichi, Drevliane, and Severi, forbidding them to pay tribute to the Magyars or Khazars. He fought and beat the Magyars for dominion in the south and taught the many Slavic tribes to think of themselves as one people, one nation.

In 897 the Magyars fell prey to a new people coming out of the east, the Patzinak Turks, or Pechenegi. Defeated, the Magyars fled into Hungary, clearing the route to Byzantium. Oleg did not hesitate. In 904 he mustered the tribes and hired mercenaries, assembling a force in the Crimea of over 500 ships.

Oleg descended upon Constantinople. Denied access to the Bosphorus channel by great defensive chains, he put in to shore and ordered his men to affix wheels to their ships.





Thus equipped they sailed onward across the open lands until they were beneath the walls of the city. This time there was no heavenly salvation for the Byzantines, no Photius to call down God's retribution on the pagans. The defense wavered and at last the Emperor had to offer a massive ransom: gold and jewelry and silken fabrics, as well as an advantageous trade treaty.

Before he departed, Oleg hung from the gates of the city his shield, symbol of peace.

In 907 and 911 further treaties were agreed. Commerce was proving more lucrative than war, and rapidly increased.

Oleg died in 912, stung to death by a venomous serpent, and was succeeded by Igor, Rurik's son, a proud, avaricious man. He had a lengthy but undistinguished reign. His one true success was against Constantinople. In 941 it took only the threat of an invasion to bring the Byzantines scurrying north with offers of treasure and another generous treaty.

In 944 Igor died while attempting to extort from the Drevlianians a third tribute in a matter of a few months. The patience of the tribesmen was at an end; they had suffered from greedy Varangians under Igor's general Sveneld, and then Igor himself. A third visit was one too many.

Olga and Sviatoslav: Church and Conquest

At the time of Igor's death his only child, Sviatoslav, was an infant. However, Sviatoslav's mother, Olga, was highly competent and secured the allegiance of the various tribes, groups of Varangians, and principal cities. She reformed the system of taxation, establishing a set rate of annual taxes collected by royal officers, thus reinforcing central authority. Her punishment of the Drevlianians was sharp, but not tyrannous; she executed their leaders, but did not drive the common people to rebellion.

Olga's truly decisive step, however, was her conversion to Christianity. By this time

there were churches throughout Russia for the benefit of visiting merchants and the many local converts. Olga could see the advantages of taking up the new religion. A pagan Russia could never enjoy the diplomatic strengths of a Christian nation; she would always be treated as inferior and threatening, and would be a target for missionary activities that would undermine royal authority.

At the same time, Olga could see the dangers. If she accepted the Christian faith she would have to acquire clergy from one of two sources: the Patriarch of Constantinople or the Pope of Rome. If she did this, then Russia's church would be dependent on foreigners. Furthermore, the Pope was aligned with the Holy Roman Emperor, who claimed authority over all princes and kings in the western world, while the Patriarch was even more closely linked to the Byzantine Emperor. If Russia converted, the nation would be faced with demands to acknowledge the overlordship of one or the other great religious leader, and one or other of the great temporal lords. What was to be done?

Olga stalled. She played diplomatic games, asked for priests to be sent first from one side then from the other, and did her best to be accepted as Christian without submitting to an established Christian authority.

It was a losing game, the more so because her son, Sviatoslav, by now coming into his manhood, was a devout pagan. She was, after all, only his regent and could not force her nation into Christianity. In 962 Olga stepped aside for Sviatoslav, taking up her abode in Kiev and withdrawing from politics.

Sviatoslav's reign was brief, and briefly glorious. He immediately began to unite the Eastern Slavs and humble all of Russia's traditional enemies. His ambitions were imperial and his character austere, but his achievements were shallow and ultimately self-destructive.

In 963 he set out against the Khazars, razing their ancient citadel of Sarkel on the lower Don. In 964 he overwhelmed the Viatichian tribe, opening the way for a campaign against the Volga Bulgars, whose capital city, Great Bulgar, he stormed in 966. In

967 he prepared a great move against Constantinople, but was persuaded by Byzantine gold to invade the Balkans and crush the Danubian Bulgars instead. When the Pechenegi seized this opportunity to besiege Kiev, Sviatoslav turned back into Russia and relieved the city.

Sviatoslav had every intention of returning to Bulgaria, which seemed to him the fairest and richest land in all his vast domains. Firstly, however, he resumed his attack on the Khazars, taking and razing their ancient capital, Itil.

In 971 Sviatoslav returned to Bulgaria only to find the Bulgarians and Byzantines united against him. He was forced into a humiliating surrender. As he made his slow way back to Kiev, the Pechenegi, who had conspired with the Byzantines, ambushed his army and slew him. The Pechenegi Khan, Kuria, had the prince's skull made into a gold-plated goblet from which he drank.

Sviatoslav left two legacies, both ruinous. First, when he had set forth for Bulgaria for the last time, he had left his three sons behind him, Iaropolk ruling in Kiev, Oleg in the Drevlianian territory, and Vladimir in Novgorod. According to ancient Slavic rules of inheritance, the brothers should have cooperated in ruling Russia jointly, but none of them had the temperament for cooperation, and civil war soon broke out. Second, his conquest of the Khazars proved ill-considered. Certainly they had been a thorn in the Russians' side, but they had also been a bulwark against new tribes from the east. With the Khazars crushed, there was nothing to stop the Pechenegi and they moved into the southern Russian steppes in strength.

The Seeds of Division

War came to Russia immediately after Sviatoslav's death. Conflict erupted between Iaropolk and Oleg. By moving swiftly, Iaropolk surprised Oleg, and slew his brother while Vladimir fled to Scandinavia.

Matters did not rest there. Iaropolk was a

Christian and was stricken with remorse at Oleg's death. Vladimir, meanwhile, gathered Varangian supporters and returned in force. Now religion entered into the picture. Vladimir was a pagan, and there were still strong pagan forces in Russia. Iaropolk was ready to negotiate with Vladimir and agreed to meet, but at the meeting he was betrayed by the pagans among his men and handed over to Vladimir, who promptly executed him.

Vladimir was now sole ruler of Russia and soon proved himself a capable one, cannily sending his dangerous Varangian followers out of the country, and then securing his position by reinstating official, wide-scale paganism. Statues of the Old Gods were set up on the hills around Kiev, embellished with gold and silver. From his campaigns against the Poles, Lithuanians, and Volga Bulgars he acquired prisoners who were offered as human sacrifices.



The Missions to the Slavs

Byzantium was always the most active Christian missionary force among the Slavs. The great Patriarch Photius sent two eminent brothers, Constantine the Philosopher and Methodius to the north. Constantine, better known as Cyril, was a particularly outstanding thinker, preacher, and linguist, and translated the gospels into the Slavic tongue. To this end he had also composed a new alphabet, the "Cyrillic."

Constantine and Methodius were active throughout the 860s, first in Khazaria, then in Bulgaria and the Czech lands. They were successful among the Czechs, but soon ran into difficulties with the proud German bishops. The brothers took their cause to Rome, where the Pope was impressed by their missionary zeal.

Constantine died in 869, apparently having been successful in winning the Pope's approval for the crucial principle of allowing the Slavs to worship and read the Gospels in Slavic. Methodius struggled on against increasing difficulties at the Papal courts, and died with much of his work in ruins. They were swiftly canonized, however, and Saints Cyril and Methodius became the Patrons of the Slavic churches. Though the western Church won out in Czechoslovakia, they created a body of religious writings that were taken into Bulgaria and Russia. Thanks to them, "Church Slavonic" became the language of religion in Russia, and helped the Russians decide to turn to Eastern Orthodoxy.



Vladimir, like Olga before him, could see the value of leading his nation to Christianity or one of the other great religions. His envoys traveled to Constantinople, Rome, and Baghdad, examining the rituals and worship of each religion, and brought back word from the great cathedral of Sancta Sophia in Byzantium that “We knew not whether we were on Earth or in Heaven” so impressive were the rites celebrated there.

Vladimir was willing to throw over his paganism for the sake of his nation, and wise enough to choose his moment with care. When the Byzantine Emperor was faced by a terrible revolt and turned to the Russians, Vladimir’s conditions were steep: control of the Crimea and marriage to a Byzantine Princess of the highest lineage. To clinch the bargain Vladimir would convert to Eastern Christianity.

The Emperor agreed and Vladimir’s troops saved his throne. In 988 Vladimir was baptized and married to Anna, the sister of Emperor Basil II. Now the old altars and statues were torn down and the Volkhy chased off into the wilderness or slain. Mass baptisms were held in the rivers near Kiev and Novgorod, and bishoprics established at

Vladimir-in-Volinia, Polotsk, Turov, Belgorod, Rostov, Novgorod, and Chernigov. The Russian church was organized as a diocese subordinate to the Patriarch of Constantinople, but with a Metropolitan Bishop as its titular head, with his cathedral in Kiev.

For his works on behalf of the church Vladimir was eventually canonized (1263), and is known to the people of the 13th century as Vladimir the Saint. He died in 1014, and on his death the problem of inheritance and seniority blew up far more seriously. He had been a pagan and polygamist for the first thirty years of his life, and had several sons.

War exploded immediately. Two of the princes, Gleb and Boris, refused to fight, were murdered, and were eventually canonized. One, Iziaslav, stayed neutral, leaving princes Iaroslav, Sviatopolk, and Mstislav as the main contenders.

The war lasted from 1014 to 1019. The Poles became involved when their king, Boleslaw the Brave, marched in to support Sviatopolk, his son-in-law. All the contenders called on the services of Varangian and Pechenegi mercenaries. Eventually, Iaroslav overcame Sviatopolk and turned against Mstislav, whom he proved unable to defeat. Russia had broken apart, with Iaroslav ruling from Novgorod, Mstislav ruling from Chernigov, and Iziaslav controlling the small border district of Polotsk.

From 1019 until 1036 the realm remained divided. By and large the two senior brothers ruled without friction, and when Mstislav died childless in 1036 Iaroslav swiftly absorbed the southern realm. Polotsk, however, despite another 18 years of rule, he never retook.

Iaroslav ruled until 1054, and is remembered as Iaroslav “the Wise.” He fought a variety of campaigns against northern tribes such as the Iatvians, struggled with the Byzantines and Pechenegi, and allied with the Polish king Casimir (the Restorer). Alas, he had too many sons and the ablest of them, Vladimir, died before him. On Iaroslav’s death, the realm was divided again.

Parallel Inheritance and the Principle of the Seniorate

The medieval Russians and Poles did not practice primogeniture. Instead, they followed an ancient Slavic law known as parallel inheritance, or (as the Poles came to call it) “the principle of the seniorate.” Among the ancient Slavs, any piece of land was held in common by a specific Zadrugya. Each Zadrugya would have a designated leader, commonly the eldest male. When that man died, his property passed in equal portions to his brothers first, and only later to his sons. Meanwhile, his authority would pass to his next oldest male relative, usually a brother.

In a small rural community this system worked. It promoted solidarity, encouraging everyone to feel equally involved in controlling their land. It did not work with a nation. Princes are seldom content to *share* anything. Another very unfortunate consequence was short reigns. Because rulership often passed from brother to brother the age differences were small and reigns were short. There was little time for the consolidation of power.

War began almost immediately when his grandson Rostislav seized the city of Galich. Rostislav was aided in this by a second young man, Vseslav of Polotsk.

Vseslav was something new in the royal House of Rurik. He was a Volkhy, and had a grisly reputation. He was born in a caul, and kept it with him always. He was a werewolf and a practitioner of dark arts and he meddled in the wars to ruinous effect.

Russia Shattered

Russia now suffered a long and painful period of decay. Occasionally a single powerful figure would briefly reunify the realm, but inevitably upon his death his sons, brothers, nephews, and cousins would fall out anew. By law this should not have happened. Parallel inheritance stated that on a man's death his next oldest male relative should ascend to the senior position, and that all the junior princes should shuffle up one step, each getting a new city: a new, more important district. With a single exception matters simply never proceeded this smoothly.

Furthermore, as the House of Rurik continued fighting among themselves, royal "sub-clans" began to form. A man's sons would take his name as their "patronymic" (for example, the sons of Sviatoslav would be termed the Sviatoslavichi) and each little clan of princes gradually assumed the right to one particular part of the realm. For instance, the Olgavichi soon came to be almost exclusively associated with Chernigov. Eventually, each royal sub-clan came to consider itself sovereign in its own realm, with only a vague acknowledgment that one among their number was senior prince.

It was during this period that the Cuman nomads came to Russia from the east. They attacked and absorbed the Pechenegi and settled in the rich southern steppe lands, cutting the Russians off from the Black Sea and raiding continually and aggressively throughout the south and east of the country.

The Last True Unity

In 1113 peace seemed, at last, to return to the beleaguered land of Russia. At the time the most respected prince was Vladimir Monomach of Pereyaslavl. When the current prince of Kiev died, the war-weary people of the city called on Vladimir to come and rule them. He declined. Parallel inheritance required that the throne of Kiev should not fall to him, but to a cousin. In Kiev his reluctance was unacceptable. The people rose in riot, attacking the homes of the clergy and rich boyars. In desperation these powerful men added their voices to those of the people: let Vladimir Monomach come to rule them!

This time Vladimir accepted, and restored order in Kiev. With the combined strength of Kiev and Pereyaslavl he dominated first the south, and then the north of Russia. The petty squabbles of the princes were subdued and they acclaimed Vladimir as Grand Prince. When Vladimir died in 1125, a second stroke of luck became apparent; he had no surviving brothers. Control of the realm passed directly to his son, Mstislav the Great.

Mstislav reconquered independent Polotsk. His son Vsevolod invaded eastern Estonia, and his brother Iaropolk defeated the Cumans twice. But such times were not to last. Mstislav died in 1132, and his brother Iaropolk ascended the throne in Kiev. Iaropolk was a fine warrior, but could not enforce the obedience of his brothers and cousins. Trouble flared with the Olgavichi of Chernigov. The Cumans attacked and could not be subdued. When Iaropolk died in 1139 unity had crumbled.



The Century of Despair

For the next hundred years, from 1139-1237, Russia suffered many sharp moments of turmoil and short periods of uneasy peace. There were scores of minor wars, and several

THE DRAGON AND THE BEAR



great ones. As time passed, certain trends emerged.

First, parallel inheritance proved no better at holding districts together than a nation. When a clan established an hereditary right to a district they swiftly fell prey to the disease of internal rivalry. Accordingly a system of sub-districts sprang up. Smaller and smaller divisions of the main districts were imposed to satisfy each princeling of his proper share. But Russia did not peel apart into hundreds of tiny baronies. Many princes died without leaving heirs. Many princes were cut out of their inheritances. Many small districts were absorbed by aggressive senior princes.

Second, Kiev was the prize for which the princes struggled most ferociously. After Mstislav the Great no prince sat on the throne of Kiev who could truly call himself Grand Prince, but even after the Suzdalians sacked the city in 1169 its prestige remained high.

Third, foreign intervention became commonplace. By now the Russian princes had marriage ties to all the central European monarchies as well as to the Cuman Khans, the Byzantines, and the Scandinavians. The princes became used to calling on their relatives for assistance, while interlopers seized what they could.

Fourth, very rarely did Russian princes die in battle. When rival forces came up against each other they were usually fighting over a fairly trivial issue. With one good look at who had the bigger army, confrontation gave way to reconciliation or flight. Church mediation helped prevent truly bloody battles and Russian princes generally exiled erring relatives.

Fifth, cities fell easily. Almost inevitably the people within the walls would split into factions and excitable crowds. It was quite simple to rouse a mob against a rival prince, for most princes had little more loyal follow-



ing than the forces of their own personal retinue and armed retainers (their Druzhina).

Sixth, a last damaging factor, was the growth of the Boyar class. The Boyars were the middling nobility of Russia: men who held land and commanded followings. Some of them were descended from the princes of the original Slavic tribes and some from Varangian chieftains. Others were wealthy merchants who had taken up landholding or the mayors of small cities. The Boyars resisted princely rule because it inhibited their power to do as they pleased. Regardless, no Boyar ever managed to permanently take control of a principality. The Russian princes all remained descendants of the House of Rurik. The statement, "We are all children of one grandfather," expressed their sense of fellow feeling, not that it affected their behavior.

Seventh, the Church was a strong moderating influence, constantly involved in diplomacy and mediation, sometimes managing to win mercy for defiant cities or errant princelings.

erated dictators, and the current situation, where there is always someone who can be persuaded to come and oust their current ruler, usually plays into the hands of the city.

The City of Novgorod

Novgorod is split by the shallow river Volkhov: on the west is the "Sophia" side, on the east is the "market" side. The city is low-lying and moated, but the Volkhov is not a turbulent river and floods are rare. Fires are far more common and damaging.

There are five districts in the city: the Neverskij, the Plotnickij (carpenters and shipbuilders), the Zazorod (castle district/Boyars' palaces), the Ljudin (home to the potters, smiths, and silversmiths), and the Slavno (the oldest and poorest district).

The most important area in the city is the Great Marketplace, where the Veche

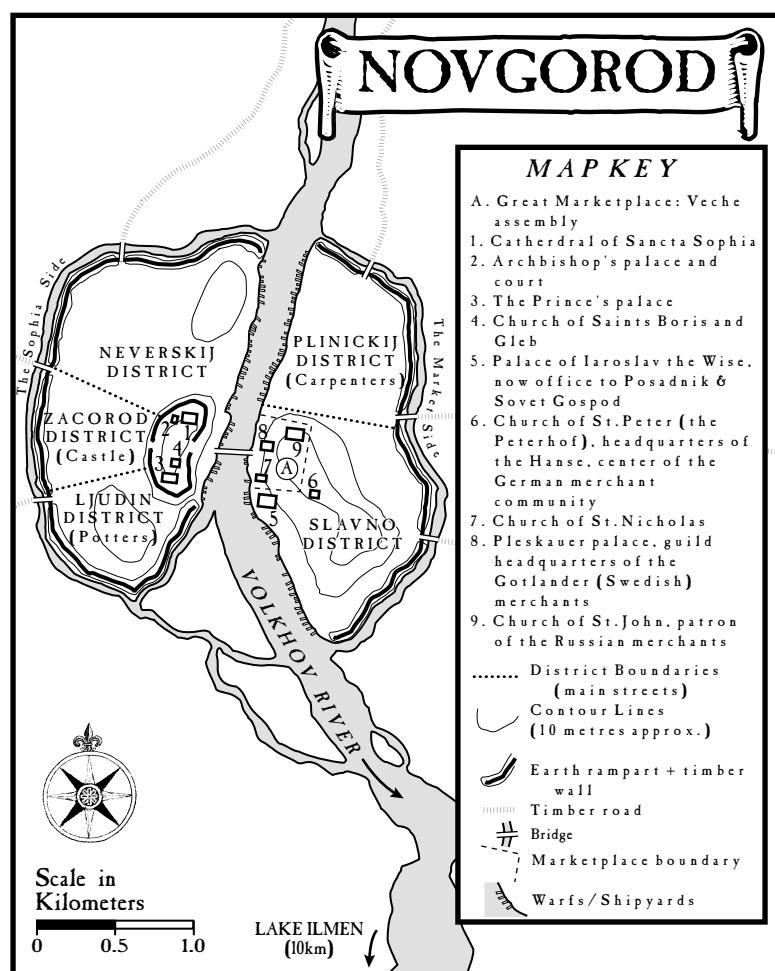


Russia: Early 13th Century

By the early 13th century Russia had been divided into several principalities, which are described in the following sections.

Novgorod

A city-state in its own right, Novgorod has expanded into a vast sweep of northern land, setting up small towns and a system of trading stations and outposts as far east as the Urals. Traditionally independent, with a rowdy democratic manner, Novgorod has always taken a prince from the House of Rurik. The city needs a prince to lead its armed forces, but its citizens have never tol-





The Russian Orthodox Church

Generally, the Russian Church preached tolerance. Though there were Western churches in Russia, and many Jews, there was relatively little friction. The church strove to outlaw slavery, and to mediate the princely squabbles. They were also the scholars and teachers of Russia. However, this was scholarship from the Greek tradition, not the Latin. An educated churchman spoke and read Church Slavonic first, Greek second, and Latin a distant third.

As it was Western, very little needs to be said about the Polish Church. Interested readers are referred to *Mythic Europe* and *Pax Dei*. The Russians, however, turned to the East, giving their church a distinctly different spirit and organization. One important difference was that their clergy were of two distinct sorts, the “white” and the “black” (though it is important to note that these distinctions were informal and not canonical designations).

The White Clergy

The white clergy performed all of the parish duties and menial work. They were ordained as priests (usually elected by their congregations), as deacons, and as junior church officials. The white clergy were required to marry.

The organization of parish churches in Russia was very weak. Few villages had a church and priest of their own. Instead they would be served by an itinerant priest, who was doing well if he managed one visit to each village once each year.

The Black Clergy

The black clergy were monks. Each was attached either to a monastery (usually close to a city) or to a cathedral. They were celibate and automatically took precedence over the white. Only members of the black

clergy became bishops. They followed the tradition of St. Theodosius, and the clearest statement of their credo was made by Abbot Feodosi of the Monastery of the Caves (near Kiev): “Prayer, humility, work, charity.” These were the key to a life of devotion. A very few monks did follow the alternate teachings of St. Anthony, which stressed seclusion, poverty, and mortification, but they were a small minority.

The Metropolitan and the Bishops

A Metropolitan was the leading bishop of any province subject to the Patriarch of Byzantium. The senior cleric in Russia was the Metropolitan Bishop of Kiev.

It was the Metropolitan’s responsibility to circulate the doctrinal rulings issued by Byzantium. He created new sees, appointed junior bishops, and corrected or dismissed them. The Metropolitan (and Russia as a whole) never sent any kind of tithe back to Byzantium, and only seldom journeyed to Constantinople to attend Patriarchal synods.

The Metropolitan was, however, chosen by the Patriarch. The Russian bishops would gather in conclave and select three candidates from among the black clergy, whose names would be forwarded to the Patriarch for final selection. The Metropolitans and the majority of senior black clergy were almost always Greek rather than Russian.

Metropolitans of the 13th Century

Nikifor II 1185-1208

Matfey 1209-1224

Kirill I 1224-1234

Iosif 1235-1240 (killed in Mongol sack of Kiev)

Vacant from 1240-1250

Kirill II 1250-1281

Maksim 1283-1305

The second-ranking bishop was the Archbishop of Novgorod. Then there were the “common” bishops. By the beginning of the 13th century there were sees in Belgorod, Chernigov, Galich, Peremyshl,

The Russian Orthodox Church, Cont.

Pereyaslavl, Polotsk, Rostov, Ryazan, Smolensk, Suzdal, Turov, Vladimir-in-Suzdalia, Vladimir-in-Volinia and Tmutorokan. In 1261 the Metropolitan Kirill II will create a new see, at Sarai, the capital of the Mongol Golden Hoard.

Canon Law

The clergy in general were subject only to the judgment of their bishops. However, legal conflicts between the church and lay people were always bought before a mixed court.

Saints

Several saints have already been mentioned. They are listed here, along with several others who were popular, and their western equivalents. This list also indicates the pagan gods (in parentheses) who became confused with specific Christian saints.

As an aside, it should be noted that this confusion of pagan gods and Christian saints can sometimes pose a problem for storyguides and troupes, since in Mythic Europe, Faerie and Divine auras are concretely different in terms of the way they affect magic. If this problem rears its head in your saga, the best bet is to talk it through as a group in order to come to a solution that respects your troupe's conception of Mythic European cosmology and the particular circumstances in question. No single solution published here will have any hope of doing justice to the myriad instances in the plethora of sagas using this material. It wouldn't hurt to remember that the perceptions of common people are often misguided, manipulated, and just plain mistaken.

Avraami: of Smolensk

Boris and Gleb: the martyr sons of Vladimir

Cyril and Methodius: Patrons of the Slavic churches

Egorii: St. George

Evfrosynya: of Polotsk

Feodosi: First Abbot of the Monastery of the Caves

Il'ia: the Prophet Elijah (Perun)

Leonty: of Rostov

Mary, Mother of God (Mati-Syra-Zemlya)

Mikhail: St. Michael

Mikola: St. Nicholas of Myra

Olga: Mother of Sviatoslav

Paraskeva: (Mokosh)

Petr: St. Peter

Theodosius and Anthony: Patrons of the Monastic tradition

Vladimir: lead the great conversion

Vlas: (Volos)



The Position of Women

Eve was the agency of Adam's fall from grace. It therefore followed that she was the devil's vessel and women were accordingly tainted. On the other hand the worship of Mary, the Mother of God, was elevated in the Eastern tradition. This tended to glorify woman as authors of salvation. These difficulties aside, there were many convents in Russia. Outside the royal houses they were practically the only venues within which women could win education.

The Eastern Church and Magic

The priesthood in Russia has had a long and frustrating fight with stubborn pagan hold-outs and the Volkhvy. While officially tolerant of Islam and Judaism, they are altogether set against paganism of any kind. Their view of magic is heavily influenced by this, although unlike the Western Church, they have no tradition of inquisition.

In game terms, Russian priests are capable of administering the sacraments and performing all other priestly functions mentioned in *Pax Dei*. They have Piety scores and occasionally True Faith.



meets. The market contains the churches and halls of the Russian and foreign merchants, and the ancient palace of Iaroslav the Wise, nowadays the home of the Posadnik and meeting-place of the Soviet Gospod (see the insert on page 28). The palace is also the site of the Veche bell, which is rung to summon the freemen of the city. The Veche has little patience with unsatisfactory princes, and very often "showed them where to go."

The folk-hero of Novgorod is Sadko the Merchant, who was famous for his daring expeditions. The city is intensely involved in Baltic trade, and has a strong Hanseatic League community. Novgorod dominates the import of Flemish cloth, Luneburg salt, and English wool.

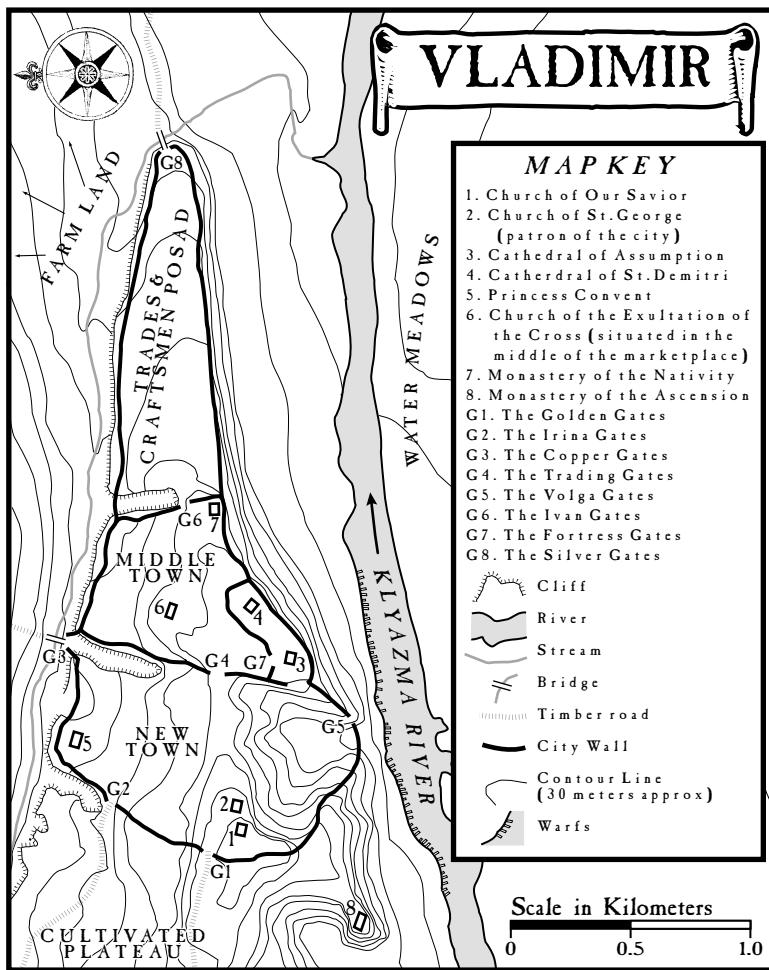
Suzdalia

Since Andrei Bogolubosky sacked Kiev in 1169, Suzdalia has generally been referred to as the Grand Principality, and is now the real power in the north. At the turn of the century the ruler was Vsevolod III (reigned 1172-1212) who gave the title "Grand Prince" some real meaning. Novgorod had elected only his sons to rule it for ten years, and the principalities of Pereyaslavl and Ryazan were under his control. The capital of Suzdalia is Vladimir-in-Suzdal, and is now the third great city of Russia.

Vladimir The City

The city has four main divisions. The western segment is the New Town. The central segment is the Middle Town, also known as Monomach's Town. The eastern segment is the Posad, a district of tradesmen and craftsmen. Set against the southern wall in the Middle Town is the heavily fortified stone Citadel.

Vladimir is distinguished by the amount of fine white stone used in its walls, buildings, and gates, and also by the bridge over the Lybed. It dazzles most newcomers with its many gilded domes and ornate church façades.



Ryazan

One of those small districts that split off from a larger one in the last century, it is generally loyal to the princes of Suzdalia. Even here there is a tendency to fragment. The city of Murom often struggled for independence.

Smolensk

When Vladimir Monomach died in 1125 this principality passed to his grandson,

Rostislav, and from then onward fell solely under the authority of the Rostislavichi. In general well-ruled, the region was held together and not allowed to fragment further.

Chernigov

By 1170 the local clan had taken on the patronymic of their ancestor Oleg (hence, "Olgavichi"). By the turn of the century there were two ruling lines and the land was partitioned. Ruling from Chernigov city itself was the senior prince, while the junior ruled from Novgorod-Seversk.

Polotsk

Polotsk had only three rulers in the entire 11th century: Iziaslav (1014-1036), Bryacheslav (1036-1044), and Vseslav (the Sorcerer, 1044-1101). Polotsk suffered terribly in the 12th century; Vseslav's many sons virtually tore it apart. But in 1128 Mstislav the Great marched in and exterminated the line. Polotsk is reasonably solidly ruled at this time, but is already suffering from the Lithuanian raids which will eventually destroy it.

Volinia and Galicia

The westernmost of the Russian principalities. United from 1199 to 1205 by Roman of Volinia, these two districts suffered most intensely from Hungarian and Polish interference and invasion. After the death of Roman of Galicia, the two districts split apart again, and Galicia was most frequently the target of opportunistic local Boyars, Hungarians, and Polish adventurers. Damaged by the brief usurpation of Vladislav the Boyar in 1212, Galicia enters the 13th century in a turbulent, strife-torn state.

Kiev

Smaller, older, and more run down than robust Suzdalia, the southern border of the principality has become a fluid, shifting line due to constant nomad raids. Though Kiev's defensive siting was good and its trade routes excellent, its power declined throughout the late 12th century.

Kiev The City

The city is split into four districts. The Old Town is the original, fortified position and is now the site of the prince's palaces. The Gora is the aristocratic district, site of the Sancta Sophia cathedral and the Metropolitan Bishop's court. The Foreign Quarter is an area set aside for foreigners,





Poles, Hungarians, German merchants, and Jews. The Podol is the traders' and craftsmen's quarter, and holds the bulk of the population.

Outside Kiev is the Monastery of the Caves. This is the oldest and most influential monastery in Russia. The original catacombs, which the early monks dug out with their own hands, still exist, but have been replaced by a compound of fine churches and the great Dormition Cathedral.

Pereyaslavl

Pereyaslavl was the battleground where the nomads were fought. The principality was politically and militarily dependent on Kiev and ruled by the Monomashichi clan (the descendants of Vladimir Monomach) for most of the 12th century until the commanding figure of Vsesvolod III took control.

Pinsk-Turov

This little western principality never had much to build on, as most of its territory is

City Government

Any big city of Russia has three principle segments of government.

- **Veche:** The assembly of free male citizens who serve in the city militia.
- **Tysiatsky:** The Militia Commander. An elected post, determined by the Veche. Princes, boyars, mayors, and councils all tried to influence the elections for these positions.
- **Posadnik:** The Mayor. The senior civil officer, at once an administrator and a magistrate. Again, an elected post.

The degree of authority held by these people depended on how much power the local prince had. Novgorod had by far the strongest tradition of local autonomy and the people usually supported their own officers over the prince.

Novgorod is in fact a special case. Aside from the above three organizations, it had a fourth one, the *Sovet Gospod*: the Council of Lords. This was composed of wealthy citizens and local Boyars. Together with the Posadnik and Tysiatsky, they formed an executive council, which tried to run the city in its own interest.

dominated by the inhospitable Pripet Marsh. Its independence is continually forfeit to the attentions of the Kievans and the Volinians.

Wars of the Early 13th Century

The Early Struggle for the South

In spring of the year 1200, Russia seemed, momentarily, at peace. In the north Vsevolod III was in command, and in the south the Olgavichi of Chernigov and the Rostislavichi of Smolensk held a truce. But war was bubbling under the surface, and it was soon to break out in the first stage of a lengthy and bitter struggle for Kiev.

There were three major factions competing for this prize: the Olgavichi, the Rostislavichi, and Roman of Volinia. Early in the summer, Roman of Volinia seized Galicia and then marched into Kiev. Kiev was held at the time by Ryurik of the Rostislavichi, Roman's father-in-law. Vsevolod III, Grand Prince of Suzdal, was Ryurik's patron and ally (at least as long as Ryurik did not achieve any real dominance). As for the Olgavichi, they were too weak to stake a claim of their own, and allied themselves wherever they saw the most advantage.

Regardless of his initial possession of Kiev, Ryurik could not hold the city and fled to a minor east Kievan town, his allies dispersing. Roman put a puppet on the throne and returned to his western domains. The situation remained stable for about two years, then, in 1203, a major Cuman raid erupted over the southern principalities. Ryurik, with help from the Olgavichi clan, allied with the Cumans and seized Kiev. The sack was so severe that Ryurik dared not stay in the city

for fear of its enraged (surviving) citizens. Not, at least, until he had once again secured Vsevolod III's backing, and sealed a treaty with Roman and his Olgavichi allies.

For a while the south knew peace. The princes cooperated in 1204 in a successful raid on the Cumans, but disputes over booty broke the peace. Roman moved first, capturing Ryurik, his wife, and his daughter (Roman's first wife, now divorced), and had them all forcibly tonsured, which technically made them members of the church's holy orders and unable to hold power. Again, however, Vsevolod III intervened. He arranged the release of Ryurik's captive sons and placed one of them, Rostislav, on the Kievan throne.

Blocked by the power of the Grand Prince, Roman turned his back on Russia. Gathering his armies he moved west in 1205, invading Poland. He was slain by Leszek of Krakow and his brother Conrad, at Zawichost.

Roman's new wife, Anna (of Byzantium) fled with her young children to Volinia, while Galicia fell into the hands of scheming Boyars, greedy Hungarians, and the Olgavichi. In Kiev, however, the old conflict continued. War gradually built up between the Rostislavichi and the Olgavichi.

Vsevolod Chermnyy ("the Red") of Chernigov, senior prince of the Olgavichi clan since 1204, made the first of many ruinous assaults on Kiev. This began a far worse period of warfare in the south. Ryurik and Vsevolod the Red chased each other in and out of the city repeatedly. The longest reign in this period was Ryurik's last, from 1207-1210. He was finally ousted by a mixture of force and church diplomacy, and replaced by the triumphant Vsevolod the Red.

Vsevolod, however, did no better than Ryurik, and when the Rostislavichi princes made a major effort in 1212, both in Novgorod which they now held and in the south, he was defeated, and died soon afterwards. Novgorod had been seized in 1208 by Mstislav Mstislavich, "the Daring." His rule in the city lasted over ten years, and was generally very successful. Vsevolod III could not dislodge Mstislav, and eventually acknowl-

edged that Novgorod had temporarily been lost to his family.

In Kiev the Rostislavichi were thorough, and this time genuinely successful in their campaign. The Olgavichi were driven out of their towns and confined to Chernigov territory. For the next twenty-three years the Rostislavichi held Kiev, and there was no-one strong enough to dispute their possession, for in 1212 Vsevolod III of Suzdalia also died.

War In The North

When Vsevolod died his sons (Konstantin, Yury, Yaroslav, Vladimir, and Sviatoslav) immediately began to battle. The principle fight was between Konstantin and Yury, while their younger brothers scrabbled on the fringes. For four years there was inconclusive squabbling, diplomacy, pursuit, alarms, and intrigue, but no major, armed clash.

In 1216 the conclusive battle occurred. Konstantin had allied with the Rostislavichi and Novgorodians; Yury had allied with his brother Yaroslav, the men of the city of Murom, and a steppe tribe known as the Brodniki. The victory went to Konstantin, and was complete. His brothers were exiled to distant, insignificant towns. Yury, however, did not have to wait long for his revenge. Konstantin died in 1218, and Yury immediately became Grand Prince.

This was the beginning of a successful period for Suzdalia. In 1219 Mstislav the Daring left Novgorod to rule Galicia. His successors were not successful in governing the difficult Boyar factions. In 1221 the Novgorodians kicked them out and appealed to Yury for a prince, who sent them his brother Yaroslav.

This set off a new round of northern war. Contending for the throne of Novgorod were Mikhail of Chernigov and Yaroslav. Both princes and their sons chased each other in and out of the city, whipping up unstable support among the Boyars and citizens. The matter was not conclusively settled until 1230, when Yaroslav permanently exiled the sup-





porters of his rival. Novgorod, at last, had a stable princely family to rule it; Yaroslav and his sons remained rulers of Novgorod for the rest of the century, even if their grip was not always firm.

Kalka

In 1223, a relatively peaceful year for Russia, something happened to break the Russian's obsession with their internal feuds. A sudden scream of alarm was heard from the south-east. The Cuman Khan, Khotian, appeared in rags at the court of his son-in-law, Mstislav the Daring, ruler of Galicia. His people, he claimed, had been devastated by a new force from the east, a tribe of deadly warriors calling themselves Mongols. Mstislav was sufficiently impressed to rally his cousins, even the sulking Olgavichi, to a grand alliance. The principle allies included another great prince of the Rostislavichi, Mstislav of Kiev, and the ruler of Chernigov, the Olgavichi prince Mstislav Sviatoslavichi. Only Suzdal and Novgorod were not represented; Grand Prince Yury cared little for squabbles far away on the steppe. Nonetheless a great army, some 60,000 strong, drew up on the far southern reaches of the Dnieper river, together with nearly 20,000 Cumans. They set off into the steppe with confidence, heading east toward a small river that ran down into the sea of Azov, the Kalka.

Though they did not know it, the Russian princes were facing the first Mongol reconnaissance into Europe. Their enemy as they marched eastward was Genghis Khan's brilliant general, Subatei Bahadur. He had devastated the Cumans over the preceding few months, and was now intent on learning the capabilities of the Russians, who had considerable problems.

There was no clear leader in the Russian army, and no clear object. They were chasing a large nomad force steadily east, and felt confident that it was already beaten. But their efforts to bring the nomads to battle consistently failed, and the three great

princes allowed their army to straggle out into a long, loose, winding column. After nine days of this pursuit the army approached the Kalka. The Cumans were in the lead.

Abruptly, the Cumans came stampeding back among the Russian ranks, screaming and bleeding. Arrows began to fall in the foremost Russian contingent. They milled in confusion, their ranks disordered by the fleeing Cumans. Suddenly, from out of the dust, a raging hoard of lancers swept down on them. The full might of the nomad army fell on the small portion of troops at the head of the column, driving them back on the unit behind. In this fashion the Mongols broke each unit in turn, never allowing their enemies time to regroup. The Mongols hunted the Russians back across the steppe to the banks of the Dnieper. Here the first troops to arrive, lead by Mstislav the Daring, burnt the boat bridge behind them, stranding over 10,000 men on the wrong side of the river. Lead by Mstislav, prince of Kiev, the Russians held out valiantly for 3 days before succumbing to their foes.

Mstislav of Kiev and Mstislav of Chernigov both died at Kalka, as did seven other princes and of all their proud army not one man in eight returned to his home.

But there was no invasion. The Mongols were not in Russia for conquest — this time. Subatei had learned what he needed to know, that the Russians were weak. Now, urgent messages were summoning him to attend upon his master. Russia could wait.

The Russian princes ignored Kalka. They had lost men, kin, and prestige, but since they had lost no territory it was easiest just to pretend nothing had happened.

The Last Southern War Begins

In the 1220s the South knew a general peace, marred only by the steady rise to power in Volinia and Galicia of Daniil, son of Roman. Daniil was ultimately successful in reuniting the two principalities, and for a

while showed himself a steady ruler. But in 1235, seemingly for no reason at all, a general war broke out. The Rostislavichi and Olgavichi renewed their old feud over Kiev. Yaroslav of Novgorod marched down to struggle against Daniil of Volinia. Seven times Kiev was seized, sometimes by trickery, sometimes by force, and madly battling bands of warriors swept to and fro across Kiev, Chernigov, and Galicia.

It was futile, bloody, and ruinous. While the southern princes fought the north was crumbling under the Mongol onslaught (see Chapter 6 for a full discussion). For now it suffices to say that Daniil did finally secure Kiev, in 1240, less than six months before the Mongols swept down and obliterated the city.

Poland

The origins of Poland are shrouded in mystery. Tribal leaders rose and fell for hundreds of years, leaving legends rather than histories: Krak, who founded Krakow;

Wistaw, the prince of the Vistulans; and Piast, who founded the ruling dynasty.

Poland was more secluded than Russia, with poorer natural river routes and fewer people. The Varangians had no reason to enter it, the Germans had not yet penetrated so far, and the surrounding Slavic tribes sheltered the region.

Mieszko

Around 960 AD a man named Mieszko, of the House of Piast, arose. He had united the Kujavians, Mazovians, Vistulans, and some of the Pomeranians into the "Polska" federation.

Now the Poles came under pressure from the East Saxons. Mieszko was pressed particularly hard by Margrave Gero, a vassal of Emperor Otto I, and eventually had to petition Otto himself to arbitrate the quarrel.

Having reached peace with the Empire, Mieszko perceived the necessity of conversion to Christianity. He saw the dangers in this situation, but unlike the Russians he was





in real danger of having ecclesiastical and political control forced on him by the Germans.

Mieszko turned to another Slavic people who were already Christian. Around 966 he married the Czech princess Dubrawka who helped lead his people to Christianity. Now, allied to the Bohemians, Poland proved powerful enough to defeat the Germans. By 973 Mieszko had been so successful that the Emperor felt compelled to step in and take Mieszko's son Boleslaw as a hostage. Nonetheless Mieszko held the upper hand, for when Otto I died, his son Otto II tried and failed to subdue Poland.

Having beaten the Empire, Mieszko remarried, this time to a German noblewoman. This caused a rupture with his Czech allies and a new war, to the satisfaction of the Germans. They considered that if the Slavs were Christians it was right that they should immediately tender homage to the "appropriate" authorities. The last thing the Germans wanted was a strong, unified Slavic state to the east.

Nonetheless, Mieszko's reign continued with a series of successes, against the Pomeranians and Luticians, the Germans, and the Czechs. When he died in 992 he passed on a vigorous realm to his sons. Unfortunately, having more than one son was a problem. A war began as soon as he was dead, victory going swiftly to Boleslaw the Brave.

Boleslaw the Brave: Empire Builder

Boleslaw was a vigorous ruler, dedicated to missionary activities. He enjoyed the strong support of Bishop Adalbert and Emperor Otto III. Boleslaw organized a national church, with an Archbishopsric at the first Polish capital, Gniezno, and sees at Krakow, Wroclaw, and Kolberg.

Boleslaw was also busy on the battlefield, invading Bohemia in 1003. From 1004 to 1018 he fought the Germans for control of

Mazovia and Silesia. The new German Emperor (Henry II) permitted Boleslaw to keep the territories he had gained, but only as German fiefs.

He invaded Russia on behalf of his son-in-law Sviatopolk in 1018, placing him on the throne of Kiev and securing control of the border region.

In 1024 he persuaded the Pope and the Emperor to grant him a crown, acknowledging Poland's sovereign status. When he died, in 1025, it was as undisputed King. Unfortunately he had seized territory from every single one of his neighbors, and he had too many sons.

Anarchy and Restoration

Boleslaw had attempted before his death to designate one of his sons, Mieszko, as sole successor. Mieszko did take the throne, but by 1028 was facing internal revolt and external invasion. In 1034 he was assassinated and for five years Poland was in turmoil. Invasion aside, hidden pagan forces rose up in terrible revolt. Eventually the last of Boleslaw's sons, Casimir the Restorer, returned with German assistance and reunified the core of Poland, quelling his pagan subjects.

Boleslaw the Bold and Wladislaw the Feckless

Casimir died in 1058, and left his realm divided along Russian lines, with each prince allowed a district to rule as his own, but all of them owing allegiance to one senior prince, Boleslaw Smialy (the Bold). Brave, even reckless, Boleslaw took advantage of the severe problems of the German Emperor, Henry IV, whom Pope Gregory VII had excommunicated. Boleslaw subdued his brothers, campaigned in Bohemia and Saxony, and persuaded Pope Gregory to sanction a new crown for Poland as well as ele-

vating the Krakow see to an Archbispopric, making Krakow the new capital of Poland.

In 1079, however, Boleslaw fell into a dispute with Archbishop Stanislas. The Archbishop was accused of treason, tried, and executed. A revolt promptly erupted and Boleslaw fled to Hungary. Shortly thereafter he was assassinated and his brother Wladislaw Herman ascended the throne.

Wladislaw was a weak, indecisive, capricious king. He was manipulated by his wife and by the Palatine Count Siechiech. He ruled from 1079-1104 and was almost continually troubled by revolts. Against Wladislaw were ranged the great nobles of the realm, striving for independence both from a monarch's power and the hated Siechiech, as well as his own sons Zbigniew and Boleslaw.

When Wladislaw died in 1104 Zbigniew and Boleslaw realized that they could not live or rule together, and immediate hostilities broke out. The war lasted two years, but eventually saw Boleslaw triumph.

Boleslaw Wrymouth

Boleslaw III ("Wrymouth"), having overcome his brother and the usual troubles with the German Emperor, was ready by 1113 to begin the great work of his reign, the conquest of the Pomeranians. By long, hard campaigning and vigorous conversion efforts, Boleslaw brought most of the Pomeranians under Polish control, opening Poland to the Baltic.

However, by dint of bribery and coercion at the Papal Court, the Germans managed to split Boleslaw's new province in two. The western half was named Szczecin Pomerania, and placed under German authority, with only the eastern portion (Gdansk Pomerania) remaining Polish. At the same time, the Germans began to bring in colonists from their western lands, a migration that would continue for hundreds of years.

Boleslaw died in 1138, and, like his grandfather before him, his death proved the end of unity for Poland.

The Seniorate System of Rule

Boleslaw III had tried to foresee and prevent disunity. He established a whole new structure of inheritance and authority, the "Seniorate" system.

Poland was split into five provinces: The Seniorate Province (Krakow, Opole, Sieradz, Gniezno and southern Great Poland), Mazovia and Kujavia, Silesia, Sandomierz territory, and Wielopolska (northern Great Poland). Four of his sons would each receive a single province, and the eldest would also receive the Seniorate province which was to be the property of the senior prince always, and never divided.

This was the beginning of a break-up as tangled and damaging as the Russian one. War began in 1145 and lead to the senior prince fleeing the country. Even German intervention could no longer elevate a prince to secure rule, and the second half of the century saw the royal house grow ever larger and the districts steadily smaller and more fragmented.



Poland in the Early 13th Century

The two great trends of this century were faction fighting amidst the princes and the steadily increasing influence of German philosophy, craft techniques, scholarship, and colonization. Polish princes continually turned to German advisors, scholars, tutors, clergy, and settlers, and reaped the benefits in more efficient administration, technology, and agriculture. Furthermore, the Jews were coming into Poland in increasing numbers, and



made their own contribution to rising Polish population, scholarship, and sophistication.

Four Princely Dukes

By now the idea of Poland as a kingdom, with a single sovereign king, had become seriously tarnished. Whoever held Krakow could generally have himself crowned, and assume the hollow title of "Grand Duke," or, later in the century, "King."

When the century began there were four great lords. Each was a Prince of the House of Piast, and they styled themselves Dukes. Leszek the White of Sandomierz ruled in Krakow as Grand Duke. Henry the Bearded ruled Silesia from Wroclaw. Conrad of Mazovia, Leszek's brother, ruled in Mazovia/Kujavia, and Wladislaw Spindleshanks ruled in Great Poland.



Leszek the White

Leszek the White seized Krakow after the death of Miesko the Old in 1202. He was an able ruler, who sponsored considerable settlement around Lublin. For much of the early part of the century he sparred on the battlefield with Henry the Bearded. Politically however, he looked mostly east. After defeating Prince Roman's invasion in 1205, Leszek was drawn firstly into intrigue on his south-eastern border, then into outright invasion of Volinia (1214 to 1218). He could not, however, hold back Roman's son Daniil, who successfully pushed out the Poles in 1218. Leszek also failed to prevent the establishment of an independent Pomeranian principality. A native prince, Swietopelk, established a small state there, which he ruled from 1220-1266. Swietopelk bowed to no-one and crusaded aggressively against his pagan neighbors, winning Papal support. In 1227 Leszek took the field, vowing to topple his rebellious vassal. The campaign was not successful, and Leszek was killed during the withdrawal.

Conrad Of Mazovia

In Mazovia, prince Conrad (who reigned until 1243) was bedeviled by Prussian and Jadzwing raids. He turned to the crusading orders for help, and in the early 1220's invited Herman von Salza, Grand Master of the Order of Teutonic Knights, to enter the Prussian districts on Crusade. Conrad sweetened the deal with an offer of land near Chelmno.

Von Salza wanted more than the right to go on Crusade. He obtained grants from both Emperor Frederick II and Pope Gregory IX, allowing him to set up a permanent, independent establishment in the conquered territories. When the Crusade finally went forward (from 1230) von Salza acted with full Polish and Pomeranian support, but all the gains made were on behalf of his Order. By 1245 the Teutonics had established Bishoprics in Kulm, Pomerania, Warmia, and Swabia. They followed up outright conquest by con-

struction of strategic citadels and encouraged German settlement.

Wladislaw Spindleshanks

Wladislaw Spindleshanks lost territory steadily to Henry the Bearded, and his only real success came after Leszek the White died. Leszek's son was a child, and Krakow fell under the authority of a dozen local lords, who eventually elected Wladislaw. Unfortunately, he found Krakow hard to dominate, the lesser lords paid him little heed, and eventually his resistance to the increasing pressure of Henry the Bearded failed. In 1231 he quit the capital.

Henry the Bearded

Everything that has so far been said about the 13th century must be judged against the gradual advances and expansion of Henry the Bearded, who succeeded to the rule of Silesia in 1201. Using German aides and scholars intensively, he developed his lands and

reaped the benefits in steadily improving manpower and resources. In 1205 he set out to bring 10,000 peasant families in to settle 400 new villages. These villages were exempted from all taxation and obligations during a start-up period of several years. Later, they would owe rent, tithes, and military service, and some very minor labor dues. The new villages thrived, and provided increased military power. Henry's wars reached a peak around 1215-1225, when he gained provinces in Great Poland and Upper Silesia. In addition Henry took Lubusz from the Germans.

Henry never managed to overwhelm Leszek the White, but Wladislaw Spindleshanks offered an easier target. After 1227 Henry increased his influence in Sandomierz, boxing Krakow in. Wladislaw bowed to the inevitable and withdrew. Henry assumed the regency for Leszek's young son, and at the same time became guardian for several other minor lords in Great Poland. This gave him such power that the local lords formally ceded half the province to him in 1234, and the crucial city of Gniezno.

The moment was ripe to step up from the title of Grand Duke and seek a crown.



German Influence

German ideas about a natural dominion in the Slavic lands were pure arrogance, but their estimation of Polish backwardness in many vital areas came closer to reality.

Engineering

The Poles were ready to move away from wood as their principal building material. Castles and town fortifications were improving rapidly. Improved building, mining, and drainage techniques came into Poland via Germany.

Law

German law and scholarship had been heavily influenced by Christianity and the Roman tradition. Concepts of contracts, writs, and legal forms were all

useful to the Polish princes in bringing a more sophisticated level of organization to their territories. Furthermore, the Germans had great success founding new towns and villages by offering settlers very generous, liberal charters (this was sometimes known as Magdeburg Law, or *locatio civitatis*). Magdeburg Law accelerated the incorporation of cities and extension of city rights, such as the establishment of the guild system and local law courts.

Agriculture

The Germans had perfected the three field system. One third of the land was allocated to winter crops, one third to spring crops, and the last third left fallow or used as grazing pasture for cattle. This was distinct from the traditional two field system (half fallow, half sowed with crops).



Diplomacy was begun (since the matter had to be approved by both Pope and Emperor), but Henry was elderly and his health failed.

Henry died in 1238. Though his will allowed much territory in Great Poland to go back to its rightful lords, he passed onto his son nearly twice the land that he himself had inherited, including Krakow. His sole heir was the very able Henry the Pious, and the new Grand Duke had every reason to believe he could reunite Poland.

It was not to be. Even as Henry the Bearded was negotiating with the Pope, the Mongols were hammering Russia to pieces. Henry the Pious was to have just three years of rule before the bloody field of Leignitz smashed his realm and ended his life.

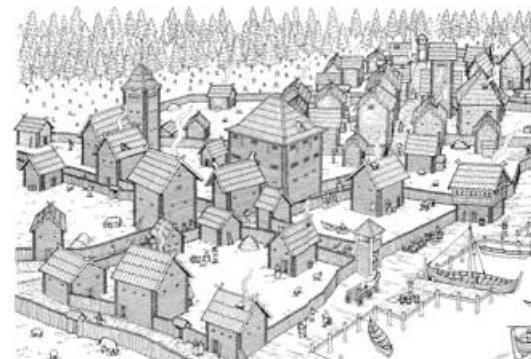
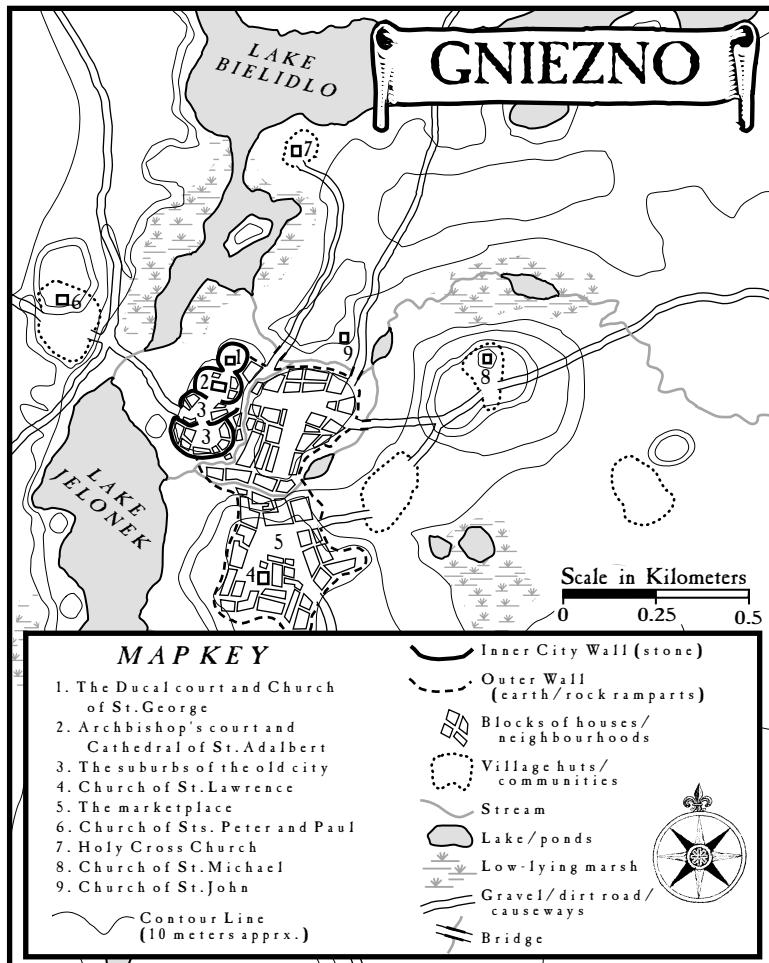
The Great Church Reform

It fell to Wladislaw Spindleshanks and Henry the Bearded, among their other troubles, to deal with a general church reform. The Archbishop of Gniezno was Henry Kietlicz (1199-1219), an able man who wanted to see the church achieve real independence so as to further its humanitarian and spiritual work. He campaigned vigorously for the following principles:

- The right of church communities to elect their bishops
- Only proper priests and monks to be invested as bishops
- Abolition of private churches
- Immunity to taxation on church lands
- Authority over all people on church lands for the bishops
- Independence of the clergy from ducal courts

The princes did not wish to give up so much authority. Faced by resistance and intimidation, Kietlicz shuffled off into exile. However, the Pope supported him. The Polish princes were excommunicated, and eventually forced to capitulate.

By 1211 the principle of ecclesiastical election was won. The other reforms took longer; the lesser lords strenuously resisted any attempts to deprive them of rights in "their" churches. Eventually the Church triumphed. Two synods were held (and Sieradz in 1233 and Breslau in 1248) at which the lords conceded on all points.



Three Polish Cities in 1220

Gniezno

The Old Capital of Poland, and site of its first Archbispopric, is situated in a low, rather marshy valley. Gniezno has not had the benefit of incorporation under German law, and the city's organization and enlargement have been haphazard. Gniezno has been left behind by more recent developments in Poland. No king has ruled from this city in over a hundred and fifty years, and it is hemmed in by the surrounding hills.

Krakow

The Capital of Poland is a modest city with new stone walls set in the midst of a rather marshy patch of land. The city is dominated by the Wawel Mount on which Wawel castle, seat of the kings of Poland, rests. Growth is constant and rapid. Outside the city walls the suburb of Okol has almost filled the space out to the moat; it will be enclosed by the wall in 1280. Further out, Stradom, the village which services the daily needs of Wawel castle, is also growing, and will become a proper suburb by the end of the century. German law and a more generous charter granted early in the 13th century is a principle force behind this growth.

Wroclaw

The furthest west of the major Polish cities, Wroclaw has often felt the unkind attentions of Bohemian and German lords, and is the key to control of Silesia. Like Krakow, Wroclaw experiences great growth

in the 13th century and by 1300 it will be pressing against the banks of the Olawa. Wroclaw is the most favored of Polish cities from 1200 to 1240, enjoying the firm rules of Henry the Bearded and Henry the Pious.

The Teutonic Knights

Throughout the 13th century one of the grand tragic endeavors of Christendom was played out on the shores of the Baltic. From Pomerania to the Gulf of Finland, knights, priests, nobles, pagan kings, and Russian princes fought for land, wealth, power, and most importantly, their gods. This was the Baltic Crusade. At the forefront of the battle,





dominating the field, were the Church's own holy warriors, the Teutonic Knights.

History

There were, in fact, three militant orders on the Baltic coast. Two of them were minor groups, the Brotherhood of the Knights of the Sword (based at Riga) and the Knights of Drobzyn (near Polish Pomerania). They were answerable to local Bishops, did not have strong internal organization, and lacked international support, but were actively campaigning in Prussia and Livonia from around 1200.

The third group was different. These were the Teutonic Knights. They were founded in Palestine, around 1190, as hospital monks. Shortly, however, they took up the sword and served in Palestine, Armenia, and

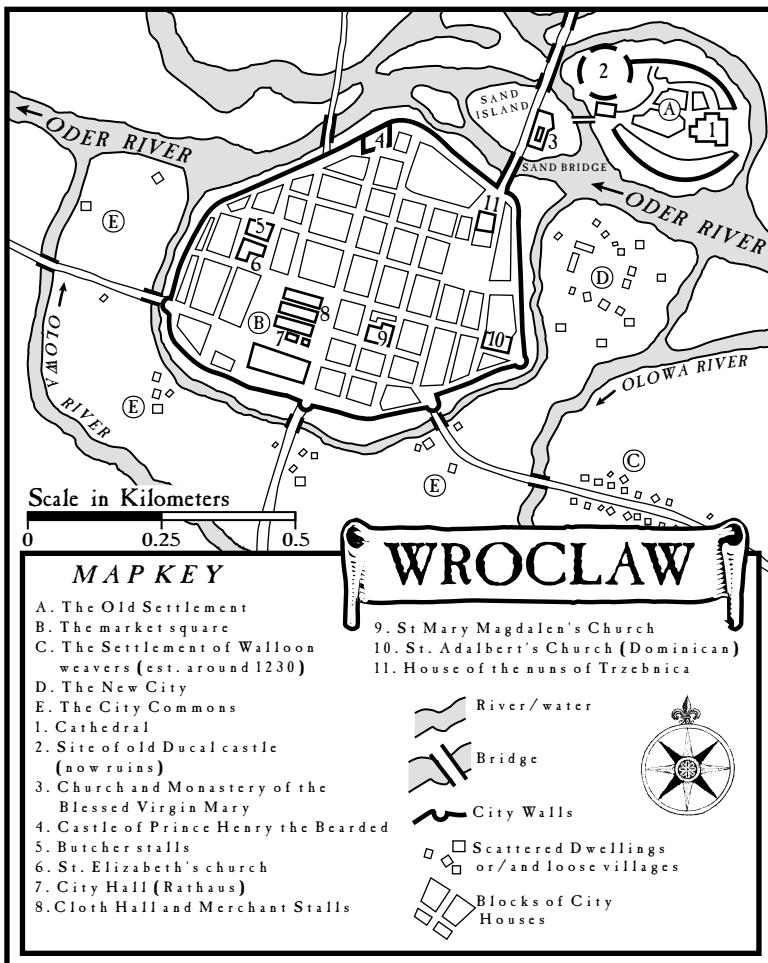
Spain. Their headquarters were in castle Montfort, near Acre.

As previously mentioned, Herman von Salza gained very favorable terms for his Prussian Crusade. Prince Conrad of Mazovia gave the Order the castle of Chelmno and let them loose to subdue the Prussians. He did not live long enough to see that he'd given growing room to a hostile independent power.

The Crusading Ideal

The Teutonics recognized that man had a duty to fight Satan, both within himself and in the world at large. They were inspired by the works of Bernard of Clairvaux, the great Cistercian Abbot, among others. In 1120, Bernard wrote *De Laude Novae Militiae*, justifying the missions of the first military orders. These men were technically monks; they had formally renounced the world and taken life-long vows of poverty, humility, chastity, and obedience. Yet these were monks who arrayed themselves as knights and rode out to smite infidels.

As Bernard explained, Satan was always tempting man to evil. Only the monk, formally bound by a rigid rule of obedience and purity, could be safe. Furthermore, Satan assailed good Christian folk through his tools, the pagans, infidels, heretics, and diabolists. When a Saracen died, as was well known, an occupying demonic force could be seen fleeing the body like a noisome cloud of flies. These forces must be fought. It was thus laudable that holy monks take up arms to war against the foes of Christendom. But was it acceptable to drive unbelievers to baptism by force? Absolutely. Baptism of pagans was, in fact, exorcism. If preaching missions failed then the evil influences must be driven out by force! Consequently it was perfectly proper to wage war in order to force conversion. Moreover, it was spiritually praiseworthy. Crusaders received remission of sins and absolution, and the act as a whole was sanctified. For the militant orders this meant that even the bloodiest acts could not touch them.



They existed in a state of grace, and all their acts were holy ones.

Advantages

How did the militant orders achieve their successes (which were notable), with such relatively small numbers of soldiers?

Permanence

Normal crusaders were accustomed to taking the cross for a limited period of time. They might win brief successes, but there was always the problem of holding conquered lands and controlling subject peoples. The militant orders solved this problem because they stayed put. They built castles, roads, and strongholds and settled in to police and evangelize their new vassals.

Discipline

Poverty, Humility, Chastity, and Obedience — the militant orders were not troubled by command disputes. Each monk had sworn a lifelong vow of obedience, and at least upon the battlefield this vow never failed them.

Recruitment and Manpower

The Orders recruited widely, but carefully. They were popular, and could choose the best. Men were selected for proven battle skills, administrative ability, and piety. Should they suffer a major defeat there were always more men eager to join.

Systematic Training

The Orders lead communal lives; they were in constant training, and near constant battle. Their opportunities to form genuinely

solid, effective battle groups were much better than usual.

Resources

By 1200 changes were taking place in the crusading movement as a whole. Previously nobles who took the cross were obliged to crusade within a certain time limit. More and more, however, nobles were making crusading vows and then finding reasons to stay at home. Gradually, nobles were permitted to find substitutes, whom they would outfit and fund, to fulfill their vows. Over time, it became acceptable simply to pay money. Since the nobles received remission of sins for their crusading vows, there were some in the church who muttered that this was tantamount to selling absolution. Still, if one wanted to make a contribution to the crusading effort *and* the church then the best way was to sponsor one of the crusading orders.

Aside from money, nobles also gave land. By 1220 the Teutonic Order had estates in Palestine, Armenia, Greece, Spain, France, and Germany. Though individual brothers were sworn to poverty (a member could not own the sword he swung nor the horse he rode) the Masters of the order lived rich in pageantry, and the order commanded great resources.



Ecclesiastical Support

The major orders were answerable only to the Pope. For over a century, Papal bulls, legates, and lawcourts consistently found for the militant orders against various royal, noble, and clerical opponents. They were also supported by the Cistercians and Dominicans.

A Wrathful God

Throughout the militant orders' domains the Divine aura was almost constantly Wrathful in Temper. Whenever the



Teutonics rode to battle they would invoke the ferocious Righteous Aura of God's Knights (see *Pax Dei*, pages 24-27). Since they were monks and their officers held appropriate ecclesiastical rank, they were perfectly capable of raising a Righteous crusading aura by themselves. Their piety was such that even on campaign they would maintain a regular roster of daily prayers, and consecrated mobile alters were carried with them to serve as chapels.

Organization

At the head of the order was the Grand Master. He spent the bulk of his time at the Papal court, deflecting complaints and ensuring that support did not waver. Just under the Grand Master was the Grand Commander. He was the active leader of the order, administering its affairs from castle Montfort. Helping the Grand Commander were four special officers. The Marshal (responsible for military matters), the Hospitaller (for healing and charitable works), the Treasurer (for finances), and the Trapier (who was basically a quartermaster).

In the various provinces and battle fronts were the knight commanders. Each of these usually controlled one castle or parish. For a major region, such as Prussia, there was a senior knight commander who was referred to as the Master of the province.

Then there were the actual knights, numbering perhaps one thousand in total, spread widely throughout Europe on the crusading fronts and the order's estates. These men were known as knight brothers, and were the group from which higher officials were elected.

Assisting the knight brothers were priest brothers, who had no military duties, but who accompanied the knights to perform conversions and to serve parishes. The priest brothers were assisted in turn by half brothers and half sisters, who did the menial work of charity, education, preaching, and healing. Some of them were named advocates and given jobs

as magistrates and tax-collectors.

At the very bottom of the pile were the men-at-arms, the sergeants. The Teutonics seldom put more than one or two hundred knights into the field of battle but the sergeants typically numbered between ten and twenty times as many. The sergeants were usually of common birth, and did not take monastic vows. They were, however, tied to the order for life, and were obedient, brave, well-trained, and well-armed.

This was hardly a typical organizational structure for feudal Europe, nor was the Teutonic method of choosing senior officers. Once a year, or when needed in emergencies, the knight commanders would meet in the General Chapter, in Venice (which became the order's headquarters after the Holy Land was lost in 1291). Here new seniors were elected in a free vote. The order was notable for its steady run of competent, energetic officers.

The Baltic Pagans

Who were the enemies of the Teutonic Knights? The map on the inside cover shows the major Baltic tribes at this time: the Prussians, Lithuanians, Samogithians, Curs, Selonians, Semgallians, Livonians, Letts, and Estonians, with many smaller clans.

Each of the major tribal groups had its own language, with modest similarities. They lived at an advanced iron-age level, with little building in stone, and primitive agriculture. Their lands tended to be boggy or heavily forested, and bleakly cold in winter. The cold weather was not altogether a disadvantage. Winter was the ideal time for trade and raiding, as the rivers, marshes, and bogs froze. Herding and raiding were these tribes' favorite activities. They spent much of their time lurking in ambush and feuding with their neighbors.

Politically, at the opening of the century, there were no large solid groupings. Around 1200-1220 the crusaders generally encountered small clans lead by local chieftains. As

pressure from the crusaders increased, this changed. Each of the tribes tried, at one point or another, to unite with others against invaders. By 1240 or so they were producing princes and even kings — some of whom ultimately allied with the crusaders. Most, however, resisted, and with one exception, Lithuania, were swept away.

Religiously, the Baltic tribes were broadly similar to the Slavs. They worshipped many gods representing heavenly bodies and natural forces. They also held a near universal belief in spirits; Lithuanian spirit masters are one example of local wise men following this tradition. Otherwise they were served by priests, usually known as Vurschayten.

The Baltic pagans were particularly devoted to snakes, which were viewed as divine messengers and guardian spirits. House snakes known as Zaltys were kept in many homes, and usually given an honored places near the hearth.

Bishop Albert and the Knights of the Sword

The new Bishop of Livonia was Albert Buxtehude, an ambitious, intolerant man who had at least the vision to see that new methods were necessary. In 1200 Albert set up a new bishopric in Riga and invited crusaders to take up permanent residence. The newly formed order was called the Brotherhood of the Knights of the Sword — *Fratres Christi Militi*. They lived under weak monastic rules, were supposed to obey and support their Bishop, to crusade and garrison as he required, and to pay for it all. This last point was a sore one. The order was generally given about one third of all land seized. The rest went to the Bishop or to the noble vassals he appointed (mostly members of his family). Throughout the first ten years of the crusaders' grumbling was constant. The Knights needed money for weapons, horses, food, and armor.

The last thing Bishop Albert wanted was trouble with his armed minions. He was busy setting up new bishoprics in Ratzeburg and Estonia and trying to convince the Pope that the northern crusade was proceeding well. What Bishop Albert most wanted — what he schemed for all his life — was to be made Archbishop of a unified North Baltic See.

Arguments over money got worse, and there were complaints from the newly baptized pagans that the Knights were committing acts of rape, murder, and robbery. This was a problem because the formal mission of the church was to bring enlightenment to the pagans and better their lot. The Pope would not tolerate that the lives men lived under Christ should be worse than the ones they had lived under the Serpent!

Bishop Albert did his best. He tried to make conversions by peaceful means like mystery plays and preaching, but the Knights would not be restrained. In 1211 a large force set out to attack the pagan town of Fellin, capturing a group of Estonians along the way. When the town defied the first assault, the Knights threatened to kill their captives, and



The Livonian Crusade

The Church had been rather unsuccessful in Livonia, among the tribes of the Livs, Letts, and Estonians, since around 1188. The local people would accept baptism only if it came with a promise of protection. Should that protection fail they reverted to paganism. The first Livonian Bishop, Berthold of Uexkull, profoundly displeased by this sort of behavior, preached a crusade. The Livs were duly defeated in a pitched battle in 1198 (during which Bishop Berthold died). The crusaders baptized the surviving natives, built a few wooden stockades, manned them with small garrisons, and sailed away. The Livonians came out of the woods, washed themselves in the river Dvina, and slaughtered the garrisons.



when the town persisted, the Knights cut the throats of their helpless victims and threw their bodies in the moat.

The Bishop did not blink at this. Pagans who would not come willingly unto the church were self-evidently tools of Satan. Fellin had been a success, for after five hard-fought days the town surrendered and the inhabitants were first catechized and then baptized.

The crusade continued in this fashion for eighteen reasonably “successful” years. By 1219, the borders of Livonia had been greatly expanded. Then, however, there came a major intervention.

The Danish Campaign

In 1219 the Danes, under their king, Waldemar II, mounted a large expedition. The Danish King had a very large fleet with which he could blockade the Baltic coast, bring traders to support the crusading effort, and force the German merchants throughout the region to support Danish garrisons. Waldemar conquered northern Estonia in just two years. He established the citadel at Reval, set up a Bishopric at Leal, and demanded the fealty of all local Christian forces.

Bishop Albert had recently finished establishing a Bishopric in Semgallia, and was far from pleased at this development. He was even less pleased by the Knights’ reaction. The Knights considered that the King of Denmark might be a better master than the Bishop of Riga. The Danish conquests meant they could no longer advance to the north, and that meant the ready supply of booty was drying up. Perhaps the King would give them more land? Another group that entered the struggle for power were the Burghers of Riga, which was by that time a considerable town. There were also German nobles in the hinterland, offering fealty for the best terms they could get.

In the midst of this confusion, the Estonian rebellion of 1223 erupted. In a series of sudden revolts, the Estonians burned the

Knights out of many of their strongholds. The Russians were also sniping at the eastern borders of Livonia, and there were raids by unsubdued pagans from the isle of Oesel.

By last minute diplomacy the Bishop and the Danish King settled their differences. The King got a formal pledge of fealty, but no right to levy taxes or raise armies. The Knights held on to their central positions, and gradually the force of the pagan revolt wound down, though previously conquered lands had been lost and would not be recovered for twenty years.

The Papal Legates

In 1224 Bishop Albert appealed to the Pope to send a Legate to resolve the territorial and jurisdictional problems in the north. In response the Pope sent William of Modena, a Papal vice-chancellor, to hear and settle all disputes.

William of Modena

William of Modena arrived in Livonia in 1225 and embarked on a thorough investigation. He spared no effort and remained immune to all forms of bribery and intimidation.

Unfortunately for the Bishop, William discovered that although the Knight Brothers had been remiss in their duties, their demands were reasonable. They carried a great burden, and if the crusade were to prosper their requirements would have to be met, at least partially. William likewise found that the Burghers of Riga must have certain rights, freeing them from the Bishop’s authority, and that Estonia, the rightful conquest of the King of Denmark, should not be brought under the authority of the Bishop of Riga at all. Instead, Estonia was declared a Papal province. At the same time William emphasized the Bishop’s spiritual authority. By his diplomacy and sanctity, William brought these varied groups into a temporary accord

and when he left (in 1226) everything seemed set for a prosperous future.

The Last Triumph of the Knights of the Sword

Things began well. In 1227 the Baltic froze over, allowing the Knights of the Sword easy access to the pagan Oeselians, whom they quickly subdued. Now, however, the Knights were hemmed in. To the north were the Danish territories of Estonia, to the east the Russians, and to the west the Baltic. This left, of course, Lithuania.

From 1227 to 1236 the Knights of the Sword were at almost constant war with the Lithuanians, and whenever this war turned against them their old disputes with the Bishop of Riga flared up again. The Knights were unceasing in their demands for money. Their means were not adequate! They could not arm or train or recruit! Their lands were too limited! Their vassals were rebellious! And for their part the new Christians were appalled by the Knights. Brutality, extortion, kidnapping — the complaints flooded in to Riga. It was too much for Bishop Albert to handle, and he died in 1229.

Now the Knights of the Sword plumbed the depths of wanton brutality. Their crusade became a protracted series of raids without even the pretense of conversion. Unwanted captives were butchered, villages that resisted were put to the torch, and women were routinely violated.

In the meantime, two separate church groups named successors to Bishop Albert's see. The election deadlocked and had to wait for Papal arbitration. The Pope ordered William of Modena to settle things, but William was busy in Poland, and delegated the matter to a distinguished Abbot, Baldwin of Alba.

Baldwin was the second Papal legate to struggle with the Baltic problem, and he achieved much less than William. In the absence of a senior Bishop to restrain them,

the Knights of the Sword had begun seizing power wherever they could. Baldwin arrived in Livonia in 1230 and set about arrogantly assuming power on behalf of the Pope. His policies alienated the Riga merchants and the nobles, and infuriated the Knights of the Sword. For a year a low-scale war was fought, both legally and militarily, with the Knights gradually losing ground. Just as Baldwin seemed on the verge of victory a new Bishop, Nicholas of Magdeburg, was confirmed in Livonia. Nicholas's policies undermined Baldwin, and the legate retreated in disarray to Italy where he told the Pope about the riotous, disobedient, arrogant conduct of the Knights of the Sword (towards himself, that is).

Pope Gregory IX was not pleased by Baldwin's report and sent him back with enhanced powers. This time Baldwin had an army of Saxons, which gave him several victories and brought the Knights to seek terms for a negotiated settlement. The Master of the Knights, Folkwin, agreed to a disadvantageous settlement, only to be overthrown by his own brothers. The Knights then moved against Baldwin, cornered him at Reval, and defeated his army, killing hundreds of Papal warriors.

Baldwin fled to Rome and charged the Knights of the Sword with disobedience, rebellion, and heresy. The Pope was furious. He relieved Baldwin of his authority and ordered William of Modena back to Livonia. William arrived in 1234 and instituted a new division of estates, giving more to the Knights and establishing Bishoprics in Oesel and



Ranks in the Teutonic Order

Grand Master

Grand Commander

High Official (Marshall, Hospitaller, Treasurer, Trapier)

Senior Knight Commander

Knight Commander

Knight Brother

Priest Brother

Half Brother/Sister

Sergeant



Curland. He brought the feuding parties to terms and got Master Folkwin reinstated.

Surely the Knights now had sufficient land? Surely they could conduct themselves as good Christians?

One man knew they could not, and Master Folkwin was in despair. All around him he could see greed, brutality, lust, and arrogance. In desperation he turned to the one force that might be able to save his Brotherhood, the Teutonic Knights. He invited the Teutonics to consider a merger. The Teutonics sent envoys, who realized that the Knights of the Sword could only be trusted under terms of complete submission, which they refused to give.

Folkwin returned to raiding. 1235 was a successful year, while in 1236 a major effort was made possible by the presence of many new crusaders from Germany and a strong body of native auxiliaries. The combined army moved into Lithuania and set about raiding and looting. Then, at Saule, they came up against a strong Lithuanian force. The Lithuanians got across the crusaders' route home and found a strong position bolstered by a swift stream. Encircled, the crusaders attacked the force in front of them, but were rebuffed and caught between the two pagan armies. Nearly half the Brotherhood was wiped out, the Master was killed, 2000 crusaders died, and Curland and Semgallia rose in rebellion.

Now there was no resisting the demands of the Teutonic Knights. They would take on the Brotherhood's debts and would arm, feed, and care for them in exchange for complete subordination and the swearing of full monastic oaths. In 1237 Herman Balke, Grand Master of the Teutonic Knights, arrived in Riga. The Knights of the Sword surrendered to him, and their crusade was over.

The Teutonics Take Charge

Once again, the Pope sent William of Modena north. All the old problems of land and authority had to be thrashed out anew.

By 1240 William had negotiated an acceptable settlement, and successfully started a crusade against the Russians. He even managed to draw in the Swedes and Danes for this campaign.

In directing a crusade in this direction, the Church was ignoring the fact that the Russians worshipped the same God they did. When Teutonic and Russian armies met, two Crusading auras came into violent conflict. The new crusade began in the winter of 1240 while most of Russia was crumbling under the final assault of the Mongols (see Chapter 6). Unluckily for the western crusaders the only Russian city not actually invaded by the Mongols was Novgorod, which was under the control of Aleksandr, grandson of Vsevolod III. Aleksandr met the Swedes first, on the frozen River Neva. His victory here was so complete that his triumphant soldiers awarded him the accolade "Aleksandr Nevskii."

The Teutonics did, however, take Pskov in 1241, and held it against Aleksandr until April of 1242. Then he entered Livonia, attacking Dorpat. The Teutonics rallied and chased Aleksandr back to lake Chudskoe. Here the two armies met in April, on the bank of the ice-locked lake. In a maelstrom of clashing steel and contending auras, Aleksandr lured the heavily armored knights out onto the ice, which promptly broke. Ultimately neither side was capable of holding the territory of the other.

From now on the Russians would have continual, low-key trouble with the Danes and Swedes north of the Neva river. But they had their share of triumphs, and pushed through to raid Estonia in 1268 and 1270.

Albert Suerbeer

In 1246 the Pope sent another Papal Legate north: Albert Suerbeer. Suerbeer was also intended to be Archbishop of Livonia/Riga. The Teutonics, however, were resistant to the idea of a strong, local master. Their campaign in Lithuania was now going well. The local king, Mindaugas, was offering

to become a Christian, and they intended to keep independence and the gains for themselves. The Teutonics did nothing openly against Suerbeer, but would not support him. In 1250 Suerbeer was recalled and the dispute sent to a Papal court overseen by William of Modena. It was William's last service for the church. Though ill, he forced a new treaty and division of authority which largely favored the Teutonics before his death in the autumn.

If anything signaled the Teutonics Knights' power clearly, it was the permission this treaty gave their Master to crown Mindaugas as Christian King of Lithuania in 1251. Unfortunately, all Mindaugas cared for was the diplomatic advantages of being thought Christian.

From now on the Teutonics would fight a war in Livonia in two directions: on the field of battle against the Samogithians and Lithuanians, and in the ecclesiastical courts against Archbishop Suerbeer. And, regardless of any treaty or agreement, the Teutonics were not about to extend any rights or privileges to their new subjects. The locals were manifestly untrustworthy. Besides, they had other things on their minds.

For some time the crusading style of the Teutonics had been decaying. In 1255 they launched a major campaign in Samogithia with large contingents of Livonians to assist them. After the Samogithian army was defeated the land was ravaged. Men, women, and children were seized for slaves. Anyone too old or ugly to be valuable was slain out of hand. Fields and homes were torched in the army's wake. No effort whatsoever was made at conversion.

Simultaneously, Archbishop Suerbeer got his case into the Papal courts. The charges against the Teutonics were falsifying Papal bulls, incest, adultery, preventing the sacraments from being administered, accepting as monks in their Brotherhood noblemen who had been convicted of robbery, simony, and assaulting clerics. It all came to nothing. No matter what charges were bought, somehow nothing could ever be proved, and the Pope stood solidly behind the Order. The

charges were finally dismissed.

In the meantime, the war had turned against the Teutonics. Mindaugas of Lithuania had returned to paganism. A truce in 1257-9 was followed by a disastrous campaign. The Lithuanians killed both the Master of Livonia and the Master of Prussia; much of southern Livonia went into revolt and portions were lost to the Teutonics for nearly twenty years.

In 1263 Mindaugas was assassinated. The Teutonics failed to take immediate advantage of this because Albert Suerbeer was once again conspiring against them, and the Russians invaded in 1268. The Teutonics finally resorted to kidnapping Suerbeer and forcing all his subordinates to swear homage before they would release him. Suerbeer could take no satisfaction from the Teutonics' problems on the battlefield (they suffered two serious defeats in 1270) — his ordeal had broken him. He died in 1273 and was succeeded by the ineffectual John of Lune.





In 1288/9 the Knights finally subdued Semgallia. By now typical policy was to drive the pagans out wholesale with fire and sword and bring in western settlers. The Teutonics would no longer tolerate opposition. In 1296, when the city of Riga tried to assert its independence, the Knights torched its major buildings, threw the local bishops in jail, and looted the homes of the rich burghers. The Lithuanians were quick to take advantage of the discord. Their new Grand Prince Vytenis marched north and reduced as many castles as he could before retreating with a wagon-train of booty.

The century ended badly, but worse was to come. In time the Teutonic Knights would be accused of worse crimes than incest and robbery. But before we can consider those events, we need to look briefly at how the Teutonics conducted themselves in their other domains in Prussia.

heavy armor, big horses, and disciplined tactics, they could win. At least on level, dry ground. On muddy ground big horses and heavily armored men sank or shambled to a stop, and forested land was almost as bad. Nonetheless, the Teutonics would have had plain sailing if it weren't for the problems of trade and authority.

For some time, the Polish Dukes had been competing with a Prince Swietopelk of Danzig over trade on the river Vistula. The Teutonic advance threatened the Pomeranian interests. In 1242 Prince Swietopelk entered an alliance with the Prussian tribes and went to war with the Teutonics. The problem was worsened by the fact that Swietopelk was technically Christian. At Rensen (1244) and at Krucken (1249) the Teutonics were defeated, losing many men and the current Masters. But the Polish Dukes gave the order solid military and trade support and the Pope sent legates north to restrain Swietopelk.

An agreement was reached splitting the Vistula between the Teutonics and the Pomeranians, with a share in future Prussian conquests for the Poles. Furthermore, the Papal legate insisted on a bill of rights for the new converts, allowing them to own property, sue in court, hold noble rank, and attend church.

None of this pleased the Teutonics. Fortunately for them, the King of Bohemia, Ottakar, gave a surprise generous donation, paying for the construction of the vital castle of Konigsberg (1254). At the same time, King Mindaugas of Lithuania, who was at least temporarily claiming to be Christian, allowed the Teutonics to build two crucial forts, Memel and Georgenburg. By 1259 the Teutonics seemed in firm control of Prussia, had no need to honor their earlier promises, and reneged.

The situation turned against them 1261, with a general Prussian revolt. After 30 years of fighting, the pagans had learned the use of siege technique and the crossbow. Two Prussian Masters were killed (one at the crucial battle of Durben), many castles were razed, the Pomeranians sent troops to aid the

The Prussian Crusade

The Prussian crusade was fought under a more disciplined code than the Livonian, and with greater resources. The Teutonics had the advantage of clear rights and charters, and their first step was to absorb the tiny militant order of the Knights of Drobzyn.

From this beginning, in 1230, the crusade moved forward smoothly for nearly twelve years, advancing up the Vistula, crushing local resistance, and building forts and churches. With their steady advances went a considerable increase in power, and in 1241 the Teutonics had a chance to repay their debt to the Poles. A sudden message from Henry the Pious called them to support him on the field of Leignitz. The Teutonics sent over a thousand men to his aid. None of them returned.

Nonetheless, when it came to the local pagans, the Teutonics proved that with their

Prussians, the Poles couldn't be bothered to help, and the first army of crusaders sent north by the Pope were wiped out at the calamitous battle of Pokarwis (1264).

Ultimately German crusaders saved the Order. The Duke of Brunswick campaigned in 1265, along with the Landgrave of Thuringia, followed by the Margrave of Brandenburg (1266) and the Margrave of Meissen (1272). The Teutonics recaptured their castles and forced the natives to either submit or to flee into Lithuania. By 1283 Prussia was firmly held. There were two more minor revolts (1286 and 1295), but there was now no force capable of helping the rebels, who were quickly crushed.

At the same time, of course, the dispute with Albert Suerbeer was working through to its sorry conclusion, and their sack of Riga in 1296 started a Livonian civil war in which their practices were unspeakably brutal.

The Tainting of the Crusade

When the Livonian Bishops were released from prison they were quick to accuse their jailers of kidnapping, assault, theft, abuse, burning their dead, killing their wounded, and indulging in witchcraft. The case entered the Papal courts in 1309 and 1310, but somehow nothing came of it. The Teutonics endured. They conquered no more lands but they ruled what they had for over a century.

Corrupted?

It is for you to chose just how much and by what means the militant orders were corrupted. They seemed lost to piety, compassion, grace, and mercy. Founded by a group of gentle healers, they had progressed to brutal murders, to laying violent hands on ordained

bishops, to rape and theft. But they always had good arguments for their actions and swift counter-accusations against anyone who stood in their way. A few options follow.

Holy Fools

Perhaps the Teutonics were right. Pagans denied Christ. Therefore they were possessed. Therefore baptism by force was exorcism. Therefore it was a sanctified act, and all acts leading to it were likewise sanctified. Having been granted absolution and remission of sin the souls of the crusaders could not be touched by "sinful" acts.

If it suits your saga you can accept this reasoning. Unquestionably many members of the various orders observed the monastic rules rigorously, and fought the inner battle against Satan as completely as they fought the outer. This, perhaps, is the most tragic of choices. It renders the crusade a failure only because the men fighting it lacked a touch of sensitivity, a smidgen of compassion. If they had been able to see when to say "Enough!" and send in the missionaries, all might have been well.

Brutes

Perhaps the crusaders simply lost control. They were vigorous men, caught up in battle lust and harder trials than they could bear. From Righteous Wrath, they strayed into simple, destructive fury. Doubtless after the craze of destruction and raping passed these men were sincerely remorseful and indulged in flagellation, hair-shirting, fasting, and prayers of penance until their tormented souls could know some peace.





Damned

Perhaps the crusaders were damned. It is, of course, very difficult for a demon to penetrate a Wrathful or Righteous aura. On the other hand, perhaps the auras in the crusading states were not always Wrathful or Righteous. All a demon needs to begin corrupting a Knight is the slightest moment of wavering. Once a demon has a hold it can infect those around the Knight, gradually replacing the local aura with an imitation, drawing everyone down into sin. Eventually, the Divine aura might collapse, allowing the demons to substitute a deceitful wrathful emotion.

Diabolists

It could be that the Teutonics and the other militant Orders were nothing more than cunning diabolists. Logically this would seem unlikely. *Pax Dei* stresses how easily a pious crusader can detect Infernal interference or corrupted souls. Page 26 states that in a Righteous aura the great majority of demonically influenced people are detected by pious crusaders on a Perception + Piety simple roll of 8+, while anyone so corrupted as to have False Faith is automatically detected.

The Teutonic Order, however, has a weakness. It is a very rigidly structured organi-

Crusading Order Virtues

Man-at-Arms (+1): You are a non-noble, non-knightly member of either the Brotherhood of the Knights of the Sword (the Sword Knights of Riga), or the Knights of the Bishop of Prussia (the Knights of Drobzyn). You have sworn a vow of obedience to the local Bishop, though your adherence to this vow is very flexible. You begin play with the +1 Virtue Good Armaments and one sturdy horse. This material will not be replaced for free if lost or damaged. You may wear a version of the emblem of your order: a red sword and cross on the left shoulder for the Sword Knights and a red sword and star on the left shoulder for the Knights of Drobzyn. You are forbidden the white mantle of a full knight.

Half Brother/Sister (+1): You are an assistant to the Priest Brothers of the Order of Teutonic Knights. You must take the +1 Virtue Educated and purchase some Formal Knowledges; at the very least you must be literate in Latin. You have taken a vow of obedience, but not of chastity, humility, or poverty. Your duties include record keeping, letter writing, preaching and conversion work amidst the heathen (though not the administration of any sacraments — you are not a priest), and healing. You may be educated enough (if you have abilities such as Civil and Canon Law) to be named an Advocate and given a post as a magistrate in a newly conquered district. Whatever your duties you are allowed to keep a small portion of fines, taxes, or fees. This is enough so that you have an income after all your living expenses of 10 silver pennies a month.

Sergeant (+2): You are a non-noble, non-knightly member of the Order of Teutonic Knights. You have

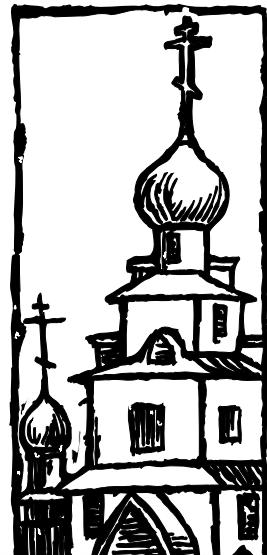
taken a lifelong vow of obedience to the Order, but have not assumed the monastic vows of chastity, poverty, or humility. You will find that this vow is neither flexible nor negotiable. Nonetheless, you are not answerable to any authority below that of the Pope or his legally appointed legates. You may wear the Order's emblem of a black cross, usually upon a gray cloak. You begin play with the +1 Virtue Good Armaments and may purchase the +2 Virtue Superior Armaments at one point less than the listed cost. You also begin play with two horses. Any of this material will be replaced at no cost if lost or damaged as long as you remain within the Order. Depending on the date you may be stationed in Palestine, Armenia, Southern Hungary, Northern Poland, Prussia or Livonia (note that you cannot be stationed in Northern Europe before 1230).

Priest Brother (+3): You are a priest of the Teutonic Knights, very likely having come from the Cistercian Order of monks. Like the Knight Brothers (below) you have sworn a full monastic oath of obedience, chastity, poverty, and humility. You should strongly consider the -3 Flaw Noncombatant. You automatically have the equivalent of the +1 Virtue Educated at no additional cost, allowing you to purchase Formal Knowledges. Unlike normal monks and priests you are answerable only to the Pope or his legally appointed legates. Your duties may be pastoral or martial. You must perform conversions and serve the congregation to which you are appointed. You may also have to invoke the Righteous Aura of God's Wrath (see *Pax Dei* page 25) as your knightly superiors go into combat with the heathen.

zation. Each Brother gives a lifelong vow of obedience, which automatically disposes him to obey his superiors. For this reason Teutonics will have considerable difficulty detecting Diabolical influence in anyone further up the chain of command. Take a look at the table "Ranks In The Teutonic Order" on page 43. For every level of separation between two Teutonics, the junior member suffers a -3 penalty to detect anything amiss in the senior member.

If the rot starts at the top it will be very difficult to detect. It will be more difficult still as false priests begin to give false sacraments and fail to invoke divine auras. In this

instance wholesale corruption can sweep through a group very quickly. As long as genuine recognition of what is going on can be prevented, a corrupt Order might sustain itself for a very long time over a very large area.



Crusading Order Virtues, Cont.

Knight Brother (+3): You are a full member of the Sword Knights or the Knights of Drobzyn. You wear a white mantle with an emblem (a sword and cross in red, or a sword and star in red). You have sworn a vow of obedience to your local bishop, though you are seldom obedient to this vow when it is not convenient. Almost all Knight Brothers have the Variable Flaw Enemies (some more than once), reflecting that somebody is very angry with you: your bishop, local burghers, a particular pagan tribe . . . take your pick. You begin play with the +2 Virtue Superior Armaments. You have two good horses and a pair of Men-at-Arms (as above). None of this material or manpower will be replaced for free should they be lost or damaged.

Teutonic Knight (+4): You are a full Knight of the Teutonic Order. You wear a golden cloak adorned with a black cross. You have taken full monastic vows, to which you must seriously adhere. You are answerable only to the Pope and can confidently expect that your superiors will argue against Papal legates on your behalf. Depending on the date you may be stationed in Palestine, Armenia, Southern Hungary, Northern Poland, Prussia, or Livonia (though note that you cannot be stationed in Northern Europe before 1230). Together with half a dozen fellows and fifty Sergeants (as above) you may garrison a castle or form a troop in an army. You may have authority over a rich estate in Germany or France. You begin play with the +2 Virtue Superior Armaments, three fine horses, and a squire. Standard equipment includes full chain mail, a lance, greatsword or battleaxe, and kite shield. All of this material will be immediately replaced if damaged or lost.

Knight Commander (+6): You are a highly ranked Knight of the Teutonic Order. You command a substantial district either within Prussia or Livonia, or perhaps a large and important castle. Note that you cannot be stationed in Prussia before 1230, nor in Livonia before 1237. You have a dozen Knights under your command and about a hundred Sergeants, as well as Priest Brothers and Half Brothers and Sisters (all as described above). You have taken a full monastic oath, to which you must seriously adhere, and have very onerous duties which are equivalent to having the -1 Flaw Obligation twice. You are answerable to no one but the Pope, and will not hesitate to dispute the decisions of Papal legates if they are not to your liking. Once a year you must travel or send a proxy (probably a senior Knight under your command) to Venice to participate in the Chapter General where the high ranking officers of the Order are elected; you yourself might aspire to hold such high rank. You start play with the +2 Virtue Superior Armaments. You have a choice of many fine horses, and the usual equipment of a Teutonic Knight. Your personal staff always includes a squire, one Knight as an aide, and a Priest Brother as your secretary. You are entitled to travel everywhere with a half dozen Sergeants for guards. You have the full use of all the resources in your district or castle, but remember, you own none of it! You must be punctilious in seeing that your subordinates are properly armed and mounted and vigorous in your leadership against the heathen.

They came down into Tchediev village in the early evening. It was a cluster of heavy log huts amid wide fields and pastures, surrounded by gentle hills. It had been a long day's trek on a poor path, but Malincka was not complaining.

This was good land to found a covenant in. The first month in the hills had taught her that. The people wore their Christianity lightly, and the auras were strong. She had found vis on the outskirts of a forest near Smolensk, and again in a rock grotto not far from Murom.

"We're in luck." It was Piotr, come back from the head of the line. Her Volkhv guide was a little less mysterious now. He still refused to let her know his real name, but he'd accepted her naming him after her own fancy, and answered to "Piotr" when they spoke. He was accompanied by a stranger, short and stout, balding but with a heavy beard, his forearms heavy and tanned from the sun.

"How so?"

"Meet Misha Vasilovich, son of the local headman. We've come in time for their midsummer ceremonial. It's the high summer offering to lord Svarog. You've said you wanted to see one."

Malincka stared down at the village, greedily. She could hear people singing among the fields and houses. She did. She did want to see this ceremony Piotr had mentioned, very much.

Such things he could do. Did the House of Bonisagus think themselves bold, to dream of breaching the Laws of Essential Nature? Could the Volkhv really form auras? Change them? Temper them? When she thought of it she grew giddy with an almost physical hunger; oh to unravel *this* magic!

"Misha, Gospodin Vasilovich, I'm honored, will you show me your village?"

The ceremonial site was at the heart. It consisted of a flat weathered stone, overshadowed by an elm of tremendous size and age. There was a crowd there, a good three hundred strong, singing an antiphonal call and response, the deep voices of the men chanting back in response to the higher calling of the women. Beneath the singing both men and women were clapping their hands in a counter-rhythm. Around the edges of the crowd were masquers, the youths of the village. Their costumes were extravagant assemblages of fur and brush, wild-men masks, and long claws.

"Demons!" Misha laughed. "Svarog banishes them, you'll see!"

It was a pretty superstition, she supposed. And there was certainly something happening. The village did have an aura. She could feel it dimly. It was not intense, not really, but it was there and positive, a friendly influence. She shivered. The aura, why it was almost *stirring*, almost *moving*, as if swept by some unseen current. But how bizarre . . . and now, well, it was deepening. Yes. She could feel it, very slowly but very definitely gaining in weight. "Impossible," she whispered. "That is just *not* possible."

As the evening began to darken, fires were lit. The stars came out slowly in the high, haze-free sky. The village men danced three times around the altar, then drove away the capering "demons" with whips made of long wheat stalks. All the while she could feel the great, mounting weight of the aura, the gathering magical power. Something was coming, something extraordinary, sensed but not understood. She cursed her imprecision, if only she could see more clearly!

Standing behind the altar, the Volkhv watched the setting sun intently. When the bottom of the solar disc touched the top of the western hills they raised their arms and began to sing. Light fell upon the altar, upon the tree, upon the priests. Their garments turned to gold, the leaves of the tree shone, the altar was ablaze. Someone had lead a horse to the altar, had its coat been brown? It was golden now, almost burning, so bright it was hard to look at. There was a knife in the chief Volkhv's hand, as the sun sank behind the hills it rose, swung to the top of an arc, held for a moment, and then plunged down.

The horse gave a whinnying sigh as it collapsed, a final beam of light burst from the west, and suddenly she could see. Like a veil dropping the world was laid out, clear and sharp before her.

Light was welling up from the ground, from the houses, from every single person standing in the crowd. Hundreds and hundreds of luminous threads, rising and mingling on the air. And from the west came an answering light, a flood of radiance. There was no sun in the west, but a being, a man, looking out upon the world, his eyes too bright to meet, shadows fleeing away before his face, and one arm was stretched out toward the village, reaching towards them, towards her . . .

The lights merged. From below, from above, meeting and reinforcing one another, spreading out in noiseless ripples, deepening and widening, moment by

moment. She could almost understand! It meant . . . it was . . . almost, yes, almost . . .

Night fell. She thought she heard a roll of distant thunder. Or was it a voice speaking? But there was Stanic, looking down at her, his lips moving, but no sound, no sound at all.

“Mistress? Mistress? Here now, are you well? Mistress Malincka? Here, you, help me sit the mistress down, she’s had a strange turn.” They gave her water to drink, and helped her to a hut where there was a bed. Marya chafed her wrists, and helped her to undress.

“Almost, I almost understand.”

“Yes mistress. Surely.”

“It is simple. It is a simple thing, but profound . . . I can understand it, if I only think a little more. . . .”

“You rest now. It’s been a long day.”

“The principles, there is an exchange of energy, of course . . . I can see the principles, and if the effect can be evoked at will, but to duplicate it we must first properly understand the exchange of energies, yes . . . that is it . . . we must understand the exchange. . . .”

“There you are my dear. You rest. You’ll understand in the morning.”

She did not understand. When morning came she walked out into the dew and the cool air. The aura was all around her, rich and strong and somehow still tied to every single man and woman in the village, intricate, marvelous and by every magical law that she knew, utterly impossible. She did not understand. But she would.

She vowed it.





Chapter 3

Slavic Magic

Long ago, in Rome and Greece, and in Celtic France, England, and Ireland, the pagan gods were worshipped by men and women who were both priests and wizards. In the Celtic lands it was the Romans who drove out the Druids, while in Rome Christianity triumphed. Throughout Europe the old gods — Jove, Zeus, Bel, and a host of others — dwindled and faded. Some lands, however, were never touched by Imperial Rome, and were largely ignored by the Christian missionaries. Here the pagans remained.

The Slavs are among the last Europeans to preserve their paganism. In the rural districts Volkhvy still conduct their ancient rituals, invoke their many-headed gods, and work their magic and miracles. But the Volkhvy are a dying breed. Not only in the Slavic lands, but throughout Europe, it seems that the age of the priest-wizard is coming to

an end as the last mortal followers of the old gods convert.

Nonetheless, for a few more centuries remnants of this unique magic and religion will linger in Russia and Poland and on the Baltic coast. In the year 1220 it is still strong.

A Magical Religion

The Slavic pagans believe that everything is innately magical. The tools a farmer uses, the rocks in his fields, the clouds in the skies, rain, air, animals, plants, people, fire, metals — magic is everywhere and in everything. They also believe that magic is in everything that people do. Agriculture, hunting, war, craftwork — every facet of a person's life benefits from magical influences. Though there are special, gifted priests, they also believe that anyone can work magic.

By their prayers and through the power of their deities, Slavs are able to understand the spirits that inhabit the world around them and use the power that flows from the faerie realm to help them with their daily chores. Within pagan villages, simple, non-Gifted huntsmen really can evoke the spirit and power within their weapons. Housewives can chant their looms into weaving and leave them to labor through the night. Fields and crops can be blessed and safe births guaranteed. The gods can be invoked on holy days to perform miracles and bestow curses and blessings.

Pagan Priests

The pagan priests of Russia are called Volkhvy. In Poland they were called Znachor, in Prussia Waidelots, and in Lithuania Vorschatyen. All of these priests served similar gods and goddesses, and for simplicity's sake we will refer to any pagan priest or priestess as a Volkhv. Readers should bear in mind that the magic system presented here is designed to reflect the abilities of Russian and Polish Volkhvy. In other regions, especially on the Baltic coast, Volkhvy with other Disciplines might well exist. Hopefully, storyguides will find this system easy to adapt by simply adding or subtracting Disciplines to reflect local variations.

In order to work the magic they derive from this understanding of the universe, the Slavs must be in a state of closeness with their deities, who are the sources of their power. This closeness is born of three things: residence within an aura sympathetic to their pagan ways, performance of the rituals and rites associated with their deities, and adher-

ence to the ways of life that are embodied in their elders.

Most important is the local aura. The pagan aura is actually a finely-tempered sort of faerie aura, for the deities of the Slavs are actually vastly powerful faerie beings. For most creatures and characters of Mythic Europe, the difference between a standard faerie aura and a pagan one is trivial and meaningless. For the Slavs, however, residence in a faerie aura which is associated with Slavic deities makes all the difference.

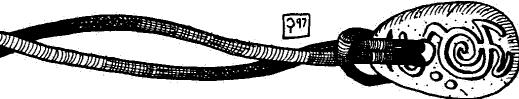
Also important is the continual state of the good graces of their deities that is ensured by the constant and continual performance of the rituals associated with their patrons. Only by these ceremonies can supernatural power continue to flow from these faerie beings to their worshippers.

Finally, the priestly leaders of the Slavs play a very important role in the mix. They are the ones that educate the “mundane” Slavs, showing them what to do and how to do it. They are the keepers and focal points of the religious tradition that supports this supernatural existence. They are also the ones that maintain the Slavic nature of the faerie auras. Without the Volkhy they would revert to the “neutral” faerie auras found elsewhere across Mythic Europe.

As the Dominion encroaches on their faerie auras, though, the power of the Slavs wanes. What was once a uniform aura stretching across continental areas has been shattered into a motley patchwork. The great temples have been cast down. The cities are swollen with churches and a strong Divine aura has asserted itself. In many places faerie

auras still exist, but without Volkhy to maintain them they have gone neutral. Only in the pagan villages does the real old Slavic aura still remain.

In these places Slavic magic still works. It exists in two varieties. First, there is the “sacred” Slavic magic which is practiced by Gifted Slavic pagans, the Volkhy. This is an



elaborate, powerful magic with a long tradition and arduous apprenticeship. Second, there is “domestic” magic which is practiced by non-Gifted Slavic pagans, the common folk. This is a very modest, practical sort of magic, only made possible in the pagan villages by the unique interactions between Volkhy, the pagan gods, their followers, and the “pagan” auras.





The Volkhv Character

A Volkhv is a Gifted pagan Slav, and a priest. Volkhvy lore is all orally transmitted, and most Volkhvy are illiterate. A Volkhv has access to a higher power, and to a variety of allies. Slavic faeries have no difficulty recognizing the servants of the gods (after all, the Slavic gods are actually faerie powers), and even faeries of considerable rank customarily address a visiting Volkhv as “cousin.” With access to his pagan gods goes the Volkhv’s occasional ability to rise above Hermetic levels in potency.

Volkhvy are mystic companions (see *Hedge Magic*, page 31, for information on other, similar mystic companions, as well as some other general information about mystic companions). As such, the troupe may elect to allow a Volkhv to occupy either the com-

panion or magus slot for his player. The companion choice is recommended if the character’s link to the covenant is loose, if you will be playing the Volkhv character infrequently because of the nature of the saga, or if the starting Volkhv is relatively weak compared to the magus characters in your saga. (If the magi in your saga are starting magi, this is not the case.) The magus choice is recommended if the Volkhv has a tight link to your covenant, will be played with relative frequency, or is among magi who are young or weak. The decision on which slot the Volkhv will occupy is ultimately up to the troupe. A Volkhv intended to occupy a player’s magus slot in a saga that contains magi of advanced age or power may be given additional experience points at character creation at the storyguide’s or troupe’s discretion.

Volkhvy are almost always firmly tied to a pagan community, whose needs are the Volkhv’s first priority. Thus, they make poor participants in roving adventures. Nonetheless, it is always possible to find ways to justify a Volkhv’s place in your saga. It might be a case of integrating your covenant tightly within a pagan Slavic community, or of deciding that some terrible ill has befallen the Volkhv’s community and that his lot must become intertwined with the covenant in order to make the situation right.

In addition to the game effects described below, almost all Volkhvy have concrete community obligations. They may be required from time to time to participate in Rituals on behalf of their fellows, which may distract them from other activities. Most distrust and dislike (if not outright loathe) the Christian church, and are reciprocally viewed with skepticism (at best) or hatred (far more often) by churchmen. Volkhvy interacting with Hermetic magi are viewed (at best) as hedge wizards.

All Volkhvy begin the game with the Personality Trait Pagan Belief +3. See page 57 for a few notes on this trait.

Historic Folk Beliefs About Magicians

Historically, Russian peasants believed that a wide variety of men and women possessed supernatural powers. Some, like the pagan priest-magician volkhv and the magical healer znakhor, were generally considered benevolent. Others, like the fortuneteller vorozheia, were neither good nor evil. Some weren’t even necessarily alive — the eretik, for example, was a dead sorcerer who continued to roam the mortal world, inflicting harm upon the living. Sorcerers — the “Dark Volkhvy” of Mythic Europe — were often thought to draw their power not from the pagan forces, but from the Infernal.

Also of note was the peasant distinction between “born” and “taught” sorcerers. “Born” sorcerers had innate supernatural powers; it was thought that these abilities might arise from being the offspring of the third of three illegitimate generations. “Taught” sorcerers were believed to inherit their powers from another practitioner, or to receive them directly from the Devil. “Taught” sorcerers had willingly acquired their supernatural powers, and thus were generally expected to be more powerful than “born” sorcerers.

Characteristics

Volkhvy Characteristics may be generated either by the purchase method or by random rolls, as specified in ArM4.

Virtues and Flaws

Volkhvy may have up to ten points of Virtues and Flaws, just like other mystic companions. They may select from among any Virtues and Flaws available to other characters, with the elaborations and exceptions given below. When the costs of Virtues and Flaws differ between grogs, companions, and magi, Volkhvy always pay the magus cost.

Required Virtue

Every Volkhvy has the “Volkhvy” Virtue, which has a cost of +2 and whose effects are described below. No characters other than Volkhvy mystic companions may purchase this Virtue; it is not available to other mystic companions or to standard magi, grogs, or companions, save by special permission of the storyguide (which should be considered very carefully before it is given).

- All Volkhvy are Gifted. However, a Slavic pagan interacting with a Volkhvy does not experience discomfort or ill-ease, though non-Slavs and non-pagans do. Animals, when inside a Slavic faerie aura, also experience no discomfort. (You may want to read pages 36-38 of the *Wizard’s Grimoire Revised Edition* for a discussion of exactly what a “Gift” is, and what it means to Hermetic magi.)
- All Volkhvy magic is sung. This is similar in effect to the -1 Flaw Necessary Conditions (ArM4, page 36.)
- Volkhvy are considered Wise Ones (see ArM4, page 38). They have all the benefits and responsibilities of that Companion Social Class Virtue and do

not select another Companion Social Class Virtue.

- All Volkhvy have Pagan Conviction (see page 57), which begins at a level of 3 for starting Volkhvy characters.
- All Volkhvy can use Volkhvy magic, including the ability to Commune and cast Improvised and Great Rituals.

Recommended Virtues and Flaws

The Virtues and Flaws in this section are commonly possessed by Volkhvy, and should be particularly considered when creating Volkhvy characters.

Animal Companion (+1) (ArM4 40)

Cyclic Magic (variable) Volkhvy magic is often attuned to seasonal variations, which can be both positive (Virtue) and negative (Flaw) in nature. (ArM4 34, 35)

Dependent (-1) Members of the Volkhvy’s home community may not be chosen for this Flaw, as such obligations are part of the character template, unless the Volkhvy’s community obligations are particularly onerous. Volkhvy often have obligations to others outside their own community, however. (ArM4 47)

Faerie Blood (variable) (ArM4 39)

Faerie Friend (+2) (ArM4 43)

Ghostly Warden (+4) (ArM4 46)

Giant Blood (+5) (ArM4 45)

Healer (+1) (ArM4 41)

Herbalism (+1) (ArM4 41)

Magical Animal Companion (+2) (ArM4 44)

Magic Sensitivity (+1) (ArM4 42)

Poor (-2) (ArM4 49)

Second Sight (+1) (ArM4 42)

Student Of Faerie (+2) (ArM4 35)

Relic (+3): This is obviously not a Christian relic and does not contain Christian Faith points. Rather, this pagan relic is associated with one particular god, which allows it to be used to Commune with that god (see page 59). A starting Volkhvy must have storyguide permission to choose a relic associated with a god other than his principal god. Pagan relics have a rating which describes their power.





Relics gained by this Virtue have a rating of 1. (ArM4 45)
Susceptibility To Divine Power (-4) (ArM4 37)
Weather Sense (+1) (ArM4 43)

Unlikely Virtues and Flaws

The following Virtues and Flaws are available to Volkhvy, but they represent life experiences so far outside the normal boundaries of pagan Slavic existence that you will need to justify them carefully and get the approval of the troupe or storyguide.

Alchemy (+1) (ArM4 40)
Arcane Lore (+1) (ArM4 40)
Blatant Gift (-1) (ArM4 35)
Book Learner (+1) (ArM4 40)
Educated (+1) (ArM4 41)
Faerie Enmity (-1) (ArM4 47)
Faerie Upbringing (+1) (ArM4 41)
Further Education (+1) (ArM4 41)
Protection (+3) (ArM4 45)
Reclusive (-1): While unlikely for normal Volkhvy, Reclusive is *recommend* for Koldun (see page 74) (ArM4 48)
Social Handicap (-1) (ArM4 48)
Susceptibility To Faerie Power (-4) (ArM4 37)
Temporal Influence (+2) (ArM4 44)
Wealth (+3) (ArM4 45)
Well-Traveled (+1) (ArM4 43)

Forbidden Virtues and Flaws

The following Virtues and Flaws may not be selected by Volkhvy under any circumstances.

Diabolic Upbringing (-2) (ArM4 49)
Divination (+4) (ArM4 45)
Feral Upbringing (-3) (ArM4 49)
Gentle Gift (+1) (ArM4 34)
Hex (+2) (ArM4 43)
Lack of Concentration (-2) (ArM4 36)
Lycanthropy (-2) (ArM4 49)
Magic Resistance (+4) (ArM4 46)
Mute (-3) (ArM4 50)
Poor Memory (-1) (ArM4 48)
Short Attention Span (-1) (ArM4 48)
Skinchanger (+2) (ArM4 44)

Tainted With Evil (-1) (ArM4 48)

Veteran (+1) (ArM4 42)

Withstand Magic (+2) (ArM4 44)

Furthermore, the following general types of Virtues and Flaws may not be selected.

- Any major magical power or tradition aside from Volkhvy Magic such as Follower of Bjornaer, Faerie Magic, or Elementalist.
- Any Hermetic Virtues and Flaws, except those specifically recommended above.
- Any Virtue or Flaw implying a strong link to the Christian church.
- Any Companion Social Class Virtue (except Wise One, which is considered to be part of the Volkhvy Virtue).

Principal God

Every Volkhvy has one principal god to whom he is dedicated; whose particular kind of magic he performs best; upon whom he can always call for assistance regardless of where he is; and to whom, in the final analysis, he is accountable.

A Volkhvy can only call on other Slavic gods if he has a suitable focus, such as a standing stone, shrine, or relic dedicated to the god in question. The absence of such a focus does not prevent him from working magic outside his principal god's specialty, but it does mean that he may suffer penalties.

As an example, consider a Volkhvy dedicated to Perun, god of war, who is trying to work a healing spell. He has no focus to allow him to contact the goddess of healing, Beilbog, and so must call upon Perun. Perun's nature is opposed to healing, and though the Volkhvy can cast the spell, it will be at a significant penalty.

Look through the descriptions of the Slavic deities in Appendix II, which begins on page 177, and select one major god to be your Volkhvy's patron. Make a careful note of the god's attributes, areas of authority, festival dates, and magical bonus and penalty categories.

Pagan Conviction

All Volkhy have a statistic called Pagan Conviction (or simply Conviction). This is a measure of their faith and belief in the old ways. Conviction is gradually absorbed during the long Volkhy apprenticeship through exposure to Slavic magic, ancestral spirits, great and small gods, faerie lords, and speaking animals. As his Volkhy master instructs him in ancestral lore, clan histories, religious rituals, and symbols it soon becomes almost impossible for the apprentice *not* to have Pagan Conviction, especially as he begins to genuinely Commune with his gods.

A Volkhy has Conviction 3 when he finishes his apprenticeship; no points need be spent on this. You may purchase more Conviction (increasing it to levels greater than 3) when creating your character, using your starting experience points and the standard pyramid scale. For example, increasing the initial rating to 4 costs four experience points. Conviction can never be purchased with experience points gained through normal saga play. This option to spend experience points on Conviction is a one time possibility, available only at character creation.

Conviction changes throughout a Volkhy's life. It usually increases, reaching as much as 9 or 10 in extreme old age, but some Volkhy have also been known to lose Conviction through failure in rituals or the varied trials of life. See the insert "Gaining and Losing Conviction" (on page 58) for more information.

Abilities

Starting Abilities

The following nine Abilities are possessed by all starting Volkhy characters, at the listed scores.

(Area) Lore*	3
Chirurgy	2

Clan Lore**	4
Concentration	2
Faerie Lore	2
Sing	3
Theology: Slavic	4
Speak Slavic***	5

*This is knowledge of the area that surrounds the Volkhy's village.

**Clan Lore is the (Organization) Lore that applies to the Volkhy's community.

***This is the "Speak Own Language" score that is possessed by all mystic companions.

The Volkhy character receives (age + 10) additional experience points which can be used to increase the starting Abilities, to round the character out with other Abilities, or to purchase more Conviction. A starting Volkhy can be no younger than 25 without special troupe permission.



Theology: Slavic

Theology: Slavic is a new Casual Knowledge which describes an understanding of the major Slavic gods; their attributes and spheres of influence; and their sacred items, animals, and plants. Likewise, it includes knowledge of local minor deities, clan totem animals, and the local ancestral cult. As a character's score in Theology: Slavic increases, a greater number of these local and minor deities are known. *Specialties: a specific deity, a specific locality, an area of deific oversight.* (Intelligence, Perception)

Conviction and Belief

A careful distinction needs to be made between Pagan Conviction and Pagan Belief.

Pagan Conviction is in some ways like True Faith, False Faith, and the Purity scores of Kabbalists (see *Kabbalah: Mythic Judaism*) and Ascetics (See *Hedge Magic*). It is a powerful force possessed only by Volkhy and is a measure of devotion to a specific religious cause.

Pagan Belief is a Personality Trait. It signals the basic religious orientation and strength of conviction of a worshipper. An individual can use his Pagan Belief to tap a Slavic faerie aura and perform domestic magic. It bears noting that as a Personality Trait, there are few rules governing its increase and decrease. Storyguides should keep an eye on characters with Pagan Belief to make sure they are not abusing the Personality Trait system in order to gain power for their characters without roleplaying appropriately.



Unlikely Abilities

Volkhvy are not allowed to purchase the following types of Abilities during character creation without the special consideration and approval of the storyguide or troupe, and with appropriate explanation in the Volkhvy's background.

- Arcane Talents
- Academic Skills
- Hermetic Skills
- Academic Knowledges
- Arcane Knowledges (other than Faerie Lore)

Age

As mentioned previously, Volkhvy may start at any age greater than 25. Volkhvy do not have longevity potions, but they are regularly exposed to powerful faerie forces that greatly enhance their life energies. Volkhvy may subtract their Conviction scores from all aging rolls.

Gaining and Losing Conviction

Throughout a saga, a Volkhvy's Conviction will wax and wane as his confidence in the Slavic gods and his fervor in worship of them changes.

Conviction behaves in many ways like an Ability, in that "experience points" are used to keep track of its progress. The same pyramidal scale that is used to determine how many experience points give a character a given score in any Ability is also used to determine what score a Volkhvy has in Conviction. The experience points used for this purpose, however, are entirely separate from other experience point gains from study or through the course of play. Normal experience points may never be used to increase Conviction (except at character creation as described elsewhere), and Conviction experience points may never be used for any other purposes.

A Volkhvy who presides over or participates in a Great Ritual (see page 70) once each season has the opportunity to increase his Conviction each time. Very simply, if the Great Ritual Total equals or exceeds the Volkhvy's current Conviction x 10, one experience point is accumulated in Conviction. As with other Abilities, when a number of experience points equal to the next level are gained, the score increases by one and the experience points disappear. Conviction can also be lost through Great Rituals. If a Volkhvy ever botches a roll on a Great Ritual, one experience point is lost for each magnitude of botch.

Conviction may be gained in other ways, but these are always at the discretion of the troupe or storyguide. In general, Conviction experience points should only

be given out or taken away one at a time, and then rarely — certainly not more often than once in a season or story (depending on the speed with which time passes in your saga). A number of examples follow, but this is not an exhaustive list.

- Failure of any important Ritual might lead to a loss of Conviction on the part of some or all of the people participating in the Ritual, while exceptional success in a particularly important Improvised Ritual might lead to an increase in Conviction. When considering whether to award Conviction after a Ritual, the storyguide should assess the importance of the Ritual; the investment of hope, time, and effort that the participants made; and the consequences of success or failure in their lives.
- A Volkhvy should be rewarded for completing tasks which contribute concretely to the welfare of his community, and may be penalized for allowing his community to be harmed when he could have prevented the harm.
- A Volkhvy should be rewarded for acts which spread awareness of and bring glory to the Slavic deities, especially in areas where Christianity is strong.
- A Volkhvy should lose Conviction if substantial numbers of his community members convert to Christianity.
- A Volkhvy should gain Conviction for traveling to Arcadia or witnessing other strong evidence of the power of the Slavic deities.

Magic

By the time a Volkhv has finished his apprenticeship, he has a score of 1 in each of the Volkhv Disciplines, and has accumulated an additional 50 experience points he can use (only) to improve those scores, to a maximum rating of 6 in any beginning Discipline. Disciplines are improved thereafter with normal experience points in the course of play, and you can use experience points from your age allocation to improve them during character creation.

Volkhv Magic

The Volkhv magical system is founded on relatively simple concepts, but the mechanics are complicated by the religious element.

Any act of magic by a Volkhv firstly requires that he enter into Communion with one of the Slavic gods. After entering Communion, he casts a Ritual (which will be either Improvised or Great in nature) based upon the Volkhv magical Disciplines to achieve a carefully-defined effect.

The following sections first describe the vital step of Communion, then the various different sorts of magic that Volkhv can perform, and then the fine details of the different Rituals.

Magic Resistance

A Volkhv's base Magic Resistance is equal to his Conviction score. If the Volkhv has taken Cyclical Magic as a Virtue or Flaw, the peaks and troughs of the cycle affect his Magic Resistance; the bonus or penalty is simply applied directly to the Magic Resistance statistic.

Communing

Communing is the means by which a Volkhv contacts the faerie source of his power. Communing is an act of prayer. It relies primarily upon the strength of the Volkhv's Pagan Conviction, allied with the local aura, and some subsidiary factors. Communing has certain limits, advantages, and side-effects.

A Volkhv may only Commune with his principal god, as chosen during character creation, with two exceptions. First, a Volkhv may attempt to Commune with any Slavic divinity at a site specifically sacred to that god. Second, a Volkhv may attempt to Commune with any god whose relic he possesses.

Establishing Communion

To establish Communion, the Volkhv first declares which Slavic divinity he wishes to establish a connection with, usually his principal god. He then performs a short prayer ritual, which usually lasts about ten minutes. Finally, he rolls a die + Pre + Concentration + Conviction + aura. Fatigue and wound penalties also apply. The result is compared to an ease factor figured by consulting the Communion Ease Factor Table on the next page. The die roll that the Volkhv makes is simple if he takes the full ten minutes to enter Communion, or stress if he elects to reduce the duration by any amount



Volkhv Realm Interactions

The following chart describes how the four different realms affect all Volkhv powers and effects which include an aura modification.

Aura	Bonus/Penalty
Magic	+ (1/2 aura rating)
Divine	- (2 x aura rating)
Infernal	- (aura rating)
Faerie ("neutral")	+ (aura rating)
Faerie ("Slavic")	+ (2 x aura rating)



(as described on the Communion Ease Factor Table).

Failure to achieve the ease factor means the Volkhv's efforts are wasted and he must start again. Success indicates that Communion has been established, and the Volkhv may proceed to use his Disciplines to cast Rituals, both Improvised and Great.

Note the initial die roll (the Communion Roll) and the Communion Total carefully each time you enter Communion. You will need to recall the former when Communion ends, in order to determine whether the Volkhv is fatigued by his experience, and the latter in case you are magically attacked or need to perceive some supernatural effect while in Communion.

Maintaining Communion

A Volkhv cannot maintain Communion forever. Communion is a demanding experience, and requires constant effort to sustain. A relaxed, otherwise unoccupied Volkhv in Communion must make a Concentration check once per hour. A Volkhv involved in a simple or repetitious task (such as conversing,

walking, or performing menial labor) must roll every fifteen minutes. A Volkhv involved in complex or dangerous actions (like combat) must check each round. However, unless the Volkhv is jarringly interrupted or distracted, he may always complete at least one Ritual, either Improvised or Great, of any length, before the clock begins to tick and he needs to begin rolling to remain in Communion. If he is distracted, he has to roll immediately rather than waiting for the next interval appropriate to his situation. Any Ritual, Improvised or Great, which is interrupted by a loss of the Communion-state automatically fails, but may still botch. The sole exception to the rule about maintaining Communion is for the period following a successful Great Ritual, known as the Aftermath. See page 73 for more information.

Checks to maintain Communion consist of a simple or stress die (depending on the circumstances) + Sta + Concentration + aura. The result is compared to an ease factor of 9+. Failure to make one's Concentration roll, of course, indicates that one has fallen out of Communion.

It is only necessary to maintain Communion while Rituals are being cast, not for the duration of their effects, unless the duration is Concentration. For instance, a shapeshift into wolf form for a full night requires Communion only while the Ritual is being cast, not throughout the night.

A Volkhv can always voluntarily leave Communion at any time, with the normal effects (see below).

Communion Ease Factor Table

Base Ease Factor: 12+

Condition	Modifier
Possession of relevant pagan relic*	-rating
Walking	+3
Running	+9
Dodging	+12
Jostled	+6
Knocked down	+9
Damaged	+12
Sudden noise or flash of light	+6
Shortening the preparatory prayers	+1/minute**

* "Relevant" means a relic specific to the divinity being Communed with.

** The Volkhv must declare how much he wants to shorten the ritual before rolling. It is possible for a Volkhv to enter Communion almost instantly. By adding +10 to the ease factor, he reduces the duration of the Communion ritual to a single round.

Fatigue Side Effects

When Communion ends a Volkhv comes down from an ecstatic state in which he has been drawing power from a god. This can leave him exhausted. Recall your initial Communion Roll (you wrote it down, right?). Add your Stamina. Apply this total to an ease factor of (6 + 1 per magnitude of magical effect created while in Communion). Failure means loss of Fatigue levels. For each 3 points or part of 3 points by which you fail to match

the ease factor you lose one Fatigue level. The maximum effect is loss of consciousness; no other damage can occur from this effect. To summarize, the ease factor – the resistance total $\div 3$ (rounded up) is the number of Fatigue levels lost.

Protection Side Effects

A Volkhv who is in Communion gains Magic Resistance equal to his Conviction + aura (as opposed to just his Conviction, as described on page 59). See the Volkhv Realm Interaction Table on page 59 for the specific bonuses and penalties auras give.

A Volkhv who is in Communion also gains Magic Resistance equal to his Communion Total (again, you wrote it down, right?) against all magical effects aligned with the relevant god's principal attribute or attributes, which is cumulative with any other Magic Resistance to which he is normally entitled. For example, Khors is a sun god. Any Volkhv attacked by fire or light while Communing with Khors receives this bonus. The storyguide is, of course, the final arbiter on whether a given magical attack is aligned with a god's principal attributes.

Sensitivity Side Effects

A Volkhv in Communion with a god gains sensitivity and may perceive nearby supernatural influences. Each time a Volkhv Communes the storyguide should note the Communion Total and secretly check it against any such influences within range. Standard detection levels are summarized below.

Faerie Being: The stronger a faerie is the more easily apparent it is to the Volkhv's detective efforts. The formula $(45 - \text{Communion Total})$ indicates the least powerful Faerie Might that is detected.

Magical Being: The stronger a magical being is the more easily apparent it is to the Volkhv's detective efforts. The formula $(55 - \text{Communion Total})$ indicates the least power-

ful Magic Might that is detected.

Infernal Being: An Infernal being is detected if the Communion Total $- 10$ is equal to or greater than its Infernal Might.

Person with Gentle Gift: $20 + (\text{InVi Magic Resistance})$

Person with Gift: $15 + (\text{InVi Magic Resistance})$

Person with Blatant Gift: $10 + (\text{InVi Magic Resistance})$

Objects' supernatural natures are detected depending on their Might, highest spell effect level, or Sacred or Cursed potency under the terms laid out for the appropriate realm's beings.

Spells are detected on the basis of their level, but because they tend to be subtler than creatures and objects, the Communion Total is cut in half and rounded up before comparison for purposes of detection.

Range for this sensitivity is equal to the Communion Total in paces, and it operates





regardless of material barriers, though it may be resisted by screening magics. Any spell deliberately designed to foil magical spying or detection is regarded as half its actual level for purposes of the detection guidelines and is thus harder to find. If such a spell is not detected, then anything it is concealing is automatically not detected. If such a spell is detected it must then be dispelled or penetrated before the object or person it is protecting can be sensed.

The sensitivity test should be made only once for each person, object, or force on each occasion that the Volkhv enters Communion. Thus, a magus who repeatedly enters and leaves a room where a Volkhv is continually in Communion is only checked on the first occasion. The Volkhv can, however, gain a second check by releasing and then re-entering Communion, at which point he generates a new Communion Total, possibly a higher one.

Volkhvy can sometimes discern detailed information through Communion sensitivity. Check the difference between the required detection level and the actual Communion Total and consult the following table. For example, a Volkhv enters Communion while a powerful faerie (Faerie Might 35) conceals itself nearby. The Communion roll is 38. The faerie would be detected on any roll of 20 or above, so the Volkhv has exceeded the required roll by 18 points.



Roll Succeeds by	Information discerned
0-5	Location
6-10	Rough Size and Shape
11-15	Nature (magical/Faerie/Divine/Infernal)
16-20	Approximate Might
21+	Details of potential

(a magus's best art, a faerie's principal power, or a demon's principal affinity, for example)

The Volkhv Disciplines

Volkhvy learn different sorts of magic as discreet Disciplines. Each Discipline is a carefully codified and defined system of chants, dances, sacred drama, and gestures, which include invocations for different seasons, situations, and gods. Volkhvy have no system of combining Forms and Techniques, as Hermetic magic does. The Disciplines available to a Volkhv are Spirit Touch, Healing, Shapeshifting, Weatherworking, Animal Magic, Removing Curses, Prophecy, Sun Magic, and Earth Magic.

Given below are descriptions of the effects governed by the Disciplines, along with the Hermetic Forms and Techniques that a Hermetic magus would have to use to create similar effects. These are given because the Hermetic spell level guidelines are used in order to assess the levels a Volkhv must achieve with his Disciplines to create given effects (an example is given on page 68 which will help you understand this process). Note that Hermetic requisites are irrelevant to this process and not listed.

Some of the Disciplines create effects that Hermetic magic cannot duplicate. In these cases no Hermetic equivalents are listed and special rules are provided for these Disciplines.

Please note that while "Hermetic Equivalents" are listed, Volkhv magic cannot duplicate all the possible effects mentioned in the Hermetic spell lists. The description of each Discipline clearly states what the limits of the Discipline are and what a Volkhv can use it to achieve. For example, Spirit Touch is a Discipline that allows communication with supernatural beings and the Hermetic Equivalent is InMe. Despite the fact that InMe is listed as the equivalent, Volkhvy cannot use Spirit Touch to duplicate spells such as *Peering into the Mortal Mind*, because the description of Spirit Touch mentions nothing about affecting mortals.

The Discipline definitions should make it fairly clear how Volkhv magic differs from and is less effective than Hermetic magic.

Volkhv cannot create objects or creatures. They cannot create illusions and cannot perform most water-related magics. They cannot perform intricate spells to alter other magics. They are very weak in the equivalent of Perdo and Muto magics, and their ability to employ violent Ignem or Terram equivalents is seriously restricted. They cannot affect the human mind, unless it is disembodied (that is, a ghost).

As a final note on the power of the Disciplines, all are resisted normally by beings with magical resistance: magi with Parma Magica, creatures with Might, and other beings with any other form of Magic Resistance. The effects of Rituals, except where otherwise noted, are resisted just like spells are, as described in ArM4, pages 72-73.

Spirit Touch

Spirit Touch allows a Volkhv to communicate with spiritual and supernatural beings or forces, including but not limited to ghosts, spirits, elementals, faeries, and demons. As a general rule of thumb, a Volkhv can use Spirit Touch to communicate with a being associated with the magical, Faerie, or Infernal realms.

The exact nature of the communication depends on the nature of the being and the sort of effect that is being attempted. A Volkhv might try a Ritual that allows him to speak verbally with a certain faerie, to communicate empathically with the spirit of a place or object, or broadcast his thoughts to all elementals within a certain area.

Spirit Touch can also be used to release, expel, exorcise, and regulate the sorts of beings described above. Most Volkhv are loathe to use these sorts of spirits as servants or pack-beasts, and though that sort of control is certainly possible with Spirit Touch, most intelligent beings that are controlled in this way have long memories. Instead, this ability is most often used to dispel malevolent spirits and protect specific areas against their intrusions.

Spirit Touch is entirely separate from Communing. Volkhv may Commune with

(and thus, communicate on some level with) any of the Slavic deities provided the Volkhv is in the presence of an appropriate relic or site, or the deity is the Volkhv's principal god.

Hermetic Equivalent: InMe, ReMe, ReVi

Healing

Volkhvy can heal humans — but not animals or any other sorts of beings — through the use of this Discipline. Healing can include the healing of Body levels, diseases, or specific injuries (sprains, fractures, burns, and so forth). Volkhvy Healing does not suffer from the vis requirements of Hermetic healing; these effects can be made Instant or Permanent in duration without vis.

Hermetic Equivalent: CrCo

Shapeshifting

Using this Discipline, a Volkhv can change himself and any collection of items he can carry without incurring a Load penalty into an animal. A Volkhv can shift into any form with which he is personally familiar; he



Improving Disciplines

In play, Disciplines are improved by spending experience points, just like Abilities are, on the same pyramidal scale. The experience used can be Story experience, Training experience, or Practice experience as described in ArM4, pages 186-187. (Even though Training and Practice can normally only be used with specific kinds of Abilities, this rule specifically permits those mechanics to be used with Disciplines even though they are not technically Abilities at all.)

Additionally, however, Volkhvy can gain Discipline experience points through Divine Revelation. By spending a season entirely immersed in a combination of service to his community, constant prayer, and studious self-contemplation, a Volkhv can gain experience points in a Discipline equal to $(\text{Conviction} + \text{Theology: Slavic}) \div 5$, rounded up. No other saga activity is permitted in this time. However, the storyguide may decide that a story grows from some community need that the Volkhv discovers in his season of heightened sensitivity to the needs of his flock.



must have, at the very least, seen the animal in question. Upon changing, the Volkhv immediately masters the animal's mundane senses, language, instincts, and physical abilities. He also gains a Personality Trait appropriate to the animal's nature at a level of +1 (Bear +1, for example) while shapeshifted.

Volkhvy cannot conduct Rituals while shapeshifted, but can resume their native forms by simply willing it.

Hermetic Equivalent: MuCo, at 10 levels less than the normal Hermetic levels. For example, a Volkhv needs only a level 25 effect to "turn a human into a bird or fish" (see ArM4 page 125).

Weatherworking

Volkhvy can summon, create, direct, or dispel mundane or magical weather conditions, as long as they are of a type that could exist naturally. For example, a Volkhv could affect a natural or magical rainstorm, but would have no power over a magically-created acidic fog, because the latter does not occur naturally. As another example, a Volkhv can call up a storm and then, as a separate Ritual, call down lightning bolts from it. Or, as a single Ritual, he may call down lightning bolts from an existing natural storm.

Hermetic Equivalents: CrAu, PeAu, ReAu

Raising the Dead

It is rumored that, in the period of Aftermath following a Great Ritual (see page 73), some Volkhvy are able to raise the dead. This is the greatest manifestation of the Healing Discipline known. This insert provides guidelines for this activity for storyguides who wish to allow it. Offering this option should be carefully considered by the storyguide before it is allowed, not only from a game balance standpoint, but because it has ramifications on a saga's entire cosmology and tone.

For those who wish to allow this option, the following restrictions apply.

- The only Volkhvy that may attempt to raise the dead are those whose principal gods are Baba Yaga, Zemlja, Telyavel, Picollos, and Puskaitis. Players should note that these gods are not particularly powerful in the Healing Discipline, but are the gods of death, and they alone have authority over the souls of the departed.
- The dead individual must have been a pagan, whole-heartedly devoted to the Slavic gods. He must never have been baptized, christened, have voluntarily heard a full mass, or otherwise been formally involved in the Christian church. He may not be a diabolist, and can't have been suffering from any diabolical taint or curse at the time of death. The point of these conditions is very simple: the soul of the dead must be accessible to the Volkhv. Only pagan Slavic souls can be returned to the material world by the Slavic gods.

They have no jurisdiction or power over other souls.

- The death must have occurred less than one season prior to the Ritual. As soon as it spends a seasonal turning point in Arcadia (where it will be dwelling with its previously deceased kin), the pagan soul will become "set" and be unwilling to return to life.
- All the body parts that will be necessary to sustain life in a restored body must be present for the ritual. Any parts that are not present will be missing from the restored body. (For example, a body whose head has been burned can't be restored to life, since a head is required for life. A body whose feet have been pulverized could be restored, but the restored person would be crippled by the loss.)
- Only victims of accidents, violence, and disease (if it carries them off before their natural time) can be resurrected. The Slavic gods do not return to life those who have died from old age or associated infirmities.

In effect this is a unique Volkhv Improvised Ritual effect that can only be attempted during the Aftermath of a Great Ritual. It can be attempted using power derived from the Aftermath's "power pool," or as a normal Improvised Ritual cast during that time. The level of the effect is 100.

Animal Magic

Using this Discipline, Volkhvy can summon, command, heal, and communicate with animals. Animal Magic is most frequently used agriculturally to summon animals into hunting, fishing, and trapping areas or ensure that animals are born healthy and prosper as they grow. However, beyond these limits, Volkhvy cannot perform anything that resembles a MuAn spell; they may not distort, enhance, or otherwise change animals.

Hermetic Equivalents: CrAn, ReAn, InAn

Removing Curses

This Discipline can remove magical, Diabolical, or Faerie influences, enchantments, effects, or curses. This includes Hermetic spell effects. Remove Curses cannot be used like a magus would use a fast-cast defense; it can only dispel effects that have already taken hold. Outside this limitation, any effect can be dispelled.

Dispelling faerie Curses and other faerie effects requires a Volkhvy to achieve a level of effect equal to the effect-creating faerie's relevant Power rating \times 5. For instance, dispelling a curse placed by a Faerie who has Curse 4 would take a level 20 effect.

Curse removal is automatic. That is, if the appropriate effect level is achieved, there is no penetration vs. Might or penetration vs. casting total comparison to determine whether the effect is dispelled.

Hermetic Equivalents: PeVi for magical and Infernal effects. Use the guideline "Dispel effects . . . with a casting total less than the level of the Vim spell + a quality die" found on ArM4 page 158, save that the casting Volkhvy need not "have some knowledge of [the] type of magic."

Prophecy

Prophecy is a unique Volkhvy effect which allows Volkhvy to answer questions about things that are likely to happen in the future.

Since the Slavic gods are not Divine and have no true pre-knowledge, these prophecies are not infallible. Instead, they reveal things that are known to the Slavic divinities, who are, after all, powerful faerie beings with access to much of the knowledge and experience of their worshippers. Because of this non-omniscient knowledge and understanding, some sorts of questions pose unusual difficulties. For example, any question that touches on the Christian church is going to prove troublesome as this is an area in which no Slavic god has any authority at all. An additional consequence of the non-Divine nature of these prophecies is that they can be overturned — though forewarned is forearmed.

Some Prophecy Rituals can be cast as Improvised Rituals, but major, long-term prophecies are almost always conducted in the Aftermath of a Great Ritual.

In the final analysis, the storyguide will have to be the arbiter of exactly what information can be gained through this Discipline, no matter how the rolls turn out. Storyguides who are uncomfortable making speedy decisions about far-reaching events may want to restrict the use of this Discipline, and may want to consider barring it entirely from their sagas.

A prophecy must always be first stated as a question. Then, to determine the difficulty of answering that question with a specific prophecy, assess the question on three bases: How serious is it? How far into the future will the events occur? To what area does it apply? Consult the Volkhvy Prophecy Table and add the results to give a total level.



Volkhvy Prophecy Table

Seriousness	Duration/Term	Distance/Area	Level
Trivial	A day or less	House/Person	1
Casual	A week or less	Neighborhood/Farm	3
Minor	A month or less	Village/Valley	6
Moderate	A season or less	District/City	10
Considerable	A year or less	Minor Principality	15
Very	A decade or less	Major Principality	21
Grave	A century or less	Nation	28
Crucial	A millennium or less	Many nations	36



For instance, a trivial question of concern to a village regarding an event that will take place next week (for example, “who will win the prize for the fattest pig at the fair?”) would be level 1 (trivial) + 3 (one week or less) + 6 (village) = 10.

As a final note, storyguides are free to secretly adjust Prophecy ease factors by $+/- 5$, and in extreme cases as much as $+/- 10$, as the story requires.

When a question is posed for prophecy, it is recommended that the storyguide make the actual stress die roll, concealing the result from the players so they cannot be certain of its accuracy. In addition, in assessing the quality or clarity of an answer, the storyguide needs to consider whether the answer requires to information that would be available to Slavic pagans and their divinities.

Sun Magic

Sun Magic includes sacred fire-starting (which is used mostly for funeral cremations and to light sacrificial fires at Great Rituals) and light-summoning. Sun Magic can be used to affect the weather in a limited sense, as it can enhance or diminish sunlight. Sun Magic does not allow the creation of bolts, fans, or balls of flame used for combat purposes.

“Beyond the Lunar Sphere”

Some Hermetic magi have heard rumors about the power of Sun Beams. Afraid that the power of these potent spells originates beyond the Lunar Sphere, these magi have suggested that Hermetic magic — and thus the Parma Magica, fast-cast spells, and other Hermetic precautions — would not protect against them. Other magi scoff, arguing that all things beyond the Lunar Sphere are God’s domain only, and thus cannot be tamed and directed by inconsequential hedge wizards.

Individual storyguides who wish to allow Volkhyv a greater advantage against Hermetic magi may wish to give the fears of the former group of magi a basis in fact. Those who feel Volkhyv are powerful enough, or that Volkhyv should not have access to power from beyond the Lunar Sphere should assume Hermetic magic works normally against it.

For some Volkhyv, however, Sun Magic includes the summoning of Sun Beams. These can be devastating weapons, as they descend from the sun, and, depending on their overall strength, will fry anything in their path. A Sun Beam is pure, concentrated solar fire. It fries anything in its way, causes steam explosions if it hits liquid, flash boils lakes or rivers, sparks conflagrations in forests and fields, and melts stone. Sun Beams may only be used by Volkhyv whose principal gods are aligned with the sun. These gods include Svarog, Svarozhich, Dazhdbog, Khors, Saule, and Svantovit.

The use of a Sun Beam must always be condoned by the god with whom the Volkhyv is Communing. The storyguide should carefully consider the Volkhyv’s motivation. Is the danger severe enough and the provocation to the aims of the god in question (as opposed to the Volkhyv) strong enough to warrant this action?

Sun Beams are not targeted effects. They always hit whatever the Volkhyv defines as the target regardless of its speed of movement or attempts to dodge, but the target must be visible to the Volkhyv at the concluding moment of the Ritual.

Range is always Sight. Duration is always Momentary. Target can be anything from Individual to Structure. Damage is specified by the Volkhyv. The more damage he wants to inflict, the tighter and more brilliant the beam is. There is no upper limit to the damage that can be done.

Level is judged based Target and damage. First, determine the Target and consult the table below for the base level. Then, simply add the amount of damage desired to determine the adjusted level. For example, if a Volkhyv wishes to inflict 20 points of damage on every member of an approaching band of cavalry (6 men — a Group) he must achieve a total of 15 (base level) plus 20 (desired damage) for a 35 level effect.

Storyguides should consider the effects of extreme heat on targets. Metal armor, for instance, is going to be a serious liability in that it will heat up, and instead of protecting the wearer, will only insure he continues to

burn for rounds after the beam has faded. Molten stone walls won't just collapse, they'll flow, and anything in the way will get burned too. Fields, forests, houses, and wooden objects will catch fire, and so forth.

Target	Base Level
Small	5
Individual	10
Group/Room	15
Structure	20

Hermetic Equivalents: CrIg for minor fire-starting effects

Earth Magic

Earth Magic is almost entirely agricultural in nature and almost solely positive in effect. It allows for the blessing of crops and fields, the healing of barren or tainted ground, the improvement of poor soil, and the tending of plants and crops. The effects of Earth Magic cannot distort plants or make them act in a malicious, violent manner. The only exception lies in the hands of Volkhvy who have dedicated themselves to earth deities. These Volkhvy can raise destructive earth or vegetation effects, but usually only in direct retribution for violations against the earth itself. If a Volkhvy were faced, for instance, with a gross episode of burning, salting, or diabolical infestation, he or she might call upon Mati-Syra-Zemlya to swallow the offenders in a chasm or throw down their fortress in an earthquake. These destructive abilities are restricted to Volkhvy who have dedicated themselves to Mati-Syra-Zemlya, Polevoi, Daten, Lawkapatim, Tawals, Birch Tree, Rugevit (only when actually on the Isle of Rugen — likewise with Porevit and Parentitz), Rugio Boba, and Pergrukiis.

Hermetic Equivalents: CrTe, CrHe, ReTe, ReHe (and PeTe and PeHe with the restrictions described)

Rituals

The magical effects created by Volkhvy are created through Rituals. This designation should not be confused with the Hermetic ritual, which is entirely different and totally unrelated. There are two types of Volkhvy rituals: Improvised Rituals and Great Rituals. Improvised Rituals are performed on a daily basis for the vast majority of magical purposes. Great Rituals, on the other hand, are performed only four times a year, at the solstices and equinoxes, and have the specific purpose of tuning local faerie auras and bringing the local pagan community together.

Note also that all Volkhvy magic — for that matter all Slavic magic — is sung. There may also be dances or gestures associated with certain sorts of Rituals. There are no Rituals that can be cast without singing. If it is not possible for a casting Volkhvy to sing in a firm voice, any Ritual being cast fails.



Improvised Rituals

Before a Volkhvy casts an Improvised Ritual he must have a clear idea of what he wishes to accomplish. This is best stated as a simple sentence or two, for example: "I wish to drive out the fever from Maatya Sandrovna so that she becomes healthy again." Once the aim of the Improvised Ritual has been defined adequately (and assuming the aim is something that falls within the description of a Volkhvy Discipline), assess the level of the desired effect using the guidelines in the Spells Chapter of ArM4 that correspond to the Hermetic Equivalents of the Discipline that is being used.

Volkhvy always need to perceive the subjects of their Improvised Rituals; usually they must be able to see them. This obviously prohibits the Range Arcane Connection, and may prevent Improvised Rituals from affecting certain other, closer targets.



Exempli Gratia: A Volkhv wants to cast a spell to clear away a fog. First, his player makes a statement of the aim of his Ritual: "I'd like to clear the fog from the clearing around my dwelling." This is clearly a task for the Weatherworking Discipline.

Referring to the description of that Discipline, we see that its Hermetic Equivalents are CrAu, PeAu, and ReAu. After referring to the spell guidelines for Perdo Auram, the storyguide decides that this is a level 15 effect taking into account the range, duration, and target implied in the statement of intent. Remember that the Volkhv will not use Hermetic magic to achieve his effect; we are just using the Hermetic spell guidelines to assess the difficulty of the task.

With aim and level determined, assess the amount of time required to cast the Ritual. Improvised Rituals take one minute per level of the effect. A Volkhv can reduce the time required to cast an Improvised Ritual by increasing the level of difficulty. For every five minutes he wishes to shave off the ritual the level of difficulty rises by three. Thus a Volkhv can rattle off a Level 20 spell very quickly by adding 12 to the difficulty of the spell. This technically would reduce the Duration of the Ritual to zero. In practical terms, this would be equivalent to an Hermetic Fast Cast spontaneous spell, where a Volkhv would substitute Conviction for Finesse in the fast-cast formula to determine his actual speed (see ArM4 page 75). It is not possible to alter the duration of a Great Ritual.

For any Improvised Ritual, the Volkhv's chance of a successful outcome depends on the Ritual Total matching or exceeding the desired level of the effect. The Ritual Total is a stress die + Int + (Discipline Score x 3) + (Sing ÷ 3, rounded up) + Conviction + aura. The number of botch dice associated with this roll is three. Since the only factors that

change in this formula are the result of the die roll and the local aura, players may wish to sum the other components of the formula on their character sheets to speed play.

Other modifiers may also apply.

First, additional pagan believers may participate in the Ritual. All pagan believers with a score in Pagan Conviction may add their Conviction score to the Ritual Total. Additional believers need not be in Communion to assist the Volkhv.

Second, the influence of the god with whom the Volkhv is Communing may influence the Ritual Total (see pages 182-185 for specific bonuses). For example, Stribog, one of the gods of wind, confers a +5 bonus on all Weatherworking magic.

Third, a token or site sacred to either the god with whom the Volkhv is Communing or one of the local subsidiary ones can lend its potency to a Ritual if there is some correspondence between the token or site and the aim of the Ritual. Standing stones and sacrificial alters that have been hallowed by centuries of use commonly give +2 or +3. More powerful objects are rare, but not unheard of, and usually relate to a god's specific attributes or legends. For example, Iarilo, God of Fertility, is said to have gifted certain communities with magical vines or trees. A branch from such a tree might give +3 or +4. A grove of trees would be a sacred site giving +5 or +6. The bonuses from several divine objects cannot be added together to boost a Ritual Total; use the highest bonus. Also, be careful not to apply bonuses from inappropriate objects. A bonus from a standing stone sacred to a Fertility goddess is of no use in Weatherworking magic, for example.

Fourth, specific dates may help or hinder certain Rituals. All the Pagan gods have specific festival dates on which their cults are particularly celebrated. On these dates their worshippers can extract greater amounts of power from them. See the charts on pages 182-185 for specific dates and bonuses.

Finally, fatigue and wound penalties apply as usual.

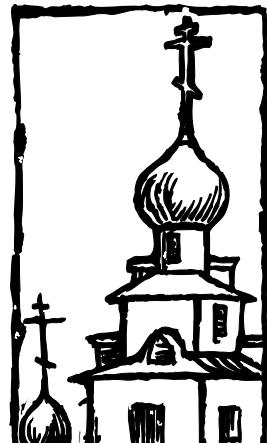
If the Ritual Total meets or exceeds the level of the effect, it takes effect. The targets

may be allowed resistance, and if they are, the penetration is based on the Ritual Total.

Once it is determined, if the Ritual Total greatly exceeds the desired level, unexpected benefits may occur. The Volkhv is in Communion with his god throughout the Ritual. This is an actual being, who may be so impressed by the Ritual as to make an additional effort on the Volkhv's behalf. Any additional benefits or effects are determined solely by the storyguide, who should consider

the Volkhv's actions, the god's character, the requirements of the story, and the details of the situation.

Finally, note that Volkhvy cannot cancel the effects of their Improvised Rituals at will. Instead, they must perform new Rituals to cancel previously cast spells, if it falls within their power. The only exception to this is shapeshifting. Shapeshifting effects are always dismissable through a simple effort of will.



Exempli Gratia: An Improvised Ritual

Danchev the Volkhv is approached by a young woman from his village who wants advice from her aunt, who, unfortunately, is recently deceased. Danchev agrees to consult the dead woman, who was a devout, practicing pagan, and is therefore accessible to him (see Chapter 4 for more on this point).

First, Danchev's player considers the requirements of the Ritual. This is a job for the Volkhv Discipline Spirit Touch. It will involve the Hermetic guidelines for Intélego Mentem, which give a basic range Eye, duration Momentary, and target Individual.

Danchev goes to the village burning ground. This effectively brings him into a range of Eye. He will have to increase the duration, as the young woman has several questions to ask, to Concentration. The InMe guidelines define "Speak with any one human" as a level 20 effect. This adequately reflects Danchev's intention for the Ritual, of establishing communication with a ghost. But because the Duration has increased one stage Danchev will have to perform a level 25 Ritual.

When he is ready to begin, Danchev rolls for Communion. He has no reason to rush the situation and will therefore take his time (ten minutes) and make a simple die roll. He decides not to appeal to Stribog (his principal god) in this instance, but to Baba Yaga, the Slavic god of the dead. Danchev has no relic for Baba Yaga, but the burning ground is sacred to this god in its own right which enables Danchev to do it.

He rolls a 6. 6 (his roll) + 1 (his Presence) + 4 (his Concentration) + 3 (his Conviction) + 4 (the place has a Slavic faerie aura level of 2) = 18. The ease factor is 12+, so Danchev easily achieves Communion. His player notes the Communion Roll (6) and Communion Total (18) for later use.

Now he performs the Improvised Ritual to contact the ghost. First, he states the aim of his Ritual: "To contact the spirit of the young woman's aunt and question it." Satisfied with that, the storyguide allows him to continue using the effect level he has already calculated.

He rolls a 3. 3 (his roll) + 1 (his Intelligence) + 6 (his score in Spirit Touch x 3) + 2 (his Sing ÷ 3, rounded up) + 3 (his Conviction) + 4 (the aura bonus) = 20. He may also add +4 because of Baba Yaga's positive influence in this Discipline and +2 because this is a site sacred to Baba Yaga. This brings the Ritual Total to 26.

This is enough to achieve the contact he wants (remember, the effect level was 25). Note that because the duration of the spell is Concentration, he must maintain Communion until he wishes to dismiss the ghost. Even though the Ritual took 25 minutes to cast, he will not have to make a roll to maintain Communion for another 15 minutes, because all he'll be doing in the meantime is performing the simple task of having a conversation. He must be careful not to be distracted, though, or he'll have to make an immediate Communion maintenance roll to avoid being dumped out of Communion, and, thus, having the Ritual's effect end.

At the conclusion of his conversation Danchev allows the spell to lapse and releases Communion. Now he must calculate fatigue. The ease factor is 6 (the base) + 5 (1 per magnitude of Ritual cast), = 11. Danchev's Communion Roll was a 6, and he must subtract -1 because his Stamina is poor for a total of 5. He has failed his fatigue check, missing the ease factor by 6. Dividing that result by 3 yields two Fatigue levels lost. Danchev goes back to his house to rest.



Great Rituals

As discussed in *Pax Dei*, Christian priests persistently channel the will of the Divine to create, reinforce, and manipulate Divine auras. The Volkhvy, as the priests of the pagan Slavs, have a similar role with regard to the auras they favor. Although Slavic faerie auras are certainly not the direct emanations of the Divine that Christian auras are, they are nevertheless of great importance to the followers of the Slavic gods. Not only are these sorts of auras more useful to the Volkhvy because of the way they affect Volkhvy magic, they also allow all pagan believers dwelling within them to work small feats of magic through the power of their belief.

A Great Ritual is a stirring, dramatic event. It involves dozens and perhaps hundreds of people. At its peak, it might involve divine revelation, prophecy, or miraculous events. Through Great Rituals, Volkhvy tune auras — that is to say, they make neutral faerie auras into Slavic faerie auras — by performing the four great seasonal rituals at the solstices and equinoxes. The regularity of these ritual is very important, because the Slavic nature of a faerie auras naturally decays without them. The community is also of vast importance in Great Rituals. They involve entire clans with singing and dancing, ceremonial drama, sacrifice, and stylized competitions. Lone Volkhvy living in seclusion cannot perform Great Rituals at all, which explains one reason that Volkhvy are so tied to their communities.

Great Rituals take between three and six hours (at the storyguide's discretion) depending on local resources and circumstances.

The Ritual Total for a Great Ritual is calculated much like the Ritual Total for Improvised Rituals. It is a stress die + Int + (Discipline Average x 3) + (Sing ÷ 3, rounded up) + Conviction + aura. "Discipline Average" means that no single Discipline score applies to a Great Ritual. All the presiding Volkhvy's Discipline scores are averaged (round to nearest whole number) to get the Discipline Average, which is then multiplied by three and added into the total.

As with Improvised Rituals, one Volkhvy must preside over the Ritual. His Discipline scores and Abilities are used to calculate the Ritual Total, and he makes the die roll. As with Improvised Rituals, though, any pagan believer with a Pagan Conviction score may add his score to the Ritual Total. In fact, it would be unusual and suspect if any Volkhvy who is a member of the local community did not participate.

The presiding Volkhvy uses his principal god's bonus for this Ritual unless he chooses to use the bonus associated with a god who is especially affiliated with the community or a local sacred site. The bonus is +3 if the deity is a "major" deity (that is, one marked with an asterisk in the charts on page 182-185) and +1 if the deity is not major.

The bonuses from any and all sacred sites in close proximity to the community's location can be added to the Ritual Total. This is possible because the community actually travels through the surrounding countryside, completing a circuit of the local sacred sites, in the course of the Ritual. Unlike Improvised Rituals, these bonuses all apply, not just the highest one.

The bonuses and penalties to Improvised Rituals resulting from sacred tokens and sites and fatigue or wound penalties apply in the same ways to Great Rituals (see page 68).

Finally, Great Rituals can benefit from sacrifice. An animal or item sacred to the appropriate god can be sacrificed. The usual bonus for an unexceptional mundane animal would be +1. An animal exceptional in color or form would garner +2. An animal exceptional in both color and form would gain +3. Magical animals confer bonuses equal to their Magic Might. A human is a very potent sacrificial creature, but there's a catch. The sacrificial victim must be a pagan who is capable of fully understanding what he is doing and who must give willing consent. Under these circumstances a human sacrifice adds +10 to the Ritual Total. The consequences of performing a human sacrifice that does not conform to these criteria is usually terrible. It guarantees failure, requires five extra botch dice, and (regardless of botch) almost cer-

tainly causes a curse to fall on both the presiding Volkhv and the community as a whole. It is also well known that some of the pagan gods prefer specific sorts of sacrifice beyond those listed here. Particulars will be found in the descriptions of gods in Appendix II. Assess the value of these sacrifices on the basis of their nature (mundane or magical), size, and quality. Bonuses for mundane items, as with animals, will not exceed +3; magical objects will, of course, be of greater value.

All of the bonuses are added together with the result of the Volkhv's roll, as described above, for the Great Ritual Total.

The primary effect of a Great Ritual, as discussed above, is to tune a local faerie aura, making it a Slavic faerie aura. If the Ritual Total is at least 20, it is a success for this purpose. If it is unsuccessful, there is no effect on the aura. The local aura behaves as if no Ritual had taken place.

Of course, a Great Ritual can be undertaken in an aura other than faerie. In an Infernal or magical aura, if the Great Ritual total exceeds the aura's (rating x 10), the existing aura is reduced by an amount equal to the amount by which the Ritual total exceeds the local aura (rating x 10), divided by 10 and rounded down. For example, a Great Ritual performed in an area with an Infernal aura of 3 that generates a Ritual Total of 46 would reduce the Infernal aura of the area by 1 to 2, since $(46 - 30) \div 10 = 1.6$, which rounds down to 1. Great Rituals performed in Divine auras are similar, except that Divine auras are multiplied by 20 rather than 10 to determine whether they're affected, and how much.

It is possible that magical, Infernal, and Divine auras can be reduced to negative totals by the formulas described above. But there can be no "negative" auras, of course. Whenever a negative rating would result





from a Great Ritual, the area affected becomes a faerie aura of rating 1 (which is tuned as a Slavic faerie aura, if the Ritual Total was 20 or more).

All of the aura effects described in this section affect only a specific area of aura. Faerie auras are only tuned to Slavic, and other auras are only affected, within a particular area. The rule of thumb (to be interpreted by the storyguide) is that the area affected will be roughly circular, centered on the most powerful sacred site involved in the ritual, and that its diameter will be approximately one mile for every twenty participants in the ritual. This is why Volkhy are rarely found unattached to communities; it is the strength of the community that determines this important factor, not the power or Conviction of the Volkhy.

Though they are described as having diameters, the areas affected by Great Rituals are rarely perfectly circular. Instead, the storyguide should determine, if necessary, exactly which local areas are affected by a shift or tuning according to natural boundaries and

the location of local sacred sites. Rivers and hillsides tend to form natural boundaries for auras, as do forest borders. Sacred sites, especially those that were involved in the Great Ritual, might cause the area of an aura to bulge around them. As a rule of thumb, the areas of an aura should be roughly equivalent to the area of a circle of the stated diameter. The storyguide's judgment is the final arbiter in case of any ambiguity or disagreement.

It is possible for the aura effect of a Great Ritual to affect only a portion of a larger aura. A faerie aura that covers an entire forest might only be tuned Slavic within the areas surrounding the village that was the center of the Great Ritual. Likewise, a Great Ritual cast successfully within a Divine aura that covers a vast reach of land would simply create a pocket of diminished effect.

Where Slavic faerie auras exist, or previous Great Rituals have affected other auras, these effects will decay if they are not bolstered by Great Rituals four times a year. In general, the Slavic nature of a faerie aura will decline at a rate of 1 mile of diameter on every solstice or equinox when a Great Ritual is not successfully completed in order to maintain it. For example, imagine that four score believers in a given community establish a tuned aura four miles in diameter in the Spring and then are all slain by crusaders. In the Summer, no Great Ritual is performed, so the tuned area shrinks to a 3 mile diameter. In the Fall, it shrinks to 2 miles. By the end of next Spring, it will be gone entirely unless a new group of believers arrives in the area and begins the rituals again.

The same decaying effect holds for magical, Infernal, or Divine auras that are diminished by Great Rituals. In the absence of other effects and in the absence of continued season Great Rituals, the original auras will gradually return to their original levels. The only exception is for magical, Infernal, or Divine auras that were totally overwhelmed and turned to faerie auras. These areas remain faerie perpetually (though they'll be neutral, rather than Slavic), sustained by the faerie creatures that have moved into the area, until and unless the local magical, Infernal, or

Affecting Auras

Great Rituals affect the strength and characteristics of auras in Mythic Europe. Some storyguides may be put off by the possibility of characters affecting the magical currents and eddies of the land, and others may be confused by the imprecise way in which they are changed. There are a few things that storyguides should consider when thinking about these issues.

First, note that no Volkhy character can affect auras by himself. The rules are set up so that all Volkhy require the support of their communities in order to successfully tune auras of any meaningful size. If you, as storyguide, don't wish to allow Volkhy this power, you have an easy method of denying it to them.

Second, understand that the auras of Mythic Europe represent forces that ebb and flow entirely at the discretion of the storyguide. Even though these rules provide powers that allow characters to have a concrete hand in changing them, the storyguide may always modify the outcomes of Great Rituals and transform the boundaries and strengths of auras to reflect supernatural forces that the players have no hope of comprehending.

Ultimately, the storyguide should not be afraid to do what he thinks is necessary and appropriate for the saga, even if it is at odds with the rules described here.

Divine forces actively persecute them.

Once the effect of the Great Ritual on the local auras is determined, the final potential outcome of a Great Ritual is that the Volkhv will convert local waverers or turn committed Christians into doubters. There is no formula for this sort of effect. Instead, the storyguide must carefully assess the Ritual. Was it a great show of community solidarity? Did it demonstrate the magical and religious might of its leaders and participants? Did it impact any waverers or potential doubters in a personal way? Will the ritual substantially change local conditions? For the better? For the worse?

Aftermath

The period immediately following the end of a Great Ritual is a time during which Volkhv are at their most potent and achieve their greatest feats. This period is known as the Aftermath and Improvised Rituals performed by the Volkhv during these periods are commonly regarded as miraculous. The powers and abilities to which a Volkhv has access during the Aftermath are described in this section.

First, the presiding Volkhv in any Great Ritual remains in a state of Communion, without effort (that is, without requiring Concentration checks to stay in Communion) until dawn of the following day.

Second, the presiding Volkhv receives the Ritual Total of the Great Ritual as a pool of power that remains at his disposal until dawn of the following day. This pool may be used to automatically cast Improvised Rituals until it is gone. (For example, if the Ritual Total was 50, the Volkhv could automatically invoke a number of levels of Improvised Rituals during this time equal to a total level of 50 without being forced to make any additional rolls.) The Volkhv may dispose of this pool in whatever fashion he pleases, all at once, in a single Improvised Ritual, or in small portions throughout the period of the Aftermath. Portions of this power pool *cannot* be “tacked on” to normally cast Improvised

Rituals. For example, a Volkhv cannot cast a Ritual normally during Aftermath, fail to achieve the necessary ease factor to cast the effect, and then make up the difference with points from the power pool.

Finally, the Volkhv’s Magic Resistance increases by the full amount of the Ritual Total until dawn of the next day. This is not affected by spending from the pool of power, as described above.

Volkhvy who participate in (but do not preside over) a Great Ritual automatically



Traditional Aftermath Activities

Because Aftermath is such a powerful time for Volkhvy, it is traditional that they invoke certain rare and powerful effects during that time. In fact, members of Slavic pagan communities often come to expect that these sorts of things will happen after Great Rituals. The communities, therefore, can be quite disappointed if a Volkhv uses the time of Aftermath for purposes other than those described below.

Miraculous Healing

Thanks to the “power pool” bestowed on them in Aftermath, most Volkhvy can perform healing spells that are much more powerful than normal, allowing them to cure especially difficult diseases and heal especially grievous wounds. There are even rumors that some Volkhvy have been able to raise the dead (see page 64). Naturally a Volkhv’s congregation is well aware of this situation, and beseech him for special attentions at this time. Obviously the Volkhv must make careful judgments as to who best deserves or needs his services.

Prophecy

The prophecies delivered during Aftermath are often given even more weight than prophecies performed at other times by the members of a pagan community. Members of the community often want to know if good times or ill are headed for the community as a whole. The highest level of prophecy reaches a theoretical level of 108 (a crucial question concerning matters a millennium in the future of concern to many nations). Accordingly, if a Volkhv needs to pursue answers to questions affecting exceptional time limits, areas, or importance, he will wait until a Great Ritual Aftermath.



remain in Communion until sunset, receive a pool of power equal half the Ritual Total which must be used by sunset or lost, and have their Magic Resistance increased by half the Ritual Total until sunset.

There is nothing to prevent a Volkhv from using the Aftermath to achieve astonishing effects in the Disciplines. The only limitations on them at these times are common sense and divine restraint. Never forget that the Volkhv is a servant to his god. He might like to go into the nearest city and level all the cathedrals there, but this is not an impulse to which he can safely give in. The old gods know this well and commonly restrain their servants from acts of vainglorious folly.

Furthermore, most Volkhv are acutely aware that their period of potency is strictly limited, and subsequent confrontations with the powers that be are unlikely to go in their favor. For this reason, most Volkhv spend their Aftermath points on a few potent healing spells or other activities especially pleasing to their gods.

Great Rituals and Miracles

In addition to the aura-tuning effects of Great Rituals, miraculous events often transpire in the midst of Great Rituals. While the pagan gods are not truly divine, there is no doubting that they greatly exceed common earthly forces in power and wisdom. There is danger, under these rules, for Volkhv deities to be treated as little more than magical reservoirs, "on tap" for Volkhv convenience. However, these are beings with their own identities, agendas, and needs. Those needs conform closely to the desires of the Slavic people, but are not solely controlled by these considerations. It is during Great Rituals that their personalities and wishes can be made particularly manifest, either to goad their followers to new heights of Conviction, to bolster the belief of an entire community, or to do some great deed that needs to be done.

To this end, genuine "divine" interventions can occur during or immediately after a

Great Ritual: idols can speak, the earth may give tongue, the sun may descend to touch the world. These events are not governed by a mechanical rule system. They answer only to the needs of the saga and the imperatives of good roleplaying. The storyguide should use them to achieve that special touch of unaccountable mystery, divinity, and revelation, and to give the Volkhv character a final, sharp edge to divide them, as priests, from simple magic-users.

Points that certainly should be considered by the storyguide include the following:

Circumstances: Who has been brought into proximity with a Volkhv Great Ritual, and how, and why?

Side Effects: How does witnessing a miracle effect the onlookers? What sort of "splash" might the manifestation of a god have? What is the nature, realm, and authority of the god in question? What will such a god do, inadvertently, to normal people or to magi?

Participants: Who is drawn into the miracle itself? Does it channel through one individual? Through many? Through none?

Manifestation: What physical, mystical, and spiritual effects are experienced? How permanent are they?

Consequences: How will the event be reported? At what distance? How will different groups like the Church, nobility, royalty, and peasants react to the news? How will the players' participation be viewed?

One last word of advice about these "real" miracles: make them rare.

The Darker Side

The picture that has been given so far is of Volkhv as devoted pastoral community leaders, committed to the welfare of their people and with a magic that simply overflows with goodwill and usefulness. This is a rather one-sided view, for Volkhv are people too. They are prey to pettiness and anger. Many of them bubble with hatred of the

Christian Church and of anything that smacks of Christianity. For that matter many have little love for the princes and boyars who afflict their people.

Then there are the gods. Even the best of them are a little bit wild. Their roots lie in faerie, and in the boundless energies of nature. Nature is not always kind. The anger of the good gods aside, there are the dark gods to consider. The Slavic pantheon doesn't just celebrate light, warmth, and fertility. The gods of war and death are represented, though these are still seen as part of the natural process. Very much worse are the gods of winter and cold. The Slavs know the cold season intimately — the deep snows and the searing wind. The gods who stand behind these forces are no friends to humanity. Lastly, there are the gods of evil. In Russia the two worst of these are Chernobog, mad brother of the white maiden Beilbog, and The Nameless, the Master of Demons and Soul of the Polar Night.

It should come as no surprise to learn that there are a very few Volkhvy devoted to these deities. They are rarely a part of normal Slavic communities, though they are usually courteously received (at arm's length) wherever they travel. Their lives are mysterious ones, which few can claim to understand. They commonly have great power in the Spirit Touch and Remove Curse Disciplines, but very seldom use them for kindly purposes. Volkhvy call these priests Koldun (Koldun'ia for females), a term that means "sorcerer" or "witch." In this context, it is often used as a term of subtle denigration. (Interestingly enough, Orthodox priests often use this word indiscriminately to describe all magic workers — members of the Order of Hermes included.)

No matter their label, it was these "Dark" Volkhvy who made a common rite of human sacrifice in the days before the Christian conversion, and who sacrificed unwilling victims without any damaging side effects. It is also the Koldun who most aggressively fight the authorities and priests of Christ and who have done so much to taint the pagans in the eyes of the Church and the nobles.

Dark Volkhvy Magic

For the most part, it is the outlook and behavior of these Volkhvy that sets them apart from other Volkhvy. As far as game mechanics are concerned, these fiendish characters are different from standard Volkhvy only in a few concrete ways. Such characters are generated almost exactly the same as normal Volkhvy. The only difference is that rather than take the Volkhvy +2 Virtue, they take a Virtue called Koldun +2. The differences between Volkhvy and Koldun are as follows.

- The Gifts of Koldun do not except Slavic pagans and animals in Slavic auras from the ill-ease at their presence.
- Koldun are considered Outcasts (ArM4 page 39) rather than Wise Ones.
- Koldun cannot cast or participate in Great Rituals.



In addition to the differences in the defining Volkhvy Virtues, Koldun can "reverse" several of the Disciplines. They use the Healing Discipline to cause damage, injuries, and diseases by following the guidelines for the Hermetic Equivalent PeCo. They can use the Animal Magic Discipline to harm and injure animals by using the Hermetic Equivalent PeAn. Finally, they can use the Remove Curses Discipline to inflict curses by using CrMe, MuMe, and ReMe Hermetic Equivalents.

Finally, Koldun can use human sacrifice to boost their Improvised Ritual Totals. They are not restricted to willing pagan sacrifices (as normal Volkhvy are) and they are not restricted to using these sacrifices as part of Great Rituals (Koldun can't participate in Great Rituals). Instead, each human sacrificed as part of an Improvised Ritual adds between +1 and +5 to the Ritual Total, depending on the value of the sacrifice to the Volkhvy's principal god (which is adjudicated solely by the storyguide). As many people can be sacrificed as the Dark Volkhvy wishes, but the maximum cumulative bonus from these



sacrifices is +5 per Ritual. Additional sacrifices are no doubt pleasing to these depraved deities, but have no additional mechanical effect.

Since Koldun can't participate in Great Rituals in any way at all, they are most commonly found lurking near pagan communities, or traveling from one to another, or sometimes on the fringes of strong faerie auras, especially those dedicated to the White Court (see Chapter 4). Although respected by the members of these communities because of their close affiliation with the pagan gods, Koldun are certainly not encouraged to remain in the area. While they remain part of the natural order for the pagans, they are not very pleasant in any event.

Another consequence of the Koldun's inability to participate in Great Rituals is a slower accumulation of Conviction experience points (see page 58). To make up for this shortfall, each season, the storyguide or troupe should review the Koldun's behavior and activities for the past season. If this behavior cleaved to the nature of the Koldun's principal god, furthered the god's agenda on earth, and demonstrated the Koldun's unwavering belief, the Koldun is awarded one Conviction experience point for the season, over and above any others earned.

It is the Koldun who are the nightmares of the Russian Church and princes, who remember Vseslav the Sorcerer and his unholy practices, the screaming of innocent victims, and the devilish slaughter of armies.

Other Slavic Character Types

Skomorokhi

Skomorokhi are pagan bards, storytellers, and fortune-tellers who travel between pagan communities entertaining with story and song. The most common divination method among these characters is to listen to the cries or grumbles of a trained animal, often a bear, as they play to it, often on a small harp called a gusli. Skomorokhi often travel into cities, sometimes on behalf of Volkhvy, to whom they are often obedient. More frequently, however, they are found in rural areas where they are assured a warm welcome among the pagan communities.

Skomorokhi are best portrayed as companion characters. Any self-respecting Skomorokhi should have the +1 Virtue Animal Companion (ArM4 page 40) and +4 Virtue Divination (ArM4 page 45). Suggested Abilities for Skomorokhi include Animal Handling, Charm, Enchanting Music (which requires the appropriate Virtue), Folk Ken, Guile, Legend Lore, Legerdemain, Play, Sing, Theology: Slavic, and Visions.

Vedun

Vedun are Slavic Cunning Folk (Vedun is the male title, Vedma is female). They are found close to cities far more commonly than Volkhvy, probably because they

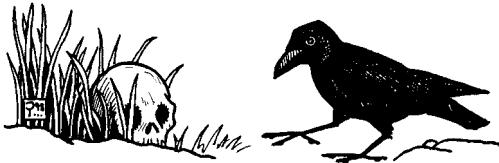
have no need of a committed pagan community to serve or to assist them in their magics. Nonetheless, they are almost always themselves pagan, and they have suffered heavily at the hands of the Orthodox Church which takes the injunction "thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" very literally. Most Vedun have the Personality Trait Pagan Belief.

Vedun should be handled according to the rules for Cunning Folk in *Hedge Magic*, with some minor amendments as described below.

Vedun who are committed pagans (that is, who have Pagan Belief) choose one particular Slavic Deity as their patron, selecting whichever one most closely accords with their particular focus in magic and life. Beilbog is popular, as is Mati-Syra-Zemlya. Violent gods such as Perun are very uncommon. When creating a Vedun, take a look at the descriptions of Slavic deities in Appendix II and select a suitable divinity, paying close attention to the areas of authority.

If a Vedun possesses a pagan relic sacred to his patron he can add the rating of this relic to his roll whenever crafting a potion, charm, or bane whose purpose is in accord with the nature of his patron. For example, a Vedma dedicated to Walgino, God of Cattle, wants to craft a charm to confer the Virtue Animal Ken. He can add the value of a relic of Walgino's which he possesses to his total for this act, since Walgino's area of authority accords with the spell. Unlike Volkhvy,

Naturally enough, Christians consider that all Volkhy are this way: devil worshippers and murderers. As a final note, it is up to the storyguide and troupe to decide just how close to the truth the Christian image of the Koldun is. On the one hand they may simply be the servants and representatives of the darkest natural forces: death, cold, decay, and destruction. Then again perhaps they truly are devil worshippers, attuned to the hidden face of Satan which the Christians have always seen lurking behind pagan idols.



Domestic Slavic Magic

Slavic pagans within a Slavic faerie aura do not need to be Gifted in order to achieve “magical” effects. For example, the woman who chants a little incantation over her loom genuinely creates an enhancement of its ability to weave. These effects can be achieved in relation to any common activity such as craftsmanship, agriculture, hunting, or art, and accordingly are referred to as Domestic Magic.

Domestic Magic is learned by everyone who believes in it — that is, anyone with a



Other Slavic Character Types, Cont.

Vedun cannot utilize relics that are not sacred to their patrons.

Possession of a pagan relic can be taken by Vedun as a variable Virtue, the cost of which is equal to its rating, up to a maximum of 3.

If the Vedun knows of a sacred pagan site such as an abandoned altar, ancient grove, or standing stone, he may choose to use it as his “laboratory:” the place where he crafts potions, charms, and banes. Naturally he will be able to use the aura of this site to assist all of his magical operations, but if the site also happens to be sacred to his patron god, he can use the pagan religious value of the site to assist operations that accord with the nature or area of authority of the patron. (This “pagan religious value” is the bonus that the site would give a Volkhy using it to cast Rituals. The values of these sites are discussed on page 68.) For example, a Vedma dedicated to Beilbog knows of an ancient grove sacred to her patron. She can use its +1 aura to aid all her operations, but she can also use its +2 pagan religious value when crafting healing potions, antidotes, and positive, benevolent charms. Knowledge of such a site for a starting character is a +1 Virtue if it is not dedicated to the Vedun’s patron and a +2 Virtue if it is.

Unlike Volkhy, Vedun do not rely on the Slavic gods for their powers, but they do usually worship these gods. Accordingly, it is much easier for a Vedun to offend his gods by working an unacceptable act of

magic. For example, if a Vedun of Beilbog (the White Maiden, Goddess of Healing and Purity) should maliciously create a bane, especially one which effects a fellow pagan, or worse, a fellow worshipper of Beilbog, he may suffer supernatural retribution, including such maladies as curses, diseases, harassment by faerie creatures, and so forth. What, exactly, constitutes an “unacceptable act of magic” is a choice every troupe and storyguide must make independently, but if you want the pagan element of the Vedun’s character to be strong, the gods should be reasonably alert and intolerant of acts that cut against their natures.

The second problem that afflicts Vedun is the possibility of betrayal. Many live amidst communities that are at least technically Christian, often close to large towns or cities. Accordingly it is all too possible that they may offend someone who will turn to the authorities (church or nobility) to seek retribution. Most Vedun carry a Flaw such as Bad Reputation or Enemies to reflect this difficulty.



positive score in the Personality Trait Pagan Belief — usually from his parents or friends. A child learns the charms for making weapons and tools especially sharp from watching his father making his. The youthful hunter watches his older brothers at work fashioning arrows and making invocations to the gods for a successful hunt, and does likewise.

Domestic spell effects are not likely to make a great impact in game terms. They are, as far as the bulk of the Order of Hermes is concerned, fundamentally incompatible with Hermetic magics. Their likeliest impact lies in the realm of money making since they enhance the quality of goods produced.

As the above outline should make clear, Domestic Magic can be used to enhance almost anything that people do or make. As a general rule, Domestic Magic can be used in conjunction with any Talent or Skill (refer to ArM4, page 53), but let common sense guide



you. Arcane Talents and Academic Skills are two absolute exceptions — they may never be used with Domestic Magic — and you may wish to exclude others such as Concentration depending on the situation. The storyguide is always the final arbiter.

Consider hunting as an example. A man who knows hunting chants and rituals can:

- Make better bows, arrows, traps, snares, pits, and lures.
- Follow a trail through worse country, in worse conditions, with more certainty of what he's following.
- Skin, butcher, dress meat, and cache it more quickly and more effectively.
- Tan skin, dry sinew, extract glue from bones, and dry meat more efficiently and get a better product at the end of it.

The mechanics of Domestic Magic are simple.

First, in order to use Domestic Magic, a pagan Slav must have the Personality Trait Pagan Belief. Second, he must be inside a Slavic faerie aura. Finally, he must have an Ability score of at least 3 in the area of the Ability that is to be affected by the Domestic Magic. This represents his knowledge of the religious rituals as they relate to the Ability in question, and also limits the sorts of Domestic Magic he can use. For example, hunters cast hunting spells; weavers cast weaving spells; and cooks, smiths, tinkers, and tanners cast cooking, smithing, tinkering, and tanning spells.

Assuming these three conditions are met, the individual first states the effect he is trying to bring about. "Lady Devana, make these arrows sharp that they may bring down many beasts," a craftsman might say as he hones the arrows he is making. Next, he sings the invocation, which takes an amount of time appropriate to the activity. Finally, the effect is determined.

The level of effect is judged by Hermetic criteria, just as with Volkhvy magic. The level of the effect created is equal to Pagan Belief + Conviction + Relevant Ability. There is no die roll. Domestic magicians cannot pool

powers, nor aid each other in any way. A +1 bonus may be added if the invoker's Sing score is greater than 3. Unlike Volkhvy magic, this is not an all or nothing system. Domestic Magics take hold at whatever level the magician manages to achieve.

Being disturbed in the middle of a spell has no effect. A Domestic magician is not in Communion and can always return to his work at a later point.

Because of the limited durations that workers of Domestic Magic can achieve, they very often repeat spells. Women don't just enchant wool as they weave it, they re-enchant it every time they wash it. Similarly, the hunter makes impermanently magical arrows, but constant honing keeps them magically sharp. Individual enchantments are fleeting, but when magic becomes a way of life, "permanent" effects can be achieved.

All tools and products enchanted by Domestic Magic lose their enchantment once removed from a Slavic aura, with one exception. A tool or product retains its enchantment if taken directly into a neutral Faerie aura. There is enough harmony between Slavic and standard faerie auras to preserve the action of Domestic enchantments, though not enough to allow the creation of new ones. Naturally, raising a Divine aura in a formally pagan village can have regrettable effects.

Objects or tools which have lost their enchantment upon leaving a Slavic aura can be revived. All it takes is a suitably skilled individual working in a Slavic faerie aura to re-enchant it.

Exempli Gratia: A woman weaving wool into cloth wants to improve its durability. She is a devout woman, having a Pagan Belief of +3. Her village lies within a Slavic Pagan aura. Her Craft: Weaving Ability level is 4. Because she meets the conditions, she may use Domestic Magic to help her task.

As outlined above, she wants to increase the durability of the material she's creating. After making a statement to this effect, she sings the invocations while she weaves. The level of effect she achieves is 3 (her Pagan Belief) + 0 (she has no Pagan Conviction) + 4 (her Ability to weave) = 7.

At level 5, she can "make a major change to something made of animal products that preserves the substance." With an effect level of 7, she can achieve that effect. The Hermetic Guidelines for Muto Animal give it Range Touch, Target Individual, and Duration Sun. If she had been able to increase her level of effect to 10, she would have been able to increase that effect to Duration Moon, if she had wanted to.



The tree took Stanic away like a man plucking a ripe plum from a bowl. One moment he was there, walking steadily along the dark trail ten feet ahead of her. In a split second, the branches swooped down, engulfing him in a blizzard of leaves, before springing upward and inward toward the great mottled trunk. A startled cry, a soft gurgle of laughter, and a few loose leaves idly fluttered down. He was gone.

Malincka gaped for all of ten seconds while, behind her, Marya screamed and Milosch cursed. Then she strode forward and put her hands on the trunk.

“Give him back,” she demanded.

Mocking laughter.

“Give him back,” she repeated, insistent.

“Shan’t,” replied a high voice, coy, like a teasing five-year old.

“Would it make any difference if I said please?”

“None.” Low giggles. “I’ve got him now. I’ve got him — he’s mine.”

“Not for long.” Five years ago she would not have known how to deal with this, but the Volkhy knew a trick or two and her three winters of study at Three Lakes covenant had been rewarding.

The veil-piercing spell was demanding but effective. Magic flowed together in her hands like a knife. It took a moment of probing to find a weak spot on the trunk: a fat knot at head height peppered with bristly sprouts. She pressed in, thrusting through the darkling magic behind the wood, and then, as if slashing the wall of a tent, she ripped downward.

The trunk peeled apart. There was a shriek in outrage and shock. Bright light flooded out onto the trail, as if from a hot summer’s day. She stepped through.

It was a hall. The trunk of a hollow tree seen from the inside, but magnified in size at least twentyfold. There was grass underfoot, and tall rounded windows flooded with green-gold light.

Stanic lay at the center of the room, his expression fixed somewhere between drunken stupor and simple lechery. Standing over him was the Rusalka.

Tall was Malincka’s first thought — very tall, and slender as a whip. Green as a fresh leaf and with far too many fingers on those long, thin hands.

“You!” The tree spirit shivered, face working convulsively. “You! How dare you! I’ll . . . I’ll . . .”

“Give me back what’s mine.” It wasn’t easy to make herself smile. The aura was very strong, and hostile. “Please. There, I asked politely, didn’t I?”

The Rusalka paused. Its gaze switching back and forth rapidly between the two mortals. “You’re separate. Two of you. Apart. I know. I took him — he’s mine.”

“No. He’s mine. He’s sworn to me. I own him. I came after him. I want him back.”

“Can’t have him.”

“I’ll take him, if I must.”

“Oh? Oh?” The Rusalka grinned. “Think you can?” There was a sudden hollow boom behind her, and Malincka knew her exit had slammed shut.

“Yes.” She raised her hands, let a little magic gather round them, then a little more, and more. “I do.”

The Rusalka hissed, crouching. “You want him? Very well. Take him,” she laughed softly. “If you can find him!”

Magic leapt up at the chamber’s heart. In a heart-beat it had risen, peaked, and died away. When it was done, there was a stand of saplings, a hundred at least, each about the height of a man. “Find him,” said the Rusalka, “and you can take him. But no cheating.” Her long hands stroked the air, and Malincka felt the magic suddenly ebbing away from her. The Rusalka giggled. “Find him, keep him, and if you can’t, I’ll keep him. And you too.”

It seemed she had no choice. She went among the saplings, examining them carefully. They were all but identical. Slender trunks, thin boughs, barely opened buds. No distinguishing marks, no leaves showing, no difference in feeling or scent. All young and perfectly formed . . . all young.

Malincka laughed. She looked at the Rusalka, who had been standing aside. “Clever!” Malincka laughed

again. "But also foolish." She strode out of the little grove, eyes searching. "Where . . . ah!" She pointed quickly at the Rusalka's left hand though the creature made a quick attempt to snatch it behind her back. "Stanic!"

A small ring of wood around one long finger. Gnarled and dark but gleaming softly, and with silver highlights. As she called his name the ring glowed brightly, then flexed, dropping from the Rusalka's hand to the floor.

"You cannot alter essential nature, can you?" Malincka remarked as the little whorl of magic began to swell, its outlines flowing to form the shape of a man; a solid, broad-shouldered man, but growing old now, well over middle-age, silver-haired. "The gift of youth isn't in you to give."

The Rusalka wept. "Give him to me! Witch, kind witch, let me keep him. I need a mortal. I need — "

"You need help. Yes. I can see that." Malincka gestured at the windows. Bright light shone in but nothing else. "You're trapped here aren't you? I've heard of this . . . the power has fallen away. This little forest doesn't have the strength it used to."

"Not now. Not anymore." She had dwindled, and the hall itself had shrunken, falling in on itself until it was little larger than a peasant's cot. Stanic was sitting up now, shaking his head in confusion.

"I think we can trade. You will give me a part of yourself. I will give you a part of myself."

"The man!"

"No. I will give you my legs. I will carry you. There is a Leshie's holt only three days from here in the waking world. I will take you there. And in return . . . "

"Yes?"

Malincka smiled. "You will tell me about this place of yours, how you made it, and how you sustain it. I have *questions*."

For a long moment the Rusalka considered, then, with a sigh, she nodded. "Trade."

Then the walls were tumbling down, the forest rearing up, dark and dank, the little group of travelers crying out and scattering as the tree crumbled away.

Malincka looked around her. Real air and real moisture, shabby, but solid. Stanic was standing by the stump of the tree. Massive, flat-topped, riddled with mushrooms and old moss; it looked as if it had tumbled a thousand years before. Perched on his shoulder was an owl. Small, perfectly formed, and as green as an emerald.



Chapter 4

Slavic Faerie

Mythic Europe is a land of four Realms: magical, faerie, Infernal, and Divine. All supernatural power flows from these four wellsprings. When thinking of the pagan Slavs, think of the Realm of Faerie. The gods of the Slavs (and for that matter, the deities of most of the pagan cultures remaining in Mythic Europe) are actually powerful faerie creatures. Their homes and domains, which you will read about in the chapter that follows, can be found within Arcadia.

The alignment of pagan gods with the Realm of Faerie explains, in some sense, their continuing decline throughout Mythic Europe. As the Dominion presses through the land claiming nations and their peoples for God, it is often the faerie auras that are the worse for it. While this encroachment of the Dominion does not particularly affect the Old Ones — the great faerie powers who were so often worshipped as gods by the original inhabitants of Mythic Europe — it does make an important impact on their followers and their followers' surroundings, because they no longer enjoy the proximity to their deities that they once did.

Bestiary Note

The descriptions of faerie creatures found in this chapter use the definitions of powers and weaknesses found in *Faeries* on pages 92-96. Although the general purposes and manifestations of the powers and weaknesses mentioned are self-explanatory in most cases, you'll need a copy of *Faeries* for the specifics.

For the time being, though, faerie is still strong in Mythic Europe. No one knows God's plans, and until they are revealed, faerie powers will continue to play an important role in Mythic Europe.

Slavic faerie is somewhat different from the faerie of western and southern Europe, but that is to be expected. Faeries are creatures with strong ties to humanity, and it is only fitting that different faeries and different areas of Arcadia correspond closely to the lands with which they are associated. The unique facets of Slavic faerie are what this chapter is about.

"Slavic" Faerie Auras

As discussed in Chapter 3, *The Dragon and the Bear* introduces a new sort of faerie aura, the Slavic faerie aura. For the purposes of almost all people, creatures, items, and acts of magic, Slavic faerie auras are no different from normal ("neutral") faerie auras. Slavic faerie auras affect magi in exactly the same way that neutral faerie auras do. In fact, most magi would be hard pressed to tell the difference between the types.

The reason the "Slavic" designation in "Slavic faerie aura" is important is that these are the areas where Volkhvy are especially powerful (refer to the Volkhvy Realm Interactions table on page 59), and that these are the areas where those with Pagan Belief can work Domestic Magic (see pages 77-79).

Bestiary

The Old High Gods

The High Gods of the Slavs are those great beings worshipped across whole principalities or kingdoms. Far from modest nature spirits, these creatures personify fundamental natural forces for millions of people. Technically, these beings are "Greater Faerie Lords," as defined in *Faeries*, on page 106. However, Slavic High Gods, such as Perun, the Slavic deity of lightning, storm, and war, are beings of staggering power to the extent that it is not only futile but also pointless to assign statistics to them. In game terms these beings are invulnerable and immortal.

Appendix II (pages 177-186) gives a

comprehensive list of the widely worshipped deities, the areas in which they are worshipped, their physical characteristics, their totems and holy objects, their feast days, and their areas of authority. Again, there are no characteristics or statistics for these gods. They are, as previously mentioned, invulnerable and nearly omnipotent.

Faerie Lords

Faerie Lords are the Seelie and Unseelie of the Slavic world. With the exception of domestic and field spirits, they are the faeries best known by the Volkhy. Each Faerie Lord in the Slavic and Baltic lands has a specific pagan god as its patron. Each Faerie Lord's character and abilities reflects this relationship and colors its relationships with mortals. Any mortal whose abilities or nature is close-



Faerie Lord

Allegiance: Stribog, god of winds

Faerie Might: 30-35

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

Gender: Either

Size: +1

Personality Traits: Abrupt +4, Valiant +3

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Sword and Shield	+7	+10	+8	+9
Lance	+12	+10	+4	+12
Compound Bow	+9	+9	—	+12

Soak: +15

Fatigue: +4

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

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

Powers

Faerie Powers: Bless 10, Change Size 5, Control Element: Auram 6, Control Element, Aquam 6, Curse 10, Elfshot 10, Glamour 12, Healing 6, Shapechange to Animal 10

Weaknesses: Discomfort from Iron

Equipment: Full Faerie Chain Mail: Load 0, Protection 13; Faerie Weapons: Enhanced Init, Atk, Dfn, and Dam

Encumbrance: 0

ly aligned to the area of authority of the appropriate god can expect a more cordial reception from that god's faerie subordinates. For example, a Flambeau magus would probably be well received in a court devoted to the Slavic divinity of fire, Svarozhich.

The Gold and White Courts

The common notion of Seelie and Unseelie in western Europe has its own unique twist in the east. Here the question is not, generally, of a struggle between Light and Dark, but between Sun and Cold — Summer and Winter. The "Seelie" faeries are those associated with the sun and the other positive, life-giving forces (including the earth). The "Unseelie" faeries are those associated with winter or decay. Those faeries of the former persuasion are usually referred to in the east as members of the Gold Court. The latter are members of the White Court. These are the dominant colors associated with the two types of Faerie Lords, though

they will be blended with others (such as blue for faeries associated with the sky, for example).

White Faerie Lords, it should be noted, are among the most beautiful faeries known. They have all the physical purity and glamour of a gleaming flake of snow. They are not necessarily malicious, but their nature is to freeze and destroy. This is not done with deliberate intent, it is simply an outgrowth of what they are. That having been said, the Faeries of a White Court are invariably appallingly lethal.

Faerie Lords always live in courts which deliberately mirror Slavic noble and royal courts. Each has a castle or more exotic dwelling place, a hierarchy (prince, lords, knights, squires, and damsels), and many lowly faeries to act as servants. The strength of the local faerie aura is likely to be high (as high as 6 - 8, though that may vary depending on the "mythic scope" of your saga), and a gateway to Arcadia will probably be within easy traveling distance. Additionally, faerie courts almost always exist in opposition. If there is a Golden Court near a given village, there is likely to be a White Court nearby. Furthermore, the locations of the courts are likely to be symbolically opposed. For instance, a court of sun faeries may be situated on a mountain top, opposed by a court of winter faeries situated in a deep, shadowed gorge.

The strength of these faerie courts and the strengths of the individual faeries, whether powerful or lowly, waxes and wanes according to the seasons. This is true for the great majority of Slavic faeries, but is especially pronounced for faeries with an intimate link to the great powers of summer and winter. The power levels given throughout this chapter should be taken as averages, and should be allowed to cycle up and down by as much as 25%. Naturally, faerie auras also cycle in strength: White Court auras swell in winter, Golden Court auras in summer. There is a similar annual cycle to the opening and closing of gates to differing areas of Arcadia.

Common Faeries

Any faerie lesser than a Faerie Lord may be identified by the general term vily (or, in Polish, wili), which simply identifies a wild spirit. The Slavs don't make a clear distinction between these kinds of supernatural creatures and the souls of their own ancestors, though there is a separate name for such souls, dziadys, and said souls are ritually feasted four times each year. The Slavs know that their pagan dead go to Arcadia, not Heaven, and accept that they become either gods or faeries in an entirely natural fashion.

You may note that certain faeries described here differ from similarly-named faeries that are described in *Faeries*. That's mostly due to the fact that while *Faeries* made an attempt to synthesize the legends of many diverse Mythic European cultures, this book has the luxury of concentrating on the myths of the Mythic Slavs. Using the statistics from both books or either throughout your saga as you feel moved would be a particularly fay thing to do, considering the nature of Arcadia.

Leshy

Leshy (or Leshyie) are forest spirits and guardians, often of considerable power and with a carefully defined territory. They are most commonly encountered as small, long-bearded, balding men with beards, bushy eyebrows, eyes of emerald green, and cheeks tinged blue by their azure blood. They are masters of size and shape-changing. Some shapechanging seems to be involuntary, for their stature often spontaneously changes to match the plants around them. Leshy are not malicious, but they are mischievous and often lead travelers astray. They are fond of bargaining and are respectful of people who can penetrate their illusions and sleights.

Leshy

Faerie Might: 30

Characteristics: Int +2, Per +1, Pre varies, Com +1, Str varies, Sta +3, Dex +1, Qik varies

Gender: Male

Size: -4 to +4

Personality Traits: Prankster +4

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Club				Variable based on Size

Soak: +5

Fatigue: +3

Fatigue levels: Variable with size

Body levels: Variable with size

Powers

Faerie Powers: Bless 6, Change Size 4, Control Animals 4, Control Fertility 12, Curse 6, Glamour 8, Shapechange to Animal 7, Shapechange Other to Animal 7

Weaknesses: Vulnerability to Iron

Vis: 15 Herbam

Polevik

Faerie Might: 20+

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

Gender: Most are female

Size: 0

Personality Traits: Solemn +3, Vicious +2

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Grapple/Strangle*	+4	+5	+2	+6

* A Polevik who achieves a grip on any victim (by successfully inflicting at least one Body level of damage) maintains it and the initiative automatically thereafter until a round occurs where it inflicts no Body levels of damage and its victim inflicts at least one Body level of damage, at which point its grip is broken. While it maintains its grip its Atk increases by +5 to +10.

Soak: +3

Fatigue: +1

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

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

* When in a blossoming field a Polevik regenerates damage at a rate of 1 Body level per round, possibly more at the height of the spring growing season.

Powers

Faerie Powers: Bless 8, Control Element: Herbam 5, Control Fertility 16, Curse 8, Healing 4

Vis: 7 Herbam

Vodyanoi

Faerie Might: 15-25

Characteristics: Int 0, Per +1, Pre varies, Com +1, Str +3, Sta +3, Dex +1, Qik +2

Gender: Either

Size: 0

Personality Traits: Murderous +4

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Grapple	+5	+7	+3	+8*

* Vodyanoi do not normally attack to inflict normal damage with their attacks. Instead, they usually attempt to immobilize their victims (see ArM4 page 169). Once immobilized, a strength contest determines whether the Vodyanoi can drag its victim into the water, where he begins to drown according to the rules presented in *The Mythic Seas*, pages 38-39.

Soak: +5

Fatigue: +3

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

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

* A Vodyanoi recovers one Fatigue level and one Body level per round when in contact with its home water.

Powers

Faerie Powers: Control Person 4, Control Element: Aquam 10, Curse 10, Fear 5, Glamour 5, Infatuation 5, Shapechange to Animal 5

Weaknesses: Vulnerability to Iron

Vis: 6 Aquam, 4 Perdo

ly tolerant of iron. The practices of plowing the earth and reaping grain with iron tools may have accustomed them to this metal.

Vodyanoi

Vodyanoi (or Topielec, in Poland) are the spirits or faeries who dwell in water. Of all the elements, the Slavs fear water most particularly, and of all common faeries, the Vodyanoi are the most vicious. Vodyanoi may be faerie in origin, or they may spring up from the souls of drowned persons. They are expert shapeshifters. Sometimes they appear as bloated, unkempt men or women with mossy, dripping hair and green skin, sometimes as beguiling beautiful women. At other times, they appear as monsters with human bodies, the heads of dogs, horns, and tails. Vodyanoi can inhabit any body of water large enough to drown someone, and their favorite means of attack is to snatch victims and plunge into the water with them.

A Vodyanoi's strength is proportional to its proximity to water. It is at its maximum when in contact with its "home water." Its combat statistics decrease by one point for every ten paces of distance from it, and a Vodyanoi removed from its home water also becomes listless and irritable. Vodyanoi often dwell in elaborate palaces (within a regio), served by the souls of those they have drowned.

Polevik

Polevik (also known as Polevoi) are field spirits. Commonly they are less powerful than Leshy, but in certain regions, especially south Russia, certain of them have attained very great power and some are even worshipped as minor divinities. Polevik are often but not exclusively female, and may appear more or less human depending on the season and the circumstances of the encounter. The hue and the color of their clothing can change from bright green (spring), through deep green (summer), auburn or gold (autumn), to white or gray (winter). Sometimes grass grows on a Polevik's head rather than hair. Their bodies may be the hue of freshly turned earth and their eyes may resemble glittering stones. The Polevik were always asked for their blessings by the Slavs, but they could be capricious, and if offended, dangerous. Polevik are high-

Rusalka

Rusalka are the nymphs and dryads of the Slavic world. They are exclusively female and occupy both water and woods. Rusalka are less vicious than Vodyanoi, but they are capricious in nature, and untrustworthy. Some Rusalka, like Vodyanoi, are thought to develop from the souls of drowned pagan dead. They may manifest as bloated or distorted females or as comely maidens. Sometimes a Rusalka may bestow blessings or fertility, and they are sought out by barren women for this reason.

Domestic Faeries

Several sorts of faeries share living space with Slavs. Some of them are ubiquitous in pagan villages. These are the most predictable of all faeries, and the Slavs have a whole litany of rituals and charms for maintaining friendly relations.

Domovoi

Domovoi are house spirits. They take care of the home and assist the family in spiritual and supernatural matters in return for small courtesies and a share of food and milk. Domovoi are rarely seen, but often heard. In fact, it's bad luck to see a Domovoi, for they prize their privacy.

Domovoi resemble small, graceful men and women covered in very fine, lustrous brown hair, even on their palms and the soles of their feet. They sometimes sport animal characteristics like horns and tails.

A Domovoi commonly lives under the stove or in the cellar. A Domovoi can sometimes be aggressive, especially if its family falls into a feud. More commonly, however, they restrict themselves to warning their families of approaching dangers and opportunities and warding off bad luck. Like Polevik, Domovoi seem to have become acclimated to iron.

Dvorovoi

Dvorovoi inhabit courtyards, farmyards, and pastures. They can be very useful as guardians of sheep and cattle, however they are less tractable than Domovoi and misbehave more frequently. Dvorovoi, unlike Domovoi, are lusty creatures, prone to seducing mortal men and women. The Slavs know the proper ways to fool the Dvorovoi (with dolls or scarecrows), but ignorant folk may well be in danger.

Dvorovoi can appear as small gnarled men or women, often with striking disfigure-

Rusalka

Faerie Might: 10-15

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

Gender: Female

Size: 0

Personality Traits: Willful +4, Unreliable +4

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Grapple	+3	+5	+2	+5*

* Aquatic Rusalka attack victims in the same fashion as Vodyanoi. See page 86.

Soak: +5

Fatigue: +3

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

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

* A Rusalka is always attached to either a body of water or a small part of a wood (perhaps just a single tree), and recovers one Fatigue level and one Body level per round when in contact with its home.

Powers

Faerie Powers: Control Element: Aquam or Herbam 7, Control Fertility 5, Curse 6, Fear 3, Infatuation 4

Weaknesses: Vulnerability to Iron

Vis: 4 Aquam or Herbam, and 3 Perdo

Domovoi

Faerie Might: 10-15

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

Gender: Either

Size: -1

Personality Traits: Loyal +4, Secretive +4

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Claws	+6	+4	+4	+4

Soak: +3

Fatigue: +1

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

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

Powers

Faerie Powers: Bless 5, Change Size 2, Curse 5, Invisibility 5, Insubstantial Form 5, Prophecy 5, Shapechange to Object 6

ments like noses that reach the chin, or as half-human/half-animal figures (usually with some characteristics of the animals they guard), or, more rarely, as inanimate objects like gateposts.

Dvorovoi

Faerie Might: 8-12

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

Gender: Either

Size: -1

Personality Traits: Diligent +4, Demanding +4

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Brawl	+5	+4	+5	+6

Soak: +4

Fatigue: +2

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

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

Powers

Faerie Powers: Bless 5, Change Size 2, Communicate with Animals

5, Control Fertility 5, Curse 5, Infatuation 6, Shapechange to Animal 4, Shapechange to Object 4

Weaknesses: Discomfort from Iron



Bannik

Bannik inhabit bath-houses, and in the north of Russia, saunas. They keep the fire lit and keep plenty of water in the cistern, and even caulk the walls and fetch wood. However they are demanding about "their turn;" every fourth bath is theirs. An intruders who disturbs a bathing Bannik is liable to be cruelly clawed at best. Bannik can prophecy, if only in very general terms.

Ovinnik

The Ovinnik, guardians of barns, are the most dangerous of the domestic faeries. Their goodwill is essential, for, if angered, Ovinnik can cause all manner of trouble up to and including burning down the barns they protect. Ovinnik can usually be found lounging about their barns in the form of large, mangy, lazy black cats.

Zaltys

The Zaltys is a special case among domestic faeries. They are only found in Lithuanian

Bannik

Faerie Might: 5-10

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

Gender: Either

Size: -2

Personality Traits: Diligent +4, Easily offended +4

Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Claw	+5	+4	+5	+4

Soak: +2

Fatigue: +1

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

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

Powers

Faerie Powers: Control Element: Aquam 5, Insubstantial Form 5, Invisibility 4, Prophecy 5

Weaknesses: Vulnerability to Iron

auras and regiones, where they are associated with the great sun goddess Saule. Zaltys always appear in the form of small, brightly colored serpents. They are indolent, and spend most of their time resting on the warm stones before the hearth. Zaltys do not do housework, but are valued for their wisdom, and for the luck they bring. Keeping and caring for a Zaltys is pleasing to Saule. A Zaltys will swiftly desert a house where it is badly treated or where the people turn away from the old religion. It usually takes the family luck with it when it goes. The Zaltys suffers no ill effects from iron.

Faerie Animals

Totem Animals

Every Slavic clan has its animal mascots, and most pagan villages are attended by one or more of these fabulous animals. Such animals are always larger than their mundane counterparts, are Intelligent rather than Cunning, and can usually talk comprehensibly if not eloquently. The villagers or clan-members often turn to these animals for advice and guidance, and always deal with these totem animals with courtesy and respect — possibly even outright worship. These animals often give gifts of prophecy; in many cases their simple appearance is an important omen.

Strukis: the Great Pike

Strukis the Pike is the king of fish and lord of the water faeries. This belief is especially powerful in Poland, near lake Strukhalis. The Pike's dominion over all the fish of the world fails for only one hour in the year, during which he sleeps and dreams prophetic dreams. Strukis has great wisdom, since knowledge is borne to him from all the streams and lakes of the Slavic world, but he is miserly and greedy for slaves. Anyone

Ovinnik

Faerie Might: 8-12

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

Gender: Male

Size: -3

Personality Traits: Malicious +4, Lazy +4

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Claws	+5	+4	+5	+4*

* Scratches or wounds inflicted by Ovinnik commonly become infected or heal poorly. Subtract twice the usual wound penalty from all Chirurgy and recovery rolls.

Soak: +3

Fatigue: +1

Fatigue levels: OK, -5, Unconscious

Body levels: OK, -5, Incapacitated

Powers

Faerie Powers: Control Element: Ignem 5, Curse 5, Elfshot 5, Shapechange to Animal 4

Weaknesses: Discomfort from Iron

Vis: 3 Ignem

Zaltys

Faerie Might: 5-10

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

Gender: Either

Size: -4

Personality Traits: Lazy +5, Benevolent +4

Soak: 0

Fatigue: -2

Fatigue levels: OK, Unconscious

Body levels: OK, Incapacitated

Powers

Faerie Powers: Bless 5, Control Element: Ignem 4, Control Fertility 5, Curse 5, Prophecy 5 em 10

Vis: 3 Intellago

entering his realm or palace stands a very good chance of being seized and enslaved. Strukis should be played as a magical faerie animal who can take the form of a great faerie lord, rather than as a faerie lord who can assume the form of an animal.

Totem Example: Bear

Faerie Might: 15-20

Characteristics: Int +1, Per +3, Pre +2, Com -3, Str +6, Sta +7, Dex +1, Qik +1

Gender: Either

Size: +3

Personality Traits: Dignified +3, Aggressive +3

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Maul	+7	+13	+4	+17
Tackle	+7	+7	+1	+15*

* The target of a damaging attack is also knocked down.

Soak: +30

Fatigue: +9

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

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

Powers

Faerie Powers: Bless 10, Control Animals 6, Control Element: Herbam 6, Control Fertility 8, Curse 10, Prophecy 10, Shapechange to Object 6

Weaknesses: Vulnerability to Iron

Vis: 8 Animál, 3 Vim

Strukis

Faerie Might: 40

Characteristics: Int +4, Per +3, Pre +2, Com +2, Str +3, Sta +2, Dex +1, Qik 0

Gender: Male

Size: 3

Personality Traits: Domineering +4, Greedy +4

Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Bite	+4	+8	+4	+15

Soak: +9

Fatigue: +5

Fatigue levels: OK, 0/0, -1/-1, -3/-3, -5, Unc*

Body levels: OK, 0/0, -1/-1, -3/-3, -5, Inc*

* Strukis recovers two Body and Fatigue levels per round when immersed in water

Powers

Faerie Powers: Bless 10, Brew Faerie Potions 5, Change Size 6, Communication with Humans 10, Control Animals 6, Control Person 10, Control Element: Aquam 10, Curse 10, Enchant Objects 5, Glamour 10, Prophecy 10, Shapechange to Human 5

Weaknesses: Discomfort from Iron

Vis: 15 Aquam, 5 Mentem, 5 Intélego

Zhar-Ptitsa: the Firebird

The Firebird, called Zhar-Ptitsa, is the most widely known, magically potent, and elusive of the legendary Slavic animals. Physically it takes the form of the cassowary, and dwells in the garden of the sun in the uttermost East. Here it feeds on golden apples and other fruits that blaze as brightly as gems. A single feather from its wing can light the interior of a palace feast hall brighter than full sunlight, though no one experiences any danger or pain in looking at the Firebird. The Firebird has never shown any true intelligence, but it is a cunning thief, with an eye for gems, fruit, or other bright, sweet things. The Firebird is typically encountered only in areas of very potent regiones with nearby access to Arcadia. It is one of those exceptionally rare faeries so powerful it can generate gateways to Arcadia at need (which makes it hard to catch, or to keep once caught).



Semargl

Semargl is among the strangest of all the chimaeric beasts of legend. He has the head, body, and limbs of a dog, the wings and tail of an eagle, and is feathered from head to tail. Semargl is swift, voracious, and cunning. He is a servant of the gods, though his duties remain a mystery. Possibly, like Hermes and Mercury, he is their messenger.

Animal Princes

All of the different species of animals have their own courts and princes. These are in many ways similar to the courts of other faeries, though animal princes and their “vassals” are much less likely to mimic the culture of humans in the way that the faeries of most Slavic courts do. Instead, they concern themselves with the issues of importance to their species.

The courts of the animal princes are only encountered deep within faerie regions. Even then, it is far more likely that any animal prince encountered makes its true home in Arcadia.

Animal princes and their courtiers are fully-intelligent shapechangers who can assume human guise at will. They have noble natures and behave graciously with guests. Some of them, particularly the princes of the eagles, hawks, and falcons, are known to have wooed human princesses. The alliances result are often highly advantageous to human princes.

In game terms, treat animal princes as atypical Faerie Lords with appropriately adjusted powers and abilities.

Monsters

Outside the realm of Slavic religious mythology, other forces lurk. Some are also seen in western folklore — dragons, ogres, and the like — but a few are peculiar to the

Zhar-Ptitsa: The Firebird

Faerie Might: 50

Characteristics: Cun +4, Per +3, Pre n/a, Com n/a, Str +1, Sta +3, Dex +3, Qik +5

Size: -2

Personality Traits: Curious +3, Thief +3

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Talons	+12	+10	+2	+10

Soak: +5

Fatigue: +3

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

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

Powers

Faerie Powers: Bless 10, Control Element: Ignem 15, Curse 10, Travel 21

Weaknesses: Discomfort from Iron

Vis: 30 Ignem

Semargl

Faerie Might: 30

Characteristics: Cun +2, Per +3, Pre n/a, Com n/a, Str +3, Sta +4, Dex +2, Qik +2

Size: +1

Personality Traits: Hungry +3

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Bite	+8	+7	+4	+10

Soak: +7

Fatigue: +4

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

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

Powers

Faerie Powers: Bless 10, Communicate with Animals/Plants 10, Control Element: Auram 10, Curse 10, Fear 10, Insubstantial Form 5, Travel 28

Weaknesses: Vulnerable to Iron

Vis: 10 Animál, 10 Auram

Slavic peoples. Many of the following creatures are found in the far north-western Carpathian mountains (the Tatras), and consequently infest the southern Polish border.

Poludnica

Poludnica are common in Poland. They are revenant spirits, either of pagan souls who have not gone to Arcadia, or of Christians

Poludnica

Faerie Might: 5-15

Characteristics: Int 0, Per -2, Pre -3, Com -5

Gender: Either

Personality Traits: Disturbed +2

Powers

Faerie Powers: Fear 2, Prophecy 3

Strzyga

Faerie Might: 10-15

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

Gender: Either

Size: +1

Personality Traits: Malicious +3

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Strangle	+5	+6	+3	+8

Soak: +5

Fatigue: +4

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

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

* A Strzyga has two hearts. Accordingly, whether in its normal life or after it, if incapacitated or killed it springs up again a moment later, fully restored to health. It has to be killed a second time to permanently dispatch it.

Powers

Faerie Powers: Control Person 8, Curse 5, Fear 8, Glamour 6, Possession 10

Weaknesses: Vulnerability to Iron

Vis: 3 Perdo, 2 Vim

who were improperly buried or slain by evil faeries such as a Vodyanoi. Poludnica have no physical form and seldom communicate clearly. They can inflict close relatives with prophetic or maddening dreams, or bring warnings of approaching tragedies.

Strzyga

Strzyga are Polish changelings or halflings. They are born with two full sets of teeth and also have two spirits: one human, the other faerie. Even proper baptism is no cure for the devilish nature of the Strzyga, for the holy water only touches the human spirit and the soul. A Strzyga can lead a long,

apparently normal life, marry, have children and die, all without demonstrating exceptional evil. After death, however, when the soul has gone to its reward and the human spirit is at rest, the evil spirit rouses and sends the body out to live as a vampire or crossroads murderer. Unlike traditional vampires, Strzyga do not suck blood. They are more prone to strangling, and enjoy inhaling the last dying breaths of their victims, from which they can gain more Faerie Might.

Dragons

The Dragons are the worst of the monsters that inhabit the northern Carpathians. One of these ferocious beasts was slain by the legendary polish hero Krakus; the site of this event later became the city of Krakow. However, even Krakus could not slay it in battle, and was forced to rely on an alchemical trick to destroy it.

Slavic dragons are similar to those found in central Mythic Europe. They're four-limbed firebreathing creatures with serpentine bodies and bat wings. Slavic dragons fall into two broad categories. The dragon Krakus killed was of the first type: physically powerful, hungry, and resilient, but not intelligent. The second type is altogether subtler. It is still physically dangerous, but much more intelligent, magically gifted, and vicious.

Most dragons in other parts of Europe are allied with the Realm of Magic. It is unknown whether these Slavic dragons bear any relation to those dragons, because while their forms are similar, these hail from faerie. It is almost certainly the burning passion of a magus somewhere to find out.

Ogres and Giants

Ogres, giants, and trolls are called *dziwozony* in Poland and *norka* in Russia. There are too many varieties of these creatures to detail here, but they do have certain common characteristics: great size, superhuman strength, low intelligence, and vulnerability

to Christian rituals and relics. They often have power over earth and a rocky invulnerability to many weapons. They are typically not seriously bothered by iron. Frequently these monsters have the ability to shapeshift into the most common element in their environment (rock, earth, water, or mud) and to move through it effortlessly. It is also common to find that they have very acute senses and can detect (often by smell) the presence of mortals. Some have senses so acute they can identify nationality by scent.

It is not uncommon to encounter these monsters in groups of siblings, and to find that the siblings have an ever-increasing number of heads. Thus, if there is a group of three giants preying on a city, the first may have three heads, the second six, and the last nine. The more heads one of these monsters has, the harder it will be to kill. As a rule of thumb, assume five points of Might per head.

Zluidni

Zluidni are the smallest, most common, and most spiteful of all the Slavic dark faeries. There are too many varieties to even begin cataloging them, but certain common attributes can be noted. Zluidni are physically small (of Size -2 to -4), misshapen or chimaeric in appearance, and have limited shapeshifting powers. Regardless of the form they take, however, some malformation or distortion always gives them away.

Zluidni are found in urban, rural, and wilderness areas equally. Their powers typically allow minor cursing and the use of glamour and possession in order to play small, vicious jokes. They are not usually capable of a physical act of murder, but are known for leading unwary travelers astray or causing enmity and feuds in a community. A good Domovoi is more than a match for any number of Zluidni, and wouldn't tolerate them near his home for an instant.



Dragon (Marauding)

Faerie Might: 40

Characteristics: Cun -1, Per +2, Str +8, Sta +8, Dex -2, Qik -3

Gender: Either

Size: +5 or more

Personality Traits: Ravenous +5

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Claw and bite	+6	+15	+8	+50

Soak: +20

Fatigue: +10

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

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

Powers

Faerie Powers: Fear 20

Fiery Breath, Crlg 35, 1 point: The range of a dragon's fiery breath is typically 30 to 40 paces. It forms a cone which reaches its widest point — about 5 paces — at the maximum range. All those who fall within this conical area are affected, taking +35 damage, against which metal armor is not effective.

Weaknesses: Vulnerability to Iron

Vis: 10 Animál, 10 Ignem, 10 Perdo, 5 Vim

Dragon (Sorcerous)

Faerie Might: 50

Characteristics: Int +2, Per +3, Pre +2, Com +1, Str +6, Sta +6, Dex -1, Qik -2

Gender: Either

Size: +4 or smaller

Personality Traits: Devious +4, Murderous +3

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Claw and bite	+6	+15	+8	+50

Soak: +15

Fatigue: +7

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

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

Powers

Faerie Powers: Brew Faerie Potions 5, Change Size (but not above +4) 6, Control Person 10, Control Element: Ignem and Auram 10, Fear 10, Glamour 12, Infatuation 10, Invisibility 5, Shapechange to Human 6, Shapechange to Object 6

Fiery Breath, Crlg 35, 1 point: The range of a dragon's fiery breath is typically 30 to 40 paces. It forms a cone which reaches its widest point — about 5 paces — at the maximum range. All those who fall within this conical area are affected, taking +35 damage, against which metal armor is not effective.

Weaknesses: Vulnerability to Iron

Vis: 5 Ignem, 15 Perdo, 15 Vim

Three-Headed Giant

Faerie Might: 15

Characteristics: Int -1, Per +4, Pre -3, Com -3, Str +4, Sta +4, Dex -1, Qik -2

Gender: Either

Size: +3

Personality Traits: Greedy +3, Murderous +4

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Greatsword	+8	+12	+7	+16

Soak: +10

Fatigue: +4

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

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

* Any giant or ogre in contact with its natural terrain regains one Fatigue level and one Body level per round, even if slain.

Powers

Faerie Powers: Communicate with Animals/Plants 6, Control Element: Terram 8, Fear 8, Shapechange to Object 6

Weaknesses: Discomfort from Iron

Vis: 6 Terram, 4 Perdo



The Infernal

Although this chapter specifically discusses Slavic faerie, there are certainly more foul creatures that stalk the Novgorod Tribunal. One Infernal example is described here.

Vampires

Vampires are reasonably common in Slavic lands. In Poland they are known as zmory, upiory, or martwiec, in Russia as oboroteni. Vampires do not, despite what Bram Stoker and Hollywood have conspired to tell us, make other vampires by biting them, and though they can kill by biting, they more commonly attack by strangling. Rather, a vampire is a mortal who has entered a particular sort of Infernal pact, giving up claim on his soul in exchange for a semblance of immortality. At the end of his natural life, the damned mortal “dies” and is buried normally. After a few nights he rises from the grave to stalk living prey.

Vampires account for their Infernal Might in two different ways. Like all creatures with Might, they can expend it to use their powers. A vampire can recover Might expended in this way by resting for a full day in its sanctuary. At the next dusk all full points of Might are restored. Even complete exhaustion of Might by spending it on powers in this fashion cannot kill the Vampire or endanger its soul.

The Infernal Might of a vampire, however, can rise and fall gradually, depending on whether it continues killing mortals. For every night a vampire fails to kill a mortal it loses a tiny fragment of its Infernal Might. In this regard (and *only* this regard) Infernal Might is treated like an Ability composed of experience points in the normal pyramid scale fashion. A vampire that fails to kill in a given night loses one “experience point” in Infernal Might. Conversely, for every mortal a vampire kills, it accumulates one Infernal Might “experience point.” For example, if a

Vampires: Upior/Oboroten

Infernal Might: 10-15+

Characteristics: Variable. The following would be normal for a modestly powerful vampire: Int +1, Per +1, Pre -3, Com +1, Str +2, Sta +2, Dex +1, Qik +2

Size: 0

Personality Traits: Murderous +5

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Bite	+4	+4	+2	+5*
Strangle	+5	+5	+5	+7**

* Once a vampire has bitten a victim by inflicting at least one Body level of damage, it can cling to him (a Strength contest is required to break this grip), and automatically draw off one Body level worth of blood at the beginning of each round. The vampire is free to employ Infernal Powers while engaged in this struggle with no effect upon his grip.

** Once a vampire has gotten a grip on his victim by inflicting at least one Body level of damage, it can automatically cause one Body level worth of additional strangulation damage at the beginning of each round. The vampire is free to employ Infernal Powers while engaged in this struggle with no effect upon his grip.

Soak: +5

Fatigue: +2

Fatigue levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Fall into dust

Body levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Fall into dust

Powers

Confusion of the Numb Will, ReMe 15, 2 points: See ArM4, page 148.

Shape of the Furred Slinker, MuCo 25, 3 points: Transforms the vampire into a rat.

Broom of the Winds, ReAu 15, 2 points: See ArM4, page 121.

new Vampire with an Infernal Might of 12 goes through a night without killing and loses an experience point, its Might drops to 11, with 11 experience points. It can only use 11 Might Points effectively until something changes. So, on the following night, the Vampire slays someone and regains a point, rising back to a full 12 Infernal Might points. If, over the next few nights, it makes 13 more kills (and never goes a night without killing), it will gain enough “experience” to rise to a new level of Infernal potency, 13 Might Points. A vampire’s maximum current

The Iron Grasp, MuCo 15, 2 points: Increases the strength of the vampire’s grip (including its Strength, Strangle Attack, and Strangle Damage) by +3.

Weaknesses

Natural Sunlight: Any Vampire exposed to natural sunlight loses 3 Infernal Might points per round. When all Infernal Might points are lost it loses one Body level per round until it collapses into dust.

Bright Light: Vampires attacked with powerful artificial light (such as a CrIg spell) lose 1 point of Infernal Might per round of exposure per magnitude of the spell – 1. (For example, a vampire confronted with a CrIg 20 spell for one round would lose 3 points of Might.) Treat very strong lantern light as a spell of level 10 and a large bonfire as level 15.

Holy Ground: Vampires cannot trespass on holy ground.

Roads: Vampires have an antipathy for the center of a road. Attacking anyone on a pathway with an Infernal power requires one point more Might than normal, and physical assaults are conducted with a -3 Atk penalty. If the target stands at the center point of a crossroads it requires three points more Might than normal and physical attacks are at -6.

After Burial: A vampire is at his most vulnerable on the first three nights after burial, assuming he has been buried in holy ground or laid out in a church. During this time anyone who had genuine affection for the vampire in life can keep a vigil over the body. If a vigil-keeper successfully stays awake through the full three nights, despite the distractions and psychomachia assaults of the Vampire’s patron demon, the vampire is prevented from rising from his grave.

Vis: At minimum, 1 Perdo, 1 Vim, and 1 Corpus, all diabolically tainted. Amounts can be much larger for more powerful vampires.

Infernal Might is known as its Permanent Infernal Might. If a vampire’s Permanent Might ever drops to zero because it has not killed enough people, its soul descends to Hell.

New vampires commonly have from 10 to 15 Infernal Might points, depending on how evil they were in life and on their ability to strike a “good” diabolical pact. As time passes vampires hope to accumulate more Might, extend their undead “lives,” and increase their range of powers. Vampires can, if they live for considerable periods, barter



Infernal Might points to their Infernal patrons in return for enhanced Characteristics, Abilities, and Powers.

Killing a vampire by conventional or magical means is very difficult. When wounded severely by muscle or magic — even to the point of having no Body levels left — a vampire collapses into a dank, grayish “grave dust.” This is not death, but a resting state. Unless the dust is thoroughly dispersed (throwing it into water is the best option), the vampire revives at the next dusk. If the dust is not dispersed and has spent the day out of sunlight, the vampire revives with its full Permanent Infernal Might. If the dust has spent any part of the day exposed to sunlight, the vampire lacks its Might, but is otherwise unharmed. If thrown onto water or otherwise effectively dispersed (roll a stress die x 10 for days to full recovery, increased if the method of dispersal is particularly ingenious or effective), the vampire’s dust will take many days to recombine, and the vampire will lose Permanent Might all the while. This may even result in the vampire’s final death.

PeVi spells are the best way to avoid having a vampire fall to grave dust and reform. They can be used to destroy a vampire’s Permanent Infernal Might directly, according to the PeVi spell guidelines, but must be tailored to this specific end.

Arcadia

The ultimate nature of Arcadia is something that magi have spent centuries debating, and the matter is far from resolved. It has been observed, however, that different portions of Arcadia take on different forms, usually with some sort of correspondence to the customs and beliefs of the people who are associated with that portion of faerie.

Slavic Arcadia — that is, the portion of Arcadia which is dominated by the powerful faerie beings that are the Slavic divinities — is more firmly fixed and has a logic that is far more reliable than the areas of faerie that are

commonly associated with western Mythic Europe. It is the place where the dreams and stories of the Slavs are acted out. By far the best way to get a sense for the flavor of Slavic Arcadia is to read a book of Russian and Polish fairy tales.

Slavic Arcadia is the world of thirty kingdoms; of speaking animals; and of sorcerers who hide their hearts in eggs, ducks, caskets, at the top of mountains of glass, and beyond the endless seas at the edge of the world. It is the world where being kind to a tree with overloaded branches or a gate with rusty hinges brings reward. It is the world where giants spring up in groups of three, each one more grim than the last. This is the world where the Firebird flies from the garden of the Sun to raid the palace of the King and the waters of Life and Death can be found by a valorous hero. Obey the logic of this world and it will reward you, defy it and it will turn against you.

Geography

Slavic Arcadia is centered on the World Tree. This is the hub of existence; according to Slavic mythology it holds the universe together. The World Tree is like a spoke and strung upon it are three worlds. At the top of the World Tree, among its branches, is Slavic Heaven. Beneath Heaven, about halfway down the trunk, is the second level of existence, Slavic Earth. Below the Earth, down among the roots of the Tree, is the lowest level, Slavic Hell.

Slavic Earth

Slavic Arcadian Earth (or simply “Slavic Earth”) is an idealized Russia. Much like other areas of Arcadia, it is made up of princedoms and cities where the high faeries dwell. Slavic Arcadia is particularly set in regard to these matters. The shape of the earth is circular, and at its center there is a great mountain range: the World Tree.

Grouped around the tree are thirty princedoms. Half of them are of the Golden Court, half are of the White Court. Some of the courts are "human" and others are "animal."

Each princedom contains numerous cities whose citizens — princes and boyars, merchants and craftsmen, peasants and hunters — mimic the business and concerns of Slavic society. It is all a grand act, of course, and the underlying nature, the great play of the natural forces of the world, can be seen quite clearly by the discerning.

On the outer fringes of this Earth dwell "Nomads," "Muslims," and "Germans" — that is, faeries who have taken on the appearance of these enemies of the Slavs. The frontier with the "German" faeries is the place where it is easiest to leave Slavic Arcadia and enter the portions of Arcadia dominated by western European beliefs.

Scattered throughout Slavic Earth are mountains, forests, seas, and swamps. It is here that faeries play out the stories that the Slavs delight in, fighting evil sorcerers, rescuing princesses, and questing after lost treasure and knowledge. Regardless of the players' reasons for entering Arcadia, it is this world that they will almost certainly encounter first (assuming they enter from a Slavic part of Mythic Europe, anyway), and it is this world that will strive to ensnare them.

Slavic Heaven

Ascending the trunk of the World Tree, whether by scaling it physically, traveling "toward Summer," or taking a special gateway, takes one into the very perilous world of the Slavic gods. Slavic Heaven is a world of absolutes where the fundamental creative forces of nature have free play and where the Sun and Summer manifest themselves in blinding, intolerable purity.

Many of the Slavic gods dwell here, and their powers in this place are effectively unlimited. Only the strongest and most devout of Volkhvy would consider making a journey to this place, and even they would never do so casually. Game experiences in

Slavic Heaven should be fundamentally mystical experiences — pure role-playing — devoid of dice and worldly concerns. And unless characters have a very good reason for visiting, they will almost certainly not come back.

Slavic Hell

There are three principle regions in Slavic Hell.

Part resembles a dim portion of Slavic Earth. Courts in this region are mean, brutal places where the faeries live fiendishly like despotic human princes, afflicting the spirits who are their captives. Though this is not a pleasant place (it is full of the spirit of Darkness and Winter) it is not Infernal. Slavic devils are great tricksters and deal-makers, not sadists for sadism's sake. The world they rule represents the toil and misery of common life on earth.

The second portion is the realm of the dark gods. The principles of Arctic Cold and Darkness hold sway here. This is where the Nameless God of Demons is confined, bound at the roots of the world until Armageddon, watched by the ever vigilant Fates. This is not a place recommended for a visit, though as the realm of the Fates it is the ultimate fount of prophecy. Regardless of the answers that can be acquired here, it is not an easy journey; visitors almost never return, and if they do return they are always changed.

The third portion is the peaceful world of the afterlife. It is Slavic Elysium, a rich, autumnal garden, overgrown but wholesome, on a late evening when the sun has set but the sky is still full of soft colors. The trees are laden with natural bounty, the waters are clear and cool, the air is warm, and the breezes are soft. This is where the ancestral Slavic spirits live in their clans, and where the souls of devout pagans still come after death. This portion of faerie hell has clear correspondences with Barathrum (as described in the original edition of *Faeries*) and also with the spirit lands (as described in *Shamans* and in Appendix I.) Both of these





realms are accessible from this region. Ultimately, Slavic spirits do go onward from even this place, through the gates of twilight into mystery.

One notable site within Slavic Elysium is the mystical Isle of Boyan. This is the place to which the spirits of deceased Volkhvy travel. It is rumored to take the form of a huge, perfectly round isle in the midst of a great circular lake. At its center is a mountain, likewise perfectly conical in form. The isle is a natural paradise of streams, vales, groves, and meadows, teeming with magnificent animals and flocks of birds. The departed Volkhvy live here in a utopian state, worshipping the gods from their many temples. The two most eminent of these temples are the temple of the Sun at the mountain's peak, and the temple of the Earth, in a sacred grove at the mountain's foot. Hermetic magi speculating on rumors of Boyan have conjectured that there must logically be portals in both these locations connecting to Slavic Heaven, permitting Volkhvy and deities instant access in both directions. Living Volkhvy, it is thought, still retain the secrets of traveling to Boyan, and consulting there with their forebears. This is not, however, likely to be a safe undertaking for non-believers. There is no living Hermetic magus in the Novgorod tribunal who openly claims to have visited Boyan.

Arcadian Adventures

As is well known, the participation of mortals in faerie affairs has some undefinable but crucial effect, and faeries are always keen to involve mortal visitors in their struggles. In Slavic Arcadia this tendency is exaggerated.

The vast majority of gateways to Slavic Arcadia deliver the visitor to Slavic Earth. Anyone entering Slavic Earth almost immediately encounters one or more emissaries, often the guardians of the gate used. These usually approach with a serious problem. Any Hermetic party penetrating this realm will almost certainly find themselves swiftly caught up in a story.

Remember that Slavic Earth is an idealized place, one that reflects the Slavic dreams and passions. It tries to work the player characters into its own internal logic, responding to the newcomers by creating situations suited to their capacities and attitudes (though, of course, the overriding rhythms of Summer and Winter must also play a part). Most often Slavic Earth presents visitors with situations that offer them the opportunity to behave as heroes. If it casts them as villains — which it only does if they provoke such a situation — they will swiftly find themselves in real trouble, as mythic villains usually end up dead, or worse.

There is a genuinely terrible danger in this situation, for if they are not careful, visitors find themselves seduced into becoming a permanent part of the faerie world. Most fairy stories end, especially for the heroes, with the phrase “happily ever after;” characters may find this to be *literally* the case. The mythic tale they find themselves living traps them, for it is very enjoyable and seems completely real. At this point, unless they have companions willing to risk the wholesale wrath of the entire environment to drag them out, the characters are lost, permanently, and spend the rest of eternity playing out enormously enjoyable but fundamentally unreal fantasies.

Assuming visitors manage to negotiate not only the reasons for which they have entered Arcadia, but also the demands that it has made of them to participate in its stories, and still manage to preserve their sanity and belief in the real world, they face the challenge of finding their way back to their gateway. Slavic Earth will not want them to leave. It will tempt them to stay, put obstacles in their path, challenge them in both subtle and obvious fashions, and if all else fails, attack them. Two general rules serve best in such a situation. If the path is marked, egress is simplest. Visitors who take some tangible connection to the gateway and keep it safe at all times can use it as a focus. Using it, finding the path back is relatively easy. A visitor with no connection to use should take the path of greatest resistance. Wherever the way

seems hardest and the chance of success least likely is where the gateway is likeliest to be.

With these dangers and pitfalls, why would any person ever bother to enter Arcadia? There are several possible motivations.

First, it is a vast repository of knowledge. Nothing is ever really lost from the consciousness of a whole people, and Slavic Arcadia is the realm of Slavic racial memories. Things can be discovered there that simply cannot be found out in the real world, if one has the endurance to locate the right "person" and the willpower to break away at the end of it all.

Second, Arcadia offers concrete glances of the future. Time in Arcadia is flexible; it ripples, it dances, and the future can send echoes backward into the past. It is here that the gods, with their mighty intelligence and supernatural foresight, dwell. This is the realm of the Fates, who, surely, can answer all questions.

Third, other realms of Arcadia are accessible from Slavic Arcadia. There are points at which the dreams and myths of east and west meet. Seeking them out is likely to be a long hard trial, but it can be done. There are always rumors in Slavic Earth of "our brethren in the West." It must be possible to travel there.

Fourth, there is great vis in Arcadia. In the real world faeries naturally cause deposits of vis to accumulate around them. Russia and Poland, recently Christianized and with their vast faerie auras, are relatively rich in such sources, but vis in Arcadia is even more abundant. It literally leaks out of the environment. All that is needed is to gather a few handfuls of dirt, a branch, or a piece of clothing and make for the nearest gateway. The environment, however, reacts badly to gross acts of theft and local spirits are likely to manifest themselves immediately and aggressively to deter thieves. Gifts are another matter, but mercenary questors will be dealt with harshly.

Finally, Arcadia is a place of fabulous quests for mythic objectives like the Firebird and the Waters of Life and Death. Such creatures and objects are only rarely accessible in

the real world. There is a far better chance of locating them in Arcadia.

One piece of advice for all storyguides is that regardless of the strength of will and cunning of the players and their characters, each foray into Arcadia should cost something tangible. A grog might wander off, perhaps quite close to the end of the quest, and once he's out of sight, he'll never be found. If no suitable grog is available then one of the other characters may find himself haunted for months after emerging into the real world by the most alluring dreams. Perhaps he might even suffer episodes of sleepwalking that lead him back towards the gateway. . . .



The Onslaught

Time ripples in Arcadia. The future echoes backward and forward. In 1206 in Mythic Europe, when Genghis Khan united the nomad tribes of Mongolia, the path of the future was substantially set. Details change with the acts of men, but the Mongol invasions of Eastern Europe became inevitable from that time forward. Slavic Earth began to suffer invasions almost immediately.

At first these were trivial. The "nomads" living on the borders of Slavic Earth began raiding more vigorously and frequently than normal. Soon matters worsened. New bands of "nomads" were seen, and many of them were dangerous: fearsome dog-headed warriors, ogres, and demons. Several faerie princedoms were attacked in force; cities were besieged, one fell. Alarm spread through Slavic Earth at these developments, as witnessed by several Merinita magi.

Then the wyrms appeared, not just in Slavic Earth, but in the clan lands of Slavic Hell too. These creatures were unlike anything seen in Slavic Arcadia before. Serpentine, these creatures have massive jaws, manes, and horns, often gold and silver or ebony in color. They have four limbs and terrible claws and fly through the air though they are wingless. They do not breath flame,



Onslaught Dragon

Faerie Might: 40

Characteristics: Int +2, Per +3, Pre +3, Com +1, Str +7, Sta +8, Dex 0, Qik 0

Size: +5

Personality Traits: Destructive +6

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Bite	+8	+12*	+4	+25
Claws	+8	+12	+4	+30

* An Onslaught Dragon's bite is large enough to engulf an opponent. Anyone suffering at least one Body level of damage must a simple die + Size of 6+ or be swallowed. Swallowed characters may try to cut their way out of the throat (Soak 12) or the stomach (Soak 15). Anyone entering the stomach must Soak 20 points per round from vitriolic acids.

Soak: +20

Fatigue: +10

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

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

Powers

Faerie Powers: Communicate with Plants/Animals/People 10, Control Element: Auram and Aquam 15, Fear 12, Glamour 10,

Weaknesses: Vulnerability to Iron

Vis: 10 Auram, 10 Aquam, 10 Perdo, 10 Vim

but travel with thunder and lightning and strange magics.

These creatures are the spirits of the Mongols, come to ravage the spirits and dreams of the Slavs. In the time since their first appearance they have attacked the very roots of the World Tree, swarming into the clan lands in vast numbers. They have destroyed three princedoms in Slavic Earth and have made a blasted wasteland of the ground there.

In the future, war will become general in Slavic Earth, and the first signs of real damage to the World Tree will emerge. The Slavs as a people are about to suffer a terrible blow, one that will greatly hasten the end of Slavic paganism. The Mongols are going to butcher vast numbers of believers in Mythic Europe

and slay many Volkhvy who will never pass on their knowledge and beliefs. If this tragedy is permitted to occur there will ultimately be no full recovery. Slavic Arcadia will be ravaged as the forces of Mongolian spirits and Shamanic magic sweep across it, and the first signs are already plain to see.

How this Onslaught, as it has come to be called, affects Mythic Europe and your saga is up to you. Although these activities may simply be the reverberations of events in Mythic Europe, you might decide that the cause and effect are actually the other way around. Whatever you decide, the events of the Onslaught should be tied in with your decisions about the inspiration and goals of the Mongol conquest in Mythic Europe, which will be discussed in Chapter 6.

From the sounds of it the debate was still going strong. Malincka sighed and wandered over to one of the wooden benches which lined the antechamber. There was a guard standing before the closed doors of the council chamber; the look he gave her mingled equal parts of boredom and envy. Certainly *he* would not be allowed the luxury of sitting down on duty.

She usually enjoyed Three Lakes. It was a healthy covenant, and, thanks to her friendship with Georgi Yurivich, usually a friendly one too. She'd passed seven winters here and brushed off several flattering hints that the magi would welcome her as a member.

Not here. Too traditional, too rule-bound, far too firmly under the thumb of the resident *quaesidores*, and much too close to heavily settled lands. Not at all what she had in mind. But if she wanted her covenant to succeed, she would need tribunal acknowledgment at a minimum. Solid support would be too much to hope for.

Politics. Did everything boil down to that? The Polish covenants fearing anything that wasn't certifiably Slavic and Hermetic, the Bjornaer magi wanting more pure Bjornaer covenants, everyone else wanting less Bjornaer altogether. The tribunal as a whole more worried than they cared to admit by the presence of the shamans on the southern steppes, and firmly resolved to ignore the existence of the Volkhvy, at least officially. Above all, their steely resolve to steer well clear of any more entanglements with the royalty of Russia and Poland. She smothered a laugh. What was it that little man from Great Bulgar had said, all those years ago on the portage? *"Too many princes."*

She sighed. Well, she had made her request. And Georgi had spoken in her support. A new covenant in the Urals. It might not be of any immediate use, but as a hedge against future developments, who could say? She hadn't had to lie, thankfully. And no one had asked any of the dangerous questions. Her obsession with *Intellego* magic and the Volkhvy was well known, but thought harmless. If they only knew . . .

The noise level rose abruptly as the doors swung open. The guard braced quickly to attention, trying to look alert and menacing. The magi came out in groups, mostly by covenant, though several Bjornaer magi came out with the Pripets. The looks they sent her were hot enough to scorch. A pity. She had hoped for more support from the Bjornaer in general. If anyone would benefit from a general broadening of the Hermetic method it was they, she *had* hinted. Oh well.

At last Georgi came out, with his father, and, a telling indicator, both of the *quaesidores*. The Leczyca were with them too. Good.

"Let me be the first to congratulate you." It was Andrei Soitchkin. The elderly *quaesitor* didn't move quickly, but his glance was very sharp. "It has been some time since we've given our blessing to a new covenant. If I may say so we were impressed, more than anything, by your willingness to travel

so far in search of a suitable site. You seem a very determined young woman, Malincka, but really, are you quite sure about this?" He gestured toward the eastern windows. "It is a wilderness out there. A wilderness!"

"It will not remain one, sir. The gorge is fertile, and there is almost no building to be done. The caves are surprisingly comfortable. Who knows," she let her voice grow arch, "perhaps you will find yourself wanting to visit?"

Andrei was famous for his lack of humor, but he favored her with a minute smile and a gracious nod. "Who knows. Certainly some of our younger fellows will. Speaking of which, Georgi, that matter I mentioned . . ."

"Certainly Andrei. All taken care of." Georgi nodded affably. Malincka had no chance to question him until the crowd had ebbed out around them, and then he beat her to it.

"You did say you wanted to attract some Bjornaer magi into this new covenant of yours?" He was smug with some secret or other.

"Absolutely. Why else did you think I spent all that time at Pripet? God, I can still remember the bloody black flies and the mosquitoes. Much thanks I got for it." She shivered. There were a few old covenants in Hungary, but she'd never visited anywhere with such an air of decay as Pripet Maior. The place stank of dying dreams.

"Well then, have you heard of Nastassia Baramov?"

"Nastassia? Yes, I've heard the name. Isn't she one of the apprentices here?"

"Ah. *Was*. She was an apprentice here. She gauntleted yesterday, very young. All the Pripet magi were there, patting themselves on the back at seeing another Bjornaer magus come into the fold, until her final display."

"Was it . . . very unusual?"

"Unusual? If you regard a Bjornaer magus who has altered her heart-beast so that it's limned in raging flames as unusual, then yes, I'd have to say it was."

"Flames?" Malincka shot a glance at the door through which the Pripet magi had withdrawn. "Oh dear — how . . . trying for them."

"Yes. Just so. In fact I'd say they were pretty much mortally offended. Not that Nastassia cares, she doesn't like being condescended to, and they'd already done that very thoroughly. But if you'd like to meet her I believe I could arrange it."

"Yes . . . yes I'd like that very much." A weight was lifting off her shoulders, she could feel it moment by moment. So much time, so much work, so much preparation, all so that she could reach this moment, all so that she could *begin*.

"Well, then, come down to the feast hall. I'll introduce you. And Malincka?"

"Yes?"

"Mind your courtesies. Yesterday Nastassia was an apprentice. Today she's a maga. And she won't be slighted. She, ah, has a *temper*."



Chapter 5

Hermetic Landscape

Origins

The Order of Hermes arrived in the Slavic lands relatively recently, and it owes its presence to a most peculiar benefactor: the Christian Church.

Before the Christian conversion the Volkhy effectively repulsed the Order. Unlike the hedge wizards of western Europe whom the Order had largely destroyed, the Volkhy enjoyed the full support of their tribes. They were priests, revered by their people, and well organized. It is true that before the Varangian era no single tribe had great military power, but in the turbulent 9th century neither did the Order of Hermes. Later, around the early 900s, the Order was in a better state, but by then matters were developing beyond them. The Poles were coming slowly together under their legendary leader Piast, while the Russians were firstly under Oleg's firm hand (and Oleg was a Volkhy), and then Igor's solid if unpopular rule.

During these years there were expeditions into the Slavic lands. Magi from the Theban and Transylvanian tribunals probed Russia, but what they found discouraged them. Rich faerie sources of vis were plentiful, but the faeries were unusually dangerous and had close links to the Volkhy. Individually, of course, no Volkhy was a match for a well trained Hermetic magus, at least not on neutral ground. But there were simply too many

of them, they were too well organized, and they had considerable mundane backing.

Changing Times

In 942 it seemed that matters might have changed for the better. Prince Igor was dead and Olga was scourging the Drevlianians. She was a Christian and she drove off the Volkhy. A major expedition was mounted from Byzantium under the leadership of the magus Michael of Amastris, who intended to found a covenant in the Drevlianian lands.

For nearly twenty years Michael and his brethren held on, but he had misread the times. The Drevlianians were hostile, churchmen attached to Olga's court were suspicious, and the faeries whom Michael had hoped to subdue or deceive were very formidable. Two magi were lost in Arcadia, one was slain by a group of Volkhy, and another was stoned to death in Kiev.

In 962 Sviatoslav became prince and Michael recognized his time was up. A devout pagan caring only for war, Sviatoslav let his mother's policies lapse. Volkhy reappeared in force. Michael evacuated before the inevitable assault could materialize, fleeing back to Constantinople.

The real opportunities only opened up a generation later. In Russia, Vladimir the Saint began a series of forced conversions and mass baptisms in the 990's, and the wholesale destruction of pagan temples. Meanwhile in

Poland the Church got properly organized during the rule of Boleslaw I (around 1000). This triggered a wide spread of conversions and an organized persecution of the pagans. Throughout the Slavic lands the Volkhy were driven away. Many were slain.

This was the open door the Order had been waiting for. The Slavic princes had betrayed their gods and cast aside their natural source of magical aid. With the Volkhy dead or in hiding the Order moved in.

The First Settlements

There were three interested tribunals on the borders of the Slavic lands: Rhine, Transylvania, and Thebes. Of the three, Rhine in particular was already experiencing vis shortages and wanted to lay claim to the eastern territories. Expeditions were sent from all three tribunals and for a while it looked as though a real argument was going to blow up between them.

At the same time however, the Order was beginning to experience serious internal turmoil. There were dreadful rumors about diabolism in House Tytalus. The confirmation of these rumors and the subsequent executions rocked the Order; key magi in both the Rhine and Transylvanian Tribunals were among the tainted. Infighting, paranoia, and unwary accusations became commonplace. For a few difficult years a fragile peace endured and then, a little after the millennium had turned, the Schism War erupted.

In the confusion of that time, the natural animosity and distrust between the three eastern tribunals turned to open hatred. Some of the most vicious encounters of the Schism War were fought in the border regions between Hungary, Germany, and Byzantium.

In Poland and Russia things developed very differently. The three new covenants had attracted several Bjornaer magi (especially Grand Silesia, which had been heavily sponsored by the Bjornaer domus magnus at Crintera) as well as magi from the houses of Merinita and Criamon. There were even a

few Flambeau and a very few Jerbiton, Mercere and Ex Miscellanea. There was one quaesitor in the region, at Rodnya. This was Patrick of Dunderry (from Hibernia) and he was appalled at the situation. When the order came from his superiors in the Theban tribunal to support their strike against a covenant in the Carpathians he flatly refused and then convened a council meeting among his covenant sodali. He denounced the commands of their sponsors as a betrayal of the Order — visible evidence of diabolical influence — and declared that he would have absolutely no part in any such mad enterprise. Patrick was a Christian, though not a Pious Magus (see *Pax Dei*), and he felt that in the face of such insanity the only proper response was that dictated by the Christian ethos: to turn the other cheek.

His fellow magi were swayed by Patrick's passionate rhetoric, even if they wouldn't endorse his pacific philosophy. They backed his rejection of the commands they'd received.

From Patrick's initial impulse a new mood swiftly swept through the covenant. Why should they or their recent adversaries in this wild, hard land bother themselves with the atrocities occurring in the West? What need did they have to go trespassing on each others' property, contending for vis, and trying to assert dominance and lines of jurisdiction? It was near on three hundred miles to Pripet Maior, and more like five hundred to Grand Silesia! Better by far to mind their own business, keep their heads low, and wait things out.



The First Three Covenants

Rodnya: Near the town of that name, on the Dnieper river about eighty miles south of Kiev. Founded by the Theban tribunal in 992.

Pripet Maior: Inside the south-western edge of the Pripet marshes. Founded by the Transylvanian tribunal in 994.

Grand Silesia: In the hill country between the Oder and Warta rivers, about halfway between Poznan and Wroclaw. Founded by the Rhine tribunal in 993.



Growth From Chaos

Throughout the autumn of 1006, the three Slavic covenants pursued a quiet policy of reconciliation. The Bjornaer magi among them were particularly keen to avoid any involvement in the Schism War. Already an unpleasant proportion of attacks had focused on House Diederne. The Order was looking for scapegoats, and the non-Latin houses were the obvious targets.

By 1008 the three covenants had formally shed their ties to their sponsors and constituted themselves as the New Slavonic Tribunal.

They could not hope to survive unscathed. Rodnya was the target of attacks both by vengeful Theban magi and hostile Transylvanians. In 1009 Rodnya was abandoned, Patrick leading his fellows north to Novgorod. Grand Silesia was also damaged,

and refugees fled to Pripet Maior.

With Rodnya destroyed, the magi agreed to found a new covenant in the Novgorod area, choosing a site at the center of the triangle formed by lakes Onega, Beloe, and Ilmen. This meant they were equidistant between three civilized centers (Novgorod, Beloozero, and Ladoga) but comfortably far away from large populations. The covenant was named Three Lakes and as time passed it was to assume a guiding role in the tribunal.

The New Age

For the next forty or so years the new tribunal developed well and its independence was one of the first matters agreed upon at the great conciliatory Grand Tribunal held after the Schism War was over. The Russian civil war of 1015-1019 was harsh, but all the



covenants were located in fairly inaccessible places, and Grand Silesia (resettled in 1013), of course, was not involved. Aside from the general turmoil of politics in the ensuing decades and the normal difficulties with Church authorities and interfering nobles, the magi did very well.

In Poland the mid eleventh century saw the terrible civil war and pagan uprising. Grand Silesia tried to stay out of sight during the conflict but there were too many people with grudges against them. Malicious tongues in the Rhine tribunal may have wagged, for when Casimir the Restorer came back to power in 1039, the covenant was targeted and destroyed by crusading anti-pagan knights. The fall of Grand Silesia left the tribunal without representation of any kind in Poland. It was at this time that the Rhine tribunal made its first attempt to "negotiate" a change in the border between itself and the New Slavonic tribunal, an attempt only narrowly defeated at Grand Tribunal. The Slavonic tribunal's response was to push through a ruling giving their tribunal council formal authority over the settlement of all new covenants in the Slavic lands. This authority has been used several times in the past hundred and fifty years to eject trespassing bands of foreign magi, but it has also slowed the growth of the tribunal, and some now argue that a more generous policy would have been wiser.

Despite the slaughter at Grand Silesia, some magi had escaped and again took refuge at Pripet Maior, but it was not until 1052, when Casimir had driven the Czechs out of Silesia, that the magi could come back to Poland. A covenant was established in the lands between the Vistula and Warta rivers, about fifty miles east of Sieradz, and took the name of a nearby town: Leczyca. It is from this time that the strong links between House Bjornaer and Pripet Maior date. The magi of Grand Silesia had twice been forced to flee there, and now many of them chose to stay.

Meanwhile, the growth of Three Lakes, and its ever increasing involvement in Novgorod city, was drawing the political center of the tribunal northward. In 1053 a

change of name was agreed. In a moment of proud affirmation the tribunal discarded the "new" from its name and chose to identify with the bustling independent city on the Volkhov river.

The next real challenge to face the tribunal followed the death of Iaroslav the Wise in 1054. Iaroslav's death brought on a new civil war, and one of the participants, prince Vseslav, was a Volkhv.

This was potentially deadly. Vseslav's actions raised the general consciousness, both Church and State, of the practice of illicit magic within Russia. Should the tribunal step in to counter Vseslav? Should they regard him as a rogue hedge wizard and kill him? The fact was that he was a prince of the House of Rurik, and to act against him would be a violation of the Hermetic Code and would draw attention to their presence. But plainly Vseslav was making the war worse than it would otherwise be. Plainly he was a direct threat to the tribunal, but equally plainly to act against him would be contrary to Hermetic principles and a provocative, dangerous action. In the end, the tribunal, meeting in emergency conclave, elected to do nothing.

In due course a temporary stability descended on Russia, when three of Iaroslav's sons formed a triumvirate. One of their first actions was to lure Vseslav to a peace conference, seize him treacherously, and hurl him into prison. This action backfired badly, for within a year the Cumans had begun pressing hard on Pereyaslavl and the common people were muttering about broken oaths and God's vengeance on traitors.

Matters did not improve. In 1069 Vseslav was released from prison by rioting Kievans and took control of the city. Again, the tribunal elected to do nothing. Patrick of Dunderry was an old man by now, but still passionate in his advocacy of non-aggression and he managed to keep the tribunal distant from the continuing conflicts. Vseslav's reign in Kiev was brief. His brother Iziaslav returned and drove him out. Though Vseslav lived till 1101 he never again troubled Russia on a similar scale, but dwelt fairly quietly in





Polotsk, dabbling in unpleasant magics and scribing his dangerous knowledge in six massive tomes of black serpent skin.

The Royal Embargo

The tribunal endured, but the promise of the early years seemed constantly to recede. With so much danger and unpredictability on all sides the covenants stayed well hidden. Alliances with noble houses were shunned. Brief contacts inevitably turned into disasters when a situation in which a magus might be of use to a prince developed. After the death of Mstislav the Great in 1132 a ruling was made. All members of the tribunal were strictly enjoined not to reveal themselves to any member of the Royal Russian house. Later this rule was extended to cover the Polish Royals as well.

Amidst so much civil strife, with nomad raids, foreign invasions, and their own restrictive policies, the tribunal grew only slowly. In the year 1220 there are only six covenants in the region.

Mundane difficulties aside, the tribunal at this time has one great and overriding concern. Members of the House of Bjornaer have fallen out among themselves. The question that is bedeviling them is this: Is it or is it not possible to integrate humanity harmoniously into a natural order?

The Harmonist/ Wilderist Debate

Right from the beginning the Novgorod tribunal attracted Bjornaer magi. Their domus magnus was at Crintera, in the Rhine tribunal, one of the first places to really feel the pinch of rising mundane population. At Pripet Maior a genuine wilderness was discovered, virtually untouched except for the

presence of a few scattered stilt-villages. Rodnya, on the edge of the steppe zone in Russia, had been the haunt of nomads for millennia, while Grand Silesia was in a secluded backwoods valley in hill country, far from even modest towns.

For a century and more, Novgorodian magi have enjoyed the virtually unfettered freedom to rove, explore, and delve in ancient forests, wild hills, and fathomless marshes. Expeditions penetrated to the Urals in the early 1150s and brought back word of seemingly limitless forests, stretching in unbroken grandeur into the uttermost East.

More and more, however, the problem of mundane encroachment has been intruding. What is to be done about the growing presence of human settlement near the Pripet? The marshes are a rich source of iron ore and there are salt basins nearby that are starting to be mined. People are being brought in to drain ground and work the land. Pripet Maior is now the oldest covenant in the tribunal (in 1194 it celebrated its bicentenary), and its reactions to this situation have been severely unimaginative. Extensive raiding has begun in recent years as well as a series of dangerous "hauntings."

Unfortunately the local nobility are not content to let matters lie. They don't yet recognize organized magical interference, but believe they are facing the presence of wild beasts or malign faerie influences. Several large scale hunts have been organized. One particular noble, the Boyar Mikhail of Turov, has even talked of summoning harpoonists from distant Norway to destroy the "marsh monsters." The Church might be brought in if solid evidence of supernatural meddling is unearthed, and Pripet Maior is hardly a cast-iron secret in the locality.

Pripet Maior's age is part of the problem. The founding magi are all long since dead or gone into Final Twilight. One of them, Stolitzya "the Swimmer," finally lost herself in her heart-beast (a great black-backed turtle) some thirty years ago. Stolitzya is somewhere in the Pripet's heart, brooding and dangerous. Many of the current magi at Pripet were her apprentices, and are close to

Final Twilight themselves, sinking slowly into animal irrationality and senile decay. Is a confrontation inevitable? Pripet Maior could do terrible damage before being dragged down. But there might be fearsome repercussions if evidence were found there pointing to the existence of other Hermetic covenants. However, there are those who believe that an alternative exists.

Several Three Lakes magi reached the Urals in the 1150s. The land delighted them with its wild nature and seemingly infinite span. The local Slavic tribes were quietly pagan, and not disposed to bother the newcomers. In particular, a narrow gorge was discovered above the headwaters of the Kama river, whose walls were dotted with literally hundreds of dry, spacious caves, connected by ledges.

In 1185 the tribunal granted a charter for a new covenant to be founded in the gorge. They were spurred on by the arguments of a newcomer to the tribunal, the young Hungarian maga Malincka Capcek. Malincka had several good arguments for her plans, and being of House Bonisagus gave her a certain weight in discussions. However, as events have shown, she concealed her true motivations from everybody.

In any event, the covenant was quite swiftly settled and soon attracted a number of quite young and unorthodox magi. The covenant was named Thousand Caves, and seemed set for success. However, it has recently emerged that the valley itself is only the center of the covenant organization, for the magi developed very friendly relations with the local people. These tribes live far more simply than the Russian peasants, using relatively little iron in favor of naturally occurring stone and wood, but their concept of the universe, and of their gods, is fully developed. The Bjornaer magi in particular were eager to learn from a people who lived in such harmony with their environment.

Thousand Caves has become the center of a small tribal confederation. While there is a moderate population in the valley itself, there are other confederated groups living outside it. Several large bands of tribesmen

drift through the forests hunting, trapping, and employing simple slash and burn agriculture. They use almost no metal, kill nothing unnecessarily, and, guided by the magi and their own Volkhvy, strive to reach a state of true harmony with the world. The Bjornaer magi have had significant success in discovering heart-beasts among these people, and in teaching the principles of Will Over Form, Animal Ken, and similar magics to Gifted members of the tribes. Many suspect that the large number of heart-beasts waiting to be found among these people is due to Thousand Caves' potent faerie aura.

Going this far was bound to irritate the traditional Bjornaer magi of Pripet Maior, but Malincka has dared to go further. While her consortes busy themselves with the locals, she has engaged in an intense effort to understand and codify Volkhvy magic. More, she intends to blend its methods and advantages with those of Hermetic magic. Her goal is to





create a unified society, bonded by a common use of magic, by a deep understanding of the natural world, and by a joint philosophy of worship and creation.

These are the two sides of the great debate, both within House Bjornaer and on a wider scale. On the one hand there are the defenders of a static piece of land, jealously guarding what they think is theirs. On the other are a group of magi who have become intertwined with a group of mundanes, trying to lead and teach a new way of life.

The tribunal council of 1214 saw this dispute break into the open. The Thousand Caves magi objected to the brutal suppression of mundanes in the Pripet area, while the Pripet magi yelled accusations of betrayal at the Caves magi, crying out that they had brought human interference into pristine wilderness. It was at this point that Malincka rose to address the tribunal, and, in an hours-long discourse, outlined the manner in which Volkhvy temper faerie auras, stressing the

vital participation both of faerie divinities and, crucially, of mundanes. She asserted that it was possible not simply for mundanes to exert magical powers in a Slavic aura, but that working with mundane help, Hermetic magi would one day be able to temper auras — magical auras — to their desires. This, she said, was the final goal of the Thousand Caves covenant: to create an aura that would enable all its inhabitants to share fully in the natural, magical glories of the world.

Many of the assembled magi were outraged, and there were calls for the immediate renunciation of Thousand Caves. The *quaesitores* were confounded and went into a private conference on the question of exactly how and to what degree Thousand Caves might have violated the Code.

But Thousand Caves also had supporters. Many of the magi had long been fascinated by the phenomenon of Domestic Magic and hurried to quiz Malincka on her discoveries. Here, it seemed to many of them, was a real

Finding Heart-beasts

Ars Magica Fourth Edition describes heart-beasts as the sole province of Bjornaer magi. At the covenant of Thousand Caves, however, non-Bjornaer — and even mundanes — also have this manifestation of the inner animal. What is at work here?

In House Bjornaer, magi who take apprentices locate individuals with the full Hermetic Gift who have heart-beasts and coax those animals forth as the apprentice learns magic. But others may have heart-beasts as well: otherwise un-Gifted individuals, individuals with minor Gifts like hedge wizards, and even non-Bjornaer Hermetic magi.

Any character who has an undiscovered heart-beast must have taken the Latent Magical Ability Virtue (ArM4 page 43) at character creation. In order for this heart-beast to emerge, a Bjornaer magus (or other character with the Ability Will Over Form) must help it to the surface. This is a seasonal activity. The “teacher” and “student” must spend a season together doing little else but exploring the inner animal located within the student. At the end of the season, the teacher rolls a stress die + Per + (Animal Ken or Will Over Form, whichever is higher). On a 9+, the student’s heart-beast

is found, and the student automatically learns the Ability Will Over Form 1, which can be improved in the future just as other Talents are. On a failure, the season is wasted, though more seasons can be spent at no penalty. On a botch, the storyguide may decide that the heart-beast has been damaged in some way, or some other calamity has arisen. There may be other ways heart-beasts can be found — perhaps through meditation and personal exploration — but any such possibilities are left to the storyguide and troupe. The guidelines presented here should suffice in most situations.

The exact nature of a character’s heart-beast (that is, what sort of animal it is) is up to the storyguide. The storyguide should, after consultation with the player involved, choose an animal whose personality seems to be in tune with the way the character has been role-played since he was created.

The political ramifications of Bjornaer magi helping non-Bjornaer express their heart-beasts is a subject best left to individual troupes, though this is certainly one of the issues at the heart of the ill will between Pripet Maior and Thousand Caves.

hope of reconciliation between the Order and the rapidly encroaching mundane world.

When the quaeſitores reconvened the meeting it was only for the purpose of immediately dismissing the tribunal. They disbanded the assembly with the brief declaration that Thousand Caves would be examined by an official delegation of quaeſitores backed by representatives from all the covenants of the tribunal, but, to be even-handed, so would Pripet Maior.

Delegation and Retribution

The quaeſitorial delegation, backed by powerful magi from all the covenants of the tribunal, visited Pripet Maior and Thousand Caves in 1215 and 1216. The delegation found Pripet Maior full of demands, outrage, and contempt. Conversely, at Thousand Caves there was hospitality and a concerted effort to convert the visitors to their philosophy. Regardless, there was no doubt that both covenants stood in violation of various sections of the Code.

However, the verdict of the quaeſitores was forestalled, for in the spring of 1217, Pripet Maior suddenly struck at Thousand Caves. Their assault was not declared as a formal Wizards' War and they had no permission for a Wizards' March. It was a simple, vicious raid, intended to wreck the enemy mages' laboratories and kill as many of them as possible. It failed, first because the animals local to Thousand Caves remained staunchly loyal despite the efforts of very powerful Bjornaer magi to sway them, and second because two of the attacking magi suffered Twilights at inopportune moments.

After the raid, the whole question of technical violations of the code was relegated to the back burner. The quaeſitores had a far more immediate offense to redress; an attack on a covenant of the tribunal cannot go unpunished. Several times they have called the Pripet Maior magi to judgment, so far without effect.

As the tribunal heads towards the meeting of 1221 these matters remain unresolved. Although Thousand Caves is patently responsible for "meddling in the lives of mundanes," it is hard to prove that they have endangered the Order by doing so as the mundanes in question are primitive pagans living hundreds of miles from the Christian authorities.

On the other hand, though Pripet Maior is plainly playing with fire, punishing them is close to impossible. Too many of the tribunal's magi have long-standing links to Pripet, and its political clout and status as the oldest surviving foundation in the tribunal makes it all but immune to censure.

Looming over this internal debate is the forthcoming Grand Tribunal of 1228. What to do? The consequences of this matter being dragged before the whole Order could be horrendous. Rhine is always looking for an opportunity to annex "vacant" Polish lands. The Novgorod tribunal cannot afford a major scandal.

While the formal organization of the tribunal is stymied, the infighting in House Bjornaer is growing worse. The magi of Pripet Maior weren't slow to rush off to Crintera and describe the Thousand Caves transgressions in the worst possible light, while Thousand Caves magi soon arrived to argue their side of the case. The raid of 1217 notched up the tension level and matters within the house are rumored to be close to eruption. The next Gathering of the Twelve Years is imminent, and is bound to be explosive. Just where judgment will fall in this matter is anybody's guess.



The Covenants

There are six known covenants in the Novgorod Tribunal. Details are given here for four of them. Two are not described. We assume that one of these two will be your own. The other "missing" covenant should be useful to players who require a particular enemy or ally, or as a covenant pursuing some



special goal, or simply to maintain an absence, unexplained and mysterious.

Of course, in your own saga, you are welcome to add covenants past six, or subtract from the number presented here. Although earlier *Ars Magica* supplements intended for use with the second and third editions have defined exact populations of the various tribunals (both in terms of magi and covenants) you should not let these definitions stifle your saga if you have other ideas.

Three Lakes Covenant

Background

Three Lakes is the guiding light of the tribunal. It is the site of tribunal meetings and the major political heavyweights whose con-

Form of the Avenging Beast

This special Bjornaer spell is used by many of the Bjornaer magi of the Novgorod tribunal, as are enhanced versions. It is not, however, listed in the *Ars Magica* Fourth Edition rules. For the benefit of those who do not have access to *Houses of Hermes*, it is repeated here.

Form of the Avenging Beast (MuCo20)

Spell focus: body part from the appropriate animal type (+2)

R: Per, D: Sun, T: Ind

The shape of your heart-beast becomes more powerful and deadly. If you have a battle-worthy heart-beast, you receive +5 on all Attack and Damage rolls and +15 on Soak rolls. If the heart-beast is not battle-worthy, it gains a +3 Attack, +3 Damage, and +10 on Soak. In addition, you receive no penalties from accumulated Body or Fatigue levels until you are unconscious, incapacitated, or dead. Your heart-beast becomes more ferocious, more fearsome, and larger, but also slightly distorted. Inert forms like those of trees or rocks become more threatening in appearance, but gain no combat abilities.

stant efforts shore up Leczyca's position in Poland and whose resident quaesitores reject Rhine and Transylvanian territorial demands. It supports the tribunal's Redcap network and is constantly pushing back the boundaries of exploration and trade.

The covenant is situated in a fertile lowland valley surrounded by dense woodlands. The valley walls and some of its floor have been cleared for pasture, but much of it is dominated by a wide, placid lake. Three Lakes itself is a large compound, split into three portions within a functional wooden stockade. The outermost portion is the Trade Yard; this is dominated by warehouses, reindeer stables, and a sled yard. It is occupied by drovers, fisherfolk, trappers, hunters, servants, and common grogs. Above the Trade Yard is the High House, which is on sloping ground leading up the valley wall. This is an ornate manor, dominated by the Great Hall. The mages' specialist servants, favored grogs, friends, and guests live here. Above the High House is the Keep. This stone bastion sits in a minor pass in the valley wall and houses the treasury, library, and the quarters of the magi.

Three Lakes has considerable flocks as well as fisherfolk and hunters. Bulk food is brought in from local villages and luxuries come from Ladoga or Novgorod. The covenant has its own resident smiths, glassworkers, several scribes, and even an alchemist.

The reindeer herds, sleds, and carts are the heart of the covenant's principal non-magical activity. As far as the local people are concerned, Three Lakes is the home of a prosperous trading family, the Beslavichi. The elderly Yury Beslav is family patriarch, while his son Georgi sees to the trading expeditions. Yury and Georgi are in fact father and son, but they are also Jerbiton magi with Gentle Gifts. Through its trading links, the covenant has accumulated significant wealth and developed a wide net of allies in north Russia and the Baltic.

The covenant has a rigid internal hierarchy. There are three grades of magi: Juniors are probationary members who surrender their sigils, have no voice in council, and

Three Lakes Statistics

Symbol: A golden sunburst at the center of a triangle formed by three blue ovals.

Season: Autumn

Founded: 1012 AD

Members:

Andrei Soitkchin, Guernicus, chief quaesitor of the tribunal, Senior

Pavel Chedyav, Guernicus, Senior

Yury Beslav, Jerbiton, Patriarch of the Beslavichi clan, Senior

Georgi Yurivich, Jerbiton, Yury's son and heir, Senior

Batiba an Khatiba, Ex Miscellanea, Cuman Shaman, Senior

Zashya Miyovna, Bjornaer (Swan heart-beast), Senior

Susan of Wicklow, Mercere, chief Redcap of the tribunal, Senior

Olga Deiaslav, Merinita, Specialist

Boris Davidovich, Bjornaer (Bear heart-beast), Zashya's filius, Specialist

Nicollo Parelli, Verditius, Specialist

Mina Dankovna, apprentice (parens: Yury Beslav)

Ratibor Peslav, apprentice (parens: Zashya Miyovna)

Dankya Yostovna, apprentice (parens: Susan of Wicklow)

Kassim ibn Fadal, apprentice, from Great Bulgar (parens: Olga Deiaslav)

Site: -1

Access Quality: Minor Clergy Quality (+3)

Access Distances: 40/0/20/20/20 (-3)

Seclusion: Visitors every 3-4 days (-1)

Environment: Average (0)

Buildings: +4

Size: 10 magi, 40 specialists, 100 grogs, 50 herders/drovers/trappers and servants (+5)

Impressive Structures: Great Hall, Stable, and Sled yard (12 total space points) (+1)

Quality: Good throughout (+6)

Repair: Average (0)

Defenses: +2

Site: One approach lake, two approaches flat, one approach uphill (+3)

Elaborate Structure: Keep (0)

Extent: Trade Yard and High House, Basic; Keep, Good (+1)

Repair: Average (0)

Stores: +4

Vis: 300 pawns (An30 Aq30 Au20 Co10 Cr20 He45 Ig20 Im15 In10 Me30 Mu5 Pe10 Re5 Te40 Vi10) (+4)

Supplies: 7,000 silvers per year (+2)

Reputations: Good neighbors (+1) among local peasants, Good neighbors (+1) among local nobles/landowners, Suspicious (-1) among local clergy, Formidable (+2) among Order of Hermes (+3)

Relations: -2

Allies: Leczyca covenant (+7)

Enemies: Novgorod city trade rivals, 1/4 of Leczyca's enemies, one minor Rhine and one minor Transylvanian covenant (-10)

Contacts: 6 merchants in north Russia and the Baltic (+3)

Improvement: +5

Income: 700 silvers per year (+2)

Vis supply: 50 pawns per year (An5 Aq8 Au4 Co4 He15 Me4 Te10) (+4)

Inhabitants: 10 magi, 40 specialists, 100 grogs, 50 covenant folk (+12)

Library: +4

Spells: 3000 levels (Widely dispersed among the 50 basic combinations of Form and Technique; specialist areas: InMe, ReMe, MuCo; Aegis: Level 35) (+5)

Hermetic Books: 900 points (Principal Summae: Animál: Level 16, Quality 8; Herbam: Level 18, Quality 8; Intélego: Level 20, Quality 9; Mentem: Level 23, Quality 9; Rego: Level 19, Quality 10; Other Summae: Average Level 15, Quality 7; Other works: 394 points) (+5)

Mundane Books: 600 points (Principal Summae: Hermetic Law: Level 6, Quality 7; specialist subjects: travelers' tales, Nordic lore, maps of northlands and Baltic, Russian and Baltic merchant law, historical chronicles of the Russian principalities, and the formal records of the Novgorod tribunal) (+5)

Mystical Attributes: +4

Aura: +4 (+1)

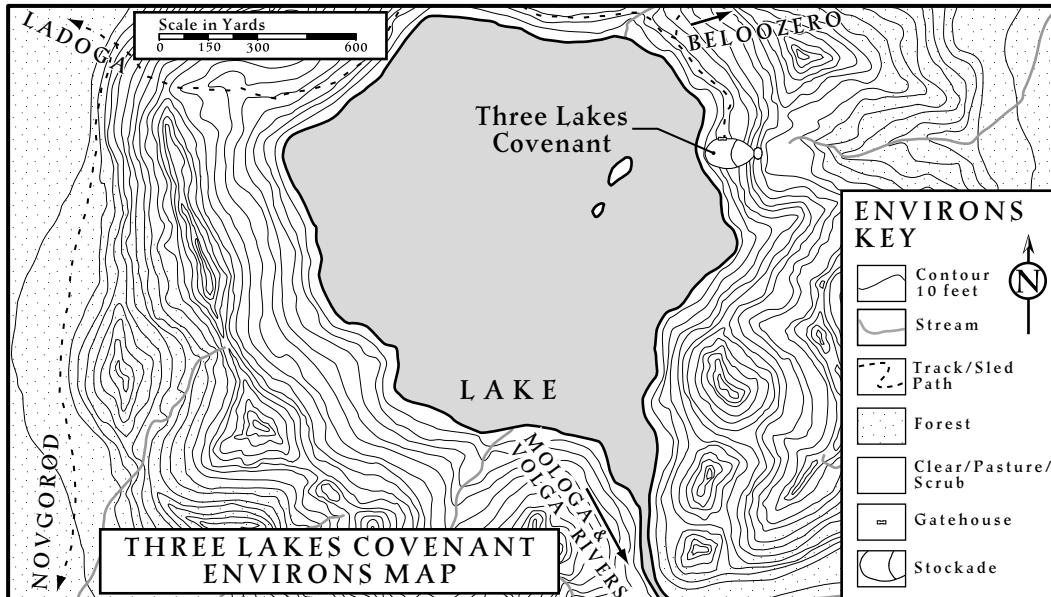
Magical Items: 600 points (+8)

(Hermes Portal to Leczyca covenant: 75 points; 10 Sleds with enchanted runners (*Veneer of Smooth Riding*): 150 points; 20 Enchanted swords/spears for favored grogs (*Edge of the Razor*): 200 points; **The Eye of Magic:** The result of a three year collaboration between Nicollo Parelli and Pavel Chedyav. A massive faceted crystal, used for investigating cryptic magics or magical effects, and for detecting magical influences approaching or influencing the covenant: 100 points; 75 additional points)

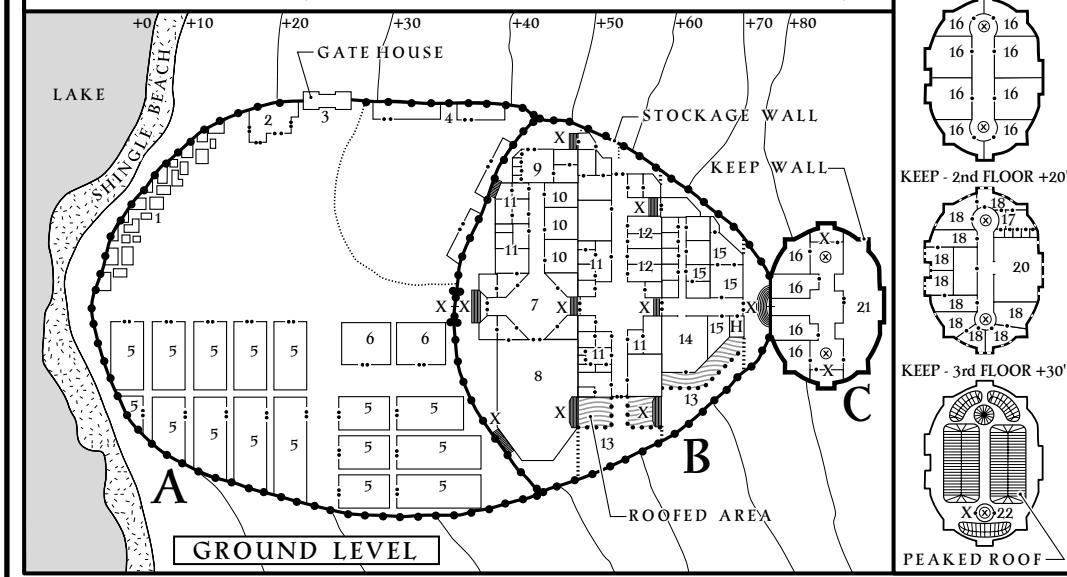
Laboratories: +1 bonus throughout (+5)

Total Scores: +90, -29

THREE LAKES COVENANT



THREE LAKES COVENANT FLOOR PLANS



FLOOR PLAN NOTES

A) The Trade House

1. Cottages and workshops for covenant folk community
2. Barracks for the gate house
3. Stone gatehouse
4. Horse stables and paddocks
5. Warehousing
6. Reindeer stables and paddocks

B) The High House

7. Outer court
8. Great Hall
9. Servants quarters
10. Trade barracks
11. Guest quarter
12. Scribes and other skilled servants
13. Gardens
14. The small hall
15. Quarters for guard captains, consorts, specially favored servants
- H. Hermes portal

C) The Keep

16. Laboratories
17. Apprentices
18. Personal rooms of those magi who chose to dwell permanently in the Keep
19. Treasury
20. Council chamber
21. Library
22. Watchtower: ascends to a total height of 60 feet

FLOOR PLAN KEY

- Stairs
- Wall & windows
- ⊗ Spiral Staircase
- Door
- Heavy, Tall Fence
- Light Fence
- ... Colonade
- 18 Specific Item (see Floor Plan Notes)
- Gate
- X Guard Post

labor under heavy obligations. Specialists are full members with a voice in all council matters who have decided to relinquish voting rights and administrative tasks in order to dedicate themselves to research. Their only obligations are to teach or contribute to the covenant library one season per year. Seniors are full members who have accepted major administrative responsibility and care for the covenant's many external obligations in return for which they alone determine policy

and have voting rights in council.

This structure, which developed gradually from about 1040-1080, has worked well for almost 150 years. However, in 1212 the covenant celebrated its bicentenary and a special council was held to assess the covenant's state. The magi were shocked by what they found, for they had failed to notice how long it had been since they had taken in any new blood. The last apprentice was gauntletted at Three Lakes 35 years ago. The

last magus to join the covenant was Boris Davidovich, who at 76 is the youngest magus by fifteen years.

The magi realized that their covenant was entering late Autumn. Accordingly, the Senior council voted unanimously to acquire apprentices, and over the next five years four promising youngsters were located. The covenant has assumed a collective responsibility for their training, which is full-time, all year round. Naturally the apprentices are flourishing.

Three Lakes' strengths are certainly formidable ones. They have a secure mundane position, strong mystical and library resources, a powerful community of magi, and widespread Hermetic respect. On the other hand their obligations are heavy. As many as three magi are routinely absent at any one time, and special obligations — the collection of vis, research, teaching, and now, the

Thousand Caves controversy — also sap their strength.

On this last matter Three Lakes is divided. Their magi are simultaneously excited and frightened by the situation. The mystical implications aside, it is politically dangerous. The quaesitorial investigation which Three Lakes mounted in 1215-6 came to no hard decisions and the tribunal meeting of 1221 promises to be a difficult one.

Magi

Andrei Soitkchin

Andrei is the senior quaesitor of the Novgorod tribunal. He is chairman of the Three Lakes council, responsible for monitor-





ing the activities of the magi and ensuring that they are living up to their various responsibilities under Three Lakes's detailed charter and the Hermetic Code.

As senior quaeſitor, Andrei will be primarily responsible for the tribunal's response to the Thousand Caves situation. A clear judgment might have emerged a few years ago, but was cut off by Pripet Maior's raid on Thousand Caves. This matter is, or at least should be, a simpler one, and Andrei's current first priority is to discipline Pripet. This, however, is proving very difficult to do, and the whole matter is currently frozen. Everyone is anticipating a major debate and some hard decisions at the forthcoming tribunal meeting of 1221.

Pavel Chedyav

Pavel is the junior quaeſitor at Three Lakes. He is Andrei's obvious successor, a fact which gives him visible satisfaction. Pavel is an ingenious magus, and an excellent laboratory worker, but he does not have Andrei's strong calling for justice. He views the Thousand Caves debate more as an intellectual challenge than a weighty philosophical or legal matter.

Pavel came to Three Lakes about fifty years ago from Leczyca. His political sympathies are more strongly aligned with Polish interests than with Russian. He wants to shape tribunal policy to cause an eventual reunification of the Polish realm and believes that the tribunal would then be sensible to shift its physical location out of Russia.

Andrei Soitkchin, Follower of Guernicus

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

Gender: Male

Age: 122

Size: -1

Confidence: 4

Decrepitude: 1

Afflictions: Rheumatism 3, Weak leg 2

Longevity Potion: Current lab total 69, Current potion bonus 14 (vis boosted)

Twilight Points: 16

Twilight: Longevity potion use 5, Vim score 20+ 4, Positive twilight: increase in Intélego score 5, Negative twilight: leg damaged 2

Personality Traits: Patient +2, Scrupulous +3, Severe +2

Reputations: Impartial Judge +4, with Order of Hermes; Over-formal +2, with Novgorod magi

Soak: +8

Fatigue: -2

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

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

Virtues: Quaeſitor +1, Magical Affinity: Intélego +4, Strong-Willed +1, Visual Eidetic Memory +3

Flaws: Creative Block -1, Weak Parma Magica: Music -3, Non-combatant -2, Small Frame -3

Abilities: Area Lore: Novgorod district (Politics) 5, Awareness (Searching) 2, Certámen (Intélego) 7, Civil and Canon Law (North Russian) 4,

Concentration (Reading) 6, Disputatio (Debate) 4, Finesse (Mentem) 4, Folk Ken (Magi) 4, Hermes Lore (History) 6, Hermetic Law (Tribunal procedures) 6, Intrigue (Alliances) 3, Magic Theory (Inventing Spells) 9, Magical Affinity: Intélego 4, Parma Magica (Mentem) 6, Penetration (Intélego) 5, Ride (Speed) 3, Scribe Latin (Copying) 5, Scribe Cyrillic (Copying) 4, Speak Latin (Hermetic) 6, Speak Russian (Novgorod dialect) 5

Arts: Cr 12, In 28, Mu 10, Pe 19, Re 26, An 7, Aq 8, Au 9, Co 26, He 9, Ig 12, Im 23, Me 30, Te 10, Vi 22

Equipment: Cloak of silken steel. Andrei is a non-combatant, but has occasionally stumbled into trouble. Nicollo made this cloak for him several decades ago. It is a finely wrought formal robe of dark blue and gray silk, with the virtue that it is as resistant to violence as a suit of supple chain links. It has Load 0 and offers Protection 10.

Spells: Andrei has specialized intensively in InMe, InIm, PeIm, ReCo, ReIm, ReMe, and ReVi. He can be assumed to have mastered all listed formulaics in these areas, and to have created enhanced versions of appropriate truth, lie-detection, and compulsion spells. He has a fair crop of defensive spells too, all of which he has mastered: invisibility, teleportation, and mind domination have always been his favorite ways of avoiding trouble.

Yury Beslav, Follower of Jerbiton

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

Gender: Male

Age: 117

Size: 0

Confidence: 4

Decrepitude: 1

Afflictions: Balding 0, Rheumatic 3, Poor Eyesight 1

Longevity potion: Current lab total 62, Current potion bonus 13 (vis boosted)

Twilight points: 20

Twilight: Longevity potion use 5, Vim score 20+ 4, Negative twilight: deleterious circumstances worsened from major to total 7, Positive twilight: increased understanding of Mentem 4

Personality Traits: Genial +2, Gregarious +2, Shrewd +4

Reputations: Canny bargainer +4, with local merchants; Venerable patriarch +3, in Novgorod district; Politician +3, in Order of Hermes

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Brawl/Dagger	+2	+4	+2	+3
Quarterstaff	+7	+8	+7	+7

Soak: +5

Fatigue: +3

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

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

Virtues: Gentle Gift +1, Quiet Magic +2, Well-Traveled +1, Subtle Magic +2, Temporal Influence +2

Flaws: Deleterious Circumstances (Common/Total: Magic only works when in the presence of two or more people) -4, Incompatible Arts (MuCo) -1, Deep Sleeper -1, Clumsy -2

Abilities: Area Lore: Novgorod Trade Territories (Geography) 3, Area Lore: Novgorod District

(Personalities) 5, Artes Liberales (Music) 3, Bargain (Forest products) 5, Brawling (Dodge) 3, Carouse (Games of Chance) 3, Certámen (Mentem) 5, Charm (First Impressions) 3, Civil and Canon Law (North Russian) 4, Concentration (Inventing spells) 3, Disputatio (Teaching) 3, Etiquette (Nobility) 5, Finesse (Mentem) 3, Folk Ken (Townsfolk) 4, Great Weapon (Quarterstaff) 3, Hermes Lore (Politics) 5, Hermetic Law (Mundane relations) 4, Magic Theory (Potions) 10, Parma Magica (Mentem) 6, Penetration (Mentem) 3, Ride (Speed) 3, Scribe Bulgar (Original Composition) 3, Scribe Latin (Original Composition) 6, Scribe Cyrillic (Original Composition) 4, Speak Bulgar (trade vocabulary) 3, Speak Latin (Hermetic) 5, Speak Polish (Leczyca Dialect) 2, Speak Russian (Novgorod dialect) 5, Storytelling (epics) 4, Wagoneering (Rough Terrain) 3

Arts: Cr 19, In 21, Mu 18, Pe 17, Re 22, An 14, Aq 9, Au 11, Co 24, He 16, Ig 19, Im 19, Me 26, Te 14, Vi 21

Equipment: Quarterstaff enchanted with a spell of stony hardness (Load -1.0, Damage +6). Fur Robes enchanted with a spell of strength and resistance (Load -1.0, Protection +5).

Encumbrance: -1

Spells: Yury's strongest concentrations are in InCo, InIm, InMe, ReCo, ReIm, and ReMe. He can be assumed to have mastered all listed formulaics in these categories. He has decent abilities in all other areas, but is strongly inclined to the subtlest possible use of magic, and abhors flashy destructive spells.

Consequently, though he obeys the tribunal ruling on non-interaction with the Polish and Russian royal houses, he resents it.

Yury Beslav

Yury is the public head of the covenant. He is a traditional Jerbiton magus, involved in district politics, trade arrangements, and patronage of artists. He has played his part for the benefit of the mundane world for so long

that it has long since ceased to be an act. Yury was instrumental in formulating the tribunal's policy about the Russian and Polish royal houses. He himself found it impossible to enter friendships or alliances with royal princes without inevitably being sucked into wider and more dangerous relationships.

Yury's magic is so strongly tied to social activities that he is actually reliant on the presence of other people to make his magic function. It fails completely in the absence of company. He cannot do laboratory work



without a few grogs in attendance, and even when in very secret negotiations he makes sure to have a scribe or two on hand to bolster his magic.

Georgi Yurivich

Georgi is Yury's son and heir. He was his father's apprentice, and their magical abilities are highly similar. Over the last thirty years or so, Georgi has taken over the traveling and trading responsibilities. He is often in Ladoga and Novgorod, or on the trade trails in the north country contacting the covenant's merchant agents, collecting information, making new contacts, and enhancing their network of political informants.

It was Georgi who found and named the Valley of a Thousand Caves over forty years ago and led Malincka Capcek there in 1182. He is now embarrassed by the way events have worked out. Malincka is a friend, but her work is potentially dangerous. As someone who will have to deal with this situation, probably from a position of authority, Georgi is troubled as to what path he should take.

Georgi has to deal with the fact that many mundanes have known him for several decades during which he has not aged adequately. In order to defuse dangerous speculation Georgi customarily employs enhanced versions of *Disguise of the New Visage* applied to the whole body. Where this fails to fully convince, he uses MuMe and ReMe spells to deter awkward questions or lines of thought.

Batiba an Khatiba

Batiba is the only non-Hermetic member of Three Lakes. (His magic is of the Shamanic variety described in Appendix I; he has become a member of the Order through the procedures described in *Hedge Magic* on page 33). He was brought to the covenant about fifty years ago by Georgi Yurivich, who encountered him in the steppe. Batiba is from the Cuman tribe, a pagan who worships his ancestors and the spirits of earth

and sky. Batiba has brought a unique perspective to Three Lakes debates, and his stature has been boosted by events at Thousand Caves; the quaeſitores turned to him as the resident authority on pagan matters, and he was a pivotal member of the delegation.

Batiba is enthusiastic about the Thousand Caves project. It comes far closer to re-creating a type of society he is familiar with than the traditional structure of the Order of Hermes. He is also eager (to the horror of the quaeſitores) to spread word of these events outside the tribunal, especially among his fellow Ex Miscellanea magi. To date they have been able to restrain him, just.

Zashya Miyovna

As senior Bjornaer maga at Three Lakes, Zashya has a certain technical authority over the other Bjornaer magi of the tribunal. The weakness of this authority has been cruelly revealed by recent events. Zashya has a gentle nature and as a member of the delegation she made every effort to reconcile her fellow Bjornaer magi.

Unfortunately, the Thousand Caves magi spent most of their time trying to convert her, while the Pripet Maior magi were threatening or dismissive. Zashya had particular difficulty with Miya Cossuri of Pripet, who is both Zashya's parent and her mother. Her visit to Crintra in 1218, to complain of Pripet Maior's actions, was equally futile. The elder Bjornaer magi did agree to summon Pripet Maior to judgment, but made no commitments to force attendance, effectively permitting Pripet to defy them.

Outside of this conflict, Zashya has lived a graceful and romantic life. She has been wooed by many men, both magi and mundanes. It is rumored that in her youth she dallied with a prince of the House of Rurik. But like many of the faerie wives of legend, the call of the wilderness was too strong, and she left him one night, flying from his palace window despite his imploring cries for her return.

This rumor is in fact true, and it greatly complicates Zashya's position. She secretly

Zashya Miyonna, Follower of Bjornaer

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

Gender: Female

Age: 119

Size: 0

Confidence: 2

Decrepitude: 0

Longevity potion: Current lab total 61, Current potion bonus 13 (vis boosted)

Afflictions: Shortness of breath 1

Twilight points: 15

Twilight: Longevity potion use 4, Vim score 20+ 4, Positive Twilight: increased understanding: Muto 7

Personality Traits: Gentle +2, Conciliatory +3, Passionate +2

Reputations: Romantic soul +4, in Novgorod tribunal; Great Beauty +4, in Novgorod District

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Brawl/Dagger	+6	+6	+6	+2

Soak: +4 Human/Swan (with Cloak of Silken Feathers)

Fatigue: 0

Fatigue levels: Human: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious; Swan: OK, -3, -5, Unconscious

Body levels: Human: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Incapacitated; Swan: OK -3, -5, Incapacitated

Virtues: Follower of Bjornaer +1 (Non-Battleworthy Heart-beast, Hidden Shape, No Familiar, Will Over Form), Magical Affinity: Weather +2, Magical Affinity: Animál +3, Animal Ken +1, Venus' Blessing +1

Flaws: Dark Secret (bore a child to a prince) -1, Major Magical Deficiency: Perdo -4, Common Fear (Claustrophobic) -2, Cyclic Magic (rough at the dark of the moon) -1

Abilities: Animal Ken 5, Area Lore: Kiev City (Personalities) 2, Area Lore: Novgorod District

(Geography) 5, Artes Liberales (Music) 3, Awareness (Alertness) 5, Brawling (Dodge) 4, Certámen (Animál) 6, Charm (Courtly Love) 5, Chirurgy (Bind Wounds) 3, Concentration (Spells) 6, Disputatio (Teaching) 4, Etiquette (Court) 4, Faerie Lore (Water Faeries) 3, Finesse (Grace) 5, Hermes Lore (Politics) 3, Magical Affinity: Animál 6, Magic Affinity: Weather 5, Magic Theory (Potions) 10, Parma Magica (Auram) 6, Penetration (Animál) 5, Play Harp (Solo) 4, Scribe Latin (Illuminating) 5, Scribe Cyrillic (Illuminating) 5, Sing (ballads) 3, Speak Latin (Hermetic) 5, Speak Russian (Novgorod Dialect) 5, Survival (Lakes) 5, Swim (Underwater Maneuvering) 3, Will Over Form 6

Arts Cr 20, In 16, Mu 30, Pe 7, Re 29, An 27, Aq 14, Au 25, Co 28, He 11, Ig 9, Im 12, Me 16, Te 9, Vi 21

Equipment: Cloak of Silken Feathers: A gift from Nicollo Parelli. Zashya often wears this great cloak of snow-white silk. It is embroidered with silken stitching and tiny diamonds which help it to hold stronger enchantments than normal cloth. The cloak confers Protection of +4, and upon command can shapechange into a feather mantle that merges seamlessly with Zashya's own swan feathers.

Spells: Zashya has chosen to specialize in her two affinity areas, weather and animals. She is extremely powerful in CrAu, CrAn, MuAu, and MuAn, bringing in Aquam and Corpus requisites to broaden her scope slightly. She knows few formulaics outside these areas, though her spontaneous capabilities are decent. If forced into combat, Zashya can produce enhanced versions of most of the combat CrAu spells.

bore a child by her prince, a non-Gifted daughter. Her daughter in turn bore a daughter, and even at the birth Zashya knew the child was Gifted. Zashya arranged for her granddaughter to be raised by another Bjornaer magus of Three Lakes (long since dead), and spent most of the next two decades away from the covenant. This child was Nastassia Baramov, now a prominent member of Thousand Caves covenant.

Though Zashya's relationship with her prince ended before the Royal Embargo, it would still embarrass her dreadfully if revealed. As for how her mother, Miya Cossuri of Pripet, would react to the news that Nastassia Baramov is her great granddaughter . . . it hardly bears thinking.



Susan of Wicklow

Of all the current Novgorod magi, Susan has traveled the farthest to claim her place in the tribunal. Her acceptance was assured on two grounds: she is that rare thing, a Gifted Mercere maga, and she is of the lineage of Patrick of Dunderry. Patrick is effectively the patron saint of the tribunal. The line of his Russian students died out about sixty years ago, and the tribunal was glad to welcome a new representative.

Susan is one of the greatest travelers and explorers of the age. She accompanied Sadko the merchant on his great travels in the 1160s and 1170s. Later she was a partner with Georgi Yurivich on his eastern expeditions. From Sweden to Constantinople, she has trekked, ridden, rafted, and, when necessary, flown or swum. Every year she aims to make a complete circuit of the Novgorodian covenants. To help conceal the presence of the Three Lakes/Leczyca Hermes Portal link she does all of this without use of the portal, though of course she can always make a return to Three Lakes via her *Leap of Homecoming* spell.

Susan is apolitical. She lives for travel, for new horizons, and for the satisfaction she gets in discharging her duty. The Redcaps are her pride — the sinew that binds the Order together — and she has no causes other than to demand the respect that her worthy service deserves.

Olga Deiaslav

Olga's fixation on Slavic faeries is all-consuming, and has been getting more so over the years. It is questionable whether her true loyalty lies to the covenant or to the various local faeries. Of all the magi at Three Lakes, she is probably the closest to leaving it, whether by Final Twilight, old age, or the lure of Arcadia.

Olga is famous for her skill as a teacher. Since Three Lakes took on new apprentices, she has spent her mandatory one season of service per year lecturing. However, she is

secretive about her spells. Considering her enormous length of tenure, she has made only modest contributions to the Three Lakes grimoire (though her *summae* and *libri quaeſitionum* are the pride of the library).

There are wild rumors about some of her accomplishments. She is said to have solved the riddle of the faerie manipulation of time, is rumored to have mastered the faerie abilities to erase fatigue, and, it is also rumored, has found ways to siphon Faerie Might from friendly faeries for her own use. Though she lectures generously on points of Faerie Lore and Etiquette, no-one has ever been able to get a firm answer from Olga on the deeper questions of Faerie Magic. Malincka Capcek came to Three Lakes about ten years ago and had several long discussions with Olga, but apparently to no useful end. Olga is altogether dismissive of the Thousand Caves project.

Nicollo Parelli

Nicollo came to Three Lakes nearly seventy five years ago at the request of the covenant council, who felt a need for the services of a Verditius magus. He is comfortable at Three Lakes, and treasures its stability and security. He also likes his pleasures, and has grown quite fat after three quarters of a century of good living.

Nonetheless, Nicollo is a more formidable spirit than many people appreciate. He has almost never been tested in violence or politics, but he has watched recent events with great concern and is beginning to feel obliged to take a stand and speak out. He is deeply fascinated by the Thousand Caves experiment, for he has long felt Hermetic magic to be a limiting factor on his creativity. At the same time as he feels drawn to this great experiment he feels a sentimental sympathy for his old companions of the Roman tribunal, and believes there is some justice in the complaints of the vis-hungry western tribunals.

Nicollo, of course, is widely famed for his ingenious laboratory work. He is also somewhat admired for his social adeptness. He is so

easygoing and pleasant that even self-righteous, arrogant magi like Pavel Chedyav have been lured into acting as laboratory assistants on Nicollo's more difficult projects.

Boris Davidovich

Boris is the youngest of the magi at Three Lakes, a Specialist dedicated to a unique project.

Boris believes that animals, much like people, have legends and folklore: tales that may reveal the wisdom of the ages before man, even perhaps the secrets of the age of Creation. He has traveled in Arcadia in attempts to speak to legendary beast lords, and has quested in the wilderland for magical animals, especially Griffins, Chimeras, Pegasi, and Unicorns.

Unlike Olga Deiaslavl, Boris is very open about the progress of his researches and takes great pains scrupulously recording his new spells and investigations. If more people made use of the Animál parts of the Three Lakes library his work might be widely known.

Boris's views on Thousand Caves are not known. His focus on his own work is so tight that he barely seems aware of much else in the world. He actually declined Zashya's invitation to accompany her on the delegation, though he did, reluctantly, accompany and support her at Crintera. This is thin comfort considering that he is her filius.

Boris is physically the most startling of the Three Lakes magi. He is enormous in stature and covered from head to foot in a dense, wiry mat of brown hair. This is the result of a bad Twilight over twenty years back, which has locked his human physical appearance much closer than normal to his bear heart-beast.



Thousand Caves Covenant

Thousand Caves covenant occupies a small portion of the Valley of a Thousand Caves, a long, twisting gorge that runs down from the western face of the Ural mountains. At the mouth of the gorge is a great rearing massif, the Earth Crown, watchpost of the covenant, below which is the main settlement.

The heart of the covenant is the Great Cavern, a cathedral-sized cave with a towering arched entryway. This is adjoined by the mages' private caves and laboratories. The Great Cavern is the only fortified portion of the covenant, its entrance having a rough stone wall and gate. Approximately fifty other adjacent caves are actually inhabited, and they depend on inaccessibility for defense. They are accessible either by precarious ledges, by rope ladders, or not at all unless you can fly. At this time almost thirty members of the covenant have avian heart-beasts. Another thirty or so have other animal heart-beasts. Needless to say, it was a surprise to the Bjornaer to discover this many people with heart-beast tendencies, and the foremost speculation is that Thousand Caves' strong Slavic faerie aura (of +6) has had some sort of "quicken" effect on the locals.

The covenant has a very unsophisticated lifestyle. The valley bottom is farmed; there are flocks, hunting, and fishing. The level of technology is late iron-age; a decent quality "modern" sword is a great prize here. The need for parchment, glassware, and inks always places the covenant in debt. However, the magi have considerable sway in this region. Thousand Caves is the acknowledged leader of the local clan, and several of the magi spend a good deal of their time roving amid the camps and semi-permanent villages in the surrounding countryside. In addition, the magi have broadened and intensified the normal pagan Slavic relationships with the local animals and faeries. Thus, despite its





lack of formal defenses, the covenant is ringed by allies and friends.

Thousand Caves' mystical status is very complex. The magi have admitted Volkhy as members (affiliating them to House Ex Miscellanea) and are teaching them Hermetic techniques. They have also accepted Malincka's reasoning that tempering an aura will require three vital elements: an Hermetic equivalent to the Volkhy Great Ritual, the willing participation of a large group of mundanes, and a mighty faerie "divinity" to "bless" the procedure. Malincka is hard at work on the first requirement. The second will come in time with Thousand Caves' large population. The last is the most difficult, and the simple, practical aim of the Thousand Caves magi is to come up with a god. They hope to entice a great faerie to assume this role; indeed they hope to bring the influence of Hermes himself back to the

world. For thirty years they have worked to this end, preaching to the local communities, teaching Hermes' mythology, creating new festivals, teaching rituals of worship, and spreading arcane lore to promote their "new" cult.

To date there are some small signs of a positive nature. The local Volkhy have proved capable of mastering Hermetic magic. There is nothing in it that denies their faith in their gods, though they have not managed to blend Hermetic and Volkhy techniques. The Volkhy can use either, but only separately. On the other hand, Malincka Capcek has achieved some blended effects, and the magi have recently begun to get hints that their efforts to "tune" the local magical aura may be paying off. Sudden surges of magical energy have been experienced, as well as ecstatic, visionary dreams. Lastly, it seems that there may now be one person who can

Thousand Caves in Your Saga

The speculative researches of Malincka and her colleagues at Thousand Caves clearly have the potential to turn some of the cherished cornerstones of Hermetic Magic Theory on their ear. While some storyguides and troupes may embrace this possibility, others may be concerned for their sagas' continuity.

Because of this, the eventual success or failure of Malincka's research has been left undefined in this book. A number of possibilities for using Thousand Caves in your saga are discussed below. As a final note, the new spells developed by Malincka Capcek (see page 125), especially those that manipulate auras, might be affected by what you decide with regard to the truth of Thousand Caves. Depending on your outlook, you may want to modify them.

1) Malincka succeeds, and this sparks a gradual reconciliation and assimilation between Hermetic and Volkhy magic-users in the Novgorod tribunal with far-reaching consequences in Hermetic politics and Slavic culture.

2) Malincka succeeds, but the rest of the Order is not pleased by the return of Hermes, who turns out to have his own agenda. Quaesitorial wrath or wider political intrigue might lead to the Renunciation of Malincka, Thousand Caves, or even her allies in other parts of the Novgorod Tribunal.

3) Malincka succeeds only partially, most likely because although her analysis of auras seems promising she has poor assistance on the faerie side of the equation. A stalling in her work could lead to an ambiguous situation in which she continues to struggle politically and magically to complete her work while the tribunal splits into opposing camps around her.

4) Malincka fails because she arouses the Slavic gods against either her presumption or against the revived antiquity Hermes who springs up in their midst.

5) Malincka fails because a demon cunningly assumes the role of the great faerie she hopes to lure into becoming the Hermetic god and either leads the whole community into diabolism or is discovered and flees after discrediting her work (and certainly bringing about her Renunciation).

6) Malincka fails because Mongol shamans discover her work and regard it as dangerous. They target her and her covenant for destruction (any time after 1223).

7) Malincka fails because there is some subtle factor in Volkhy Ritual that simply defies Hermetic analysis; at the end of the day it is a religion, not just a system of magic, and remains forever beyond the ken of Hermetic Magic Theory.

truly bridge the gap between the two traditions. A young girl, Stenya Vassanovna has proven herself Gifted, and claims that she can talk to "Lord Hermes." She is preaching his cult with remarkable persuasiveness. If she is telling the truth then perhaps one day she will be the first priestess of a newly revived Hermetic religion.

Of course, the chief difficulties with all this research lie in the fact that the powers of the Volkhyv come from the faerie realm, while Hermetic magi draw on magical powers. The thrust of Malincka's research is to figure out some way that the techniques of the Volkhyv, aided by the existence of pagan believers, can be made to affect magical auras in the same way they affect faerie auras. Clearly much research into faerie, magical energy, and the strange power of mass mundane worship is needed.

It is assumed by the magi of Thousand Caves that their patron, Hermes, is of the magical realm rather than the faerie (after all,

their magic is based largely on the power of the Cult of Hermes — how could there be any other explanation!). One fear at Thousand Caves, however, is that they will wind up simply attracting the attention of demons.

Since declaring their successes at the 1214 tribunal, Thousand Caves has been striving to convert the tribunal to their point of view. They are keen to expand their numbers. Much research into faerie, magical energy, faith, and belief is needed. The philosophical questions are almost as complex as the magical ones, and Malincka urgently wants competent collaborators. In fact, you might consider these needs of Thousand Caves when you're getting ready to start your own saga — new player magi would be heartily welcomed at Thousand Caves, especially if they are interested in research in these areas.



Thousand Caves Statistics

Symbol: A labyrinth

Season: Summer

Founded: 1185

Members:

Malincka Capcek: Bonisagus

Nastassia Baramov "the Firebird": Bjornaer (Eagle heart-beast)

Rehamchi Danichev: Volkhv, Ex Miscellanea

Lelya Danichev: Volkhv, Ex Miscellanea

Basyl Karrimichi: Merinita

Otto Rattstein: Bjornaer (Lynx heart-beast)

Yakim ibn Rassur: Flambeau

Narina Cheminov: Bjornaer (Horse heart-beast)

Site: -1

Access Quality: Average Peasant (0)

Access Distances: 20/40/20/20/0/ (-1)

Seclusion: Visitors every 2-3 days (-2)

Environment: Good, mountain gorge, sheltered, and well-watered (+2)

Buildings: +1

Size: 8 magi, 10 specialists, 200 covenfolk (+4)

Impressive Structures: Great Cavern (10 total space points) (0)

Quality: Average to poor (4 points of space are poor) (-2)

Repair: Two points of space good, two points of space poor (0)

Defenses: -2

Site: Inaccessible from cliff foot, overlook from cliff top (unique situation, only two directions of approach) (+2)

Elaborate Structure: The Earth Crown (watchpost) (0)

Extent: Seven points of space have poor defenses, Great Cavern is well defended (+1)

Repair: Great Cavern defenses in good repair (+1)

Stores: -1

Vis: 150 pawns (An25 Aq20 Au15 Co10 He20 Im15 In5 Me5 Te20 Vi15) (+1)

Supplies: Average (0)

Reputations: Formidable and Benevolent (+2) among local villages, Radical (-3) among Novgorod covenants (-6)

Relations: +4

Allies: Local villages +5, Faeries +5, Animals +3 (+13)

Enemies: Pripet Maior (-3)

Contacts: None (0)

Improvement: +3

Income: 700 silvers debt (-2)

Vis Supply: (An10 Aq5 Au6 Co5 He7 Im5 In5 Me5 Te6 Vi6) (+6)

Inhabitants: 8 magi, 0 specialists, 175 tribesfolk (+5)

Library: -2

Spells: 1200 levels (Specialist areas: CrVi, InVi, MuVi; Malincka's spells; Nastassia's shapechange spell; Nastassia and Yakim's CrIg spells; Basyl's faerie related CrIm and ReIm spells; Aegis: Level 35) (-1)

Hermetic Books: 360 points (Summae Level 5, Quality 5 in all areas; remaining 135 points principally specialist tractatus) (-1)

Mundane Books: 180 points (Principal Summae: Legend Lore (Slavic) Level 8, Quality 6; Legend Lore (Greek) Level 5, Quality 5; Magic Theory Level 7, Quality 5; special subjects: Volkhv Ritual technique, folklore, and magic) (-3)

Mystical Attributes: +3

Aura: Slavic Faerie +6 (+6)

Magical Items: 75 points (Cloak of Feathers: 35 points, 2

Fire Javelins (as *Pilum of Fire*): 40 points) (+1)

Laboratories: Six laboratories -1, one laboratory +2 (-3, +2)

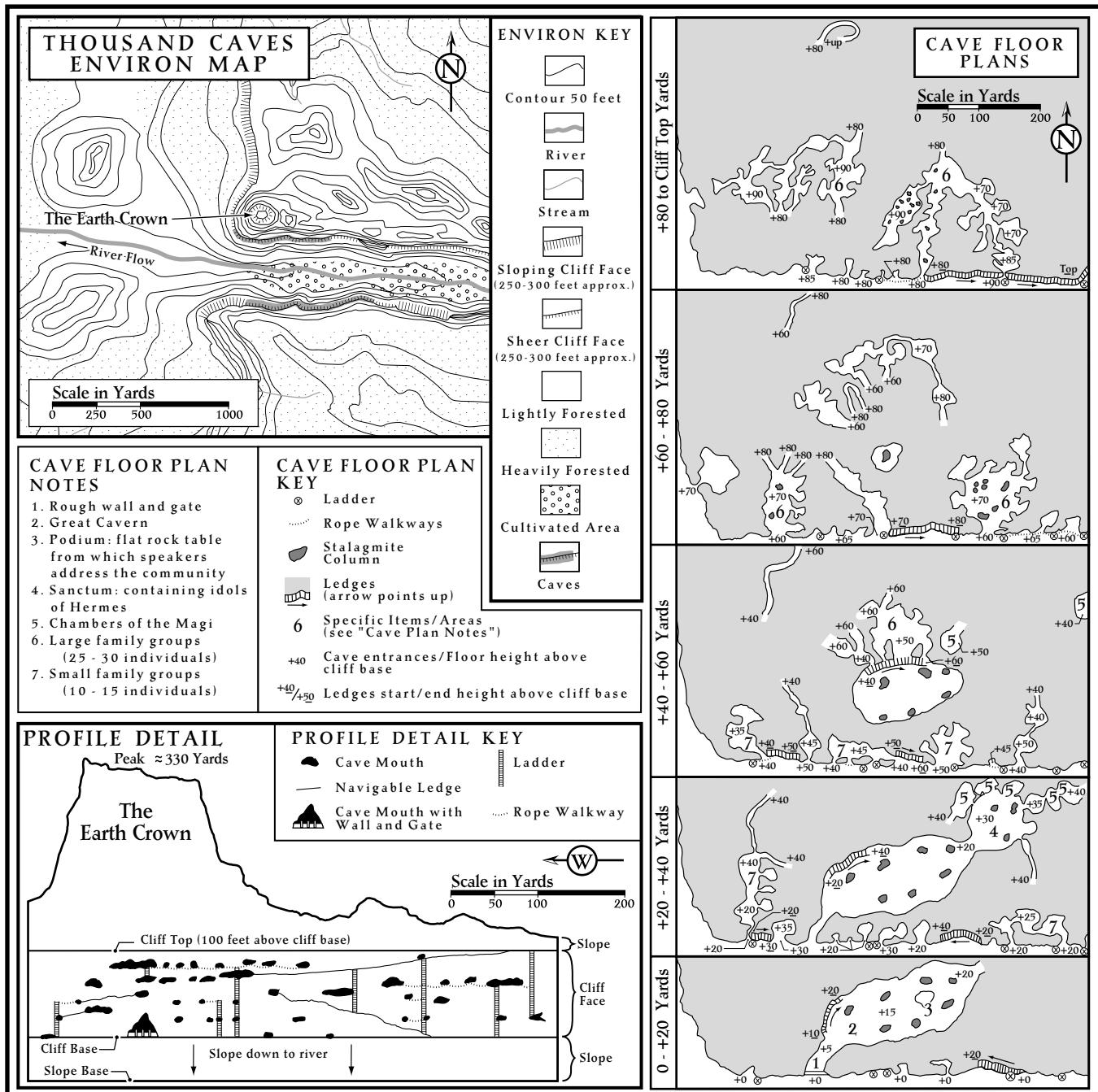
Total Scores: +48, -35

Magi

Malincka Capcek

Malincka is the ideological leader of the covenant. She achieved her key insight into the nature of Volkhv magic almost thirty-five years ago, in a Twilight experience while observing a Great Ritual. The Twilight gave

Malincka a gut feeling for what was going on. Four hundred years of failed Hermetic attempts to manipulate and create auras suddenly came clear to her; no such magic, with its necessarily enormous power demands yet requirement for intricate control, can succeed in the hands of a single wizard. It requires the interaction of magical ritual, a fount of faerie power, and (so she believes) the channelling effect of mundane human participants. She believes that she understands how Volkhv



Great Rituals interact with local auras and the power of faerie divinities channeled through pagan believers to tune auras. This understanding, however, isn't of much practical use to her. No-one else is likely to experience a similar Twilight, and knowing what is happening doesn't help her convince other people that she's right, or to achieve similar effects through Hermetic methods.

Her goals (in approximately this order of importance) are:

- To learn from the Volkhvy how to craft a Hermetic variant of the Great Ritual, balancing faerie power and human worship into an aura-tempering force.
- To create or temper an aura so sympathetic to Hermetic magic that it yields bonuses as strong as the x2 benefits Volkhvy get from Slavic faerie auras. If that's possible, she wants to find a way to meld Slavic faerie and Hermetic magical auras into one, single, unified aura sym-



pathetic to the practice of both magical systems.

- To broaden the Volkhv Disciplines into a wider-ranging, more flexible system, akin to Hermetic Forms and Techniques, as well as developing quick “Formulaic” techniques for them.
- To find out what exactly allows Slavs to work Domestic Magic, and to use that force to allow mundanes in a Hermetic covenant to achieve similar effects and attain heart-beasts.

Though Malincka believes she knows what happens in a Volkhv Great Ritual, in order to control it she must first understand how it happens. Therefore she has been creating ever more powerful InVi spells. Simultaneously, she is pursuing methods of creating and manipulating auras using a blend of Hermetic and Volkhv methods. She has also encouraged her community to pursue more direct methods. The revived cult of Hermes was her idea though she has played relatively little part in promoting it. Her reasoning is that while a great faerie power is

Malincka Capcek, Follower of Bonisagus

Characteristics: Int +4, Per +2, Pre -1, Com +1, Str -1, Sta 0, Dex +2, Qik +1

Gender: Female

Age: 70

Size: -1

Confidence: 4

Decrepitude: 0

Afflictions: Liver spots 0, Stiff hips 1

Longevity potion: Current lab total 51, Current potion bonus -10

Twilight points: 12

Twilights: Longevity potion use 2, Vim score 15+ 3, Positive Twilight: Increase in Vim score 3, Positive Twilight: Insight into Volkhv Magic 4

Personality Traits: Compassionate +2, Impetuous +2, Proud +1

Reputations: Follower of Bonisagus +3, with Order of Hermes; Radical +4, with Novgorodian Magi

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Dagger	+5	+5	+5	+2

Soak: -1

Fatigue: +2

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

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

Virtues: Hermetic Prestige +1, Magical Affinity (Vim) +3, Higher Purpose (Unify Order of Hermes and mundanes) +1, Magic Sensitivity +1, Great Characteristic (Intelligence) +2

Flaws: Small Frame -3, Major Magical Deficiency (Perdo) -4, Driving Goal (Invent a blended theory of Volkhv and Hermetic magic) -1

Abilities: Area Lore: Hungary (Budapest) 3, Area Lore: Urals (Kama River) 3, Awareness (Searching) 3, Brawling (Dagger) 2, Certamen (Intellego) 4,

Concentration (Lab work) 4, Faerie Lore (Slavic) 4, Finesse (Vim) 3, Hermes Lore (History) 3, Legend Lore (Slavic Gods) 2, Magic Affinity with Vim 6, Magic Sensitivity 4, Magic Theory (Inventing Spells) 8, Parma Magica (Ignem) 5, Penetration (Intellego) 2, Scribe Latin (Original Composition) 5, Scribe Cyrillic (Original Composition) 3, Speak Latin (Hermetic) 4, Speak Hungarian (Buda District) 4, Speak Russian (Novgorod Dialect) 4

Arts: Cr 14, In 19, Mu 11, Pe 5, Re 11, An 8, Aq 6, Au 5, Co 15, He 6, Ig 7, Im 10, Me 17, Te 6, Vi 18

Spells

Shiver of the Lycanthrope (InAn 10)

Tongue of the Beasts (InAn 20)

The Immaculate Beast (MuAn 15)

Soothe the Ferocious Bear (ReAn 5)

Voice of the Lake (InAq 25)

Ward Against Faeries of the Water (ReAq 15)

Whispering Winds (InAu 15)

Eyes of the Bat (InAu 25)

Gentle Touch of the Purified Body (CrCo 15)

Sight of the True Form (InCo 20)

The Inexorable Search (InCo 20)

Hunt for the Wild Herb (InHe 15)

Pilum of Fire (CrIg 20)

Eyes of the Past (InIm 20)

Wizard's Side-step (ReIm 10)

Peering into the Mortal Mind (InMe 30)

Emotion of Reversed Intentions (MuMe 20)

Charge the Magical Circle (CrVi 25)

Read the Magic Sphere (InVi 35)

Plumb the Magical Scent (InVi[Me] 20)

Air of Friendly Magic (MuVi 30)

Malincka's Spells

The last four spells listed in Malincka's statistic insert are the fruits of three decades of spell design effort. These are only the most recent versions of her relatively *successful* spells. Malincka usually experiments in her struggle to get away from Hermetic methods, and has had several spectacular failures.

Charge the Magical Circle (CrVi 25)

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Circle, Ritual

This spell creates magical auras by mingled Hermetic and Volkhv means. It uses Hermetic methods, but includes sacred Volkhv dance patterns and sung invocations to some of the Slavic gods. The effect of *Charge the Magical Circle* to raise a small, circular, magical aura. The power rating of the circle depends on how much vis is used above and beyond the normal Hermetic ritual requirements. Using one extra pawn of vis creates an aura of +1 strength, using three additional pawns of vis creates an aura of +2, using six pawns gives +3, and so on, with higher auras requiring pyramidal summed amounts of vis. (Using no extra vis results in a "magical" aura of +0 — effectively worthless.)

The blend of techniques used in this spell has not been fully successful by any stretch of the imagination. First, the spell is always cast with six botch dice. Second, the effects described above apply only if the spell is cast in an area without any prior aura. *Charge the Magical Circle* has a highly unstable character, and it reacts with extreme and unpredictable fluctuations if cast in areas where auras already exist. In such cases the spell automatically fails and the normal number of botch dice plus a number of botch dice equal to the level of the local aura (whatever sort it is) must be rolled. Needless to say, the first experiment of this sort turned out horribly. Finally, there are often other side-effects depending on other local circumstances. On one alarming occasion a fellow magus inadvertently brought some Herbam vis to the edge of the circle. The spell absorbed the vis, its aura increased to +10, and a gateway to a forest region of the Spirit Lands spontaneously opened, with near-fatal consequences.

Malincka has concluded that a successful aura-generating technique is of no use without proper control, which is apparently impossible unless mundanes are integrated into the spell.

Air of Friendly Magic (MuVi 30)

R: Per, D: Sun, T: Group/Room, Ritual

This spell uses a blend of Volkhv and Hermetic techniques to change small areas of faerie aura into magical ones. The spell works on faerie auras with a rating of 6 or less. Casting does not affect the level of the aura, simply its type.

Air of Friendly Magic requires six mundane assistants who perform ritualized Hermetic gestures and Volkhv chants. As she expected, Malincka found that the addition of mundane helpers somehow had a stabilizing effect on the spell, but she is not yet sure why.

As with *Charge the Magical Circle*, the Volkhv and Hermetic techniques did not mesh smoothly in this spell, and it is always cast with three extra botch dice. In addition, any spell cast within the converted aura has two extra botch dice. Furthermore, the spell does not achieve a very clean change. Though a magical aura does develop, so that any magus receives a full spell-casting bonus, the aura is faerie tainted. Many reliable spells display fay characteristics, and botches almost inevitably cause bizarre faerie manifestations.

Read the Magic Sphere (InVi 35)

R: Per, D: Conc, T: Ind

Read the Magic Sphere is Malincka's most recent aura investigating spell, created eight years ago. The magus casts this effect on himself and it enhances his perception of supernatural energies, enabling him to clearly perceive any type of aura. The principal sense used in this perception is sight, though tactile and audible manifestations are also experienced. Usually the magus can perceive the aura to the limit of his unimpeded view, and may walk through it (while maintaining concentration) to trace out its limits.

The magus automatically perceives the nature of an aura (magical, Divine, faerie, or Infernal). He is then permitted a Perception roll to determine further information: the strength of the aura to a maximum of 7 (on 9+), the direction to its center (on 12+), and its age (on 15+). A magus with the Magic Sensitivity Virtue gains this information automatically, and a +5 bonus to his normal level of Sensitivity. Such a magus may make a Perception roll adding his Sensitivity score to answer the following questions: What is the current state of the aura — stable, decaying, or growing? (12+), What is its

Continues on next page



necessary to the aura tempering process, Hermetic magi must not use a Slavic deity, for this will merely lead to a situation where they are locked into Volkhv techniques and results. She needs a new god, one willing to work with and through a Hermetic system, and able to help raise and temper a Hermetic magic aura. She speculates that a great faerie will be willing to assume this role, for though she does not know what benefit faerie gods derive from human worship, she believes they must derive some real and tangible increase in power from such attention.

However, Malincka is not a fool. She slaves at her InVi, MuVi, and CrVi spells because she knows that the new religion is dangerously uncontrolled. If she cannot understand and control the magical energies that create the Slavic aura then who knows what fearsome end might result?

Nastassia Baramov

Nastassia is Malincka's second-in-command, and supplies the force of character necessary to support Malincka's rather abstract vision. Nastassia is an oddity for a Bjornaer maga. She has a powerful leaning toward Ignem magic, which shows up in several of her abilities, and her personality. In fact, aside from her strong commitment to Malincka's goals, Nastassia has one overriding obsession, the Firebird.

Since childhood, this legendary beast has dominated Nastassia's imagination. She has traveled widely in search of its lore, and regards it as her mascot. Magically, Nastassia has devoted her abilities to crafting spells that will allow her to alter her Eagle heart-beast closer and closer to the Firebird.

Of all the Hermetic magi at Thousand

Malincka's Spells, Cont.

source? (15+), Was there another aura here previously? (15+) How long ago? (18+) Of what kind? (18+), and Of what strength? (21+). At the storyguide's discretion exceptionally high perception rolls (24+) may reveal further information if any is available.

Plumb the Magical Scent (InVi[Me] 20)

R: Per, D: Mom, T: Group

This spell was Malincka's first attempt to examine the interaction between a Great Ritual and the minds of the pagan worshippers who participate in it. It allows a magus to detect whether a human mind is being influenced by magic. A Per + Magic Sensitivity stress roll of 9+ allows the caster to discern further details of any influence. The spell is effective, but not very precise, and its fleeting duration makes it a clumsy tool.

Further Information

All these spells are in the covenant grimoire, and in the library as tractatus:

- Vim (Quality 5): *Charge the Magical Circle*
- Intélego (Quality 7): *Read the Magic Sphere*
- Intélego (Quality 5): *Plumb the Magical Scent*

- Vim (Quality 6): *Air of Friendly Magic*

At the present Malincka is furiously at work on her next spell. This will be a development of *Read the Magic Sphere* but with aspects of *Plumb the Magical Scent*. It will be of magnitude 11, with a Mentem requisite and a Range of Touch. This new combination should allow Malincka to cast the spell on other magi, to allow the affected magi to perceive an aura with considerable precision, and to allow them to perceive the way peoples' minds interact with the aura.

With this tool she hopes to reach a better understanding of auras, to understand how they are changed by Great Rituals, and also, crucially, to persuade other magi of the accuracy of her theories. Malincka's Lab Total in this combination is a formidable 69 (including Intelligence, aura, Magic Theory, Magic Sensitivity, Vim Affinity, Vim/Mentem scores, Intélego score, points for her last InVi/Me spell, good laboratory). Even so, though she has a year, she must still experiment to have any hope of completing it before the next tribunal. But with it she believes her understanding of auras will be perfected, her theories will be vindicated, the tribunal will swing behind her, and she will be able to take the next step: devising a Hermetic spell to match the Volkhv Great Ritual.

Caves, Nastassia is the most serious about worship of Hermes. She is also devoted to Khors, as sun god and protector of the Firebird. Additionally, she has been at the forefront in searching out heart-beasts among the local tribesfolk. In recent years Nastassia has taken Yakim as her lover, learning more Ignem techniques from him, while working to ferret out his heart-beast. She is certain that he has one, but it is "deeply buried," and thus far has proven elusive.

Rehamchi Danichev

Rehamchi is the local senior Volkhv. As far as he is concerned he is teaching the Hermetic magi the truth about the world, and how to worship it properly. He therefore privately regards himself as the leader of the community. Certainly he is the one who conducts all the rituals and celebrations, except for the new ones, which Nastassia leads. He has a tolerant sense of amusement for the



Nastassia Baramov, Follower of Bjornaer

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

Gender: Female

Age: 54

Size: 0

Confidence: 3

Longevity potion: Current lab total 40 (vis boosted), Current potion bonus -8

Twilight points: 4

Twilight: Longevity potion use (2), Vim score 10+ (2)

Personality Traits: Brave +3, Determined +2, Overbearing +2

Reputations: Radical +2, in Novgorod tribunal; Radical +4, in House Bjornaer; Intemperate +1, in Order of Hermes

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Brawl	+2	+3	+3	+1
Normal Eagle/Talon	+7	+6	-1	+4
Avenging Beast Eagle	+7	+11	-1	+9
Firebird Eagle	+7	+11	-1	+12

Soak: 0 (as Human/Normal Eagle), 15 (as Avenging Beast/Firebird)

Fatigue: 0

Fatigue levels: Human: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious; Eagle or Avenging Eagle: OK, -5, Unconscious; Firebird: OK, -3, -5, Unconscious

Body levels: Human: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Incapacitated; Eagle or Avenging Eagle: OK, -5, Incapacitated; Firebird: OK -3, -5, Incapacitated

Virtues: Follower of Bjornaer +2 (Battleworthy Heart-beast, Hidden Shape, No Familiar, Will Over Form), Magical Affinity (Birds) +2, Animal Ken +1, Inspirational +1

Flaws: Fury (Abuse of animals) -3, Major Magical Deficiency (Aquam) -2, Obsession (The Firebird) -1

Abilities: Animal Handling (Falconry) 4, Animal Ken 3, Area Lore (Suzdal) 2, Area Lore (Urals) 3, Awareness (Alertness) 3, Brawling (Dodge) 3, Certámen (Ignem) 3, Concentration (Spells) 2, Finesse (Precision) 2, Hermes Lore (Politics) 3, Leadership (Obedience) 3, Legend Lore (Beasts) 3, Magic Affinity: Birds 4, Magic Theory (Invent Spells) 6, Parma Magica (Ignem) 3, Penetration (Ignem) 2, Scribe Latin (Copying) 4, Scribe Cyrillic (Copying) 3, Speak Latin (Hermetic) 5, Speak Russian (Suzdal Dialect) 4, Survival (Mountains) 3, Will Over Form 3

Arts: Cr 5, In 11, Mu 15, Pe 5, Re 8, An 16, Aq 6, Au 14, Co 16, He 8, Ig 15, Im 7, Me 5, Te 7, Vi 10

Spells

Full Health of Beast and Bird (CrAn 25)

Soothe Pains of the Beast (CrAn 20)

Tongue of the Beasts (InAn 20)

Tongue of the Birds — extended range version (InAn 30)

The Immaculate Beast (MuAn 15)

Soothe the Ferocious Bear (ReAn 5)

The Gentle Beast (ReAn 20)

Eyes of the Bat (InAu 25)

Preternatural Growth and Shrinking (MuCo 20)

Shape of the Woodland Prowler (MuCo 25)

Form of the Avenging Beast (MuCo 20)

Echo of the Firebird (MuCo[AnAuIg] 40)

Rise of the Feathery Body (ReCo 5)

Lamp Without Flame (CrIg 10)

Pilum of Fire (CrIg 20)

Prison of Flames (MuIg 15)

Trapping the Fire (MuIg 25)



overall project. The idea of finding a new god is rather foolish, really, and the gods themselves will tend to be more amused than offended by such mortal silliness.

This basic difference of opinion aside, Rehamchi gets on well with the magi and has learned enough Latin and Hermetic Magic Theory to qualify as an Ex *Miscellanea* magus. Two things, however, do reach him deeply. For one, it was Nastassia who discerned the fact that he had a Swallow heart-beast and taught him how to release it. He was puzzled as to how a "Latin witch" could manage to see such a thing in him. Secondly there is the young girl, Stenny. She has been preaching the coming of Hermes for about two years now, and he is beginning to believe that she is having a genuine revelation. For now he is content to teach his companions and await developments. Perhaps, though, he may eventually seek guidance through a major Prophecy.

Lelya Danichev

Lelya is Rehamchi's daughter. As she was brought up among Hermetic magi her grasp of Hermetic methods is much firmer than her

father's, and she is more genuinely enthusiastic about Malincka's project. She is Stenny's step-mother and keen to see the girl's powers develop. Lelya is impatient to assert herself within the Order of Hermes. She intends to attend the next tribunal meeting, and wants to enter a motion condemning the existing attitude of Hermetic magi towards Volkhvy in general. She is also intent upon extracting some revenge for the Pripet raid, and has been practicing certámen diligently over the last three years with the rather foolish notion of forcing a formal apology.

Yakim ibn Rassur

Born in Great Bulgar, Yakim was sold to Greek merchants at an early age and taken to Constantinople. There he was recognized as Gifted by one of the most notoriously vicious old Flambeau magi of the Theban tribunal. Yakim bears the marks of his master's cruelty in the form of welts and scars across his back. After passing his gauntlet he fled Constantinople, vowing never to return. For a year or so he rode with the Cuman tribesmen, returning to Great Bulgar in 1203. There he had the good fortune to fall in with the great Muslim scholar Haroun Hashemi, with whom Yakim spent six years learning Theology, Medicine, and Philosophy. He also experienced a profound change of personality, regaining his youthful enthusiasm. He still returns to Great Bulgar at least once a year.

In 1209, Yakim met Malincka, and was sufficiently intrigued to visit Thousand Caves. He joined the covenant in 1211 and fit in well. For a Flambeau magus he is surprisingly outgoing and genial. His philosophical expertise has made him Malincka's main theoretical partner.

Basyl Karrimichi

Basyl is the least useful of all the Thousand Caves magi for Malincka's purposes. His basic mindset is frivolous. He is a prankster, and can seldom pass up the oppor-

Echo of the Firebird

This is the latest version of Nastassia's personal heart-beast altering spell.

Echo of the Firebird MuCo[AnAuIg]40)

R: Per, D: Sun, T: Ind

This spell alters any avian heart-beast towards an idealized Firebird form. The heart-beast gains 1 point in Size, its Attacks and Damage increase by +5 and +8 respectively, and its Soak increases by +15. Wounds and fatigue suffered inflict no penalty until unconsciousness, incapacitation, or death. The appearance of the heart-beast becomes near-perfect. Feathers, talons, and beak assume a supernatural, ruddy-golden gleam and in flight appear to trail wisps of flame. The form radiates heat; anyone standing within 3 paces can feel a billow of warmth while touching it with a naked hand is like touching a torch flame. This spell is not cumulative with *Form of the Avenging Beast*.

tunity for witty play or practical jokes. Even his attitude to faerie is light-hearted. He has many friends there, but persistently refuses to get involved in serious research or study.

There is only one aspect of Basyl's character which can force him into a more serious mood: his tendency to have prophetic visions. Basyl's visions are very intense, and leave him exhausted. They tend to strike either at the peak of his powers or at the trough (his magic cycles over a considerable range each season). It is Basyl who has, over the last five years or so, begun to report

visions of "the coming of Hermes," but so baroque and twisted is the content of his visions that noone has succeeded in making sense of them.

Narina Cheminov

Narina was stolen at the age of 6 by her parents, a very elderly Bjornaer magus, who lived the last twenty five years of his life as a virtual hermit in the Urals, with only Narina and a few equally elderly servants as compan-



Rehamchi Danichev, Magus Ex Miscellanea

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

Gender: Male

Age: 71

Size: 0

Pagan Conviction: 6

Principal God: Khors

Discipline Bonuses: Sun Magic +5, Spirit Touch +3, Great Ritual +3, Shapeshift to golden horse +3, Earth Magic -5

Afflictions: Bad teeth 2, Limp 1, Short breath 0

Longevity potion: Current lab total 21, Current potion bonus 5 (vis boosted)

Twilight points: 3

Twilight: Longevity potion use (2), Vim score 5+ (1)

Personality Traits: Wry +2, Patient +3

Reputations: Holy +2, in Thousand Caves covenant; Hedge Wizard +2, in Novgorod Tribunal

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Dagger	+5	+4	+6	+3
Shortspear/Roundshield	+7	+5	+9	+5

Soak: +2

Fatigue: +4

Fatigue levels: Human: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious; Swallow: OK, Unconscious

Body levels: Human: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Incapacitated; Swallow: OK, Incapacitated

Virtues: Volkhv +2, Emerged Latent Magical Ability: Swallow heart-beast +2, Cyclic Magic (+3 peak at noon) +2, Herbalism +1, Second Sight +1

Flaws: Cyclic Magic (-3 trough at midnight) -2, Susceptibility to Divine Power -4, Slow Caster -2

Abilities: Area Lore: Urals (Kama River) 5, Awareness (Alertness) 4, Brawling (Dagger) 3, Chirurgy

(Wounds) 5, Clan History (Ancestors) 5, Climb (Trees) 2, Concentration (Spells) 4, Faerie Lore (Faerie Lords) 7, Finesse (Precision) 2, Herbalism 4, Hermes Lore (Politics) 2, Hunt (Tracks) 3, Magic Theory (Inventing Spells) 3, Parma Magica (Animál) 2, Penetration (Animál) 1, Scribe Latin (Copying) 2, Second Sight 4, Shield and Weapon (Shortspear and Round Shield) 3, Sing (Solo) 5, Theology: Slavic 5 (Gods of the Kama River region), Legend Lore 6 (Slavic), Speak Latin (Hermetic) 3, Speak Russian (Ural Dialect) 5, Stealth (Wilderness) 3, Survival (Hill Country) 4

Arts: Cr 6, In 7, Mu 4, Pe 2, Re 5, An 4, Aq 1, Au 5, Co 6, He 6, Ig 4, Im 4, Me 1, Te 2, Vi 5

Volkhv Disciplines: Spirit Touch 6, Healing 7, Shapeshift 6, Weatherworking 9, Animal Magic 8, Remove Curse 10, Prophecy 7, Sun Magic 11, Earth Magic 6

Volkhv Magic Resistance: Rehamchi receives the greatest bonus of his Volkhv Magic Resistance or Hermetic Magic Resistance based on his Parma Magica, not the sum of both. Basic: 6 +/-3 (from Cyclic Magic). In Communion: 6 +/-3 + aura (general); 6 +/-3 + aura + Communion Total (against fire, heat, and Ignem)

Equipment: Shortspear, Roundshield, Hauberk Fur

Encumbrance: -1

Spells

Shiver of the Lycanthrope (InAn 10)

Soothe the Ferocious Bear (ReAn 5)

Whispering Winds (InAu 15)

Gentle Touch of the Purified Body (CrCo 15)

Hunt for the Wild Herb (InHe 15)

Wizard's Side-step (ReIm 10)



ions. When she was 15 he began teaching her in a thoroughly Bjornaer tradition. Her understanding of Hermetic magic is eccentric, and she is very poor with certain common Hermetic abilities (Penetration, Finesse, and Certámen). This is balanced by powerful animal-related and wilderness skills, as well as Healing abilities.

Narina's time at the covenant has been hard as she makes the difficult adjustment to communal life. She is now beginning to develop a fuller suite of normal abilities (she could not read Latin when she arrived ten years ago). She is the friend of all local animals, and much more attuned to the natural life around her than is Nastassia. Narina, of all the Thousand Caves magi, actively hates Pripet Maior most intensely. The attack of 1217 severely disturbed the local animals, an offense for which she will never forgive them.



Otto Rattstein

Otto is an enigma. He is an elderly Bjornaer magus, once of considerable standing at Crintera. He arrived at Thousand Caves a little over ten years ago and petitioned for entry. Malincka was already considering whether to make her revelation at the 1214 tribunal, or to wait until 1221. Otto's arrival hinted that her work had already become known, and increased the pressure on her to publicly admit the nature of her researches. The magi suspected him of being a spy, but were ultimately constrained to admit him.

Otto has maintained a considerable degree of mystery. He has become fully involved with the community of the covenant, spending much of his time in the camps and scattered villages, but not in Malincka's research, or in the missionary

work of the other magi. At the 1214 tribunal he stood up with Malincka and insisted that she receive a full hearing when the Pripet Maior magi tried to shout her down, though he made no actual endorsement of her work. In the attack of 1217 he was pivotal in defending the Great Cavern against the last assault of the raiders, and drove off Casimi Ljech just as this powerful magus was preparing to kill Nastassia. But he refused to go to Crintera to lay charges before the elders.

Otto's intentions, his mission (if he has one), and his beliefs remain obscure. He defends his companions vigorously and stands up for their rights under the Hermetic Code, but refuses to take punitive action against fellow Bjornaer magi.

Pripet Maior Covenant

Pripet Maior is located on a medium-sized island about twenty miles inside the south edge of the Great Pripet Marsh. There is one easy access, a narrow pathway leading in from the south. The final approach is barred by a wide deep-water channel, which the inhabitants cross by calling up an enchanted causeway. The magi have long since incorporated the causeway enchantment into their aegis spell, and it will respond to any of the covenfolk, as well as to anyone who has been formally invited into the aegis.

The island was once a marvelous, baroque celebration of natural life. In their youth the Pripet magi seized on living forces, especially plants, to create habitations for themselves. Reed palaces, living tree houses,

mossy swards and dells, glorious flower arbors: the quality of the work was exceptional and though upkeep faded long ago a hint of former glories is still apparent.

Pripet was never a well-supplied covenant. Foodstuffs came from the marsh as did extraordinary vis harvests. Other materials had to be brought in. Nowadays, when the magi or covenfolk need something, they steal it. Vis harvests too have dwindled, not because the marsh was over-exploited, but because the magi can no longer make the effort.

Pripet's relationships have decayed. Local swamp animals and faeries now avoid the covenant, wary of its irrational, violent inhabitants. Peasants on the swamp edge fear and hate the magi. Many of their misfortunes, especially those of the trappers, iron-dredgers, and fisherfolk are indeed Pripet's fault. This matter has now come to the attention of the Boyar Mikhail of Turov. He intends to dig canals to the Pripet river and drain the land for pasture. He also intends to deal firmly with any opposition.



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Pripet Major Statistics

Symbol: A house on stilts above a reed bed

Season: Late Winter

Founded: 993 AD

Members:

Yellina Ozwry: Bjornaer (Otter heart-beast)

Vlachs von Hasstein: Bjornaer (Osprey heart-beast)

Casimi Ljech: Bjornaer (Water Ox heart-beast)

Miya Cossuri: Bjornaer (Heron heart-beast)

Lev Deniki: Bjornaer (Serpent heart-beast)

Stolitzya "the Swimmer:" Bjornaer (Black-Backed Turtle heart-beast)

Site: 0

Access Quality: Average Peasant (0)

Access Distances: 60/0/0/20/20 (-1)

Seclusion: Visitors every 4 months (+4)

Environment: Insect-plagued, feverish, and dank (-3)

Buildings: +1

Size: 10 magi, 20 specialists, 50 grogs (+2)

Impressive Structures: None (7 total space points) (-1)

Quality: Mostly good, isolated patches excellent (+4)

Repair: Uniformly bad (-3)

Defenses: -3

Site: One approach narrow but passable, three approaches difficult (+6)

Elaborate Structure: None (-1)

Extent: Five points of space are completely undefended; Two points of space, representing scattered strong points, have basic defense (-5)

Repair: Bad (-7)

Stores: +2

Vis: 400 pawns (An40 Aq50 Au10 Co10 Cr45 He5 Ig10 Im10 In15 Me15 Mu45 Pe25 Re10 Te40 Vi25) (+6)

Supplies: 3,500 silvers debt (-1)

Reputations: Venerable (+2) in Novgorod Tribunal and House Bjornaer, Decaying (-1) in Order of Hermes, Evil (-3) among local peasants (-1)

Relations: -4

Allies: Crintera (+10)

Enemies: Thousand Caves Covenant, Local nobles and peasants (-20)

Contacts: None (0)

Improvement: -2

Income: 350 debt (-1)

Vis Supply: 30 pawns per year (An3 Aq7 Cr5 He7 Mu5 Te3) (0)

Inhabitants: 5 magi, 10 specialists, 25 grogs (-3)

Library: -2

Spells: 1200 levels (-1) Specialist Areas: MuCo (multiple requisites); CrAu, MuAu, ReAu (weatherworking); CrHe, MuHe, ReHe (plants); Aegis: Level 40 (the aegis is not always performed promptly — if it is neglected the causeway sticks in an up or down position)

Hermetic Books: 360 points (-1) Principal Summae: Animál: Level 28, Quality 11; Corpus: Level 24, Quality 9; Herbam: Level 20, Quality 10; Muto: Level 27, Quality 12; All other categories average Level 4, Quality 3 — low level due to neglect and dampness

Mundane Books: 120 points (-3) Mostly natural philosophies and Artes Liberales. There are over 100 books, all spoiled by neglect and dampness.

Mystical Attributes: +2

Aura: +6 (+6)

Magical Items: 150 points (+2) Chalice of pure water: 60 points, 2 Feather Cloaks: 70 points, a swamp skimmer boat: 40 points

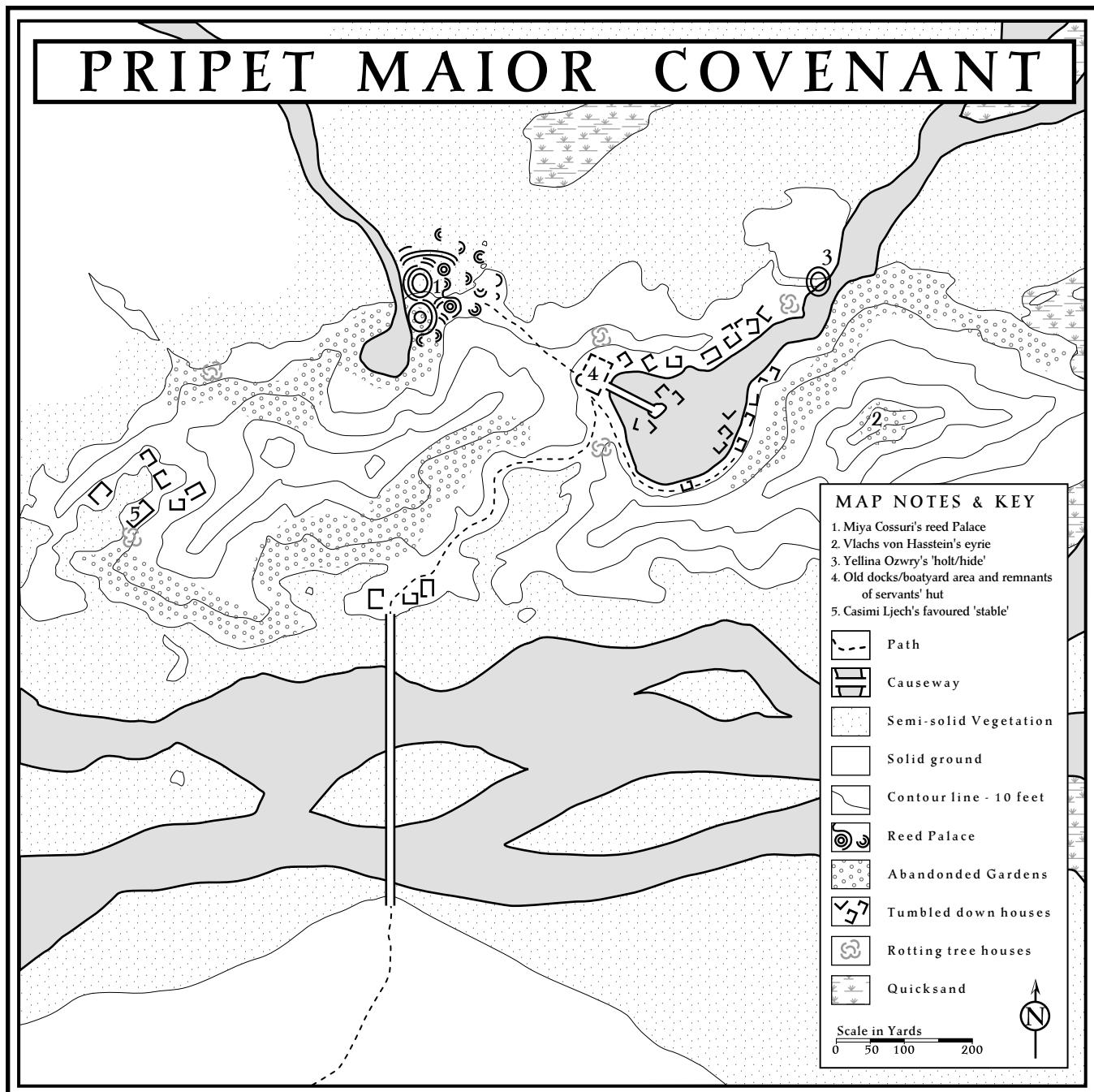
Laboratories: Six laboratories at a -1 penalty (-3)

Total Scores: +46, -61

The magi themselves range from “old and feeble, but still rational” to “consumed by raging animal impulses, one step from Final Twilight.” There hasn’t been an apprentice at Pripet in almost 85 years, nor a new member in over 70. They have exhausted their scholarly, investigative spirits, and even their curiosity. Their vast accumulation of lore, experience, and power is now reserved for the single purpose of defending their home. In

the last twenty years the only significant external action they have attempted was their abortive assault on Thousand Caves.

Pripet is no longer the site of tribal meetings. Rather than tolerate trespassers in their marsh they gladly ceded the privilege to Three Lakes over 40 years ago. Nonetheless they retain a vestigial sense of Hermetic rights, and three or four of them routinely attend tribal meetings.



Pripet's status in House Bjornaer is still high. In their Autumn period (about 1110-1165) they were second only to Crintra in influence, while in 1147, Roslav Lavickovich was summoned to Crintra to become Primus of Bjornaer, a position he held for almost 30 years. Crintra would still aid Pripet in a crisis. Then again, because of the relationship that exists between Miya Cossuri of Pripet and Zashya Miyovna, and a sense of tribunal solidarity, Three Lakes remains an occasional

supporter, routinely pressing Pripet to re-enter the mainstream of tribunal affairs.





Magi

Yellina Ozwry

Yellina is the current leader of Pripet Maior. This doesn't mean that she has any effective authority over the other magi, but that she has the lowest Dementia rating, and is thus the most lucid and controlled.

Her principle point of confusion about the world is her steadily strengthening conviction that her parents, Roslav Lavickovich, who was once head of Pripet and Primus of House Bjornaer, is alive. She no longer recalls

that he died almost fifty years ago, and has a rock-solid, altogether unfounded belief that he still watches over the covenant's affairs from distant Crintera.

Yellina has gone completely deaf in the last five years, but can still communicate with individual people thanks to a minor InCo spell, which helps her clearly decipher peoples' lip movements.

Though she is largely rational, Yellina's principles and politics are stubbornly conservative-Bjornaer. She might refrain from direct physical confrontations herself, but she sees nothing wrong with attacking mundanes, and views the Thousand Caves project as a hideous treachery.

Yellina Ozwry, Follower of Bjornaer

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

Gender: Female

Age: 139

Size: 0

Confidence: 3

Decrepitude: 3

Afflictions: Limp 3, Going blind 3, Going deaf 6, Dementia 2, Long term memory loss 4

Longevity potion: Current lab total 72, Current potion bonus -14

Twilight points: 21

Twilight: Longevity potion use (6), Vim score 20+ (4), Positive twilight: increased understanding in Animál (2), Negative twilight: gained Clumsy Magic Flaw (3), Negative twilight: Clumsy Magic Flaw replaced by Chaotic Magic Flaw (6)

Personality Traits: Otter +5, Secretive +3, Wary +3, Protective +3

Reputations: Senile +2, in Novgorod tribunal; Respected +2, in House Bjornaer

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Brawl	+5	+6	+11	+4

Soak: Human 0, Otter +2

Fatigue: Human +4, Otter 0

Fatigue levels: Human: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious; Otter: OK, -3, Unconscious

Body levels: Human: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Incapacitated; Otter: OK, -3, Incapacitated

Virtues: Follower of Bjornaer +2 (Battleworthy Heart-

beast, Hidden Shape, No Familiar, Will Over Form), Special circumstances (Swimming) +1, Animal Ken +1, Herbalism +1, Quiet Magic +2

Flaws: Reclusive -1, Chaotic Magic -4, Blatant Gift -1, Delusion (Parents still alive) -1

Abilities: Animal Ken 6, Area Lore: Pripet (Geography) 6, Artes Liberales (Astronomy) 4, Awareness (Keeping Watch) 4, Brawling (Dodge) 4, Certámen (Aquam) 6, Boating (Fishing) 5, Concentration (Spells) 5, Faerie Lore (Marsh faeries) 4, Finesse (Precision) 5, Herbalism (Antidotes) 7, Hermetic Lore (Politics) 6, Hermetic Law (Tribunal procedures) 4, Intrigue (Alliances) 5, Lectio (Tractatus) 6, Magic Theory (potions) 11, Parma Magica (Aquam) 6, Penetration (Aquam) 5, Scribe Latin (Copying) 5, Scribe Cyrillic (Copying) 4, Speak Latin (Hermetic) 5, Speak Russian (Turov Dialect) 5, Stealth (Natural areas) 5, Survival (Marsh) 5, Swim (Underwater maneuvering) 6, Will Over Form 6

Arts: Cr 19, In 22, Mu 32, Pe 17, Re 26, An 34, Aq 27, Au 16, Co 29, He 24, Ig 12, Im 13, Me 15, Te 14, Vi 21

Spells: Yellina knows all the listed Animál spells, as well as all the listed MuCo, InCo, MuHe, and MuAq spells. Her other formulaics are too numerous to list. Assume that if her basic Technique + Form exceeds a given spell by at least ten levels, then she knows the Formulaic, excepting level 10 and lower spells, which she casts spontaneously.

Nowadays Yellina is rather cautious with her magic. She is close to Final Twilight, and gained the Chaotic Magic Flaw in her last Twilight. The situation is not helped by her Dementia, which acts as a negative factor in spontaneous spell rolls, and would count against her in controlling a Twilight.

Vlachs von Hasstein

Vlachs came into Russia from Bavaria almost a century ago. He joined Pripet shortly after gauntleting at Crintra, when the Russian covenant was just reaching the peak of its strength. Now, however, his short-term memory is failing. The past he remembers well, but not the present, and a dozen times a day he suffers a terrible shock as he looks about him at a covenant “suddenly” fallen into ruins, which can trigger dangerous convulsive fits.

Vlachs is a vigilant, aggressive sentinel, patrolling widely in his Osprey heart-beast. He uses this form under an *Avenging Beast* spell, or alternately various dangerous weather spells, to attack interlopers. He is also a thief, flitting down on distant towns, finding substances that the covenant needs, shrinking them by magic, and bearing them off with triumphant shrieks.

Vlachs has been seriously emotionally wounded by the loss of his Gentle Gift in a bad Twilight. He never had the Animal Ken Talent, and now finds himself disturbing the animals which he loves and strives to protect. This is a key part of his Dementia, and bad experiences of this sort can stir up the worst in his nature.

Casimi Ljech

Casimi is the most blatantly dangerous of the Pripet Maior magi. In his human form he is a big, blustery, aggressive Pole. His heart-beast form, a water ox, has many of the same characteristics, but so complete is Casimi’s identification with his heart-beast that once in this form there is almost no capacity for ratio-

nal thought left. Over time, Casimi has been losing control of his body and he is subject to sudden shifts from human to animal and vice versa. He may remain locked in one of the animal forms he has mastered for an indefinite period. In addition his memory loss has been eroding his conscious control of his magic.

Dementia aside, Casimi is now so old, and laboring under so much Decrepitude, that his longevity potion almost always fails. It did so three years ago, and he no longer has the wits to re-brew it. He is now aging continuously and his likely lifespan is no more than a few years. All of this pales beside his near-terminal Twilight state. Casimi’s next Twilight will be his last, and his previous Twilights have twisted his magic into such a state that his control of it is precarious. All of this is irrelevant to his actions, as he is so demented that he does not recognize his danger.

Casimi led the Pripet Maior assault on Thousand Caves in 1217, and came very close to killing Nastassia Baramov. So far there has been no effective attempt to punish him. He ignores summons to quaeisitorial judgment at Three Lakes and likewise ignores queries and summons from Crintra. In effect, he is ungovernable.

Nowadays, he spends almost all his time prowling in the swamp in oxen form, terrorizing villagers and battling the more ferocious swamp beasts and faeries. He retains his Parma Magica, as well as his Form bonuses to resisting damage and magic. In addition, a Twilight while casting *Form of the Avenging Beast* made the effects of that spell permanent. This combination renders him terribly dangerous, as he is highly magic resistant and physically very powerful.

Miya Cossuri

At 153, Miya is by one year the oldest of the magi in the Novgorod tribunal. Her mind is sounder than Casimi Ljech’s, who is barely 11 months younger, but her body is failing.

Miya’s home is a massive reed palace of sculpted ledges, domes, and towers. It is the soundest building on the island; Miya seldom





leaves it, and spends most of her waning powers on its upkeep. The palace is a menagerie, though none of the animals there are imprisoned. There are thousands of water-fowl nesting here, beaver and otter, snakes and lizards, and water-deer. All of them co-exist amicably under the influence of Miya's crowning achievement: an exceptionally powerful ReAn spell which produces an irresistible

pacifistic urge in any animal inside the walls.

The only hole in the spell relates to Miya herself. On the one hand it doesn't affect her directly, and she retains a formidable arsenal of magics. On the other, the animals know she is their benefactress. Their many generations of life in the covenant have rendered them more intelligent and larger than normal animals; they will defend her.

Stolitzya "The Swimmer"

Characteristics: Cun +5, Per +2, Str +7, Sta +3, Pre +4, Com -5, Dex -3, Qik -3

Magic Might: 45

Gender: Female

Age: Approximately 200

Size: +4

Personality Traits: Lazy +4, Irritable +2

Reputations: Monster (+3) among local peasants, Dead (+2) in Novgorod tribunal, Legendary (+2) in House Bjornaer

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Bite	+3	+20	+5	+30*
Ram	+9	+25	+8	+45**
Sudden surface	+12	+15	+15	+40***

* Anyone of size 0 or lower who suffers as much as Body level of damage (after Soaking) must roll against Size at ease factor 6+. The ease factor increases by +1 for each extra Body level of damage beyond the first one. Failure indicates that the character has been swallowed. Swallowed characters spend one round in Stolitzya's throat, where they suffer no damage but are so disoriented they can do nothing unless they roll a stress die + Int of 9+. Stolitzya has swallowed a great many stones and rocks to help grind up food. Anyone entering her stomach takes +30 damage each round. Stolitzya's internal Soak is 12 in her throat and 20 in her stomach.

** Given 100 feet of clear, straight water, Stolitzya may attempt to ram individuals, groups, sections of river bank, or even small islands (many of which are infirm or floating). Even if a river bank or island proves strong enough to endure her assault without collapsing, her charge builds up a powerful bow wave which can swamp anyone nearby (effect as *Mighty Torrent of Water*).

*** Given enough depth to submerge, Stolitzya may suddenly surface beneath an enemy. From this posi-

tion she is exceptionally hard to hurt, as she offers no vulnerable spot to her attacker. This attack can shatter a boat, tear a small (floating) island apart, or overturn a medium sized one.

Soak: +35

Fatigue: +5

Fatigue levels: OK, 0/0, -1/-1, -3/-3, -5/-5, Unc.

Body levels: OK, 0/0, -1/-1, -3/-3, -5/-5, Inc.

Arts: Stolitzya's final Art scores are listed only for resistance purposes. She no longer casts magic by Hermetic means. Cr 24, In 29, Mu 37, Pe 26, Re 29, An 34, Aq 30, Au 16, Co 33, He 24, Ig 6, Im 13, Me 19, Te 26, Vi 31

Powers

Man into Sprat, MuCo35, 1 point: Turns any one man at a range up to Far into a fish of about size -3. Penetration is 30.

Steel Shell, MuAn40, 3 points: As a last ditch defense, if Stolitzya is hard pressed, she turns her shell into a gleaming, steely dome, increasing her Soak by 15. At the same time she ducks her head inside her shell, covering it with her immense, horny forelimbs. If possible she will also let herself sink into deep water.

Dominion of the Swamp, ReHe(Aq)40, 5 points: Whips vegetation and water within 300 yards into a maelstrom of violence that does +5 damage to all those caught within it who fail to roll 6+ on a stress die + Dex + (Swim or Athletics depending on location). It makes movement difficult as well — a similar roll is required to do anything other than maintain position and aspect. Duration is Diameter.

Speech, ReAn5, 1 point: Stolitzya can, at will, still speak human languages. Her attention, however, is hard to engage.

Miya's home is, by default, the place where visiting Redcaps and emissaries are most likely to meet a cordial welcome. Miya herself is a sweet, incredibly ancient lady, lacking malice, but with little understanding of the world that now surrounds her beloved marsh and animals.

Lev Deniki

Unlike Vlachs and Casimi, Lev Deniki appears to be a pleasant, restrained man. He is rational in conversation and apparently moderate in his views. This, however, is a mask. Lev is unquestionably the most deadly of the three. His heart-beast is a water serpent, and he epitomizes the characteristics of stealth, subtlety, and lethal venom.

Lev meets and talks with any visitors to the covenant. If he decides they are dangerous, he ambushes them as they leave the swamp, for he is quite mad. Lev has become afflicted by a mounting paranoia. The world exists for him only in shades of threat and danger. Nowhere is safe. Lev's fears are consuming, and at base he is a coward. Strong initial resistance to his attack will cause him to flee, and if cornered or trapped, he can easily be intimidated.

Stolitzya "The Swimmer"

The last member of Pripet Maior covenant is Stolitzya. This near-legendary Bjornaer maga went into Final Twilight over forty years ago, permanently assuming her heart-beast shape, a great black-backed turtle augmented with formidable Muto spells, and imbued with magical energy from a century and a half of longevity potion use.

The Pripet Maior magi believe Stolitzya is still alive, living in the heart of the swamp, its *de facto* queen. The last independent sighting was about fifteen years ago, when Susan of Wicklow claims to have spotted Stolitzya, her shell so huge it resembled a submerged island, her massive head and encrusted beak big as a house. Susan of Wicklow is not generally

known for flights of irresponsible imagination, but whether Stolitzya truly does survive within the swamp is a question each troupe should answer for itself.

Leczyca Covenant

Leczyca covenant sits atop a ridge in gentle hill country. Rough ground renders the east and west approaches difficult and the southern one rather tedious. There is an easy ascent to the north along the track which leads to Leczyca town. The covenant is an impressive, well-built castle, with a large outer bailey, stable-yard, and tilting run.

Of all the Novgorodian covenants, Leczyca is most at odds with the older tribunals. Its powerful turb is principally geared to harrying bands of Rhine interlopers. They are perpetually ready for siege, and have stood off more than one Wizards' War. Their merchant contacts bring them information about road conditions and troop movements as well as the opportunity to fund merchant ventures.

Leczyca's outlook is strongly flavored by the general Polish attitude toward the Germans. The Germans are the Enemy, eaten up by envy, resentment, and guilt. Was it Leczyca who betrayed the Order of Hermes in the Schism War? No! It was the Germans! Is it Leczyca who has abused and impoverished their local vis resources? No! It is the Germans! And yet, it is the German covenants who accuse innocent Leczyca of treachery and abandonment! Having a strong external enemy helps keep Leczyca's very argumentative magi basically united.

The roots of the dispute between Leczyca and the Rhine covenants is ancient and complex. Leczyca inherited all the resentment the Rhine tribunal felt when Grand Silesia abandoned them, as well as offering a tempting target for vis-starved covenants. The center of these frictions is Durenmar, domus magna of House Bonisagus. For their own reasons, the other two Rhine domus magnae have reached a concord with the Novgorod tri-



Leczyca Statistics

Symbol: A quill, point upright, with a sword's hilt

Season: Autumn

Founded: 1052 AD

Members:

Stanis Chechenko: Jerbiton

Kasina Popovich: Merinita

Frania Popovich: Tremere

Tomaszi Klimowicz: Verditius

Ruprecht de Solange: Tremere

Sanya Tianowicz: Bjornaer (Badger heart-beast)

Barchek Ocowski: Mercere

Site: +1

Access Quality: Minor Clergy (+3)

Access Distances: 20/40/20/0/20 (-2)

Seclusion: Visitors every 2 weeks (+1)

Environment: Hill country (0)

Buildings: +3

Size: 8 magi, 20 specialists, 150 grogs (+3)

Impressive Structures: Tilting and training yard, stud facilities and stables (10 total space points) (+1)

Quality: Barracks, tilting yard, and stables are Good quality (+5)

Repair: Average throughout (0)

Defenses: +6

Site: One approach average, one approach slightly difficult, two approaches difficult (+5)

Elaborate defensive structures: Gatehouse, watchtower, and keep (+2)

Extent: Concentric defensive walls (+13)

Repair: Gatehouse and keep in Good repair (+2)

Stores: -2

Vis: 200 pawns (An5 Aq10 Au10 Co15 Cr10 He15 Ig15 Im5 In20 Me15 Mu5 Pe20 Re20 Te25 Vi10) (+2)

Supplies: 3,500 silvers surplus (+1)

Reputations: Treacherous (-3) among Rhine Tribunal (-6)

bunal (Crintra, for instance, is too proud of Pripet Maior, while Irencillia is just not very good at holding grudges). But Durenmar, home of House Bonisagus, heir to the authority of the Founders, has never gotten over its sense of Polish treachery. They are joined in this by some of the younger covenants of the Rhine, and no Grand Tribunal goes by without a motion being moved by Durenmar for a reassessment of the eastern Rhine border.

Three Lakes, however, recognizes that Poland is their first line of defense against

Relations: -3

Allies: Three Lakes Covenant 12 weeks per year (+12)

Enemies: Durenmar 2 weeks per year, minor Rhine covenants (-22)

Contacts: Four merchants (+2)

Improvement: +4

Income: 700 silvers per year surplus (+2)

Vis Supply: 60 pawns per year (Au4 Co6 He6 Ig6 In6 Me6 Pe8 Re8 Te10) (+6)

Inhabitants: 7 magi, 20 specialists, 100 grogs, 50 covenfolk (+5)

Library: +3

Spells: 2700 levels (+4) Strongly concentrated in destructive and defensive magics. Specialist Areas: CrAu, CrLg, PeMe, MuMe, PeCo, MuCo, ReTe, PeTe. Aegis: Level 30

Hermetic Books: 720 points (+4) Principal Summae: Creo Level 17, Quality 6; Auram: Level 19, Quality 9; Ignem: Level 16, Quality 7; Mentem: Level 20, Quality 10; Perdo: Level 21, Quality 8; Terram: Level 18, Quality 8. Other summae cover all remaining Arts at an average of Level 12 and Quality 6. Remaining 154 points: tractatus and libri quaestionum relating to magi specialties.

Mundane Books: 300 points (0) Principal Summae: Civil and Canon Law: Level 8, Quality 7. Specialist Subjects: Polish chronicles and Papal rulings on German/Polish disputes.

Mystical Attributes: +3

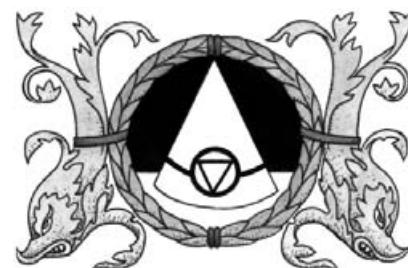
Aura: +4 (+1)

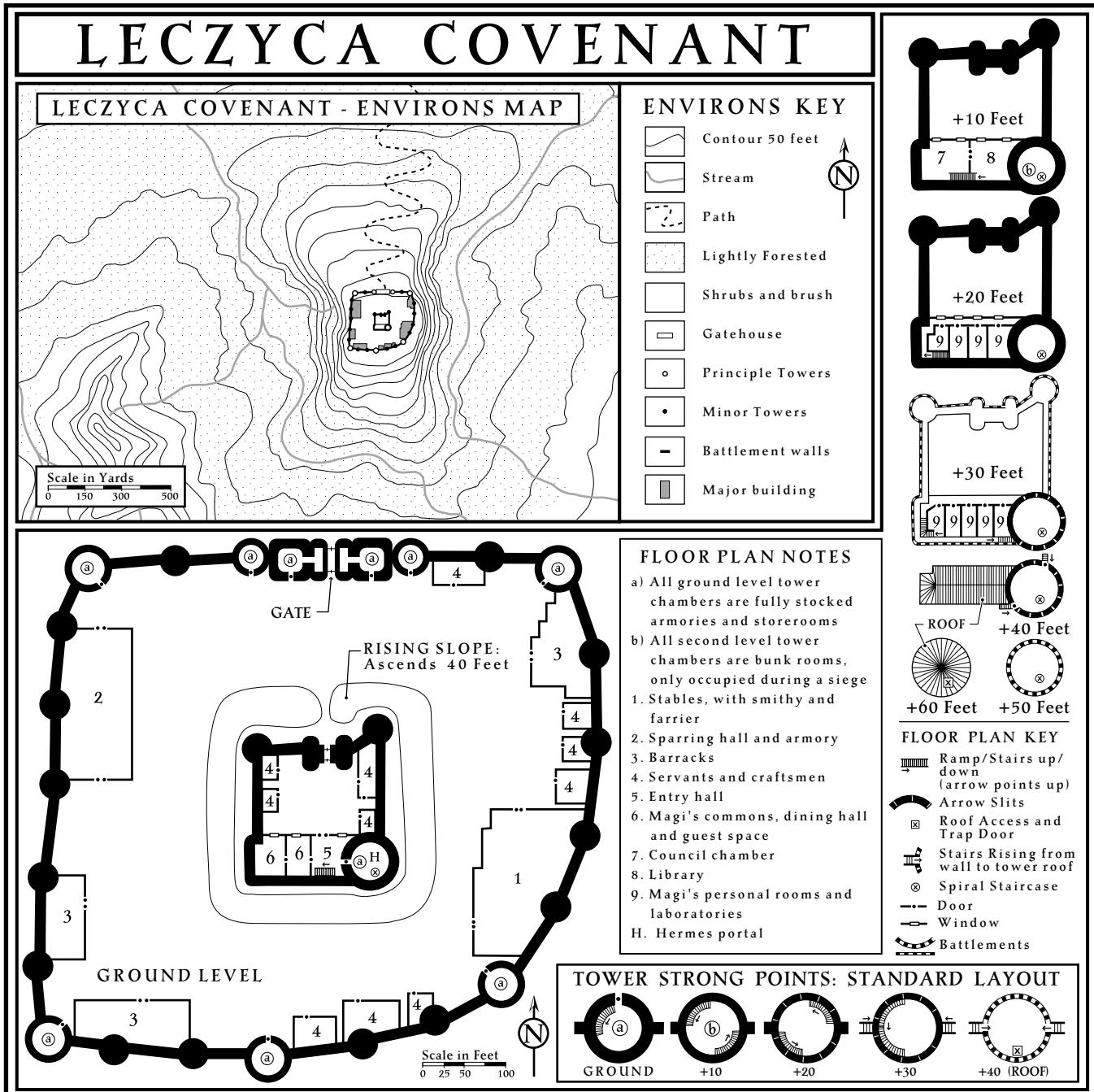
Magical Items: 300 levels (+4) Hermes Portal link to Three Lakes: 75 points, 20 enchanted swords/lances (*Edge of the Razor*): 200 points, 25 excess points at storyguide discretion.

Laboratories: Five laboratories average: 0, two laboratories at plus two bonus: (+3)

Total Scores: +82, -30

western encroachment. Accordingly there is a Hermes Portal link between Leczyca and Three Lakes, and Three Lakes magi visit Leczyca on a regular basis.





Of all the Novgorodian covenants, Leczyca is most indifferent to the Thousand Caves controversy. Yes, it is technically interesting, but not important. They are also most resentful of the proscription against consorting with royalty. They have a powerful fellow-feeling for the Polish nobility, and 30 years ago were found guilty of serious infringements of the proscription. They paid a heavy vis fine for providing Silesian nobles with magically acquired information about German raids.



the similarities end. Yury Beslav has significant authority at Three Lakes. Stanis is nothing more than one among a group of argumentative equals, and has frequently been embarrassed by their failure to back him in his negotiations. The Tremere magi in particular are forever sniping at his heels, challenging his authority and trying to cement their own local treaties.

Stanis's major concerns are with keeping Leczyca's lines of communication and influence strong. He is often seen at the courts of minor local nobles, though he at least seems

to obey the tribunal's ruling regarding royalty. He also guides Leczyca's investments in merchant ventures.

Mundane relations aside, Stanis would like to be a major political player in the Order. He is constantly engaged in correspondence and maneuverings to undermine Rhine influence. How effective his politicking has been is a matter of opinion. There are those who believe that Leczyca's continued independence stems more from stout walls, a strong Aegis, and a devoted, efficient turb than any other reasons.

Stanis Chechenko, Follower of Terbiton

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

Gender: Male

Age: 101

Size: 0

Confidence: 3

Decrepitude: 0

Afflictions: Stooped back 1, Rheumatism 1, Fretful bouts 2

Longevity potion: Current lab total 56, Current potion bonus 12 (vis boosting)

Twilight points: 17 Twilight: Longevity potion use (4), Vim score 15+ (3), Positive twilight: increased understanding: Rego (6), Negative twilight: minor Creo deficiency became major (4)

Personality Traits: Manipulative +2, Argumentative +3, Stubborn +2

Reputations: Skilled Lutist +4, with Polish nobles; Political hack +2, in Order of Hermes

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Brawl (dagger)	+4	+3	+4	+6*
Lance	+8	+9	+4	+6
Longsword/Roundshield	+5	+5	+10	+6*

*See Equipment, below

Soak: +7

Fatigue: +2 Longsword/Roundshield

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

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

Virtues: Gentle Gift +1, Deft Art (Rego) +1, Busybody +1, Social Contacts (Nobility) +1, Free Expression +1, Patron: Count of Leczyca +2

Flaws: Major Magical Deficiency (Creo) -4, Faerie Enmity -1, Common Fear (Cats) -2

Abilities: Animal Handling (Horses) 3, Area Lore: Leczyca (Politics) 5, Area Lore: Sieradz (Politics) 3, Area Lore: Silesia (Politics) 4, Artes Liberales (Rhetoric) 3, Brawling (Dagger) 3, Certámen (Rego) 7, Charm (Being Witty) 3, Civil and Canon Law (Papal laws) 5, Concentration (Lab work) 3, Disputatio (Debate) 4, Etiquette (Nobility) 5, Finesse (Grace) 5, Folk Ken (Nobles) 5, Hermes Lore (Politics) 5, Hermetic Law (Wizards' Marches) 4, Intrigue (Plotting) 3, Longshaft Weapons (Lance) 4, Magic Theory (Potions) 8, Parma Magica (Rego) 6, Penetration (Rego) 4, Play Lute (Solo) 5, Ride (Battle) 4, Scribe Latin (Original Composition) 5, Shield and Weapon (Longsword and Roundshield) 4, Speak Latin (Hermetic) 5, Speak Polish (Leczyca Dialect) 5, Speak Russian (Novgorod Dialect) 2, Theology (Biblical Knowledge) 3

Arts: Cr 12, In 19, Mu 14, Pe 27, Re 29, An 10, Aq 5, Au 9, Co 21, He 8, Ig 11, Im 9, Me 22, Te 9, Vi 18

Equipment: Lance, longsword, and dagger are all enchanted with an enhanced version of *The Razor's Edge* that gives them Damage +6. Shield and half chain mail are enchanted with subtle ReTe spells to reduce weight: Load is 0 and -2.0, respectively.

Encumbrance: -2

Spells: Stanis is a narrow specialist. He has chosen the combinations of Rego and Perdo with Corpus and Mentem as his fields of expertise, and tends towards politically useful spells of influence and battlefield spells of physical destruction. In these areas, he has Mastered all the listed formulaics.

Kasina and Frania Popovich

Kasina and Frania are halves of a unique pair who form a unit with remarkable qualities. Gifted siblings are rare, Gifted twins even rarer, and magic in such closely related people tends to express itself in unpredictable fashions. Kasina and Frania are a perfect example of this rule. On the one hand their styles of magic are completely opposite. Kasina is a Merinita maga. Her magic is wild, powerfully spontaneous, and unorthodox. Formulaic magic is very difficult for her. Frania is a Tremere maga. She is incapable of spontaneous magic. However, the two sisters share a common Flaw and a common Virtue. At 100 paces apart, their magic has normal potency. When separated by more than 100 paces, their magic wanes in strength. If they reduce their separation below 100, their powers wax. (The intensity is approximately 1 point on spell totals per 20 paces, to a maximum bonus and penalty of + or - 5; treat this

as an unusual Virtue/Flaw combination similar to Cyclic Magic). The deep, mysterious bond of their magic is not yet fully understood. For instance, the sisters have had simultaneous Twilight experiences at identical levels of intensity. What this might mean, and how it might one day affect them, is unknown.

Of the two sisters, Kasina is the better known. She is flamboyant, fey, and a wicked practical joker. Advancing age has not diminished her ability to outrage more staid magi; she has been vocal in her applause for the Thousand Caves project. Kasina's two true interests are Faerie and her sister, for their fundamental affection is unshakable.

Frания is her twin's emotional, philosophical, and magical opposite. She is reserved, dignified, and forthright. She is a Tremere maga with a powerful respect for hierarchy, rules, and careful planning.

Frania is politically committed to the basic philosophies of the Lecyzcan covenant





(for which Kasina could not give a fig). She supports Stanis in his various maneuvers, except when she is actively trying to usurp his position. Simultaneously, she tries to keep her fellow Tremere magus, Ruprecht de Solange, under control, and bring some order and efficiency to the covenant.

Francia's interests and abilities diverge sharply from her sister's. She is a student of human law and knowledge; Kasina is obsessed with weird and unnatural lore. She is a close-quarters fighter (when necessary); Kasina favors the bow. She cares for what she can see, feel, hear or taste; Kasina hankers for the mysterious and intangible.

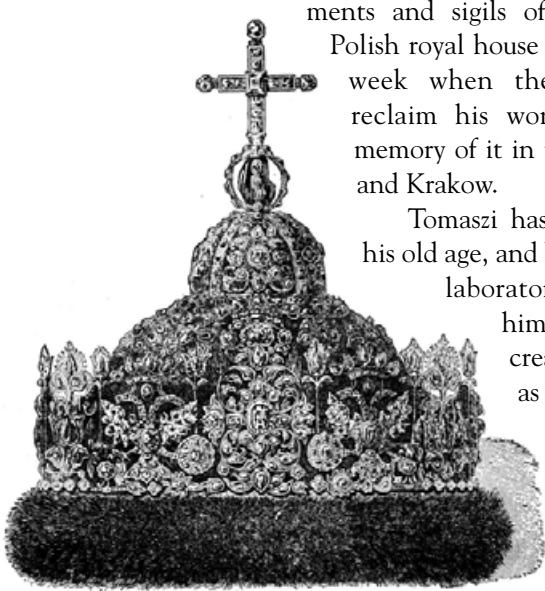
Note that as a mature Tremere maga, Francia has long since reclaimed her sigil from her parens.

Tomaszi Klimowicz

Tomaszi, at 133, is the eldest of the Leczyca magi, and likes to make this seniority the basis of his own claims to authority though he is not truly politically ambitious. His interests lie in his craft as an artisan and enchanter of physical objects. He is principally responsible for the armaments of his fellow magi and the covenant's grogs, as well as being one of the magi who originally invoked the Hermes Portal between Leczyca and

Three Lakes. In his youth he crafted ornaments and sigils of authority for the Polish royal house itself; he wept for a week when the Order came to reclaim his work and destroy all memory of it in the courts of Silesia and Krakow.

Tomaszi has grown irritable in his old age, and his long years in the laboratory have deformed him. But his pleasure in creation is undimmed, as is his skill. He still travels to Italy every few years to compete in the contests at Verdi.



Ruprecht de Solange

Ruprecht is the babe of the covenant at a mere 69 years of age. He came to Poland from France about forty years ago seeking a suitable arena in which he might harden his will and be tested. Ruprecht comes from noble stock, and idealizes the warrior knight as the epitome of civilization and honor. He is the leader of Leczyca's turb.

Despite the pleasure he takes in the constant friction and struggle at Leczyca, Ruprecht has been growing steadily more annoyed at his inability to impose order and control on the covenant. The necessary first step in this process is to defeat Frania Popovich in certámen; so far he has been unsuccessful.

Ruprecht reclaimed his sigil about fifteen years ago, and hence lacks the mandatory No Sigil Flaw. He has recently taken an apprentice, Janek (the only one currently at the covenant, since Kasina and Francia both released their last apprentices two years ago).

Sanya Tianowicz

Sanya is the only Bjornaer maga at Leczyca. Her presence in the covenant owes a good deal to the wider political situation. Though there is no formal alliance between Leczyca and Crintra, the Leczycan magi feel much more secure about Crintra's support if there is at least one Bjornaer magus in residence.

Sanya seems oblivious to this aspect of affairs. She came to Leczyca fifty years ago, "recommended" by the elders at Crintra, and has proven a considerable asset to the covenant. She is a stable personality, steadfast in combat, loyal, and resolute. Sanya's heart-beast is a badger, and she demonstrates all of a badger's proverbial toughness in defense of her home. This aside, she does not align regularly with any of the factions or individuals at Leczyca; her interests lie with the local animals, and to some degree, with the covenant's large herd of horses.

Barchek Ocowski

Barchek is the only member of House Mercere in the Novgorod Tribunal aside from Susan of Wicklow. Unlike her, he is not a Gifted magus, and relies for his magical abilities on an array of devices which have been created for him by the Leczycan magi. Unlike Susan, his normal routes are towards the west. He visits several Rhine covenants each year (carrying challenges or rebukes), several Transylvanian covenants (especially the ones located in the northern Carpathian mountains), and at least once a year he visits the Roman tribunal, carrying messages to Verdi and legal complaints to Magvillus.

Barchek is a lean, spry man with an engaging sense of humor and an iron stamina. He comes from peasant stock and is adept at blending almost seamlessly into the stream of travelers and villagers through which he must pass.

Yannes Kolski

The last widely known magus of the Novgorod tribunal is Yannes Kolski, also known as the Mad Magus of the East. Yannes was a Criamon magi of Leczyca, a master of the Enigma. All his life, Yannes had been prone to prophetic visions and numerous but



Yannes Kolski, Follower of Criamon

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

Gender: Male

Age: 127

Size: 0

Confidence: 0

Decrepitude: 4

Longevity potion: Current lab total 61, Current potion bonus None

Afflictions: Dementia 3, Limp 3, Difficulty Speaking 2, Difficulty Understanding Speech 4, Epilepsy 3

Twilight points: 23 Twilight: Longevity potion use (5), Vim score 20+ (4), Negative twilight: gained Unpredictable Magic Flaw and Painful Magic Flaw (7), Positive twilight: experience points in Enigmatic Wisdom (2), Positive twilight: experience points in Certámen (1), Positive twilight: increased understanding: Mentem (2), Positive twilight: experience points in Enigmatic Wisdom (2)

Personality Traits: Lunatic +6, Inscrutable +6

Reputations: Mad 4, in Order of Hermes; Passed into Final Twilight 2, in Novgorod tribunal

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Brawl/Dagger	+7	+7	+4	+3

Soak: 0

Fatigue: +3 Dagger

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

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

Virtues: Great Intelligence +2, Knack with Enigma +3, Visions +2

Flaws: Poor Communication -2, Sense of Doom -3, Unpredictable Magic -4, Painful Magic -3, Blatant Gift -1

Abilities: Area Lore: Leczyca (Politics) 5, Area Lore: Silesia (Politics) 3, Artes Liberales (Geometry) 6, Awareness (Alertness) 5, Brawling (Dagger) 2, Certámen (Mentem) 4, Civil and Canon Law (Polish) 6, Concentration (Spells) 6, Disputatio (Debate) 6, Enigmatic Wisdom 7, Finesse (Grace) 6, Hermes Lore (History) 6, Hermetic Law (Political Intrigue) 3, Magic Theory (Inventing Spells) 9, Occult Lore (Demons) 4, Parma Magica (Mentem) 7, Penetration (Mentem) 6, Philosophiae (Metaphysics) 7, Ride (Speed) 4, Scribe Latin (Original Composition) 6, Speak Latin (Hermetic) 5, Speak Polish (Leczycan dialect) 5, Theology (Biblical Knowledge) 4, Visions 8

Arts: Cr 17, In 22, Mu 23, Pe 16, Re 17, An 17, Aq 14, Au 16, Co 22, He 16, Ig 18, Im 21, Me 24, Te 15, Vi 22

Encumbrance: 0

Spells: Yannes was an adept at Intélego and Muto combinations with Corpus, Imáginem, Mentem, and Vim. If you allow him to use magic at all, he can be considered to have mastered all listed Formulaics in these categories. His listed Flaws make magic difficult, but not impossible for him. At your discretion you may wish to make his magic totally non-functional, or perhaps completely uncontrollable.

THE DRAGON AND THE BEAR

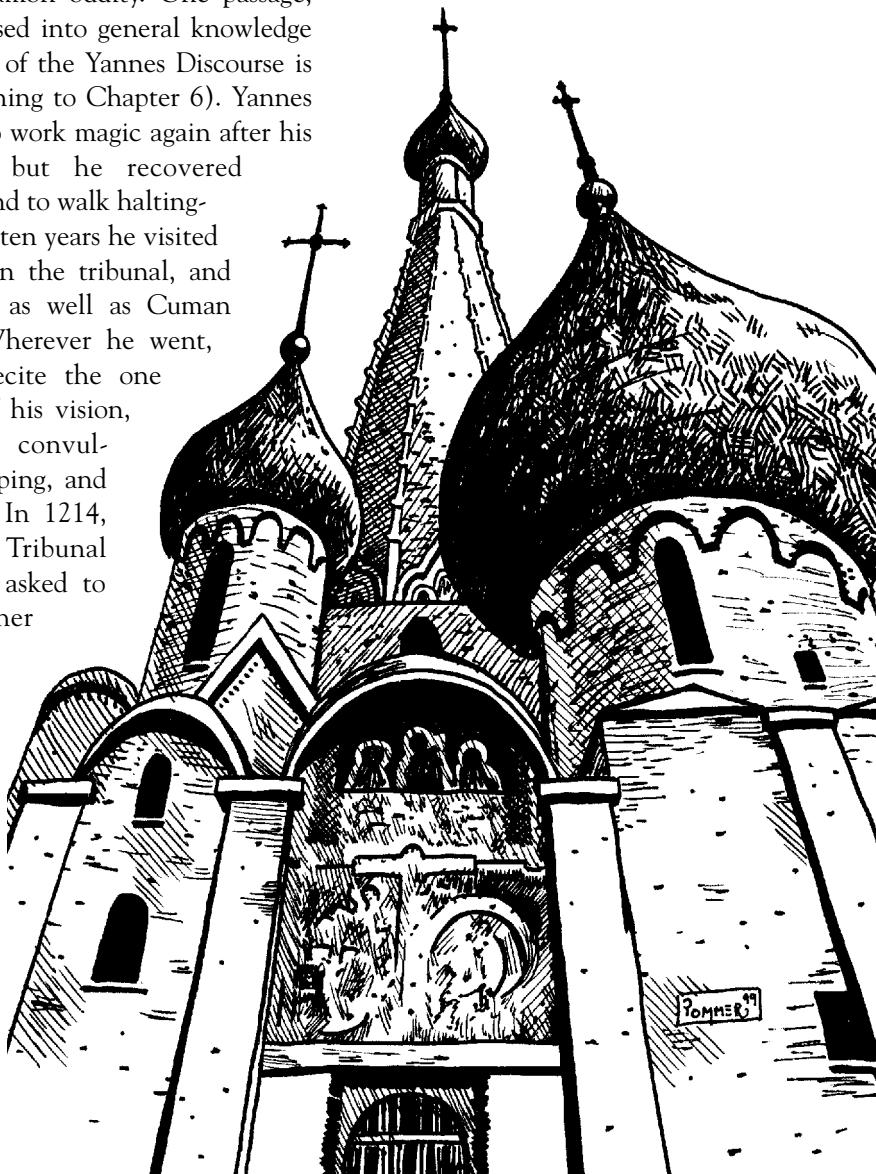


minor Twilights which yielded profound insights into the Enigma and the world.

In 1206, at the age of 113, Yannes suffered an overwhelming and very lengthy Twilight. Yannes was actively in Twilight and prophesying for at least two weeks. The Leczyca magi made careful notes of his behavior and his pronouncements. This vast morass of inscrutable, elliptical, apocalyptic material, the "Yannes Discourse," is kept at Leczyca. Some of it is in verse, some in what seems to be cipher, and some in languages which Yannes was not thought to have known. Then there are the parts where the scribes could only write "screaming."

By and large the Discourse is regarded as just another Criamon oddity. One passage, however, has passed into general knowledge (this key portion of the Yannes Discourse is given in the opening to Chapter 6). Yannes was never seen to work magic again after his great Twilight, but he recovered enough to talk, and to walk haltingly. Over the next ten years he visited every covenant in the tribunal, and some outside it, as well as Cuman encampments. Wherever he went, Yannes would recite the one particular part of his vision, accompanied by convulsions, fits of weeping, and lunatic howling. In 1214, the Novgorod Tribunal quaeſitores were asked to consider whether

Yannes had in fact passed into Final Twilight. Some magi felt that Yannes was bringing the Order into disrepute, and that his "animated cadaver" should be restrained. The question was still under consideration when Yannes vanished, in 1216, after a severely disruptive visit to Thousand Caves. The Thousand Caves magi did their best to chaperone him back towards Three Lakes, but lost him not far from the city of Vladimir-in-Suzdalia.



The screams had stopped echoing from the canyon walls. Malincka sighed with relief. Of all the wretched, useless, distracting things to happen, a visit from Yannes Kolski was surely the worst possibility. Three weeks of disruptions, of harassment, and of barely restrained violence . . . and the screaming.

The canyon could be beautiful at night, with the stars gleaming in the narrow sky, the wind playing amid the trees and gardens. Not tonight.

"We've found him." Lisheya was one of their best scouts, the heart-beast of a linnet. She made her change in mid-air, dropping down to the ground as a human. "Will you come? He's in a bad way."

It wasn't far, less than a mile. Yannes had found a mud wallow, shaded by some old willows. He was lying on the ground as she came up, half covered in mud, stirring feebly under the attentions of four men, two of whom were binding up his left arm.

"He's gone hurt hisself," one of them growled.

"Is it bad?"

"Na, ifn he'd only stop his cussed jerking about!"

She held the man's eyes for a few moments. Long enough to make him flush and look away. She had insisted that Yannes be shown every courtesy. It was a nuisance, but with the delegation due to arrive in less than a month, necessary. "Clean him," she ordered, then stood back while the men worked. Eventually they were done. Once released, Yannes flopped over onto his side and lay, breathing in deep gasps.

"Yannes." She took care not to stand too close to him. He sometimes lashed out, and he smelled bad. "Yannes Kolski. It's Malincka Capcek. Capcek of the Thousand Caves? Do you remember me? You are at the Thousand Caves, Master Yannes. The Valley of a Thousand Caves. . . ."

When he began to speak she felt, for the briefest moment, a spark of hope; perhaps this time . . . but no. It was only the usual weary monologue.

His voice was rusty, and quiet. Whatever passion this vision had once stirred in him was long since gone.

"I stood upon the slopes of the mountains. Around the curve of the world I looked, into the east. Across a thousand leagues I sent my gaze and every blade of grass, every leaf on every tree, each speck of sand on every beach was clear and fine and sharp to my eyes. I saw the lands of the Muslims, Baghdad of the many domes and the golden spires of Samarkand. I saw the mighty cities of far Cathay, the kingdoms the Kin and the Sung.

"I looked into the East and there I saw a wall. High and long and hard, and it warded the Kingdoms of Cathay from the lands of the north. For the north was cold and cruel, a place of wild beasts and spirits who walked on feet of bone with the faces of men and the hearts of dogs.

"I saw in the north that a serpent was born, small and soft and alone on the fells. Swiftly it grew and its scales turned black, armoring its back like plates of steel. From its jaw sprouted fangs and its eyes let drop tears of fire. And when the serpent was grown to a mighty size it turned its gaze to the south and went there, ashes in its wake, and it bore upon the wall of Cathay and broke it down and went among the people of those lands. And its breath was poison that rose in a great cloud and its eyes let fall rivers of fire that the cities went up in smoke and burning and the streets were alight like the floor of hell and the wailing of the people rose to a mute heaven.

"And the serpent stayed not in the lands of Cathay but turned now to the west, to the lands of the Muslims. Its scales were like shields, and its eyes like beacons and it put forth from its body limbs and claws and scoured the land with them as it went.

"And it went into the lands of the Muslims and took with it fire and pestilence and death. Samarkand was burning and fair Baghdad.

"I looked into the east and it seemed to me that the world was afire. And as I gazed upon the serpent its head rose up. It saw me and it knew me. I heard a roaring that shook the world and a blackness gathered around the beast into which no light would shine. And the serpent came towards the west, the darkness growing all around.

"I saw the serpent reach the mountains, I felt the terrible heat of its breath, and the shaking of the earth beneath its weight. Never knew I such a fear as in that moment, as it towered above me, above the mountain peaks.

"I flew. I flew up, a dove. I flew up, past the maw of the serpent, into the light of Heaven. I flew up and awoke and knew no more."

She had heard it before of course. Even Thousand Caves' slender library had a copy.

She turned to the waiting men. "You will be pleased to know that Master Yannes is leaving in the morning." They were, in fact, very pleased. "We will, of course, be providing him an escort." The good humor abruptly failed. "I will be going myself, but it will take a dozen men or so to ensure he is properly cared for." She smiled humorlessly. Eventually she extracted a sour agreement, then brought Yannes back to the cliff face herself, levitating him gently. Lisheya came with her, more intrigued than anything.

"I'd never heard him speak his piece before," she finally admitted, as they were ascending the slope toward the Great Cavern gates. They went on another dozen steps. "What . . . well, what does it mean?"

"Mean?" Malincka shrugged. "My dear, it doesn't mean anything at all."



Chapter 6

Mythic Mongols

Three thousand miles to the east of Russia a new power was taking shape in the closing years of the 12th century. These were the Mongols. They were one tribe among many. Some others, such as the Naimans, Merkits, Uighurs, Taijiks, and Tatars, shared the steppe with them. Others, such as the Saxins, Kanglis, and Kipchaks (of which the Cumans were one branch) had already trekked west.

Occasionally the Mongols would rise to a brief superiority, united by some charismatic leader who led daring raids against their enemies: the other nomads and China. Inevitably, with the death of their leader, the tribe would break apart again into small, bickering clans.

The Mongols were typical nomads. They roved in moderately predictable patterns over the steppe, living by herding and hunting. They were dependent on the horse for mobility and their steeds were enormously hardy and nasty tempered, possessing the ability to survive on very meager fodder. The men were much like their beasts: hard as the steppes were hard, inured to pain and cold, and used to great exertions. In times of need they would open veins on their mounts and drink the blood for sustenance. They were fierce and highly skilled warriors with lance, bow, and sword, but they lacked discipline and they lacked unity and so they stayed a small people.

Around the end of the 12th century, all of this changed. The Mongols were united as never before by the actions, charisma, and brilliant dynamism of one man, a chieftain of

the royal clan named Temujin. From 1185 he was busy, unifying by conquest and alliance the scattered Mongol clans. In time he turned upon his nomad neighbors, subduing the Merkits, the Uighurs, and the Naiman. He forced discipline and law upon his men. In battle he formed them into solid units based upon the decimal system: squads of ten (Arban), companies of a hundred (Jagun), battalions of a thousand (Minghan), and legions of ten thousand (Toumen). He forbade them to make slaves of each other, organized regulations for trade, and created a marvelous system of messengers (the arrow messengers, or "Yam") who traveled from horse-post to horse-post, covering two hundred miles in a day.

In 1206, Temujin subdued the last of the Merkits. His great general Subatei led the pursuit, catching them far to the north near the ice-locked river Chui. Supreme on the steppes, Temujin convened a great council, a Kuriltai, where the many chiefs came to offer oaths of fealty. Enthroned amidst his vassals, beneath his banner of the nine white yak tails, he took the title Genghis Khan, Lord of the Earth. It was a title he took literally, a claim he meant to enforce.

China was first to feel his new ambitions. The small border realm of Hsi-Hsia was ravaged and forced to pay a humiliating tribute, then the northern kingdom of the Kin was invaded in the beginning of a campaign that would last for sixty years.

In 1220 the Mongols took their first step west, warring against the Khwarismian

Empire. By the end of the first year, the capital, Samarkand, was in ruins, and the Shah was fleeing through a crumbling realm with the Mongols hot on his heels. (The Mongols always pursued and killed sovereigns and nobles, destroying anyone to whom their victims might rally.) 1221 saw Persia invaded. While Genghis hunted down the former Shah's son, Jelal ud-Din, Subatei broke away from the main action. With twenty thousand men and the junior general Jebei, he thrust

into the Caucasus, battled his way past the small kingdom of Georgia, won over the difficult Caucasian mountains, and reached the Russian steppe early in 1223.

This was the Mongols' reconnaissance of Europe. Their aims were simple: to gauge the military strength of their future enemies, to establish spies and methods of communication, and to enforce the submission of any nomad groups they might encounter.





The Mongol Military

What was the basis of the Mongols' military superiority? How could they routinely win victories over forces two or three or even four times their size? Genghis Khan was born among a people who were naturally fine warriors. They were enormously hardy, highly mobile, exceptionally skilled in the use of the bow, and well used to the sword and lance. They were, however, poor soldiers. They had no discipline, no chain of command, no military structure, and no systematic training in

Typical Mongol Trooper

Characteristics: Int -1, Per +1, Pre -1, Com -2, Str +1, Sta +2,

Dex +1, Qik +2

Gender: Male

Age: 30

Size: 0

Personality Traits: Brave +3, Ruthless +3, Loyal +3

Reputations: Murderous +4, Everywhere

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam	Fat
Dagger	+6	+4	+6	+4	+4
Composite Bow	+6	+7	—	+9	+7
Lance	+9	+9	+5	+7	+4
Longsword/Roundshield	+5	+4	+11	+5	+3

Soak: +7

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

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

Virtues: Knack (Riding) +1, Knack (Bows) +2

Flaws: Disfigured (Scars) -1, Infamous -2

Abilities: Animal Handling (Horses) 3, Area Lore: Mongolia (Geography) 3, Awareness (Alertness) 2, Bargain (Livestock) 2, Bowmaking 3, Bows (Composite) 4, Brawling (Dagger) 2, Hunt (Tracking) 3, Longshaft Weapon (Lance) 3, Shield and Weapon (Longsword and Roundshield) 3, Ride (In Battle) 3, Speak Mongolian 4, Survival (Steppe) 3

Equipment: Composite bow, metal reinforced leather half-armor, longsword, round shield, daggers, lance

Load: 4.0 with sword and shield, 3.5 with lance or bow, 2.5 with dagger.

Encumbrance: 3 with sword and shield, 2 with lance or bow, 1 with dagger, 0 regardless of equipment when mounted

fighting as units. Genghis Khan changed all this, and added the vital ingredient of intelligent leadership. Even before he had invaded China, he had given his people a solid understanding of the key principles of successful military action.

Unity Of Command: A strong army has one designated leader whose commands are followed without hesitation.

Chain Of Command: A strong army has a designated order of command. If any given officer falls, his replacement is ready to take over.

Ability To Command: A strong army has officers and generals promoted due to their ability to lead and to think creatively.

Discipline: Soldiers follow orders, they do not act precipitately, nor do they lag behind.

Organization And Cohesion: A strong army is organized into coherent units whose members are familiar with each other.

Communication: The different units of an army must always be tightly coordinated. The Mongols developed a semaphore signaling system to relay both information and instructions across a battlefield. At night this flag and staff system was replaced with burning torches. As they advanced into new territory they would establish the Yam system of horse posts, so that armies advancing on a broad front could stay in contact and under the control of a single general.

Mobility: The more mobile army always has the initiative. The Mongol army was pure cavalry, with a minimum of three remounts per man. It routinely covered distances of up to 60 or 70 miles in a day.

Firepower: The army with the longest reach on the battlefield strikes first; the Mongols were exceptional mounted archers.

Misdirection: An enemy who doesn't know where you are is impotent. The Mongols could lay a smokescreen across a battlefield with fire arrows or utilize terrain to enable fast flanking motions. Decoy forces were frequently used since the number of spare horses in a Mongol army allowed a small group of men to mimic a large cavalry force. Often the Mongols would simply

retreat, drawing the enemy out in a long, futile pursuit until they were exhausted. Then the Mongols would turn and devastate their disorganized foes.

Information: Wars are won by leaders who understand the capacities, abilities, characters, and likely actions of their opponents. Genghis Khan never went to war without first spying out the land, learning what alliances his enemies had to call upon, finding out what their resources were, and knowing how he might cut them off from the first and scatter the second.

Siegecraft: By the time Genghis Khan's armies moved west they had the experience of war in China. The Mongols suffered badly in their first encounters with entrenched positions and castles. But Genghis Khan was an innovator, so he studied siege technique. When he took a city he would draft all the artisans — blacksmiths, engineers, masons, miners — thousands at a time. Chinese siege artisans accompanied his armies into Persia, providing catapults and battering rams. In Persia these techniques were refined and improved.

Magical Resources: Being a nomadic people the Mongols were led in their worship by tribal Shamans who used the full force of their magical might on the military's behalf. For more information on these Shamans (including rules for playing them in your saga), refer to Appendix I.

hoc nature of these armies, and communications went no further than horn-call and courier. Mobility was compromised by mixed armies of horse and foot and the presence of large, highly-bred horses that needed rich fodder. The numbers of remounts were low, and heavy armor slowed the cavalry. Firepower was available, but poorly used because of the noble knights' insistence on taking the frontal position. Misdirection was sneered at as unmanly; the knights liked to charge directly towards their foes. Information about local enemies was good, but information about the Mongols was nonexistent and arrogantly unsought. The Europeans had fairly good knowledge of fortification and siegecraft, but nothing that exceeded Chinese and Persian abilities, which the Mongols had already overcome. As for magical resources, this was the greatest weakness in the European armory. The foremost European organization of wizards, the Order of Hermes, was a covert group, at odds with the nobility and clergy. Additionally, the Order was composed of a dozen different traditions who disagreed about priorities. Only one house, Tremere, had an efficient organization, and only one other, Flambeau, made a point of training its members in cooperative aggressive magic. In battle, if the European chivalry felt the need of supernatural assistance, they turned to the Church. To protect its warriors against malign sorceries required the Church to declare a crusade. When the Mongols invaded in 1237-41, Pope Gregory IX was at open war with the Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick II. Rather than allying, each denounced the other as an uncompromising scoundrel. The Pope cried out for a crusade while the Emperor was advancing through Italy. The Church had abilities, but they were squandered.



European Inferiority

By comparison, militarily and magically, the European forces were far inferior. Their unity of command was compromised by dispute and rivalry, their chain of command by arguments over rank. Commanders were appointed by right of birth, not ability. Discipline suffered from the quarrels of the leaders and the lack of systematic training for troops. Mercenaries did somewhat better on this score than most feudal levies, but if mercenaries aren't paid promptly they usually desert. Organization was damaged by the *ad*





The Mongol Reconnaissance

This was the relative balance of power when Subatei and Jebei approached the south Russian steppe. Before they could probe the Russian principalities, they first had to trick their way past an alliance of Cumans, Alans, Bulgars, and Khazars. The Mongol campaigns in Persia had not gone unnoticed; many of the best troops of the Khwarismian Shah had been kin to the Cumans. The Cuman Khan, Kotian, stirred by the desire for revenge, had assembled an alliance.

Coming down from the Caucasian mountains, the Mongols were confronted by this army and chose not to give battle. They retreated into the pass, but their position was

not good; the battles in Georgia had been hard, and the mountains cruel. To hide in the hills would mean starvation. Subatei chose trickery as his weapon. He sent messengers to the Cumans. Were they not all nomads, of Turkish descent? Were they not kin from afar? Subatei claimed he had no quarrel with the Cumans, and sent them wagonloads of Georgian treasure. The Cumans succumbed to this bribery and abandoned their allies, drifting back out onto the steppes.

Swiftly the Mongols descended from the mountains and set out in pursuit. One by one the tribes were destroyed. Last were the Cumans, attacked in small groups, their camps stormed, the treasures they had accepted from the Mongols retaken.

Subatei had accomplished one third of his goal, dispersing the nomadic groups west and north of the Caspian Sea. Now, on the north coast of the Black Sea, he found an opportunity to fulfill his second goal.

On the Black Sea a bitter merchant war was being fought between the Genoese and the Venetians. Here were two European groups at each others throats. Both had wide links throughout the continent and good sources of information. Could one of them be drawn into Mongol service? The Venetians had very few scruples, and no appreciation of what they were dealing with.

A deal was struck. The Mongols descended into the Crimea and destroyed several Genoese trading posts. The Venetians agreed to send information east. Couriers were recruited from the local tribes who were willing to obey this new power and who would form the basis of a Mongol spy ring which would operate on the borders of Russia for over fifteen years. Well satisfied, Subatei led his force back to the steppe.

In his absence matters had changed. The Cumans had fled into Russia, seeking refuge and assistance from the princes. Khan Kotian was father-in-law to Mstislav of Galicia, to whom he appealed; these savage invaders had destroyed the lands of the Cumans. Tomorrow they would do the same to Russia — better to fight them now!



As has been mentioned, Mstislav formed a coalition which advanced to the shores of the Dnieper. Here the Russian princes and the vengeful Cumans formed up, eighty thousand strong. Subatei sent them emissaries. He had no argument with the princes, only with the Cumans who were rebellious subjects of Genghis Khan; he sent gifts, protesting his friendship. The Russians rejected these overtures, killing the envoys. By murdering the ambassadors, whose safety was sacrosanct under Mongol law, the ignorant Russians had unknowingly declared war.

The march to Kalka has already been described (see page 30) from the Russian point of view. For the Mongols it was a different experience. They were making a disciplined retreat, which lasted for nine days. The Russian pursuit displayed all the key errors of European military action. When the Mongols turned and attacked, their enemies collapsed. The pursuit back to the Dnieper was a slaughter. The last stand of the Prince of Kiev was doomed. The Mongol siege ended with false offers of a truce followed by his execution in retribution for their murdered ambassadors. As was proper with royalty, they forbore to draw his blood, but instead smothered him to death in a massive carpet. Then they stormed the camp.

The defeat was a severe one. Of the sixty thousand Russian soldiers, not eight thousand saw their homes again. Nine princes died, including the Prince of Kiev and two of the Olgavichi clan. For the Cumans this blow was the last. They were a diminished, broken people, no longer capable of more than minor raids.

Subatei's work was done. He turned back to the east, passing close by the Kingdom of the Volga Bulgars. Here one of his columns was struck by a Bulgar ambush. He would have halted to punish this audacity, but impatient messages were coming from the great Khan. Subatei hurried on, but he did not forget.

Soon the Russians forgot the Mongols. They had come, rampaged, fought, and then departed. Who they were and where they were from — these things did not concern the Russians. Surely they would not return.

In fact, the Mongols never wholly diverted their attention from the west. Genghis Khan had already promised the western lands to his son, Jochi. Although Jochi died in 1226, his claim was inherited by his eldest son, Batu. So, while Genghis Khan pursued his last campaign, in China, three toumens secured the north-western border. Under the command of one of Batu's brother, Suntai, they operated north of the Caspian, subduing the remnants of the Saxins, Kanglis, and Kipchak Turks. This was the focal point from which Mongol spies operated.

The Return of the Mongols

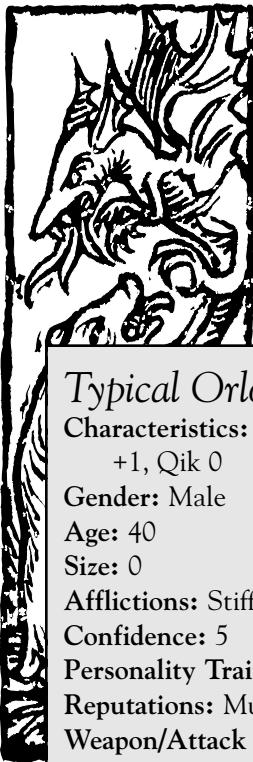
Genghis Khan had died (1227). The north Chinese realm of the Kin had fallen, and his grandsons were busy in the south, wearing down the traditional Chinese Emperors of the Sung dynasty.

The new Khan of Khans was Ogedei. At his disposal was the magnificent military machine Genghis Khan had created and the services of the incomparable Subatei, as eager as ever to carry out his plans for the conquest of the Western lands.

The western advance began in 1236. Batu was the formal leader, but the inspiring genius was Subatei, now acting the part of Batu's chief of staff. As the core of their army Ogedei had given them a force of five Mongol Toumens, fifty thousand crack warriors; plus two Toumens of nomad conscripts; several corps of Persian and Chinese engineers, artillerists, physicians, and administrators; and a Shaman corps.

The first stage in the invasion was the final subjugation of the nomad tribes north of the Caucasus and west of the Urals. With Mongol officers and a season's training, they would make soldiers nearly the equal of their masters. Throughout 1236 and 1237 the Mongols were busy raiding, battling, and





training. Over sixty thousand new warriors were added to their ranks, and by the end of 1237, Subatei had repaid the affront offered to him fourteen years before; the Volga Bulgars were destroyed. Their capital was razed, their towns burned, and their fields stripped. The young and fit were enslaved and the rest were killed.

Typical Orlock (Mongol General)

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

Gender: Male

Age: 40

Size: 0

Afflictions: Stiff hands 0, Limp 2

Confidence: 5

Personality Traits: Resolute +3, Ruthless +5, Cunning +4

Reputations: Murderous +4, Everywhere

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam	Fat
Dagger	+2	+2	+1	+3	0
Composite Bow	-1	+2	n/a	+9	0
Lance	+5	+7	+1	+6	0
Longsword/Roundshield	0	+2	+6	+4	-1

Soak: +5

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

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

Virtues: Knack (Riding) +1, Knack (Leadership) +3, Clear Thinker +1, Knack (Strategy and Tactics) +3

Flaws: Disfigured (Scars) -1, Infamous -2, Vow (Loyalty to Great Khan) -2, Enemies (All the world except Mongolia) -3

Abilities: Animal Handling (Horses) 2, Area Lore: Mongolia (Geography) 3, Area Lore: Persia (Geography) 2, Area Lore: Russia (Geography) 2, Awareness (Alertness) 2, Bows (Composite) 2, Bowmaking 1, Brawling (Dagger) 1, Folk Ken (Nobles) 2, Guile (Elaborate Lies) 3, Hunt (Tracking) 2, Intrigue (Alliances) 3, Leadership (Battlefield) 3, Longshaft Weapon (Lance) 2, Ride (In Battle) 2, Scribe Mongolian (Military Matters) 3, Siege Equipment 3, Shield and Weapon (Longsword and Roundshield) 2, Speak Mongolian 5, Speak Persian 3, Strategy and Tactics (Strategy) 3, Survival (Steppe) 3

Equipment: composite bow, metal reinforced leather half-armor, longsword, roundshield, daggers, lance

Load: 4.0 with sword and shield, 3.5 with lance or bow, 2.5 with dagger

Encumbrance: 4 with sword and shield, 3 with lance or bow, 2 with dagger, 0 regardless when mounted

The Russians paid no notice. In 1235 the struggle for Kiev had begun and was going full blast. Daniil of Galicia was gradually gaining the upper hand over Yaroslav of Novgorod, the Olgavichi, and Rostislavichi. The war was fruitless and ruinous, and served no real purpose, for while each of the princes in turn proved strong enough to take Kiev, none of them could successfully invade and conquer each others' home territories. This struggle could not have come at a worse time, for it distracted the Russians from the terrible peril growing in the east.

Was it pure chance that a major war should break out among the Russian princes on the eve of the Mongol invasion? The Russians certainly thought so, but the Mongol spies and Shamans might have told a different story. Their agents and supernatural allies had been busy in Russia for a dozen years.

One man understood the situation: Khan Kotian. He gathered as many of his people as he could, mustering almost forty thousand warriors and their families, and crossed the Carpathians to seek refuge in Hungary with king Bela IV. It was safety with a price. The Cumans had to convert to Christianity, but they weren't reluctant. No price was too high to escape the fall of the axe.

Subatei's first attack in Russia focused on Suzdalia, making the Grand Prince the primary target. Success would effectively divide Novgorod from the southern principalities of Smolensk, Chernigov, and Kiev. He struck in the depths of winter when rivers were frozen, ground hard, and mobility good. In December 1237 the Mongols entered Russia.

The Mongols struck first in Ryazan. The wooden towns and castles revealed their vulnerability as they collapsed in infernos of flame. Resistance on the battlefield was late and ineffective. Grand Prince Yuri could not credit what was happening and sent little aid to the beleaguered district. When he did realize that this invasion was in earnest he sent a summons to his brothers and set out with his main army. At first the Mongols simply ignored him. They slipped around the advancing Russian army, encircled Vladimir-in-Suzdal, and burned it to the ground.

Turning back too late, Yuri was caught on open ground and defeated, dying in the battle which was fought well before his brothers had a chance to come to his assistance.

The invasion of northern Russia became general. Novgorod was threatened and its outlying towns burned. Now, however, the weather turned against the Mongols. The spring thaw was early and the ground became a mire. Withdrawing from Novgorod, the Mongols assaulted northern Chernigov. One town, Kozel'sk, held out valiantly for nearly seven weeks before falling. In a period of four months, northern Russia had succumbed. Its princes were either dead or surrendered. If surrendered, they found themselves ruling in Batu's name and supplying his armies with craftsmen, horses, and provisions of all kinds. Novgorod was spared, but it had other problems. The Swedes had advanced across the Neva river, only to meet defeat at the hands of Prince Yaroslav's son, Aleksandr. The crusade of the Teutonics followed, and though the Novgorodians were victorious, they could spare no aid.

None of this could stop the southern Russian war. Gradually, Daniil of Volinia gained the upper hand. It took him until early 1240 to take control of Kiev, by which time his enemies in Chernigov and Smolensk were exhausted. Doubtless this was a relief, since his own forces were terribly reduced.

During this period, the Mongols paused. For nearly two years the Mongols were busy planning the next stage of their campaign, subduing scattered groups of nomads in the north and far south, and extorting every bit of assistance they could from their new subjects. Livestock, fodder, hides, metals, slaves, gold, and silver. What they wanted they took, and where they found resistance they smashed it.

At the same time the Mongols experienced a hint of the dynastic squabbles that would one day bring them down. Though the leader of the invasion was Batu, among his generals were Kuyuk, son of Ogedei Khan, and Buri, a cousin. Dissension sprang up over a petty slight at a victory feast. The two junior princes stormed off in a temper, ultimately traveling all the way back to

Karakorum to complain to Ogedei. Their complaints were not well received. Ogedei was Genghis Khan's son. Junior commanders, even of his own flesh, did not presume to criticize their general during a campaign. Discipline, first and foremost! These complications delayed matters, as did the formidable tasks of organizing vast numbers of captives and training up new corps of auxiliary artisans and Toumens.

The advance resumed in the summer of 1240, even as Daniil seated himself triumphantly in Kiev. Chernigov was re-entered and crushed, the capital falling in October. Smolensk was attacked, and then Pereyaslavl. In Chernigov and Pereyaslavl so violent was the assault that they effectively ceased to exist.

Now, Daniil abandoned Kiev and returned to Volinia, leaving his general Dmitr to hold the city. Kiev, which had suffered so much since its days of greatness, was first bombarded by artillery, and then, on



THE DRAGON AND THE BEAR



December 6, stormed. No mercy was shown. Even the churches were deliberately destroyed, helpless throngs of refugees burned or crushed within. By the day's end the city had been reduced to an ash-streaked wasteland, a cemetery wreathed in smoke amidst a field of unhallowed bones.

While the princes squabbled, Russia had fallen. All that was left was to bow down before the invaders. Early in 1241 Daniil did just that. When the Mongol armies arrived in Volinia and Galicia the prince was waiting, not to give battle, but to surrender.

By the end of 1240 Volinia and Galicia had submitted. Their rulers became vassals of the Mongols. Russia had fallen. By exploiting natural divisions in Russia's leadership; by using their tremendous mobility; and by employing the weapons of fear, lightning assault, siege, fire, and deceit the Mongols had shattered and subdued a dozen principalities. Only Novgorod had not actually been invaded. For now it remained free, but isolated and paralyzed by fear.

Now the invasion of eastern Europe began. Subatei knew everything about the web of marriages and alliances in the region. His main opponent was Bela IV of Hungary who could field a hundred thousand men. This in itself did not frighten Subatei. However, to the north of Hungary were Bohemia and Poland, as well as the Teutonic Knights and the East German Margraves. A coalition must be prevented. King Wenceslas of Bohemia, who could muster fifty thousand warriors, must especially be kept away from

the main combat until Bela was destroyed.

Accordingly, while he and Batu swept into Hungary, Subatei sent generals Kaidu and Baidar into Poland with two toumens. Their orders were to create as much confusion and disruption as possible. By speed of movement and the use of dummies and decoys, they would seem to have three times as many men. In a grand feint, they would distract the northern realms.



Kaidu and Baidar crossed the Vistula in February 1241, sacked Sandomierz, and then divided to begin raiding. Kaidu skirted Mazovia before smashing through the counties of Leczyca and Sieradz, while Baidar plunged directly toward Krakow. Approaching the city cautiously, he then withdrew in seeming panic. Confident that the nomads were fleeing, Vladimir, Palatine count of Sandomir and Krakow, Prince Henry the Pious' deputy, set out in pursuit. On March 18 the Poles were ambushed and annihilated. By the end of March, Krakow was in flames along with the other rich towns on the Vistula. Now Silesia was invaded and Wroclaw attacked. Briefly, it seemed that the Mongols might be turned back, because at Wroclaw there was a miracle. The prior of the Dominican church, St. Adalbert's, mounted the walls and bent his head in prayer. There was a light in the sky and a sound of singing. Baidar withdrew from Wroclaw, but miracle or no he was not about to abandon the war. The Polish army under Henry of Silesia was in the field, and Wenceslas of Bohemia was closing in. Now it was vital that Baidar rejoin Kaidu. The Mongol forces had steadily maintained contact, and reunited near Legnica at the beginning of April.

On April 8th the Polish armies and their allies came out of Legnica to fight. Henry had called up his knights and the militias from the nearby towns and mines and linked up with the Teutonic Knights, Hospitallers, and even some Templar forces. Unfortunately, Wenceslas of Bohemia had not arrived. Somehow, unaccountably, he had been led astray. Nonetheless, Henry had the numerical advantage by at least ten thousand men.

The Mongols employed a smokescreen as the Christian army advanced. The heavily armored knights thundered forward only to lose themselves in the haze of smoke which cut them off from the ill-armed militias. They stumbled to a confused halt. Abruptly, out of the smoke on one flank, came a buzzing swarm of arrows. Horses screamed and men fell on every side, trying to turn and face this threat. It was the predictable response, and as

the army slowly wheeled about it was taken in the rear by the Mongol lancers. Henry the Pious and the cream of northeastern European chivalry died on the field of Legnica. As a token of his victory, Kaidu had the ears of the dead warriors cut off and sent to Batu; they filled nine sacks.

In the meantime, Subatei and Batu had invaded Hungary, crushing the border forts in the Carpathian mountains while supporting columns slipped into the country from the north and south.

The Hungarian king, Bela, had great difficulty bringing his barons out to fight the Mongols. They resented his rule and his previous wise decision to accommodate the Cuman refugees. His barons loathed the Cumans and made their presence an excuse to defy their king. Bela was determined to retain the Cuman forces, who were numerous, hardy, and loyal. He did, however, agree to hold the Cuman leaders, including Kotian, hostage. When Bela finally managed to persuade his barons to advance against the Mongols, some of them slipped back and slew the unarmed Cuman lords. The Cumans rioted at news of this betrayal, attacking first some of Bela's vassals and then the Austrians before turning south and fleeing into Bulgaria.

Exactly one day after the battle of Legnica, Bela and his army encountered the Mongols, who numbered perhaps seventy thousand. Against them Bela had almost a hundred thousand men, who were well armed but ruinously disunited. The Mongols retreated across the river Sajo, which was crossable by a strong stone bridge. The next morning, as Bela approached, half the horde, under Batu, stayed to contest the bridge, while the other half, under Subatei, circled to the north and forced a crossing of the river beyond the Hungarian lines. Batu pushed the Hungarians back from the bridge with combined artillery and archery fire and then crossed over. The battle was hard fought until Subatei appeared from the hills at the Hungarian rear. Surrounded, the Hungarians fell back on their camp. The Mongols deliberately allowed a gap to open in their lines. Despite Bela's firm commands, some of his barons

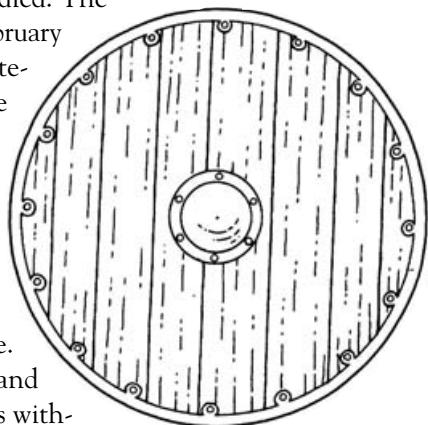
took the lure and galloped from the camp, apparently breaking free to flee back to the capital. Suddenly flight became general, and masses of men broke away, casting aside weapons and armor to make better speed. The Mongol pursuit was devastating. The light cavalry effortlessly outpaced the European knights and cut them to ribbons. In a matter of hours Bela's army was annihilated.

Bela did not die, but was pursued all the way to the Adriatic, where he took to the sea. Throughout the autumn and winter of 1241 the Mongols tormented Hungary. Their advance scouts probed the borders of Austria and roamed through Croatia, hunting for Bela.

Europe shook. The final payment for the sins of humanity had come. The hordes of Gog and Magog were advancing to destroy Church, Faith, and Christendom. Russia was conquered, and Hungary had fallen. Poland was in turmoil as Kaidu dashed about, toying with Wenceslas. The Mongols were poised for a general advance into Austria and Saxony. Their next logical objective was the Holy Roman Empire, and in Venice certain men were cursing their greed and stupidity; they had sold a civilization for fool's gold.

But the next advance never came. Three thousand miles to the East, sodden with drink and overindulgence, Ogedei had died. The messengers brought word in February 1242. Subatei departed immediately, to vote at the Kuriltai for the new Khan. With him went the bulk of the original Mongol troops allocated to Batu. They were imperial legions and obliged to attend the new Khan's orders.

Batu had to halt his advance. He withdrew from Hungary and ordered Kaidu out of Poland. This withdrawal was even more destructive than the advance had been. To some degree the Mongols had begun to make permanent settlements in Hungary. Its wide central plains were the best position for the center of their new realm. Peasants had been encouraged to come out of the forests and hills and minor





nobles to swear allegiance. Now, the cold-blooded policy of the Mongol commander demanded that nothing be left to provide resources for an enemy's recovery. The helpless peasants were slaughtered and every field, castle, and village within reach was razed.

Batu followed the line of the Danube back to the Black Sea, terrorizing the Bulgarians into submission, and settled in the southern Russian steppe. In time he would build a city, Sarai, on the Volga, a few hundred miles from the Caspian sea. For now he contented himself with enforcing the submission of his Russian vassals. At Batu's command were nearly sixty thousand fine warriors, commanded by Mongol officers who had stayed loyal to him. Half a dozen princes and fifty cities owed him allegiance and battle service. In the years to come, Batu and his descendants would develop a system of exacting taxes from their unwilling subjects, would punish rebellion and use Russian leaders as

pawns in their quarrels with other members of Genghis Khan's far flung family. For two centuries Russia would lie supine beneath the Mongol yoke. The years of freedom were over. The long night had begun.

The Middle and Late 13th Century

Poland

The Mongols entered Poland only to divert attention from the southern arm of their invasion. The destruction of several key Polish cities, the ruin of much rich farmland, and the defeat of Henry the Pious were the only significant events; unlike Russia, Poland suffered no centuries of slavery under Mongol rule.

When the Mongols withdrew, Poland went back to minding its own problems, which soon took a turn for the worse. Without Henry the Pious, Krakow became a bone of contention between Conrad of Mazovia and Boleslaw the Chaste of Sandomierz.

From 1243 (when Conrad of Mazovia died) disintegration became general. New fractures opened up in the Polish state, with Silesia (the most extreme example) split into four provinces: Upper Silesia, Legnica, Wroclaw, and Glogow.

True, some of Poland's oldest rivals had been eliminated. Volinian and Galician princes were no longer a concern, and the Prussians too were no longer a threat. However, these two enemies had now been replaced by new forces. The Mongols soon began forcing their Russian vassals to raid their neighbors. In 1259 they came back in person. This was a plundering raid, far more destructive than the feint of 1241. Sandomir and Lublin fell. Krakow burned again, though the citadel survived, and northern Poland



suffered appalling devastation. The last Mongol invasion came in 1286. By this time the Mongols had lost something of their fine discipline and strategic thinking, and the Poles had learned enough to hang on in fortified positions and not be lured into rash attacks. Though the countryside was ruined again, the cities survived this assault.

Meanwhile, the Teutonic Knights were developing rapidly during the latter part of the century and had no love for the Poles. In addition, a totally new power had arisen. The Lithuanians had achieved unity, bolstered by large numbers of Jadzwing refugees fleeing from Teutonic advances. In 1261 they defeated the Teutonic Order decisively at Durben and established a new nation that took to raiding north-eastern Poland.

Worst of all, in the south-west, the Czechs were systematically advancing. Wenceslas II of Bohemia had married Elzbieta, daughter of Przemysl II, "King" of Poland (1290-1296). When Przemysl died Wenceslas drove for the throne.

The Poles could not resist this sort of pressure. By 1300 Wenceslas was sitting on the throne in Krakow and all of southern Poland his. When Wladislaw the Short, last independent prince of the house of Piast, went into exile, southern and western Poland became part of the Czech dynasties' possessions. At the same time the Lithuanians, who had already begun absorbing Polotsk, moved into Mazovia, and step by step took over the Duchy.

Though Mazovia was to be lost forever, Poland was not doomed to eternal foreign rule. Wladislaw the Short used his exile fruitfully to cement alliances in Hungary and with Pope Boniface VIII, and returned in 1306 to gather in the tattered remnants of his nation. But as the century closed the Poles were a subject people.

Khanate of the Golden Horde were preoccupied with the affairs of the Mongol Empire. When Ogedei died, intrigue robbed Batu of his chance to sit upon his grandfather's throne. Instead his rival Kuyuk was elected. Kuyuk, who ruled from 1246-1248, did little to actively keep the Mongol conquests rolling forward. When he died, Mangku was elected Khan of Khans and began to expand the borders, but Europe was spared. Mangku ordered campaigns in Persia and China. In the near-east the Mongols came within a whisper of seizing Palestine and invading Egypt. Their advance appeared unstoppable throughout the 1250s. Under Mangku's brother, Hulegu, they smashed the nations of the Muslims, sacked Damascus and Baghdad, broke through into Asia Minor, and prepared, in a final move, to destroy the Mamluk sultans who ruled in Egypt and Palestine. They were halted, once again, by the death of a Khan. In 1260, while coordinating a grand sweep



Russia and the Mongols

In Russia, new masters reined, but for years the Mongols of what was now the



against China, Mangku fell ill and died. Immediately, a civil war began between his brothers Kublai and Arik-Boke.

Hulegu's troops were now needed in the east, and he was not friendly with the new Khan of the Golden Horde, Batu's brother Berke (1257-66). He left a small holding force in Syria and returned to Persia. A few months later, the Mamluks, warrior-rulers of Egypt, overwhelmed this force at Ain Jalut (Goliath's Spring) in Palestine, ending the Mongol advance.

Mongol Rule

From 1238-1252, though the Mongols controlled Russia, they made no effort to actively govern. The Russian princes either died or swore fealty. The Mongols accepted this fealty and went back to their traditional way of life in the steppe, though Batu did build his new capital, Sarai, on the Volga. Southern Russia, of course, had been ruined. Kiev, Pereyaslavl, and Chernigov no longer existed as states. But in the north, government continued more or less as normal.

With Grand Prince Yuri dead, his brother Yaroslav was Grand Prince. He ruled effectively, reigning in his brothers and assigning lands in north-western Suzdalia to his various nephews. In 1246, however, he felt the whip of Mongol authority. Batu had no intention of attending the Grand Kuriltai himself, but had to send a representative or risk arousing the wrath of the Khan of Khans. Who better than the foremost of his vassals? He sent Yaroslav three thousand miles to Karakorum, where the prince was poisoned.

The Khans of the Golden Horde now devised one simple method of control. No man could hold authority without the approval of the Khan. To gain that approval he must present himself in person at Sarai and be awarded a patent. What this did was give the Russian princes a new source of power to manipulate and call upon in their numerous feuds.

With Yaroslav dead his two sons took authority in the north. Andrei ruled in

Suzdalia, Aleksandr in Novgorod. Aleksandr, of course, had been Yaroslav's deputy in Novgorod since 1238. Arguing furiously, the two brothers appealed to Sarai for a ruling on the limits of their authorities. Batu sent them to Karakorum, where the partition of their lands was finalized. This did not satisfy Aleksandr and by intrigue he managed to stir the Mongols of Sarai to march against Andrei, in 1252. Suzdalia was again a battleground. Helpless before the Mongols' wrath, Andrei fled and Aleksandr became Grand Prince.

This became the pattern of affairs for the next few decades. The Mongols could be easily roused against any. Unfortunately, they swiftly seized on such events as excuses for wholesale plunder and slaughter. Aleksandr played a key part. He appeased the Mongols and called on their support against his various opponents. He found that within their overlordship he could rule quite handily. He could campaign against foreign enemies and rule despotically with his new and dangerous masters at his beck and call, just so long as he could bear to pay the price in the sufferings of the common folk.

Taxation and Rebellion

In 1257 the Mongols ordered a census, taxation and conscription on their minds. Hulegu's campaign in the near-east was building to a climax, manpower was needed, and Mangku ordered the Golden Horde to support Hulegu. The tax was deeply resented. Novgorodians especially hated the idea of a tax and the presence in their city of haughty Mongol tax collectors. In 1261 angry mutters began to sweep the streets and in 1262 it finally broke into open revolt. Rostov, Vladimir, Suzdal, and Yaroslavl also rose against the tax men and drove them out. This was the Great Uprising, and for a brief moment it seemed that Russia might be freed. Suppression, however, was immediate and brutal, and the Mongols were aided in it to some degree by the Russian princes.

In 1263 Aleksandr Nevsky died. Suzdalia waited anxiously while his sons, brothers,

uncles, cousins, and nephews bickered over the spoils. An appeal was made to Sarai and Khan Berke made his decision. Berke cannily appointed the ineffectual Yaroslav (1264-1271) as Grand Prince. Yaroslav could not rally his family in any sense and Suzdal was effectively partitioned into a dozen tiny counties. Yaroslav's successor, Vasily (1272-77) had the same problem and bitter internal conflicts.

By this time the Mongols had begun to actually govern their subjects with a network of civil and military officials (called baskak) stationed throughout Russia. The court at Sarai was developing all the signs of a despot's den, with intrigue rife.

The Mongols ruled by the principals of patronage, military suppression, and assassination. Weak princes were indulged, rebels killed, and strong princes were ordered to Sarai, feted lavishly, and then tended to fall sick and die of mysterious stomach ailments.

In Novgorod trouble was brewing between the city and the princes who were called to rule it. The Mongols had never actually sacked the city and the Novgorodians were traditionally a rowdy and independent lot. Novgorod in this period effectively defied its ruling princes and managed to enforce a written contract between prince and city that severely limited the prince's powers (1267, reaffirmed in 1269). This was the sort of internal squabbling the Mongols willingly overlooked.

The Russian princes fell into patterns of appeasement and intrigue. Either weak princes called upon Mongol aid to oust stronger enemies or Mongol candidates for rule of the Golden Horde demanded allegiance from Russian princes.

When Berke died in 1266, rule of the Golden Horde passed to the capable Mangu-Temur. After his death, however, two candidates emerged. Mangu-Temur's brother Tode-Mangu was his designated heir, but a cousin, Nogai, rose up against him. Nogai proved formidable. Neither Tode-Mangu nor his two successors managed to defeat him. It wasn't until his death in 1299 that the Golden Horde was united again (by Toktu).

Naturally, the Russian princes fell prey to the various factions and disputes of the warring Mongol chieftains.

This, then, was the "Mongol Yoke:" two hundred years of enslavement, intrigue, and wanton violence. Not until the beginning of the 15th century would the Muscovites throw off the waning Mongol power.

There would, it's true, be development of a sort in Russia before then. Novgorod would cement its republican status. As its council of boyars (the Soviet Gospod) learned to cooperate with each other and cherish the city's interests, they helped the citizens enforce more and more restrictions on the men who ruled them, emerging at last as a city-state as strong and proud as Venice. For most of Russia, however, the period was one of stagnation. In terms the ancient Slavs would have understood, the Darkness had come upon the Earth, and of the Sun's Rebirth there was no sign.



Variations

What has been presented here is a picture of the Mongol invasions close to the historical reality, but you are under no obligation to play out the invasions in this fashion. You may make the Mongols more or less formidable as you please, and alter their direction of approach or timetable to suit your saga.

If you are responsible for handling the Mongols in your saga (either as lone storyguide or as part of a team of storyguides), consider straying from the historical reality, at least enough to surprise your players. The following sections describe a number of options to consider.

Extended Campaigns

As presented, the Mongols affect only the Novgorod and Transylvanian tribunals (in Europe, anyway). This need not be the case. If you're looking for something really



cataclysmic to enliven your saga, the Mongols make a great disaster. Historically, the Mongol invasions in Europe and the Near East stopped because two men died prematurely: in 1241, Khan Ogedei, and, in 1260, Khan Mangku.

If Ogedei had lived just one more year, Batu would probably have settled the center of his Khanate in Hungary. Given that year he would certainly have invaded Bohemia to destroy King Wenceslas, and probably re-entered Poland and Prussia. Given two more years he would probably have been attacking the Holy Roman Empire. Subatei, Batu's chief of staff, did not plan the invasion on the basis of limited goals; he had an overall plan for the conquest of the entire continent. He believed that it would take eighteen years, given the necessity of garrisoning rear areas while maintaining an adequate field force. Remember, the Mongols did completely conquer China, which was larger in area than Europe, more densely populated, and more unified.

It took the Mongols just six years to destroy Great Bulgar, conquer Russia and Hungary, and ravage Poland. Given another twelve years, it is reasonable to imagine them subduing Germany, France, Italy, Spain, and the Balkans.

Then again, if you are playing a saga in Palestine, Turkey, or North Africa, consider that Hulegu's advance in 1260 had already broken the power of Baghdad and Damascus. The Mamluk victory at Ain Jalut was won over less than 10,000 Mongol troopers. Hulegu's full army was almost 200,000 strong. Had he advanced into Palestine, he would almost certainly have conquered the region, continued into Egypt, and then across the whole North African coast. After all, this particular conquest route had already been exploited once before. The Arabs did exactly the same thing six centuries earlier when they exploded out of Arabia, swept through North Africa, and eventually invaded Spain and France.

If, however, you are not inclined to see your neighborhood swept away by a ravaging Mongol horde, consider the screams for help

that are going to come from the east. All the old political certainties and alliances are going to be tested. Whether they act in pure self-defense or throw in with the Russian and Polish princes, the Novgorodian magi will want help. Here is an opportunity for the Rhine covenants to strike some hard bargains. Or perhaps the Transylvanian magi might cross the Carpathian mountains and help their fellow magi before the Mongol steamroller turns in their direction.

The aftermath of the Mongol invasions will introduce a new political element into Europe, as Popes and Emperors scurry to send emissaries to Sarai and Karakorum. In Palestine the crusader states will have to make a choice between siding with the new Mamluk rulers or inviting the Mongols in. In our history they chose to help the Mamluks with supplies and guides as they marched to Ain Jalut. The Mamluks won and eventually turned on the crusaders and wiped them out. But the Mongols remained a factor in all the power struggles of the 13th century, whether in Russia or the Near East.

Remember, finally, that you have complete discretion in handling the Mongols. You can treat them as simple steppe nomads or as the hordes of Hell complete with demonic monsters, giants, and werewolves, or any point in between.

Diabolical Inspiration

The Mongol invasions, both as they actually happened or in the scenarios outlined above, seriously threaten all that the Christian Church (both East and West) claims as its own. If you're looking for a massive Infernal force against which your righteous covenant can fight in an epic battle that will resound across Mythic Europe, the Mongols certainly provide that opportunity.

You can stage this in a number of ways. Infernal powers might lurk behind the scenes, subtly planting unholy ideas and motivations in key ears throughout the Golden Horde. For

example, you might decide that Temujin's remarkable abilities made him the perfect tool. By himself he might only have united the Mongols, for he believed his people must be as one to be free and strong. Perhaps he would have united the steppe nomads as a whole too, and raided the neighboring nations. But the ambition to rule the world? That could easily be Infernal in origin. A little vanity, a little greed, an overwhelming pride: Temujin's weaknesses were obvious and by the most subtle of stoking he could be drawn from being simply a great nomad leader to being the unifier of a world empire built on blood, fire, and unhallowed dead slaughtered in tens and hundreds of thousands.

On the other hand, a more fantastic approach might suit your saga. The hordes, in addition to being composed of Mongols and conquered conscripts, might actually contain creatures and beings aligned with the Infernal realm. Two-headed monsters, giants, ogres, evil spirits — in short, the Cavalry of Satan running rampant through Christianity.

Divine Inspiration

There is yet another option (which, surprisingly, actually circulated in historical Europe): that the Mongol Hordes were actually the legions of the legendary Prester John, sent by God to return the Holy Land to Christendom. This option would require a bit of work on the part of the storyguide, as the magics of the Mongolian Shamans are presented as firmly set within the magical realm. Nevertheless, a saga that chose this option would allow for a wide range of exciting and wildly mythic conflicts and possibilities.

Storyguides interested in exploring this possibility may wish to locate a copy of a very old Atlas Games supplement for *Ars Magica*, *South of the Sun*. Although now out of print and unavailable through retail channels, resourceful players might locate it through game and book stores that sell used books, or from other collectors at conventions or on the Internet.



Standing at the top of the Earth Crown on a clear autumn day, Malincka could look down on the canyon and the surrounding hills. It was something she had taken to doing more and more often as she grew older.

Today was good. The sky was bright, with high distant clouds. Below her the white houses in the canyon were gleaming in the late afternoon sun. The gilded domes above the temple of Hermes were shining, and the people were moving up from the town and down from the caverns for evensong.

It really was the valley of a Thousand Caves now. The truth had taken a long time to bring to life. Those first few decades hardly seemed real anymore. What had they been? A few hundred people, living on hope.

Now there was a temple, and a priesthood, villages to the north and south, and the Bjornaer camps spreading vigorously eastwards. And, in the last ten years, the real work had begun in Great Bulgar, which had been so hostile before the Mongol attacks.

Malincka gave a dry chuckle. How surprised the Mongol Shamans had been, to find her and her sodalis on the walls at Great Bulgar, and then again when they faced the Leczyca legion and King Henry of Poland outside the walls of Vladimir . . . that had been a day worth living! And now the Volkhvy had been given let to preach in Great Bulgar, and the Mullahs agreed that the first true prophet since Mohammed had been born in their time.

She took a deep breath. She savored the wind now, the final release from the laboratory. The middle of her life had been spent locked in small rooms, sweating with abstractions. It was better that the end should be spent like this, while her apprentices and the envoys from the Order continued her work.

Malincka Capcek looked out into the west, and the sunset of her life, and was content.

Standing at the top of the Earth Crown on a gray autumn day, Malincka looked down onto the canyon and the dark hills and sighed wearily. Her back ached and her legs were very stiff. Still, it was worth climbing up this far just to get away from the wrangling of her apprentices and the whining of the tribal elders.

If she squinted she could see people working in the gardens clustered around the stream bed far below. Were there fewer than last year? She thought perhaps there were. Several families had moved away. Disclosing their work to the Order in 1214 had been such a mistake. Everything had somehow been tainted, fumbled, from that time onward, and when she recalled the fiasco of the 1221 tribunal . . . dear Lord!

Well, at least the Mongols had saved them from the worst of it. Without the invasions the Suzdalian princes would have been building summer lodges in the Ural foothills by now and taxing them all into the grave. She gave a grunt of satisfaction. They had learnt the errors of their ways, but so perhaps had she.

Had she really been that arrogant? To imagine she could twist the world into answering her desires? Humans weren't made like that, and the magic had remained always one meager step short of successful resolution. As for the Volkhvy, well, they had tried, and Stenny had seemed promising. If only she had remained in the canyon, developed her powers fully before traveling to Great Bulgar.

But there was still work to be done. She could still resolve some of those final problems. It only wanted a little more time, surely . . .

She sighed. She wouldn't indulge herself by lying. The world had turned to a different path. Better to face it squarely.

Malincka Capcek looked out into the west, and the end of her life, and allowed herself the dignity of honesty.

Standing at the top of the Earth Crown on a black autumn day was a small figure. A beaten wreck who could scarcely have survived the demanding climb to the peak. Rags were bound around hands and feet, tattered robes swirled around rickety, scarred limbs. Beneath a filthy hood a gaunt face boasting only a single eye looked out on a cold world.

It had taken Malincka a long time to return to the canyon. From her refuge in the north she had come, struggling against encroaching death, wanting to stand in this place just one more time.

The canyon far below was an empty slot. There was no one stirring there now. From the height she could see no sign they ever had. The outlines of the gardens had been obliterated by floods and wild growth. The gate of the Great Cavern . . . that had come crashing down during the last assault, when Aleksandr of Novgorod had joined the Mongol Shamans in their campaign to exterminate the Order.

Wearily she allowed her eye to close. She could remember the screams of the dying, the roaring of the flames, the way the cliffs had crumbled around them, and Nastassia's valiant, foolish death.

Slowly she let herself sink down to the ground. A mirthless smile cracked her ruined face. Aleksandr had learnt his lesson, in the end, when the Mongols needed him no longer. Idly she wandered whether the Ur-Khan of the West still ruled from Rome, or whether the Mongol civil war had completely destroyed the city. Hadn't the Khan of Germania won, and established a new capital at Aachen?

She wasn't sure. Too much time, too many rumors, and only the patient, Finnish wind mages working their magic to keep the north free. They had tried to persuade her not to leave their camps, but in the end she had to come back. Here where her life had seemed to blossom in hope. Here where it had crashed into ruin. Here where it would finally end.

Malincka Capcek laid her head down on the stone. She could not bear to look out into the west, no one dwelt there now but her enemies and their slaves. The end had come; finally it was time to sleep.



She woke with a start, her heart racing. With shaking hands she conjured light, setting the little alcove abuzz with warmth and illumination. At the foot of her bed, Nina, her new apprentice, stirred in her cot and murmured sleepily, "Morning, mistress?"

"No. No dear. Not morning, go to sleep." She let the lights die down a little. Morning. Yes. Soon it would be morning. She must get back to work at once. The new spell of perception was going to be crucial. She'd been neglecting it to play politics with the tribal elders, the young priestess, the whole covenant community. The coming tribunal would be vital, absolutely vital.

Lord, but she was stretched too far, in too many directions, with too much to do. No wonder she dreamed such strange and terrible dreams.

Eventually, Malincka Capcek let the lights die and the darkness return, and closed her eyes. But for all her will and weariness, she had no more sleep that night.



Chapter 7

Saga

This chapter describes directions you might want to take your own saga. It will obviously be of the greatest use to sagas actually set in the Novgorod tribunal, but sagas set in other tribunals might use the following information just as easily.

The Novgorod Tribunal

Obviously, the tribunal is facing hard times. Can the Order ever be reconciled with mundane society, or any sort of society at all? Is the experiment at Thousand Caves the way forward, or is it a dangerous folly?

In many parts of north and western Russia and throughout Poland, land development will be a constant. Mongol invasions will drive refugees from Kiev, Pereyaslavl, and Chernigov west, while German colonization will push east. Poland is set to make a major advance in terms of population, technology, and administration, and the Order will find it harder to hide from mundanes.

In Russia the times are set for ruin. The prophecy of the mad magus Yannes Kolski is about to yield its first dreadful fruits. Manifestations of the terrible invasions in Arcadia are beginning to appear in the real world: lambs born with two heads, walls

sweating blood, hauntings, and ghostly processions. Such signs may well become more and more frequent as the years pass.

As the Order and the tribunal bicker internally, what can be done to avert the coming storm? What are the possible avenues to salvation?

The first possibility is unification of the Russian principalities. If the tribunal is convinced of the danger, they might make an attempt to bring the Russian princes together. We invite you to consider for yourself the difficulties of such a course, especially for the Novgorod Tribunal, where one cardinal rule is stressed: no involvement with the houses of Rurik or Piast!

Flight is another option. The faerie realm might offer a sanctuary. Can Houses Merinita and Bjornaer thread the maze of Faerie and take their people through to a promised land? Or will they be forced to flee into destitution as refugees in western Europe?

Finally, a policy of endurance could work. The Mongols, some will argue, can be tolerated. They are merely the latest in a long sequence of barbarian invaders. Thirty years will see them done with. Can a covenant survive under the Mongol yoke? Only by offering swift and complete submission will they even be permitted to try. And then, of course, they will be placed under the supervision of the Mongol Shamans, deprived of vis, their laboratories opened to investigation, and their texts confiscated.

Your Covenant

Where does your covenant fit into this tangled web of intrigue, conflict, and invasion? As a first step, ask yourself how your covenant relates to each of the four established covenants of the tribunal; this will help you align yourself within the major power struggles. At the same time, your covenant's involvement with each of the other covenants opens possibilities for adventure. Here are some possible positions, and story ideas you might like to try out.

Three Lakes

Support: You support Three Lakes, broadly speaking. You strive to uphold their general policies, within the boundaries of your own particular aims. Consequently you may be called upon to assist Three Lakes magi, or even to support a group of traveling *quaesidores* on an official mission for the tribunal. This is a privilege, but also a responsibility, and possibly a burden. In return, Three Lakes is ready to offer you advice, and sometimes more concrete aid.

Oppose: Three Lakes, as far as you're concerned, has got it wrong. Perhaps they are foolish to deny other tribunals the right to move into Slavic lands (your position: the tribunal needs new blood), perhaps their restrictions on meeting Slavic royalty is futile or stupid (your position: the tribunal must integrate with the nobility), or perhaps you simply resent their dominance and the threat of interference (your position: you didn't found your own covenant just to be told what to do by another bunch of magi!).

Story Suggestions: The current situation gives you the opportunity to help or to hinder Three Lakes. Will you assist them in controlling the Thousand Caves controversy, or use it to damage them? An opportunity soon arises. A magus from another tribunal visits your covenant. He may be a friend, a casual acquaintance, or a complete stranger. Most

likely he comes from Rhine, Transylvania, or Thebes. Your visitor drops hints about possible favors he could do you. He wants to trade, and seems especially interested in gossip about tribunal affairs. You could sell out Three Lakes quite easily, or strive to keep their affairs secret. Ultimately, of course, it is unlikely that your actions will remain secret. Whether you help or hinder, your behavior will sooner or later come home to haunt you. If you work to protect Three Lakes, your visitor may turn nasty, or take to more covert ways of extracting information. If you betray Three Lakes they will probably discover it eventually, and then you had better hope your new friends are strong enough to protect you!

Thousand Caves

Support: Thousand Caves is, in your opinion, undertaking one of the most radical, visionary tasks of any covenant in the Order. This, as you see it, is a real hope for the future and for the recreation of a magical society as vigorous and powerful as that of ancient, pagan Rome.

Oppose: Thousand Caves is blundering disastrously. Their project is wholly misconceived. Inevitably they are going to attract demons or other malign spiritual entities with their misguided "worship." If not, then the whole project will simply fail, and in the meantime it is proving horribly divisive. Even in a best case situation, the tribunal is going to be hideously embarrassed if this matter comes out at Grand Tribunal, and you're all going to lose prestige, independence, and probably territory as well.

Story Suggestion: Missionaries from Thousand Caves enter your area. They are preaching to the local villagers, demonstrating Hermetic magic and some peculiar effects that seem to straddle the line between Hermetic and Volkhv magic. The local Volkhv may react positively or negatively to this situation. In any case, the visitors stir up the local populace and get them talking: about paganism, about magic, about you. Ultimately all of this





fuss comes to the attention of the local clergy and nobility. Paganism is not to be tolerated, and the local powers move in swiftly to purge the area of malicious influences, possibly including you! How do you react? Will you support the missionaries, or seek to suppress them? Will you cooperate with the authorities, or try to mislead them? Do you believe in the new religion? Perhaps you will have an experience you cannot explain by normal methods; you yourself may end up being converted. Alternatively, what you see may convince you that the Thousand Caves magi are simply consorting with demonic entities and being granted malefic powers. A quick certámen might suffice to banish the interlopers from your district. If not, perhaps more direct methods will prove necessary.

Pripet Maior

Support: Pripet Maior is the true heart of the tribunal. Their attitudes toward encroaching mundanes are quite correct. They have every right to defend their land. Three Lakes, for one, has made a grievous error in getting so involved in mundane affairs. Further, Pripet Maior is a proper Bjornaer covenant, with the right priorities. The animals and the wilderness must come first!

Oppose: Pripet Maior is a disaster waiting to happen. Before much longer they are obviously going to antagonize the wrong people. It won't be long before the mundanes march in, probably with the support of the Church. Their whole approach is wrong. They can't expect to preserve their domain unchanged forever. They should be trying to enlist the local mundanes, not frighten them off. Pripet's actions endanger the whole tribunal; everyone will suffer in the aftermath of their defeat.

Story Suggestion: Pripet Maior duly kicks off the war which everyone has been expecting. By stealing something or killing the wrong person, their magi inflame the

local mundanes. A small army assembles on the edges of the marsh. While workers begin digging a drainage channel, the soldiers search for the "marsh warlocks." Pripet now finds itself outmatched. Its magi can no longer cooperate effectively enough to defeat this attack. If the drainage channel is completed a considerable portion of the marsh near them will be destroyed. You become involved either because you are Pripet's ally, because you see a chance to profit from the situation by selling Pripet your aid, because the tribunal (Three Lakes) asks you to step in and try to resolve the matter, or because you greedily anticipate Pripet's fall and want to wait nearby and then swoop in to loot the covenant of vis and books after the mundanes finish off the magi. In any of these cases you will find yourself having to deal with Pripet's irrational, angry, frightened old magi, as well as dodging, or bargaining with, boyars and clergy from Pinsk-Turov.

Regardless of your approach, you will find yourself suddenly facing a third factor. Crintra is not going to sit on the sidelines forever. Pripet is very important to them. If Pripet Maior is seriously threatened or destroyed, magi from Crintra will arrive very swiftly to lay claim to the legacy of the covenant (books, vis, enchanted items, laboratory equipment), and even to the territory of the marsh itself. Pripet has, after all, been the reason for Crintra's support of the Novgorod Tribunal for centuries, and they will demand the right to dispose of its properties and very likely to re-found the covenant. The Crintra magi will be mature or elderly Bjornaer, probably former apprentices of the Pripet magi, with conservative attitudes and territorial feelings. If you already have a solution to the conflict you will have to talk fast to get them to go along with it. If they find you scavenging in the ruins or even just trying to take advantage, get ready for a fight. Also, don't expect Three Lakes' support in this matter; when it comes to Crintra, Three Lakes knows where the tribunal's interests lie.

Leczyca

Support: Leczyca has the right idea when it comes to dealing with mundane society; form alliances that bring the nobility in on your side, and don't give an inch if any other part of the Order tries to muscle in on your territory. Our own worst enemies are our own kind; it is other magi who know our weaknesses. Anyway, the western magi in general have been short-sighted and greedy. If they have a vis shortage, that's their problem. The borders of the Novgorod tribunal were settled a long time ago and aren't about to be changed now!

Oppose: Leczyca are the next best thing to turncoats. They've grown far too fond of their mundane allies, and opened themselves up to all kinds of exploitation. Their friends among the nobility won't stand up for them if the church denounces them, and then where will they be? They've already alienated half the Order. Sooner or later the nobility or royalty of Poland will begin demanding magical assistance, and they'll turn against Leczyca if they don't get it. The covenant has become little more than a pawn in the scramble for Krakow.

Story Suggestion: Information comes to you about a battle in the Polish/German borderlands. Perhaps a wandering minstrel, merchant, spy of yours, or even a Redcap brings the news. From the descriptions it seems obvious to you that this fight between noble warbands was tilted in the Polish favor by magical intervention. Did Leczyca take a hand? They've already been disciplined once over such matters and had to pay a heavy vis fine. Whether you support or oppose Leczyca this is an opportunity. Perhaps you can squeeze some vis out of them as the price of your silence, or perhaps you had better do what you can to ensure the story doesn't circulate more widely. If you send an agent into the area to investigate the matter, you may soon find yourself facing agents from the Rhine tribunal or possibly even magi from Durenmar eager to

expose Leczyca's illegal actions. Being Leczyca's ally in this situation may be a considerable burden. It is quite possible that they have re-established themselves in the Polish royal courts and are unwilling to disengage; probably they will expect your support.



The Sixth Covenant

When all is said and done, you have no overwhelming need to get closely involved with the other major covenants of the tribunal. It is possible to establish yourself in an area so distant from other covenants that you have very little contact with them. Taking this option allows you to devote yourself to your own concerns, and to involve yourself in cooperation or rivalry with Novgorod's sixth covenant. The sixth covenant offers you the opportunity to create an ally or enemy, or perhaps to re-balance the political weight and factions within the tribunal. Do you think the tribunal needs another Bjornaer covenant? A special tie to the church? To the nobility? Perhaps a group of Ex Miscellanea magi have formed a partnership with the pagan Lapps, or the Cuman Shamans. There might be a covenant in the Crimea, technically Novgorodian but heavily involved in the Theban tribunal, or on one of the Baltic islands where it serves as a meeting place with the mysterious Order of Odin. The choice is yours.

Appendix I: Shamans

Shamanism may be the oldest form of magic, for while the vast majority of Shamans are illiterate, the Romans and Greeks left written records of ancient shamanic peoples who were active in their ages. In the Mythic Europe of 1220, Shamans can be found in many remote regions, among the Mongols, Lapps, and other peoples living in the northern reaches of Russia, Scandinavia, Siberia, and the waste areas of the Far East. There are also stories of Shamans living in isolated rural areas in recently Christianized countries, keeping their ancient magics alive.

While the few Shamans in Christendom live in isolation, Shamans are part of the normal pagan life of their tribes. Unlike Hermetic magi, they live among their own people, acting as healers, diviners, and intermediaries to the spirit world. In this role, they are considered as unique and important as priests are in Christendom.

The descriptions and rules in this section are included for the specific purpose of allowing you to portray the Shamans of the Mongols in your saga, either as player characters or non-player characters. But don't let that limit you. You're also encouraged to portray Shamans from other nomadic cultures and to depict isolated Shamans who have been cut off from their ancient communities by the Christianization of their people.

A final note: the rules here are adapted from *Shamans: the Hidden Paths*, a supplement for *Ars Magica* Third Edition published by White Wolf, now out of print.

Shaman Characters

Shamans are mystic companions, just like Volkhvy. The troupe may elect to allow a Shaman created under these rules to occupy either the companion or the magus slot

for his player, though Shamans are powerful enough that the magus slot should be chosen most of the time. For other information on the sorts of considerations informing this decision, refer to the discussion of Volkhvy on page 54 and to Hedge Magic, page 31.

While Volkhvy are always tied to pagan communities, there is a little more flexibility for Shamans, though there should still be an explanation for their presence at the covenant. The most obvious explanation is for the covenant to be in the Novgorod, Rhine, or Transylvanian Tribunal. A Shaman could have heard about the Order and wish to join. A Shaman could have been spying on the covenant from the spirit world and been discovered. The troupe might have set up "business" in a village whose people expect Shamans to deal with strange creatures like magi.

One important fact to remember about playing most Shamans is that unlike Hermetic magi, Shamans are expected to interact with mundanes as spiritual intermediaries. This can create difficulties for Shamans who join the Order, but they are not insurmountable. The Shaman's village might be declared a covenant, for example, or you can play an untrained Shaman (as per the Flaw on the next page).

and magi, Shamans always pay the magus cost. (In the lists given below, "ArM4" page references are to *Ars Magica* Fourth Edition, and "WGRe" references are to *The Wizard's Grimoire Revised Edition*.)

The shamanic Gift marks all those who have it in some way, often physically, sometimes mentally. All Shamans must choose at least one Flaw from the following list.

Cursed (variable) (ArM4 46)

Delusion: (-1) (ArM4 47) A storyguide may rule that certain dangerous delusions are worth more than -1 for Shamans. Good examples of such delusions are that the Shaman's personal spirits are angels or saints (-2), demons (-3), Jesus (-4), or Satan! (-5). Obviously, claiming to talk to Jesus or Satan can have grave consequences.

Disfigured (-1) (ArM4 47)

Dwarf (-4) (ArM4 50)

Evil Eye (-1) (ArM4 47)

Fury (-3) (ArM4 50)

Hunchback (-1) (ArM4 47)

Lame (-2) (ArM4 49)

Magical Air (-1) (ArM4 47)

Mute (-3) (ArM4 50)

Obsessed (-1) (ArM4 48)

Offensive to Animals (-1) (ArM4 48)

Prohibition (variable) (WGRe 66)

Sense of Doom (-3) (ArM4 50)

Terrors (-2) (ArM4 49)

Transvestite (-2) (WGRe 66)

The Shamanic Gift also imparts certain unique innate Virtues. All Shamans have the Gentle Gift (ArM4 page 34) at no cost. Other common Shamanic Virtues are listed below.

Animal Ken (+1) (ArM4 40)

Blessing (+1) (WGRe 64)

Empathy (+1) (ArM4 41)

Enchanting Music (+2) (ArM4 43) With the troupe or storyguide's permission, this Virtue may describe ability in storytelling rather than music, with the same effects.

Entrancement (+4) (ArM4 45)

Gift of Tongues (+2) (WGRe 64)

Healer (+1) (ArM4 41)

Hex (+2) (ArM4 43)

Immunity (variable) (ArM4 40)
Magic Resistance (+4) (ArM4 46)
Outsider Trained in the Order (+2) (WGRe 61)
Purifying Touch (variable) (ArM4 40)
Visions (+2) (ArM4 44)
Weather Sense (+1) (ArM4 43)

There are a number of new Virtues and Flaws which Shamans (and only Shamans, except where noted) may purchase.

Well Trained (+1): Your master trained you exceptionally well. You have 5 extra points for purchasing Shamanic Powers. This Virtue may be taken only once.

Strong Fetch (+1): You bonded with an exceptionally strong Fetch. This spirit has a Magic Might of 30.

Ghostly Warder (+2): As printed in ArM4 page 81, except this Virtue is a +2 Virtue for Shamans, the ghost has a Magical Might of 15, and if it gets lost the Shaman may journey to the spirit world to try to find it again. This Virtue can also be taken if the Shaman wants his Fetch to be able to act and perceive in the mortal world like a ghostly warder.

The Sight (+2): This Virtue is a combination of Second Sight (ArM4 page 42) and Faerie Sight (*Faeries* page 133). This Virtue imparts the Exceptional Talent The Sight at an initial level of 1. This Ability allows you to perceive everything perceptible to characters with either Second Sight or Faerie Sight, and to see into and attempt to enter both magic and Faerie regions. Shaman characters need not purchase this Virtue, as the Ability The Sight is included in their basic Abilities package (see below). It is included here because it is available to characters who purchase the Dreamer Virtue (see the insert to the right).

Stingy Master (-1): Your master trained you less thoroughly than most masters, so you only have 40 points with which to purchase your Shamanic Powers.

Weak Fetch (-1): Your Fetch only has a Magic Might of 20.

Untrained Shaman (-3): An untrained Shaman has come into his power without the benefit of another Shaman, and has trained alone with the aid of spirits. Such a Shaman is often chosen by spirits to be a Shaman. An untrained Shaman does not have the standard Shaman's starting scores in Herbalism and Area Lore. In addition, untrained Shamans may not learn the Shamanic Power Ritual (and thus may obviously not select the Flaw

Dependence on Ritual, below). Due to their close connection to the spirit world no untrained Shaman may take the No Fetch Flaw. This Flaw is common in Christendom.

No Fetch (-3): A Shaman with this Flaw is unable to bond to a Fetch. In addition to not having the advantages of a Fetch the Shaman has a bad Reputation 2 among other Shamans and members of his community.

Dependence on Ritual (-4): You must successfully use the Ritual Power to be able to go into a trance and use your other Shamanic powers.

Finally, you must purchase the +1 Virtue Free Expression (ArM4 page 41) if you wish to be able to purchase and use the Shamanic Power Alter.

Abilities

All Shamans begin with the following Abilities. Shamans may purchase additional Abilities using (age + 10) experience points.

Speak Own Language	5
The Sight*	4
Folk Magic**	3
Herbalism	3
Occult Lore	2
Legend Lore	2
Area Lore	2

* Since this Ability is included in this starting Abilities package, Shamans need not purchase the +2 Virtue The Sight.

** Folk Magic is an Ability described in *Hedge Magic*, page 56. Shamans use Folk Magic only for the operations described under "Additional Capabilities," below.

Shamanic Powers

Shamans have four Shamanic Powers: Travel, Control, Alter, and Ritual. These powers are learned during years of apprenticeship. They are what allow Shamans to enter trances, journey to the spirit world, and affect spirits. Initial Power scores are pur-

New Virtue: Dreamer (+2)

When most people dream their spirits simply drift in the magic realm, unable to control their movements except in an unconscious way. You are aware of your dreaming and can control fully control your actions and movements while asleep. You are Gifted, but either lack the ability to be a full shaman or had the ability and inclination but never received training until your Gift had already solidified in this way.

You have the Travel Power, just like shamans do. You start the game with Travel 1, and may spend experience points to improve it just as shamans can. You can use Travel to travel to the Near Lands, return from them, hide within them, and do any of the Spirit World Activities described in this appendix. You can even take others along to the magic realm with you. You lack the Control, Alter, and Ritual Powers, and do not possess a Fetch. You may not attempt to awe or control spirits, though you may attempt to bargain with and persuade them. Even though you lack the Alter Power, you may attempt to alter your form in the Magic Realm, just as shamans do, by rolling 6+ on a stress die + Sta + Dreaming.

You have the same ability as shamans to communicate fully with all sentient inhabitants of the magic realm, but only in your dreams and trances. The +1 Virtue Versatile Sleeper allows a Dreamer to enter the magic realm at a moment's notice. Any Dreamer who has the +2 Virtue Latent Magical Ability has the capacity to become either a magus or a Shaman with the proper training.

Dreaming may be purchased by any character except a Faerie Companion, because faeries do not dream like people do.

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chased just as Abilities are on a pyramidal scale. Beginning Shamans have 50 points to spend on these four Powers, though, as mentioned earlier, only Shamans with the Virtue Free Expression may purchase and use Alter.

Additional Capabilities

All Shamans can communicate freely with any inhabitant of the magic realm: ghosts, spirits, animal spirits, elementals, and so on.

Shamans are able to create potions and minor potions like those created by cunning-folk (see *Hedge Magic*, pages 34-36). They can also harvest and use wild vis as cunning-folk do (see *Hedge Magic*, page 36), using The Sight rather than Faerie Sight in the relevant formulae.

Auras give Shamans the same bonuses and penalties they give Hermetic magi. However, the affecting aura is the one where the Shaman's body and soul reside, not where his spirit happens to be. For example, if a Shaman goes into a trance in a church with a Divine aura of +5, he is at -5 to all Shamanic Power rolls, even though his spirit is in the magic realm, which has a +10 magical aura.

The Spirit World

The spirit world is the source of magic, magic auras, and magic regiones. Hermetic magi refer to it as the magic realm. Shamans divide this realm into two separate areas, known to them as the Near Lands and Far Lands. This distinction is less useful to Hermetic magi, who disagree about its veracity and utility.

The Near Lands

Just as high level faerie auras and regiones connect directly to Arcadia, high level magic auras and regiones connect to the Near Lands. This is the domain of ghosts, elementals, magical beasts, animal spirits, and the spirits of dreaming mortals.

Magi and Shamans agree that, unlike Arcadia, places in the Near Lands often resemble corresponding locations in the mortal world. However, determining exact correspondences has proved difficult. Many magic realm informants are ghosts and spirits for whom the angle of the sun or the boundaries of France are not issues of burning importance. A human ghost, questioned by a magus as to the geography of the magic realm, answered:

"Yes, the sun rises here when I am walking, and sets when I am dreaming, though sometimes I do not know one from the other now. Was it always like that? No, I do not see churches here, though there are many pagan signs, and also many cities.

I cannot find Rome, though I have looked, or perhaps it was the city of the velvet curtains and I did not recognize it because there are no crucifixes. I found a cathedral once, but inside it there was no priest and no sacraments, only a crazy woman wrapped in furs, shaking a tambourine."

The same magus later summoned a spirit from the magic realm in the form of a white bear, which answered the same questions:

"The sun is bright in the warm time and dark in the cold time, as it should be. The ground is solid and white and drifting, opening into water wherever the food comes up to breathe and rest. There is a place with a great



shining stone. It is not part of my place, so I know little about it. Small bears come there and shed their skins; they turn into something like newborn cubs, naked and shapeless, then grow skins again. I imagine they are tender when they do not have their skins, but I am not sure they should be eaten. What is a church?"

Physical geography in the magic realm is indefinite; no one has succeeded in mapping the spirit world. Most magi agree that different areas in the magic realm are places where different categories of spirits are resident, or that different areas correspond to different Hermetic Forms and Techniques. Likewise, Shamans have referred to the existence of a "place of wolves," a "place of fires," and so on. In any case, the physical parameters of the magic realm vary from place to place in a way consistent with the kinds of beings found there. Human ghosts tend to be found in areas that seem much like the human world, for instance, while the white bear spirit described a land of endless frozen waters.

Time, too, seems to be different in the magic realm. There have been no reports of sudden aging after a return from the magic realm. Rather, the effects of time seem to be only in the mind and spirit of the traveler. It is most common for a traveler into the magic realm to report that much more time seemed to pass within the magic realm than had passed in the mortal world in his absence. In this way, the magic realm seems to be experienced almost as a dream.

The Far Lands

The Far Lands lie beyond the Near Lands. The barrier between them varies in appearance, but it always exists — not necessarily as a solid wall, but always as some sort of gateway which prevents the passage of inappropriate travelers between the lands.

On the far side of the gateway, the spirit world is profoundly different. Time passes, but does not separate past, present, and future events. These coexist with dreams and legends. It is useless, even dangerous, to presume that "reality" is more powerful than "unreality" here, for in the Far Lands things that never were can be more solid than truths that everyone in the mortal world knows. In the Far Lands, it is not only possible to meet yourself, it is possible to meet a self that never was or one that might some-

day be. The behavior of objects in the Far Lands is quite unusual. Stones may float and creatures may climb down emptiness without falling.

The landscape is far from featureless. The ground is folded into hills and mountains and covered with patterns ranging from elaborate patchworks to stained glass to carved stones. Half-formed faces appear and disappear and ridges cross the landscape like the backbones of serpents. The ground itself may rise in plumes of sand or foam. Solid-looking surfaces may be as fine as paper or as insubstantial as water or mist. Lakes and rivers may be as solid as rock crystal. The difference between creatures and objects blurs, since everything in the Far Lands is an animate spirit, fully aware of its surroundings.

Nothing in the Far Lands is recognizable as having come from the mundane world, but everything evokes fleeting images of a memory or a dream in the mind of the viewer. Was the curve of that fissure the same as the unfolding fern leaves in the valley where I was born? Was the lost emerald of Abdul Aziz exactly that shade of green? Is this the endless library of my dream? Such thoughts can overwhelm the minds of inexperienced travelers, leading them to forget their purpose, their plans, and even their bodies.

Some magi propose that this portion of the magic realm is home to magi who have passed on into Final Twilight, but this has not been proven. Shamans believe that the spirits of insane mortals and the spirits of ancient and legendary Shamans reside in the Far Lands, as do numerous spirits which have very little connection to the mortal world.

Shamanic Powers

Ritual

Ritual describes a Shaman's ability to increase the capacity of his Travel and Control Powers by entering a Ritual Trance.

To use Ritual, the Shaman first prepares himself. This preparation can take many forms: dancing, chanting, playing music, ingesting strong drugs, or some combination of those. Any interruption during this period will force the Shaman to begin his preparations over again. After an uninterrupted hour of preparation, the Shaman rolls a stress die + Sta + Ritual against an ease factor of 9+. If this roll succeeds the Shaman enters a Ritual Trance and may add his Ritual score to any single Travel or Control roll while in it. If the roll fails the Shaman may end the attempt or spend another hour preparing and roll again. This process may be repeated until the Shaman succeeds, gives up, or botches. On a botch, the Shaman may not enter a Ritual Trance for the next 24 hours.

Use of Powers which call for a trance (but not specifically a Ritual Trance) do not require a Ritual Trance. A non-Ritual trance can be entered with a few moments (10 – Concentration score in rounds) of silent preparation with no rolls required. However, no Shaman may go into either sort of trance in a high stress situation such as combat without making some sort of Concentration roll. In the case of combat the ease factor would be 15+.

In all cases, going into a trance leaves a Shaman's body totally helpless, unless it is possessed by his Fetch (see page 175).

Travel

Travel describes a Shaman's power to go into trance and journey to the magic realm in spirit, and to find a particular being or location in the magic realm.

Times described in the sections on travel in the magic realm are given as they actually pass in the real world. These amounts of time may or may not have any correspondence to the time that appears to pass in the magic realm, at the discretion of the storyguide. For example, a Shaman who spends a mundane day in the spirit world may spiritually experience the passage of many days or only several minutes.

Travel in the Near Lands

To use the Travel Power a Shaman must first enter a trance. Then he chooses

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the destination for his journey and rolls a stress die + Per + Travel.

If the destination is one the Shaman has visited before, the ease factor for this roll is 9+. On a success, the Shaman arrives at the destination almost immediately. On a failure, the Shaman wanders aimlessly in the magic realm for one hour. After the hour is up, the Shaman may attempt the roll again or return to his body. On a botch (one botch die is associated with this roll), the Shaman's spirit becomes lost in the Near Lands (see below).

If the destination is one the Shaman has not visited before (such as the nearest magic regio, the Shaman of a village heard of but never visited, or a ghost never met), the Shaman must roll 12+. On a success, the chart below is consulted to determine the length of the journey. The consequences of failures and botches are the same as for familiar destinations.

Roll	Time Taken
12-13	4 Hours
14-15	2 Hours
16-17	1 Hour
18-19	20 minutes
20-21	5 minutes
22+	1 minute

To journey to an unfamiliar destination, a Shaman needs some sort of connection to the destination or subject of the journey. If the destination is a person living or dead, the presence of a relative, direct descendant, lover, sworn enemy, or dear friend will serve as this connection.

A Shaman may travel to a number of Near Lands destinations while in the same trance. Each new journey requires rolls just like the previous ones did.

Returning from any Near Lands destination takes the same amount of time the outward journey took, including any time spent wandering aimlessly. It requires no rolls, assuming the Shaman is not lost. Shamans may attempt to return more quickly than this, however. To do this, they simply make a normal roll for visiting a familiar location, with all the attendant risks of failure and botches.

Travel in the Far Lands

Journeying into the Far Lands is very difficult and dangerous. Once a trance is entered, the Shaman must roll a stress die + Per + Travel.

To visit a destination he has visited before, the Shaman must beat an ease factor of 12+. On a success, he arrives in an amount of time determined by consulting the table used for unfamiliar destinations in the Near Lands. On a failure, he wanders for three hours before either rolling again or returning to his body, as he wishes. On a botch (two botch dice are associated with this roll), he becomes lost (see below).

Even when journeying to familiar locations in the Far Lands, some connection with the destination is needed. In addition to the sorts of connections detailed in the section on travel to the Near Lands, a Shaman can attempt to visit any spirit of the Far Lands with which his bloodline or tribe has an hereditary allegiance. A Shaman may also attempt to visit any location or entity that is described to him in detail by a Shaman who has been there, or any entity or location which is described in detail by a storyteller who succeeds in a stress roll + Com + Storytelling of 12+.

To visit an unfamiliar destination in the Far Lands, a Shaman must beat an ease factor of 15+. On a success, the following table is consulted for travel time. On a failure, the Shaman wanders for six hours before rolling again or returning. On a botch (three botch dice are associated with this roll), the Shaman becomes lost (see below).

Roll	Time Taken
15-16	4 Hours
17-18	2 Hours
19-20	1 Hour
21-22	20 minutes
23-24	5 minutes
25+	1 minute

Returning from any Far Lands destination takes the same amount of time the outward journey took, including any time spent wandering aimlessly. It requires no rolls, assuming the Shaman is not lost. Shamans may attempt to return more quickly than this, however. To do this, they simply make a normal roll for visiting a familiar location, with all the attendant risks of failure and botches.

Getting Lost

A Shaman who has become lost in the spirit world must make rolls to find his body again.

Each day, a stress die + Per + Travel must be rolled against an ease factor of 9+. On a success, the Shaman finds his body. On

a failure, nothing happens; the Shaman wanders for another day. On a botch, not only does the Shaman not find his body, but he increases the ease factor of future rolls to find it by 3.

Other Shamans or dreamers (see page 169) may attempt to find lost Shamans by following the normal rules for traveling in the magic realm. If found by someone who knows the physical location of the lost Shaman's body, a lost Shaman can automatically find his own body (as long as the searcher is willing to tell him where it is!).

Every day a Shaman is out of his body, he loses one Body level. If a Shaman's last Body level is lost in this way, his spirit becomes trapped forever in the magic realm.

Hiding in the Spirit World

Sometimes Shamans search for entities that do not wish to be found. If this is the case the hiding entity rolls a stress die + Travel or a stress die + (Might ÷ 5) and subtract this from the Shaman's Travel roll. To make this roll, the entity must do nothing but hide in the spirit world for the duration of the Shaman's search. Remember, if one Shaman hides from another Shaman both must be in trances and may do nothing but search or hide.

Spirit World Activities

Permitted objects of a Shaman's searching in the spirit world include beings with Magical Might and people with the Gift. Storyguides must decide whether a given person has a strong enough Gift to allow contact in this way. Hermetic magi certainly do, as do other Shamans, Gruagachan (see *Lion of the North*), and mystic companions. People with Exceptional Abilities may or may not. The storyguide may wish to consult the *Wizard's Grimoire Revised Edition*, page 36, for ideas.

Upon locating a being who is the object of his search, a journeying Shaman has a number of options.

First, he may converse with it. Such activities should be roleplayed by the player and storyguide.

Second, if the contacted being has a physical presence in the mundane world, it may allow the Shaman to share its mundane senses. In this case, the Shaman can sense anything the other being can normally sense in the mundane world. If the being will not allow this, the Shaman may only sense the

being and any other magical places and beings within Near range.

Third, the Shaman may attempt to possess the being. In this case, the Shaman rolls a stress die + Sta + Control. He may add +3 if he has the Virtue Strong Will. This total is compared to either the victim's Magic Resistance, Magic Might, or (Stamina + 5), whichever is highest. Magi gain the benefit of their Parma Magica, but not Form or Technique bonuses. If the Shaman's total is equal or higher, he may freely use the being's senses, but may not control the actions of the victim in any way. If the Shaman's total is lower, he must roll a stress die + Sta of 6+ or lose a Fatigue level.

Fourth, a Shaman with access to the being's perceptions (whether through possession or invitation) may attempt to control the being's actions. In this case, both roll a stress die + Sta, with the Strong Will Virtue adding +3. If the Shaman's score beats the victim's score by 3 or more, the Shaman gains control for one round and the victim must roll a stress die + Sta of 6+ or lose a Fatigue level. If the victim's score beats the Shaman's score by 3 or more, the victim retains control for one round and the Shaman automatically loses a Fatigue level. If neither one wins by 3 or more the body falls down or thrashes about, uncontrolled by either. These rolls for control may be repeated as often as the Shaman likes, but a Shaman that loses all Fatigue levels is automatically returned to his body, unconscious. On the other hand, if a being under attack in this way drops to Dazed (-5), it may be controlled without further rolls until it recovers to Weary (-1). Controlled beings can be forced to use their innate powers as the Shaman wishes (for example, a dragon could be forced to breathe fire or a giant to lift something heavy), but learned powers and Abilities (such as the ability to work magic or to shoe horses) can't. A Shaman uses his own learned powers and Abilities even when controlling other beings. For example, a Shaman who is controlling a magus who is attacked by bandits would use the Shaman's Brawl Ability when dodging, rather than the magus's Brawl Ability. When a possessed being acts, the fatigue penalties for both the Shaman and host body are summed for a single penalty.

If he's traveled to a specific magic aura or regio, a Shaman may observe what is occurring within its boundaries in the mortal world, since these locations are directly connected to the magic realm.

Guests

Shamans and dreamers may take others with them on their journeys in the Near Lands. To do this, a Shaman (or dreamer) may contact the spirit of any person he has ever met normally, as long as the person is asleep and dreaming. Follow the normal rules for contacting beings in the Near Lands. Once contacted, that spirit may accompany the Shaman wherever else he goes in the magic realm, until the Shaman leaves his trance.

A Shaman may contact and take along any number of beings in this manner. If a person planning to accompany the Shaman goes to sleep in contact with him, then the Shaman's Travel ease factor is only 6+. If a number of people all sleep in contact with the Shaman, they can all be found on a single roll of 6+.

If a Shaman with guests becomes lost in the Near Lands, each guest can attempt to roll a stress die + Per against an ease factor of 9+ to find his body again. Guests who find their own bodies may aid others (the rest may roll again at +3). Once the Shaman finds his body he may automatically lead the rest back to their bodies without additional rolls.

Instead of traveling with a person he's contacted, the Shaman may talk to the person, or even temporarily reshape the magic realm around the person to craft him a dream. For information on shaping portions of the magic realm, refer to the description of the Alter Power, below. Magi, dreamers, Shamans, and people who have dealt extensively with Shamans are likely to recognize that created dreams are not natural. They do so on a stress die + Per of 6+. Others less familiar with Shamanic powers only recognize this if they make a stress die + Per roll of 12+

Control

The Control power is used to make spirits do a Shaman's bidding. There are three ways of getting a spirit or other magical entity to perform a service: Command, Awe, and Persuasion.

Aid from spirits can take many forms. Answers to questions, aid in the spirit world, or even an appearance in the mortal realm are possible.

Spirits who still have some connection with the mortal world, such as ghosts, animal spirits, elementals, or spirits of places can materialize in the mortal world. However, any spirit who is linked to a particular place on the mortal world can normally appear only at that place, regardless of where the Shaman calling it is. For example, a ghost normally only appears where its body lies.

To cause a spirit linked to a place to appear somewhere else in the mortal world the Shaman must go into a trance in the place where he wishes the spirit to appear. After contacting the spirit (and convincing it to appear) the Shaman must roll a stress die + Per + Travel against an ease factor of 9+ to find an appropriate path for the spirit. Some spirits such as legendary spirits and ghosts who have been dead so long that their bodies have decayed into dust have lost their firm connections with the mortal world. A Shaman must roll 12+ to help them find a path into the mortal world. A Shaman who fails this roll (whether the ease factor is 9+ or 12+) may try again in another day. If the roll is botched the spirit breaks free from the Shaman and may appear anywhere it wants in the mortal world, or hide in the spirit world, depending on its preference.

Some spirits can appear anywhere in the mortal world at will.

No inhabitant from the Far Lands can appear in the mortal world (at least not through the use of the Control Power), since the connection between the Far Lands and the mortal realm is very tenuous.

Command

Commanding a spirit is the most direct approach to controlling it. Commanding a spirit means the Shaman pits his force of will against the Might of the spirit. The Shaman compares a stress die + Sta + Leadership + Control + (Might of any aiding entity such as a Fetch ÷ 5) to the Magical Might of the spirit to be commanded. The Virtue Strong Will gives the Shaman a +3 on this roll, and only one bound spirit at a time can aid a Shaman on this roll.

On a success or tie, the Shaman has control of the spirit, and may command the spirit to perform any single action or truthfully answer one question. On a failure, the Shaman fails to command the spirit but may try again. On a botch the Shaman may not try to command that spirit again for the next full lunar month. In any case, unless the

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Shaman succeeds by 10 or more, he must roll a stress die + Sta of 6+ or lose a Fatigue level.

Awe

When a Shaman awes a spirit, he attempts to impress it with his power so it will submit without a fight. To awe a spirit a Shaman rolls a stress die + Pre + Charm + Control and compares it to the Magical Might of the spirit to be awed. There are no bonuses or additions to this roll.

On a success or tie the spirit or entity will truthfully answer any number of questions which are not directly contrary to its interests, or will perform any one task which requires no risk and which is not against its interests. If the Shaman succeeds by 10 or more the spirit reacts as if it had been successfully commanded — the spirit has been completely awed.

On a failure, the Shaman may not try again to awe this spirit until after the next full moon, or until he has successfully commanded it. On a botch the spirit loses all respect for the Shaman, and he may never attempt to awe it again.

Some spirits and magical entities, at the storyguide's discretion, are by their very nature immune to awe.

Persuasion

The best way to gain help from powerful spirits is to offer a service to the spirit in return for a favor. For example, to gain the aid of a powerful spirit that is the guardian of a different tribe, a Shaman might offer to aid that tribe. He might offer to bring a message from a ghost to its living relatives, to avenge its death, or to write a song commemorating its memory.

When a Shaman wants to persuade a spirit, he must roleplay with the storyguide, who decides exactly what the outcome will be depending on the situation.

Alter

The Alter Power is used to alter the magic realm directly by creating objects that are connected directly to it. The Alter Power may only be purchased and used by Shamans who have the +1 virtue Free Expression. Furthermore, every Shaman who uses Alter must also buy a Craft Skill

which forms the physical basis of the Alter power. This Skill can be anything: woodcarving, tattooing, metalwork, and stonework are only some of the possible options. This Craft Skill is used together with the Alter power to create a physical object which is the physical manifestation of the change the Shaman has created in the magic realm. If the Shaman has several Craft Skills the Alter power may be used with each of them. The only restriction is that a Shaman must have a score of 2 in any Craft Skill used with the Alter power.

Binding Objects

The most common use for the Alter power is to create objects which can house spirits the Shaman has successfully controlled. These dwellings, called Binding Objects, are often small charms or tattoos on the Shaman's body. To make a binding object for a spirit the Shaman first declares the maximum Might of a spirit which can be housed in the object. Once that's done, he must roll a stress die + Dex + Craft Skill + Alter. If the roll meets or exceeds an ease factor of $15 + (\text{Maximum Might to be housed} \div 5)$, it is successfully created as long as the Shaman spends one pawn of vis (wild or ordinary) for every 5 points of Might to be housed. This vis is often physically incorporated into the object. A failure wastes the time and materials. On a botch, the failure is not readily apparent, but the first spirit asked to enter the dwelling is so horrified or insulted that it breaks free from the Shaman's control and flees or attacks.

A successfully created Binding Object will house any spirit which enters it, regardless of the means of getting it there. The spirit is held in the object until the holder of the Object voluntarily releases it.

If a Binding Object is exceptionally well made, with a roll of $21 + (\text{Might} \div 5)$, low to moderate power spirits (Might 5-20) can sometimes be talked into voluntarily choosing such a beautiful dwelling. Also, when making a Binding Object, every three points above $21 + (\text{Might} \div 5)$ add +1 to rolls for making a spirit return to this object once it has been bound and released.

Upon releasing a spirit from a Binding Object, the holder of the object may ask one service of it. The spirit must try to complete this task to the best of its ability, return, and report on the success or failure of its task. To make the spirit return to the binding object once the service has been completed the

Shaman must again control or awe the spirit.

Bound spirits in a Shaman's possession can count as helping spirits for purposes of Control rolls (see page 173), though using a spirit for this purpose releases it. However, a Shaman may only communicate with one bound spirit at a time, so only one bound spirit at a time may aid the Shaman in Control rolls. Since the Binding Object is magically connected to the magic realm the Shaman can access this object while journeying in the magic realm.

Anyone who touches a Binding Object inhabited by a spirit may communicate with the spirit inside, regardless of differences in language. Thus, a spirit in a binding object may serve as a source of information to the holder, though the spirit is free to ask a price for its knowledge — often its freedom.

Spirit Links

A Shaman can create a link between a spirit from the Far Lands and the mortal realm. To make such a link, the Shaman must first convince the spirit to have contact with the mortal world. Usual attractions are aid from the Shaman or worship by the Shaman's group.

These link are usually created as stories which tell of how a spirit came to inhabit a mortal place such as a mountain, stream, or forest. To create such a link the Shaman must roll a stress die + Com + Storytelling + Alter. If the player of the Shaman invents an appropriate myth, he receive a bonus of +1 to +3 on this roll. If the roll is equal to $18 + (\text{Might} \div 5)$ the spirit link is created. On a failure, it is not. A botch greatly offends the spirit. A myth of this type takes a Shaman at least a week to create, and the storyguide may decide that it takes as long as a season to create the myth and tell it to enough people to make it take hold.

Once created, a spirit link will endure until both the story and the physical link (the mountain, stream, or whatever) are gone from the world. The existence of such a link gives the place a magic aura or regio (storyguide's choice). It is impossible to create such a link on ground which is already an area of Divine or Infernal power.

Shaping the Magic Realm

A Shaman may use the Alter Power to change his appearance in the magic realm,

taking on the form of an animal or some other being. To do this a Shaman must roll a die + Sta + Alter of 6+. This roll is simple for ordinary Shamans and stress for untrained Shamans. A botch gets the Shaman stuck in an undesired form for the duration of his journey.

Shamans can also use the Alter Power to actually reshape portions of the magic realm. To do this the Shaman must roll a stress die + Com + Storytelling + Alter. The ease factor is 18+ if the section of the spirit world is relatively unpopulated and the changes are not drastic (for example, changing a meadow into a grove of trees). More extreme changes are more difficult. If there are spirits inhabiting the area in question, they may roll a stress die and add their summed Might ÷ 5. This result is then subtracted from the Shaman's roll.

A Fetch has 15 experience points to spend on Social Talents, Social Skills, and Knowledges; most of these Abilities focus on the magic realm. A Fetch cannot journey in or even perceive the mortal world unless the Shaman purchases the +2 virtue Ghostly Warder and designates their Fetch as the warder.

A body without a spirit (such as the body of a Shaman traveling in the magic realm) can occasionally be possessed or influenced by other spirits. Shamans can normally displace such invaders by returning to their bodies, but they are answerable for the body's actions. To prevent this problem, or to act physically while absent, a Shaman may allow his Fetch to take control of his vacant body. Once in control the Fetch is capable of fully perceiving and interacting with the world. However, the Fetch may only use its own

Abilities, and its own Intelligence and Perception, not the Shaman's.

Fetches are natives of the magic realm; they are not familiar with the mortal world. Nobles, the church, and wild animals are all new to a Fetch. Even more importantly, basics like fire, hunger, night, pain, and physical combat are new. A normal Fetch is at -3 to all social and knowledge rolls involving the mortal world, including rolls made while possessing the Shaman's body. Fetches who are Ghostly Warders do not suffer from this -3 penalty. However, even a Fetch who is a Ghostly Warder has had no recent experience with having a physical body which needs to eat and bleeds if cut. Fetches do learn from experience, and receive experience points as the storyguide deems appropriate. With practice a fetch

The Fetch

All Shamans have one additional advantage, a Fetch. A Fetch is a spiritual ally of the Shaman who helps him work in the spirit world. Once an apprentice Shaman has finished all training he must journey into the spirit world and return with a Fetch. Thus, possession of a Fetch is the mark of being a fully trained Shaman. Normal Fetches have a Magic Might of 25. A Shaman can have a more powerful Fetch by taking the virtue Strong Fetch, or a weaker one by taking the Flaw Weak Fetch.

The Shaman's Fetch can take many forms. For some the Fetch is a spiritual double, for others a totem animal, the spirit of an ancestor, or the spirit of a deceased Shaman. Rare Shamans have more than one Fetch, usually 2 or 3 totem animals or spirits. In such cases, the Fetch's Might is divided up between these spirits.

The type of Fetch a Shaman has determines where in the magic realm he appears when he goes into a trance. A Shaman who has a wolf spirit for a Fetch will appear in the local place of wolves, while a Shaman with an ancestor as a Fetch will often appear in a place which strongly resembles the ancestor's homeland. A Shaman who has a spiritual double for a Fetch appears in a place in the magic realm that is replete with objects and beings of personal significance to the Shaman.

Typical Shaman and Fetch

Typical Mongol Shaman

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

Gender: Male

Age: 55

Size: 0

Afflictions: Arthritis 1, Withered Arm 3

Personality Traits: Ruthless +3, Discerning +4

Reputations: Evil +2, Everywhere

Weapon Init Atk Dfn Dam Fat
Dagger +5 +3 +5 +2 +2

Soak: +7

Fatigue levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unc.

Body levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Inc.

Virtues: Knack (Riding) +1, Magic Sensitivity +1, Visions +2, Gift of Tongues +2

Flaws: Disfigured (Ritual Scars) -1, Vow (Loyalty to the Great Khan) -2, Useless Arm -2

Abilities: Animal Handling (Horses) 2, Area Lore: Mongolia (Geography) 3, Area Lore: Persia (Geography) 2, Area Lore: Russia (Geography) 2, Awareness (Alertness) 2,

Bowmaking 1, Brawling (Dagger) 1, Hunt (Tracking) 2, Occult Lore (Demons) 2, Magic Theory 2, Legend Lore (Mongolian) 4, Storytelling (Epics) 4, Chirurgy (Binding Wounds) 3, Magic Sensitivity 3, Ride (Long Distance) 2, Scribe Mongolian (Spiritual Matters) 5, Speak Mongolian 5, Speak Persian 3, Speak Russian (Ryazan Dialect) 2, Survival (Steppe) 3, Weather Sense 3

Powers

Shamanic: Travel 7, Control 8, Alter 6, Ritual 7

Equipment: Daggers

Load: 0

Encumbrance: 0

Typical Mongol Fetch

Type: Ancestral Spirit

Magic Might: 25

Characteristics: Int 0, Per 0, Pre 0, Com +1

Personality Traits: Cunning +2

Abilities: Bargain 3, Intrigue 3, Occult Lore 2

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may learn at least some of the basics of interacting in the mortal world.

While in the spirit world, a Fetch can journey and report on conditions there and carry messages to and from spiritual allies of the Shaman. Fetches can also journey into magic regions and auras and report on conditions there, but they are natives of the spirit world, and so their reports on conditions in the mortal world are often unreliable. Fetches who are also Ghostly Warders tend to give more reliable reports, but are less familiar with the spirit world.

A final, important function of a Fetch is to protect the Shaman from magical attacks. As long as the Fetch is present, the Shaman has Magic Resistance equal to the Fetch's Spirit Might. The Shaman only has access to this Magic Resistance in the mortal world. A Shaman has no such protection in the magic realm, though a Shaman who leaves his Fetch guarding his body leaves this protection intact upon it.

Most importantly, a Shaman's Fetch is his close friend and near-constant companion. This is a great boon in the lonely life of a Shaman. In many ways the relationship between Shamans and their Fetches is very similar to that of magi and their familiars.

Shamans in Sagas

Aging

Though Shamans have much of the power of magi, they lack the gift of prolonged life. There are some spirits which have the power to slow aging by lengthening the amount of time between aging rolls by up to five years per roll. Contacting such spirits and convincing them to do this, however, is a difficult task, to be adjudicated by the storyguide depending on the needs of the story and the circumstances of the Shaman in question.

Experience

Shamans gain and spend experience points to improve their Abilities like any other characters.

The four Shamanic Powers can be increased with experience points, just like Abilities (though they are not strictly speaking Abilities themselves). Story experience and Practice experience (see ArM4 pages 186-7) may both be used for this purpose.

In addition, Shamans can improve their Shamanic Powers by studying with other Shamans or spirits (though they cannot study with their Fetches). To learn from another Shaman over a season, the student generates a study total equal to the tutor's appropriate Power (the one being taught) + the tutor's Communication + the student's Intelligence + the student's Concentration. A Shaman may not learn from another Shaman whose relevant Power score is lower than his own. To learn from a spirit over a season, the study total is the spirit's (Might - 15) + the student's Intelligence + the student's Concentration. In either case, the study total is divided by five and rounded up to determine how many experience points are gained in the season. A maximum of three experience points can be gained in this way in a given season. Remember, Shamans and spirits will want recompense for a season spent teaching. Money may work for Shamans, but spirits usually have other needs.

Kizil Kum desert and the Carpathian Mountains, and spark plots among Mongol enemies. Above all, Mongol Shamans held off the assaults of enemy sorcerers and took charge of expeditions to root out and destroy magical resistance in conquered lands. Captured foreign wizards were placed under the Shamans' supervision and forced to labor like other captive artisans for the Mongol victory.

Magical Slaves

The Mongols have discovered that captive sorcerers make useful but dangerous slaves. Wherever possible they carefully spy on any sorcerer they hope to take captive. They will want to know how useful, how dangerous, and how vulnerable the sorcerer might be. They like to have a firm hold on the sorcerer's loyalties. Friends, relatives, and companions make good hostages. Alternatively, if a sorcerer has no visible weaknesses and dangerous personal abilities, the most expedient method of dealing with him is assassination.

Some Shamans are rumored to have very unusual powers. It is said they can draw a man's heart out of his body and hide it away. In this case his life would quite literally be in their hands. Worse still, there are vague whispers among those who see the Infernal in every dark shadow that they can do the same thing to his soul. If such an abomination were true it would give them hideous power over their victims.

The Mongol Shamans

Genghis Khan used the Shamans as gatherers of military information. The spirits at their command could infiltrate over great distances. Pressed to provide further aid, some of his Shamans devised new magical methods of aiding his military forces. Opponents were deluded into making startling blunders, lead astray by false messengers, and driven mad by morale-sapping nightmares. Magical power was used further to help break down the defenses of Peking and Samarkand, spy out routes through the

Appendix II: Slavic Deities

The descriptions in this appendix describe some of the characteristics of the pagan gods discussed in this book. These are summarized at the end of the appendix on pages 182-185.

Don't be surprised if you find certain points in the following descriptions contradictory, or if it seems that the areas of authority of various gods overlap or conflict; this mythology is not neat or orderly, but a great organic, ever-changing sprawl of belief. Points of confusion, debate, and outright mystery are to be expected. In addition, in areas where Christianity is not yet the official religion (in 1220 this includes Lithuania, Prussia, and much of Pomerania) Volkhvy can have certain Virtues that are normally disallowed in Russia and Poland. These exceptions are noted in the descriptions below.

Finally, as you read, you'll notice that the descriptions of these deities are significantly abbreviated. While these descriptions will do to make you acquainted with the Slavic and Baltic pantheons, it is highly recommended that you look to the Bibliography for further information on a specific god if you will be playing (or storyguiding) a Volkhvy associated with any of these powers.

Svarog

An archetypal sun and fire god, Svarog's priesthood is purely male, which seems to be the god's own dictate. Svarog's focus on creative energies tends to reduce the aggressiveness displayed by his priests, and many of them are talented artists or artisans who spend considerable time crafting fine objects for sacrifice to their god. Priests of Svarog very often have intensely cyclic magic (as per the Virtue/Flaw) with high peaks at midsummer and severe troughs at midwinter. Each priest of Svarog usually forms a special friendship and has special knowledge of just one of Svarog's four sacred animals: either the falcon, aurochs, bear, or horse.

Perun/Percunos/Pehrkonis

The best known and most widely respected god of war, Perun is invoked in battle more than any other Slavic or Baltic deity. His priests are bellicose. They tend to be thoroughly unsubtle in their approach to problems, with an immediate tendency to smash down obstacles in their path. Priests of Perun may be male or female, though males are notably in the majority. They tend to be skilled warriors, favoring weapon combinations with an axe or heavy hammer. Finally, Perun's priests generally display a blustery good humor, a fondness for carousing, and a disdain for wounds ("Grin and bear it," most respond to requests for healing).

Mati-Syra-Zemlya

This earth deity may be the most widely respected and acknowledged of any of the Slavic or Baltic gods; her cult is universal in these regions and no one ignores her favor. She is predominantly but not exclusively served by priestesses; certainly all the most powerful of her servants are women. Volkhvy dedicated to Mati-Syra-Zemlya are deeply concerned with the agricultural cycle, and usually bound very tightly to their communities. They tend to be gifted handlers of livestock; Animal Ken is a common Virtue. They are also known to especially value nuggets of precious ore or raw gemstones (though not finished, polished, or refined items) which they describe as the tears of the goddess. Like the priests of Svarog they sacrifice such items to their goddess and claim to receive spell boons or special favors in return. Dowsing is a very common Virtue.

Svarozhich

Generally regarded as one of the sons of Svarog, Svarozhich is a god of fire. His priesthood is both male and female. Priests or priestesses of Svarozhich always display one of two basic temperaments. Some of them are among the worst, most violent, destructive, and aggressive of the Volkhvy

(though they are never Dark Volkhvy), while others are among the most generous, helpful, charitable, and judicious. These are "the two faces of the god:" fire as wanton destroyer and fire as helpful friend. Along with these temperaments go different practical inclinations: warriors on the one side, artisans (exclusively of crafts such as smithing or pottery which make careful use of fire) on the other.

Dazhdbog

Another of Svarog's sons, Dazhdbog represents creative powers in much the same fashion as his father. His priests and priestesses have a particular interest in bringing the power of the sun to bear on all evil taints, curses, and hauntings. They are particular enemies of servants of the Devil, and the Nameless Demon God of the Slavs (even to the point of actual physical combat). Dazhdbog's priesthood are markedly respectful of Christianity, and take a definite (if rather cautious) interest in rites of exorcism and other such anti-Infernal activities. Some priests of Dazhdbog are noted scholars of the occult in the "know thine enemy" tradition. There is a small sub-group of Dazhdbog Volkhvy who regard their god as a manifestation of the Archangel Michael (Mikhail), and vice versa. Their access to Volkh powers seems unhampered by this suggestion, and they claim to suffer much less from the negative effects of the Dominion and Christian Piety or True Faith.

Khors

Khors is the third of Svarog's sons. He is sometimes pictured rather like Apollo, as a charioteer driving a blazing chariot of the sun across the sky. Gold is sacred to Khors, and his priests and priestesses accept it as a sacrificial object. Volkhvy dedicated to Khors emphasize a search for mysteries in their lives and service to their god. As he travels the dazzling paths of the sky and the pathless maze of the underworld, they plumb the mysteries of life and uncover hidden secrets. Folk Ken is a common Ability,

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Occult Lore and Faerie Lore well thought of, and literacy is not terribly uncommon. Some Criamon magi have had fruitful riddle games with Khorsian Volkhvy.

Myesyats

Among the Slavs (though not the Balts, see Mehnesis/Menuo below) the moon was thought to be female and wife to the Sun (Khors, that is). Myesyats is the celestial charioteer of the moon, and silver is sacred to her. Volkhvy of Myesyats are exclusively female. Cyclical magic (aligned to the lunar phases) is common among them and they tend to be well-attuned to nocturnal events or activities. Volkhvy of Myesyats, unlike many of the other “good” gods, have a special influence with faeries of the White Court, tending to interact with them on at least a respectful basis. Faerie Friend and Light Sleeper are common Virtues.

Iarilo

Iarilo is the son of Dazhdbog and god of fertility. He is a Dionysian figure given to extreme eroticism. His Volkhvy can be either male or female and his rites are usually orgiastic without being degenerate. Volkhvy dedicated to Iarilo are hardly cunning seducers, but they do take a frank and easy attitude to physical attraction. They believe fertility is, quite simply, a blessing. Man, maid, beast, or field — it hardly matters. Let the world ripen and give birth! Venus’ Blessing is a very common Virtue; Curse of Venus is unheard of.

Krukis/Kalvaitis

Another of Dazhdbog’s sons and patron of blacksmiths. Krukis’ Volkhvy are always blacksmiths, and skilled ones. They are, however, very rare. They were renowned in the old days for their skill in crafting magical weaponry (a Discipline that now seems to have been lost) and were terribly persecuted by the authorities. They value gifts of iron ore and works of fine craftsmanship. They are inclined to take the risk of living close to larger towns, where communities of skilled artisans can be found, and often have non-pagan apprentices in their smithies. Their ethic lies in making fire and iron serve the needs of their people and they are generally slow to act destructively or violently. Appropriate Knacks are common, as are Mentor and Patron. On the Baltic coast and

in Lithuania Krukis is worshipped under the name Kalvaitis, and his Volkhvy have honored places in their communities and the households of pagan nobles, for whom they craft armor and weaponry of superior quality.

Ersvorsh

The god of weather is regarded throughout the Slavic lands as one of an unofficial trinity including Svarog and Mati-Syra-Zemlya. His priests and priestesses tend to two extremes. First are sharp, blustery characters who often suffer from afflictions such as Fury or Oversensitive. Others are calm, temperate characters who tend to display Common Sense, or a Carefree disposition. Weather Sense is an almost universal Virtue; any Volkhvy of Ersvorsh may add 1/3 (round up) of his Weatherworking Discipline score to his Weather Sense when rolling against it.

Stribog

The son of Ersvorsh, Stribog’s priesthood is restricted to men (he is defined as Father of Winds), though their temperament is not notably set in any pattern. Weather Sense is near universal among them, and like Volkhvy of Ersvorsh they are allowed 1/3 of their Weatherworking Discipline score as a bonus to this Ability. Volkhvy of Stribog tend to be skilled horsemen, so Animal Ken is a common Virtue, and they are often Oversensitive in regard to the treatment meted out to horses, especially white horses.

Varpulis

The firstborn son of Stribog, Varpulis is one of the wildest and most uncontrollable of the Slavic gods. He skirts the edge between good and evil and his Volkhvy are capable of acts of great destruction. Their temperaments tend to be gruff, abrasive, or downright raging, and they can be personally dangerous warriors. Like all the wind and weather gods they often have Weather Sense, and gain 1/3 of their Weatherworking Discipline score to rolls against it. Reckless is a common Flaw.

Dogoda

The second born son of Stribog is the god of mild winds (specifically the West wind) and his Volkhvy are the complete

antithesis of Varpulis: gentle, considerate, and cheerful. They often have the Virtue Healer, and sometimes are even Noncombatants. Their affinity with birds is marked. They commonly have Animal Ken with a specialty in swallows.

Kupala

Kupala is one of the daughters of Mati-Syra-Zemlya. Her Volkhvy are all female and tend to be extremely devoted to their communities. Healer is by far their commonest Virtue, but various Immunities are also common. Noncombatant is not unusual and their reluctance to employ violent magics (except in the last extremity of community defense) is proverbial.

Beilbog

Beilbog, another of the Earth Goddess’s daughters, is the archetypal White Maiden, the embodiment of purity and benevolence. Her Volkhvy are both male and female. They all take the Noncombatant Flaw. Healer is a common Virtue, so is Sense Holiness/Unholiness and Purifying Touch. There are rumors that Volkhvy of Beilbog are completely unaffected by the adverse effects of Christian Piety on their rituals, and only very slightly effected by True Faith. It is also whispered, however, that they are exceptionally vulnerable to the adverse effects of False Faith and Diabolical auras. Individual storyguides must decide how much truth there is in this.

Chernobog

Chernobog is Beilbog’s mad brother, deranged scion of the Earth. His Volkhvy are numbered among the servants of the darkness, and are Koldun. Reclusive is a common Flaw, as are Tainted with Evil and Infamous. As with other Koldun, Volkhvy of Chernobog do not serve any community, but travel widely (and often have the Virtue Widely Traveled). They often intrude on pagan communities at the Autumn and Winter Great Rituals.

Jarovit

Jarovit is a war god of lesser stature than Perun and with a wilder, more wantonly destructive character. He is the patron of berserkers and all his Volkhvy (who may be male or female) must take the Berserk

Virtue. Reserves of Strength and Inspirational are also common, as is Great Presence. These Volkhvy are very often found acting as war-leaders in the wilder rural areas near the steppe, and frequently draw their communities after them in mad forays or assaults on their nomad enemies. Fury is a common Flaw.

Kolyada

Kolyada is the Ice Spirit, dedicated enemy of Perun and embodiment of Winter. His Volkhvy — or Koldun, more accurately — are silent, sinister, and seldom seen. Knack with Stealth is common, as are Premonitions, especially relating to approaching death. Kolyada's Volkhvy can be male or female; they are never attached to a community, and would be driven out if they attempted to approach one under anything remotely resembling normal circumstances. Only the direst of straits could drive a pagan village to accept aid from one of these dangerous characters. It is rumored that these Volkhvy make a special ritual of sacrificing Christian priests (they certainly did so in the age of martyrs, before the conversions) and other especially innocent souls.

Proven

In pagan Slavic society justice is more a matter of taking and observing oaths, and exacting revenge for breaking them, than for jury trials. Proven is the great guarantor of such oaths and pagan treaties. His Volkhvy (male or female) often have Great or Mythic Presence, Piercing Gaze, Knacks with Folk Ken, or Higher Purpose (to guarantee oaths and seal treaties). They also tend to be Obsessive in regard to avenging broken oaths for which they have stood witness.

Utrennyaya

The three Zorya (the Slavic Fates: maiden, matron, and crone) were thought to be the daughters of Khors, and to attend upon the chariot of the sun as well as being jailers for the Nameless God of Demons. Utrennyaya is the Maiden Goddess of Dawn. Her Volkhvy are exclusively female, and almost always have Cyclic Magic, with peaks at dawn and troughs at dusk. Like all the Zorya, Utrennyaya was a sheildmay (much like a Valkyrie), and her Volkhvy are capable warriors. They are often Inspirational, but not usually Berserk, nor do they easily

suffer from Fury or Obsession. Carefree is a common Virtue as are Premonitions and Second Sight.

Zorya Vrechernyaya

The second of the Zorya is goddess of dusk. Second Sight is exceptionally common among her (all female) Volkhvy, as are Knacks with Leadership. Tough, Long-Winded and Enduring Constitution are also frequently found. Cyclic Magic is very common.

Lada Dernyaya

The last of the Zorya is the Crone Goddess of Midnight. All her Volkhvy are female. Cyclic Magic is nearly universal among her priesthood, as are the Virtues Premonitions and Visions. Strong-Willed is also very common, as is Second Sight. Lada Dernyaya's Volkhvy almost always carry some stigmata (as the Flaw Disfigured) signaling their affiliation, and may well be Obsessed by some prophetic vision or foreboding knowledge.

The Nameless

The Nameless God of Demons, who has no known gender, is by far the worst of the Slavic/Baltic dark gods. Its priesthood — Koldun all — is secretive. Almost all have the Reclusive and Tainted with Evil Flaws. Great or Mythic Presence, Faerie Blood (Goblin), Giant's Blood, Obsession, Fury, and Cyclic Magic (usually on an annual cycle with a peak at mid-winter) are common. It is openly acknowledged among other Volkhvy that Koldun of The Nameless are evil and insane creatures. Most rational Volkhvy would seek to drive them away, though those affiliated with martial gods might attempt to slay them instead.

Baba Yaga

The goddess of death is a mystical presence, inscrutable but not malicious. Her priests are both male and female. Visions and Premonitions are very common amongst them, and Second Sight is near universal. Bad Reputation (due to many people's misconceptions) is fairly common. Occult Lore (and Knacks with it) are often found among these Volkhvy.

Walgino

Animal Ken is the most common Virtue among Volkhvy of the cattle god. Knacks with Animal Handling are frequent, as is Animal Companion.

Devana/Dziewona

The goddess of the hunt is served only by women. Even for Volkhvy, priestesses of Devana live very closely with the fay, often having Faerie Friends and hunting in their company. Ways of the Forest is nearly universal among her servants, as is Animal Companion or Magical Animal Companion. Knacks with Wilderness Skills (especially Hunt) are common, and also with Stealth (Forest specialty) and Bows.

Volos

Volos is a many-faceted god, with interests in many areas. His Volkhvy (both men and women) usually "specialize" in one area: poetry, oracles, commerce, or cattle. They have Virtues such as Free Expression, Visions, Knack with Bargaining, Animal Ken, or anything else that fits the particular part of their god they have chosen to worship. It is also common for them to play a part in non-pagan secular society, especially near Novgorod city where their worship is strong and some of them have Patrons and Social Contacts.

Mokosh

Volkhvy of Mokosh, whether male or female, usually exhibit an extreme poverty and tendency to asceticism. The untutored can easily mistake them for pious Christian hermits. They are powerful healers (the Healer Virtue is common, as are large scores in the Healing Discipline) but are also notable for a pronounced tendency to meddle. They seem, in short, unable to pass by an injustice, or see people in trouble (especially poor or oppressed people) without feeling an urge to offer assistance.

Polevoi

Volkhvy dedicated to Polevoi often take the Ways of the Steppe Virtue, being closely attuned to growing fields and grasslands. Their magic is often Cyclic, with a peak in the spring and a trough in the fall (during reaping). Their attachment to grasslands and

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growing crops is sometimes extreme enough to warrant the Obsessive Flaw, or even Fury at any affront to these places.

Datan

The three Polish “Field Spirits” represent the three stages of plant growth: spring budding, mature growth, and withered husk. Datan is the spirit of spring, and his Volkhvy almost all have Cyclic Magic with a strong spring peak. Agricultural Craft skills, and strong Knacks with them, are common.

Lawkapatim

The second Field Spirit is the spirit of mature crops. His Volkhvy usually exhibit Cyclic Magic with a late Summer or early Autumn peak, and agricultural abilities similar to those of Datan’s priesthood. Lawkapatim’s Volkhvy are usually closely tied to their communities, often to the point of having large families. Dependent (children or family) is a common Flaw.

Tawals

Tawals the Old is the spirit of the husk — what is left after the crops are reaped. His Volkhvy frequently show Cyclic Magic with a winter peak. Sense of Doom is a not an uncommon Flaw.

Birch Tree

Mother Birch Tree is the Baltic divinity of the earth and the world, frequently identified with Mati-Syra-Zemlya. Her Volkhvy are all female, and almost all display the Ways of the Forest Virtue. Cyclic Magic with a spring peak and an autumn trough is common. Volkhvy of the Birch Tree are not so tightly bound to specific communities and occasionally move around through forested regions. Their relationships with Rusalki are often very good, and Faerie Friend is a common Virtue.

Dievs/Diveriks

The Baltic sky god and husband to Birch Tree. Dievs’ Volkhvy are all male. Weather Sense is a frequent Virtue. The hare is Dievs’ sacred animal, and hare heart-beasts are frequent among his Volkhvy. Martial skills are sometimes seen amongst these Volkhvy, but the only weapon they will touch is the sword, which is sacred to

them. In Lithuania Dievs is known as Diveriks and his Volkhvy are close counselors to the king and leaders in his armies.

Saule

In the Baltic the sun is seen as female, not male. Saule is the light-giver who brings growth to crops. Her Volkhvy are all female, commonly with Great or Mythic Presence and frequently with brilliantly blonde hair. Snakes are sacred to Saule, and serpent heart-beasts are sometimes found among her Volkhvy.

Mehnesis/Menuo

Mehnesis is the Baltic moon, a charioteer much like Khors and Myesyats in Russia. He is Saule’s husband and a faithless one, for he is often seen dallying with the brilliant Evening Star. Mehnesis’s Volkhvy are all male. Venus’ Blessing is sometimes found among them. Animal Handling, with a specialty in horses, is a common Ability, and they often have Knacks with it. Cyclic Magic on a lunar period is almost universal.

Auskelis

The Evening Star is Mehnesis’s lover and Saule’s rival, and the Volkhvy of these two female divinities are not friendly with each other. Auskelis’s Volkhvy are all female, and often exhibit Venus’ Blessing, and a stigmata of ash-blonde hair. The Evening Star can often herald events of importance, and Visions is a common Virtue.

Svaixtix

Svaixtix is Auskelis’s brother, often thought of as the Pole Star. His Volkhvy may be male or female and often exhibit Great Presence. His Volkhvy often dedicate their lives to one particular facet of art: song, music, storytelling, painting, poetry, silver-smithing, or jewelry, and have Free Expression with accompanying Knacks. Dedicating or sacrificing items of their art to Svaixtix is claimed to have a beneficial effect on their rituals.

Lytuvnis

A weather god with particular authority over rain, Lytuvnis’s Volkhvy almost all exhibit Weather Sense, and gain 1/3 of their Weatherworking Discipline score (rounded

up) as a bonus to this Ability. Immunities to the various illnesses inspired by cold and damp are common among them.

Mate Juras

Volkhvy of the sea god may be either male or female. Ways of the Sea is near universal among them. Knacks with Swim, Boating, and Sailing are common as are Weather Sense and Direction Sense. Aquatic heart-beasts are also frequently found, but tend more to the mammalian (such as otters and dolphins) than piscian.

Jods

One of the worst of the dark gods, Jods’ Koldun demonstrate many of the same vicious qualities as do those of Chernobog. He is also thought to inspire insanity, and his followers often display deranged behavior best simulated by the Flaws Haunted, Terrors, Fury, Sense of Doom, or some combination of them.

Zemlja

The Baltic ruler of the dead is a kindly, matriarchal spirit. Her Volkhvy are all female, and almost all have Ghostly Warders. They may, in fact, be attended by several spirits, both human and animal. It is rumored that these Volkhvy know some ritual means of entering Arcadia, specifically Slavic Elysium. Second Sight is very common, as is Sense Holiness/Unholiness.

Majas Kungs/Zemepatis/Zeminkas

Zemlja’s brother is the ruler of the home, bar the hearth, which is sacred to Gabija. His Volkhvy tend to be male, but are not exclusively so. They are exceptionally dedicated to their communities, and his Volkhvy always marry, and thus often have Dependents. Knacks with various Craft Skills are typical, as are Folk Ken, Bargain, and other useful Social Skills and Talents. These Volkhvy are often good at hiding within superficially Christian communities, and can sometimes be found, living very unobtrusively, even in quite large cities.

Gabija

Like the Volkhvy of Zemlja, Volkhvy of the goddess of the hearth and fire can be either male or female, though they are more

often the latter, and are very good at concealing themselves within outwardly Christian communities. They always have high Craft Skills and appropriate Knacks associated with domestic pursuits. If they are in a non-pagan community they may have the equivalent of the Companion Social Class Virtues Petty Merchant or Prosperous Peasant instead of the usual Wise One. Gossip and Patron are fairly common Virtues, and even Educated is not unheard of.

Nenadey

The Lithuanian deity of ill-fortune has Volkhvy who are very seldom encountered. They are very strong prophets, frequently having the Virtues Visions and Premonitions, as well as high scores in the Discipline Prophecy. The news they choose to deliver is almost uniformly bad and their most common Flaw is Sense of Doom. Volkhvy of Nenadey are believed to know very clearly how they will die, but not where or when, and thus almost all of them suffer the Terrors Flaw.

Telyavel

Telyavel is the Lithuanian protectress of the dead, also known as the Silent Woman. Her Volkhvy take a Vow (-3 Flaw) never to speak except in the performance of their Rituals or the instruction of their apprentices. Their characters tend towards the relentless, but not the malicious.

Meidein and Giraitis

These two are the Lithuanian forest god and goddess, patrons and protectors of wild animals. Ways of the Woods and Animal Ken are near universal among their priesthoods (of whom Meidein's is exclusively female and Giraitis' exclusively male). Animal Companion and Magical Animal Companion are likewise very common as are Knacks with Skills such as Survival. Reclusive and Sheltered Upbringing are frequent Flaws, and Volkhvy of these deities are almost never found near even modest sized towns let alone cities.

Andai

Andai is the Lithuanian god of war. Andai's Volkhvy may be male or female, but in either case they take an active role in leading war-parties. Their preferred weapon

is the lance. Berserk is a frequent Virtue, as is Inspirational. Knacks with Leadership are common. Andai's priests fight preferentially on horseback and are likely to be skilled riders and animal handlers.

Picollos

The Lithuanian ruler of the underworld, Picollos is sometimes viewed as one of the Dark Gods. Certainly his Volkhvy can display a wicked, mischievous bent at times. They can be either standard Volkhvy or Koldun. Hunchback, Small Frame, and Dwarf are common Flaws, Knacks with Legerdemain, Guile, and Intrigue are also common. In Prussia this god is known as Puskaitis.

Potrimpo

This Lithuanian patron of springs and streams does not have a widespread priesthood. Dowsing is a universal Virtue among them, and Weather Sense is common.

Svantovit

Svantovit, a four-headed Sun God, is the patron of the Isle of Rugen. His Volkhvy tend to have very high Awareness and considerable martial abilities. Ride, Bows, Sword, and Animal Handling are common Skills, and they frequently have Knacks to match.

Triglav

Worshipped by covert pagans surviving in the Brandenburg area, Triglav is a three headed god, overseer of cosmic balance. Each of his heads represents one cosmic realm, either heaven, earth, or hell. His Volkhvy often have the Clear Thinker Virtue and interests in philosophy and mysticism. They are occasionally Educated and may display some interest in the higher forms of knowledge.

Gerovit

Gerovit is the god of fortitude, worshipped near Wolgast. His Volkhvy almost all have Enduring Constitution and consider it a sacred act to endure pain and suffering stoically. They are sometimes capable warriors, but tend to be cautious and deliberate in thought and action.

Rugevit, Porevit, Porenitz

These three forest-dwelling brothers are worshipped on the Isle of Rugen and in Pomerania. They are patrons of the Rowan, Beech, and Larch respectively; these trees will always be found near the dwellings of their respective Volkhvy. These Volkhvy are exclusively male, and very seldom leave their islands or villages. Ways of the Forest is nearly universal among them, as is a fierce devotion to family (Close Family Ties is common) and tribe.

Radegost

The foremost god of the Pomeranians, Radegost is an archetypal "clan elder" and war god. Volkhvy of Radegost frequently have links to noble or "royal" pagan Pomeranian families (and the Prestigious Family Virtue) and may act as tribal or court advisors (Temporal Influence). Combat Skills are common, as is Leadership. Inspirational and Great Presence are common Virtues, and Overconfident a common Flaw.

Antrimpas

Antrimpas is the Prussian god of clean water and springs. His Volkhvy always have the Dowsing Virtue.

Rugio Boba

A Prussian field spirit and patron of good harvests, his Volkhvy have considerable Craft Skills and accompanying Knacks. Herbalism is a very common Virtue.

Pergrukijs

A field spirit worshipped in Livonia, his Volkhvy demonstrate strong Cyclic Magic, with peaks at the planting and harvesting periods.

THE DRAGON AND THE BEAR

All Slavs and Balts				
Deity	Relationships	Appearance	Area of authority	Communion Magic Resistance†
Svarog*	Father to Svarozhich, Dazhbog, and Khors	gold-haired patriarch	fire, sky, universal creation	fire, heat, Ignem
Perun/Percunos/ Pehrkon*		human	war and thunder	lightning, axes, Auram
Mati-Syra-Zemlya *		the world	earth, spinning, weaving, women	Terram
All Slavic Regions				
Deity	Relationships	Appearance	Area of authority	Communion Magic Resistance†
Svarozhich*	Son of Svarog	a blaze	fire	fire, heat, Ignem
Dazhbog*	Son of Svarog	sun-eyed youth	sun, creative energy, expelling demons	fire, heat, Ignem
Khors*	Son of Svarog, Husband of Myesyats	the sun	sun, mysteries	fire, heat, Ignem
Myesyats*	Wife to Khors, Mother of the stars	the moon	moon	Muto
Iarilo*	Son of Dazhbog	Dionysian	fertility, eroticism	Mentem
Krukis*	Son of Dazhbog	stalwart craftsman	blacksmiths	fire, Terram, Ignem
Ersvorsh*	Father of Stribog	clouds/rain/sky	weather	weather, Auram, Aquam
Stribog*	Father of Varpulic and Dogoda	cloud-haired patriarch	wind	winds, Auram
Varpulic	Father of wild winds	wild warrior	storm winds	winds, Auram
Dogoda	Father of gentle winds	youth or poet	gentle west wind, poetry	winds, Auram
Kupala	Daughter of Earth	pregnant woman	fertility, birth, women	Corpus
Beilbog	Daughter of Earth	maiden	purity, benevolence, healing	Corpus, spring, light, luck
Chernobog	Son of Earth	wolf-headed man	darkness, evil	Perdo
Jarovit		berserker	war	swords
Kolyada	Enemy of Perun	ice spirit	winter	cold
Proven		venerable patriarch	justice	deceit, Intellego
Utrennyaya	One of the Zorya	beautiful child	dawn	Corpus
Zorya Vrechernyaya	One of the Zorya	mature shieldmay	dusk	Corpus
Lada Dernyaya	One of the Zorya	bright-eyed crone	midnight, prophecy	Corpus
“The Nameless”	Guarded by the Zorya	loathesome beast	polar night, armageddon, demons	Perdo
Baba Yaga*		kindly matriarch	death	Perdo
Walgino		bull-headed man	cattle	Animál
Devana		woman or wild hart	hunting	arrows, tracking
North Russia				
Deity	Relationships	Appearance	Area of authority	Communion Magic Resistance†
Volos		merchant	poetry, oracles, money, cattle, commerce	deceit
Mokosh		ragged beggar	liberation, redemption	Rego
South Russia				
Deity	Relationships	Appearance	Area of authority	Communion Magic Resistance†
Polevoi		green haired woman	fields, fertility	Corpus, Herbam
Poland				
Deity	Relationships	Appearance	Area of authority	Communion Magic Resistance†
Dziewona	(as Devana, above)**			
Datan	field spirit brother	field sprite	fields	Herbam, Terram
Lawkapatim	field spirit brother	corn man	fields	Herbam, Terram
Tawals	field spirit brother	ancient husk	fields	Herbam, Terram

All Baltic Regions and Tribes				
Deity	Relationships	Appearance	Area of authority	Communion Magic Resistance†
Birch Tree*		the world tree	growth, fertility	wood, Creo, Herbam
Dievs*		silver-robed king with cap and sword	sky	wind, swords, Auram
Saule*	Wife of Mehnesis	golden-haired woman	sun	fire, heat, Ignem
Mehnesis*	Saule's Faithless Husband	silver-haired charioteer	moon	Muto
Auskelis*	Mehnesis's Lover	divine beauty	evening star, prophecy	light, Ignem
Svaixtix*	Auskelis's Brother	radiant human figure	light, pole star, art	light, Ignem
Lytuvnis*		rainbows or mist	rain	water, Aquam
Juras Mate*		dolphin	sea	water, Aquam
Kalvaitis		burly man	blacksmiths	iron, Ignem
Jods		deranged man	destruction, wrongdoing	Perdo
Zemlja*	Sister to Majas Kungs	kindly crone	earth, dead	Perdo
Majas Kungs	Brother to Zemlja	jolly spirit	the home (except hearth)	—
Gabija		ruddy-haired woman	fire, hearth	fire, Ignem, domestic crafts
Lithuania				
Deity	Relationships	Appearance	Area of authority	Communion Magic Resistance†
Nenadey		black dog	ill-fortune	Perdo, bad omens
Telyavel*		silent woman	protection of the dead	ghosts, Perdo, Mentem
Diveriks*	(see Dievs above)**			
Meidein*		A gyrfalcon	forest	forest animals, Animál
Giraitis*		stag	forest	forest animals, Animál
Menuo*	(see Mehnesis above)**			
Zemepatis/Zeminkas	(See Majas Kungs above)**			
Andai		stern warrior	war	lances
Picollos		dwarf	underworld	Terram
Potrimpo		pike	rivers, springs	water, Aquam
Minor Baltic Regions and Tribes				
Deity	Relationships	Appearance	Area of authority	Communion Magic Resistance†
Svantovit*		four-headed human	sun, creation	fire, heat, Ignem
Triglav*		three-headed man	cosmic balance, exception	deceit
Gerovit		two-headed man	fortitude	pain
Rugevit	forest brother	seven-headed man	Isle of Rugen	—
Porevit	forest brother	five-headed man	Isle of Rugen	—
Porenitz	forest brother	four-headed man	Isle of Rugen	—
Radegost		warrior-chief	clan patron	—
Antrimpas		stream	clean water	water, Aquam
Puskaitis		gnome	underworld spirits and faeries	faerie magic, Terram
Rugio Boba		last sheaf of rye at harvest	harvest, crops	Herbam, Corpus
Pergrukius		field spirit	flowers, growing things	Herbam, Corpus

Notes

All of the gods listed here are worshipped over large areas. The table does not include the host of local gods, clan patrons, craft patrons, field spirits, faerie lords, territorial gods (mountains, rivers, forests, and so on), nor the various beast lords.

† This column indicates the types of magic against which a Volkhv has increased Magic Resistance while in Communion (see page 61).

* These are the “major” gods who are widely recognized as having pre-eminent or senior status.

** These deities have alternate regional names.

THE DRAGON AND THE BEAR

All Slavs and Balts

Deity	Volkhv Bonuses/Penalties*	Festivals (and Bonuses)	Sacred Items**
Svarog	Sun +5; Weather +3; falcon, aurochs, bear, horse +5	midsummer +5	falcon, golden-horned aurochs, bear, horses, whirlwinds, fine craftwork axe, chariot, goat, oak tree
Perun	Weather +3, RemC +3, Heal -5, goat +3	late July +5	crops, cattle, nuggets of raw ore, gemstones
Mati-Syra-Zemlya	Earth +8, Sun -6, cattle +3	first day of sowing and harvesting +5	

All Slavic Regions

Deity	Volkhv Bonuses/Penalties*	Festivals (and Bonuses)	Sacred Items**
Svarozhich	Sun +5, Proph +3, Earth -5, Weather -3, eagle +3	midsummer +5	golden eagle
Dazhdbog	Sun +5, RemC +3, Earth -5, Animal -3, Firebird +3	day after midwinter +5	The Firebird
Khors	Sun +5, Spirit +3, Earth -5, golden horse +3	midsummer +5	golden horse
Myesyats	Weather +3, Animal +3, Sun -3, Proph -3, grey dove +3	nights of the full moon +1	grey dove, silver
Iarilo	Earth +3, Animal +3, Spirit -3, Heal -3, geese +3	early June +3, springtime +5	geese
Krukis	Earth +3, RemC -3, Weather -3, beaver +3,	early September +3	beavers, raw iron ore, fine iron craftwork
Ervorsh	Weatherer +8, Earth -8	mid-March +5	clouds
Stribog	Weather +5, Earth -5, white horse +3	late autumn +5	white horse
Varpulis	Weather +5, Earth -5, hawk +3	late autumn +3	lightning, mercury, hawk
Dogoda	Weather +5, Earth -5, swallow +3	early spring +3	poetry, swallow
Kupala	Earth +3, Heal +3, Sun -5, bee +3	St. John the Baptist's Eve +3	all young, bees, honey
Beilbog	Heal +6, Spirit -3, Proph -3, swan +5	May fifth +3	swan
Chernobog	wolf +6	midwinter +3	wolves, Ivy, Belladonna
Jarovit	Sun +3, Earth -3, Heal -3	various local +3	swords, iron
Kolyada	Weather +3, Sun -3, fox +4	first day of winter +3	ice, knives, foxes
Proven	RemC +3, Proph +3, Earth -3, Animal -3	various local +3	oaths
Utrennyaya	Proph +3, Inst -5, magpie +3	early winter +3 (joint festival)	magpie
Zorya Vrechernyaya	Proph +3, Spirit -5, raven +3	early winter +3 (joint festival)	raven
Lada Dernyaya	Proph +3, Sun -5, crow +3	early winter +3 (joint festival)	crow
"The Nameless"	Healing -6	—	—
Baba Yaga	Spirit +4, RemC +4, Sun -5, Weather -5, fowl +3	funerals +2	bones, houses, fowl
Walgino	Animal +5, Healing -5, cattle +4	spring +3	cattle
Devana	Animal +3, Earth +3, Sun -5, deer +3	various local +3	bows, deer

North Russia

Deity	Volkhv Bonuses/Penalties*	Festivals (and Bonuses)	Sacred Items**
Volos	Proph +5, RemC -5	winter solstice/spring equinox +3	scales, hides, coins
Mokosh	Heal +5, RemC +3, Inst -5, Animal -3	late October +3	—

South Russia

Deity	Volkhv Bonuses/Penalties*	Festivals (and Bonuses)	Sacred Items**
Polevoi	Earth +5, Sun -5	at planting +5	barely, wheat

Poland

Deity	Volkhv Bonuses/Penalties*	Festivals (and Bonuses)	Sacred Items**
Dziewona	Animal +3, Earth +3, Sun -5, deer +3	various local +3	bows, deer
Datan	Earth +5, Sun -5	at planting +3	seeds
Lawkapatim	Earth +5, Sun -5	at hoeing +3	ripe grain
Tawals	Earth +5, Sun -5	at harvest +3	stubble

All Baltic Regions and Tribes

Deity	Volkhv Bonuses/Penalties*	Festivals (and Bonuses)	Sacred Items**
Birch Tree	Earth +6, Sun -6	budding/shedding +5	birch tree
Dievs	Sun +2, Weather +2, Earth -5, hare +4	midsummer +5	hares, swords
Saule	Snakes +4, Sun +5, Earth -5	midwinter +5, midsummer +5	wheels, eggs, golden apples, flax, hearth fires, house snakes
Mehnesis	Weather +3, Sun -3, grey horse +3	nights of the new moon +1	chariot, grey horses
Auskelis	Proph +3, Spirit -3, owl +3	late spring +5	evening star, owl
Svaixtix	Sun +4, Earth -4	day after midwinter +5	diamonds, crystals, artistic creations
Lytvunis	Weather +5, Earth -5, frog +3	early spring +5	rain, mist, frogs
Juras Mate	Weather +3, Earth -6, dolphin +5	various local +5	dolphins, whales, ships
Kalvaitis	Earth +2, Sun +2, RemC -5	various local +3	iron, fire
Jods	Healing -6	—	—
Zemlja	Spirit +5, Heal -5, bat +3	funerals +3	ash, caves, bats
Majas Kungs	Earth +3, Heal +3, Sun -3, Weather -4, pigeons +3	various local +3	pigeons, pottery, beer
Gabija	Sun +3, Animal -3	varioius local +3	fires, hearths, domestic craftwork

Lithuania

Deity	Volkhv Bonuses/Penalties*	Festivals (and Bonuses)	Sacred Items**
Nenadey	Proph +6, Heal -6, dogs +6	—	black dogs, Ash tree
Telyavel	Spirit +5, RemC +3, Heal -5, Proph -3	funerals +1	the old (in every form)
Diveriks	Sun +2, Weather +2, Earth -5, hare +4	midsummer +5	hares, swords
Meidein	Animal +3, Earth +3, Spirit -5, falcon +3	various local +3	falcons
Giraitis	Earth +3, Animal +3, Spirit -5, stag +3	various local +3	stags
Menuo	Weather +3, Sun -3, grey horse +3	nights of the new moon +1	chariot, grey horses
Zemepatis/ Zeminkas	Earth +3, Heal +3, Sun -3, Weather -4, pigeon +3	various local +3	pigeons, pottery, beer
Andai	Sun +2, Inst +2, Heal -3, Animal -3	various local +3	horses, lances
Picollos	Earth +4, Sun -4, badger +3	spring and autumn +3	caves, badgers
Potrimpo	Weather +2, Earth +2, Sun -5, pike +4	at the spring thaw +3	pike, river, streams

Minor Baltic Regions and Tribes

Deity	Volkhv Bonuses/Penalties*	Festivals (and Bonuses)	Sacred Items**
Svantovit	Sun +5, Inst +3, Earth -5, Spirit -3, white horse +3	after harvest +5	bow, sword, bridle, white horse
Triglav	Proph +5, Sun -3, Weather -3, black horse +3	all equinoxes and solstices +5	oaks, wells, black horses
Gerovit	Heal +5, Spirit -5	last day of autumn +3	shield
Rugevit	Earth +5, Sun -5	vernal equinox +3	rowan
Porevit	Earth +5, Weather -5	summer solstice +3	beech
Porenitz	Earth +5, RemC -5	autumnal equinox +3	larch
Radegost	Sun +3, Earth -3	last day of august +3	bird helm, double-edged axe
Antrimpas	Earth +3, Sun -3	at the spring thaw +3	wells, streams
Puskaitis	Spirit +5, Heal -5	November first +3	elder tree
Rugio Boba	Earth +5, Sun -5	at harvest +3	rye
Pergrukius	Earth +5, Sun -5	planting and harvesting +3	flowers

Notes

* The bonuses listed apply to Volkhvy Disciplines, save that there is no general bonus for Shapeshifting. Instead, specific animals are listed. Bonuses apply for shifing into the forms listed. Abbreviations used are:

Animal Magic=Animal

Earth Magic=Earth

Healing=Heal

Prophecy=Prop

Remove Curse=RemC

Spirit Touch=Spirit

Sun Magic=Sun

Weatherworking=Weather

** These items should spark storyguide ideas about likely sacred foci and sites that a Volkhv can use to access particular gods.

Appendix III: Mystical Artifacts

Every land has its legends of magical objects and sacred relics. Russia and Poland are no different. The unique items listed below mostly date from the old pagan period of the 9th and 10th centuries. Their powers are formidable and they would be valuable to any Hermetic covenant, whether for their virtues, or as objects for study. Rumors of them are constant, and may form the basis for treasure-hunting forays or sleuthing challenges.

The Shield of Oleg

When he left Constantinople, the great prince and Volkhy, Oleg, hung from the gates his shield, a symbol of peace. The shield of Oleg was returned to Russia in later centuries, and is said to have remained in the treasury of the ruling prince until the civil wars began. Where it is now, none can say.

The shield of Oleg is a powerful magical object, endowed with strong Volkhy spells and hallowed by the ancient pagan gods. It has two principal properties.

First, if displayed at a peace conference, it exerts a mixture of calming and lie-inhibiting effects on the attendees. Any violent or contentious Personality Traits are reduced by 3 points; any moderating or generous traits are enhanced by 3 points. Resistance to spells or supernatural influences intended to set people at odds is increased by 3 points. At the same time, it is very difficult to lie in the presence of the shield. Anyone planning to deceive or mislead those to whom they talk must make a skill roll (Guile for instance) adjusted for suitable Personality Traits against a 9+ ease factor just to get the lie out. Failure means the liar cannot bring himself to utter falsehood in the shield's presence for the duration of the conversation. If he does manage to utter a lie, the victims' chances of detecting it are 3 points better than normal. Note that this does not compel someone to tell the truth. It only hinders active lying. Though these immediate effects cease as soon as people leave the presence of the shield, any agreement that they reach while under its influence will always seem reasonable and sensible to them. This effect is not

subject to Hermetic methods of dispelling. The shield acts to bestow a pagan blessing on those in its presence, and nothing less than exorcism by a Christian priest with True Faith can dispel the effect.

Second, if hung from the gates of a city, the shield will make it impossible to bring the gates under close attack. Enemies quite literally flinch from approaching. The area of effect is approximately 100 paces, and the shield can therefore completely protect small villages or fortresses. Note, however, that the settlement protected must have proper, defensible gates, and that once an attacker gets clear of the area of effect there is nothing to stop him from assaulting another portion of the fortification or launching long range weapons against the gate. This is a special Volkhy magical effect, not a pagan god's blessing. As such it can be suppressed by any PeVi spells that make a penetration of at least 35. This is not, however, sufficient to completely purge this power from the shield; it will resume operation at the next sunrise. To completely expunge it would require a PeVi spell with a penetration of at least 45.

The Shield is a relic sacred to the Slavic goddess of peace, Beilbog, with a rating of 5, and an additional +3 to any use of the Remove Curse discipline.

The Skull of Sviatoslav

At the end of prince Sviatoslav's last campaign he was slain by the Pechenegi nomads. The Pechenegi Khan took Sviatoslav's skull and had it made into a gold-chased goblet.

It is believed that the skull is sacred to Perun. If a man pours wine into the skull it issues forth from the mouth as blood. Drinking even a single drop will create a terrible berserk spirit so that the drinker will fly upon his enemies relentlessly, not ceasing his attack until they or he are dead. In ancient times, it is said that whole companies of men together would drink from the skull before battle.

This effect is a pagan god's blessing and cannot be dispelled short of counter-blessing

by a Christian cleric with True Faith. Anyone drinking from the skull gains +1 to Str, Sta, Dex, and Qik and -3 to Int, Per, and Com. All drinkers gain a temporary Personality Trait Enraged +6 until they lose consciousness or until the next sunset or sunrise. Furthermore, people who drink from the skull take no effects from lost Fatigue or Body levels until they are rendered unconscious or wounded to incapacity. They never make any form of morale check, cannot be frightened by mundane or magical means, and won't retreat.

The skull can also be used for divination. If human blood is placed in the skull cavity a skilled diviner can often see visions of the future. Treat this as a bonus of +5 to anyone with the Virtue Divination.

The Skull is a relic sacred to the Slavic god Perun with a rating of 5, and gives an additional +3 to any use of the Prophecy discipline.

The Ewer of Ioann

The Ewer of Ioann is one of the few truly divine items known to the Russian Orthodox Church. Ioann was one of the early Metropolitans of the church. His ewer was a small, silver bowl, which he used as a baptismal font.

The ewer can trap demons. If a demon sees its reflection in the bowl it will be caught within it, held fast and powerless. This virtue even works against invisible or possessing demons. In either case the demon is plucked straight into the ewer. Being trapped in the ewer is a ghastly experience for a demon and it will make any promise and reveal just about any secret in order to get out. Demons released from the ewer always return directly to hell, and are forced to remain there for a very lengthy period of time — decades at the least — before they are restored sufficiently to return to or even perceive the mortal world.

The ewer is a divinely blessed object. It contains 5 Faith points.

The Golden Cock

The Golden Cock is an automaton of Hermetic manufacture, given to one of the early Russian princes. Its virtue is to cry out whenever danger approaches. The Cock is an invested object with a powerful InMe spell and a weak CrIm spell.

The InMe spell is a greatly enhanced version of *Sight of the Transparent Motive*. Both range and target are Sight, which raises the spell's level and penetration to 50. Whenever any person or group becomes visible to the cock it perceives whether they harbor malice. It then employ its CrIm ability and cries out loudly. The Cock easily identifies the object of its cries, as it faces its target.

The Bow of Svarozhich

Svarozhich is one of the sun gods, a patron of fire, and his idol bore a great ivory bow strung with a single hair from Pegasus. When Prince Vladimir the Saint cast down the pagan idols, the chief Volkhv stole the bow and hid it.

For combat purposes, treat Svarozhich's bow as a longbow. Even in the hands of a non-pagan it is a devastating weapon. The Optional Longbow and Crossbow Damage Rule (ArM4 page 165) should be used, even if you do not employ it for other weapons in your saga. If you already employ the rule, enhance the combat statistics of the bow by Init +5, Atk +5.

In the hands of a committed pagan worshipper of Svarozhich, the bow will reveal its true strength. Any arrow fired from it bursts into glaring flame as soon as it leaves the string. This flame infallibly ignites what it hits — wood, leather, flesh, stone, or even steel — and it burns until its target is completely consumed (the maximum size of any one target is +4, or fifty square feet, but larger objects may be destroyed by multiple shots). The bow's range is also enhanced in the hands of a true worshipper: each standard range category is doubled (Near, for example, is now out to 30 paces).

Caution should be used when employing the bow. Any attempt to turn it against a Slavic pagan, most especially against a Volkhv, is likely to come to a ruinous end. Consider, quite simply, that Svarozhich is not yet dead, and certainly is not ignorant of the use to which his bow is put.

The Bow is a pagan relic with a rating of 5, and gives a further bonus of +3 to any use of the Sun Magic discipline.

The Caul of Vseslav

Legend has it that Vseslav was born wearing a small hood of flesh. He kept this caul with him always, and used it in his magical operations. Vseslav was in fact a Dark Volkhv worshipper of Chernobog, and his caul was hallowed by that god to increase Vseslav's strength. The caul is thus a relic sacred to Chernobog, with a rating of 5, and a further bonus of +3 to any negative use of the Remove Curse discipline. In addition, however, the caul is a source of Perdo vis. Small hard blisters form on it at regular intervals, and on each solstice or equinox one falls off, hard, black, and slightly acidic so that it stings the hands to hold. Unfortunately, the caul is also innately attractive to demons. Whether this is a curse of Chernobog or Vseslav or whether Vseslav had actual dealings with demons is not known. But the caul did, at one time, come into the hands of a Hermetic magus who concluded that demons could sniff it out and bedevil the owner in order to get possession of it.

The Horn of Vasili Okulevich

Vasili Okulevich was one of the Bogatyr, the hero-knights of ancient Russian saga, who lived in the age before the Varangians came to Russia. His horn was a magical item of unknown origin. In form it was a mighty aurochs' horn, chased with silver. Its call could shake down mountains, level forests, or raise tempests at sea.

Cascade of Rocks (PeTe 40; R: Sight, D: Mom, T: Bound), *Breath of the Open Sky* (CrAu 40; R: Per, D: Spec, T: Spec), *Wrath of Whirling Winds and Water* (only at sea) (CrAu 40; R: Sight, D: Sun, T: Spec)

The Waters of Life and Death

The Waters of Life and Death are a well-known legend, not just in Poland and Russia, but throughout eastern Europe. The details often vary. In the Slavic version, the Water of death can do two things: it will kill anyone who comes into contact with even as much as a single drop spilled on his hand, and if sprinkled on a damaged or even completely dismembered corpse, it will reassemble it into a complete whole and restore the body to perfect cleanliness free of any blemish. The Water of Life, of course, brings the dead back to life. The Waters will certainly not be found in the mortal world. One could

only hope to find the source in areas of extremely high regio (+9), or in Arcadia.

A note of caution in employing the Waters of Life: this fluid will not bring back from the dead Christians who have been properly buried in consecrated ground, or devout followers of other religions who have similarly been given the proper last rites of their religion. It will, however, work on pagans and unbelievers, or on a follower of one of the great religions who has not received proper burial. But be warned, the Waters of Life do not restore the body to a cleanly or wholesome condition! If a corpse has been rotting in the ground for a month before you resurrect it the result will be very unpleasant. The Waters of Death must be used first to restore the body.

A Hermetic magus could easily distill large amounts of Creo or Perdo vis from these two Waters: as much as ten pawns per pint.

Princess Kinga's Ring

Princess Kinga was a lady of Hungary who came to Poland to marry one of the princes. Hungary at that time was a land with rich salt mines, while Poland was very poor in this commodity. Before she left Hungary, Kinga threw her ring into a salt mine. When she arrived in Poland she set miners to digging near Krakow, and very soon they found rich salt deposits. The very first nugget to be brought to the surface was split open. There in the center was Kinga's ring.

The ring can be treated as an Hermetic invested object with the spell *Miner's Keen Eye* cast on it, or as a Divine relic, or a relic sacred to an appropriate pagan god (such as Mati-Syra-Zemlya). Its powers are certainly not exceptional: perhaps 2 Faith points, or a Volkhv bonus of +3.

The Knights of Boleslaw

It is said that under Gevant peak in the heart of the Tatra mountains in a sacred cavern, King Boleslaw the Brave and a hundred of his knights lie sleeping. They await some moment of Poland's need when they can arise and fight for her honor and freedom. There are no more specific details to this legend, but it should be remembered what a mighty warrior Boleslaw the Brave was, and how he humbled the Germans, Czechs, Pomeranians, and Russians. Perhaps it is nothing more than peasant superstition that loves to believe in mighty, just, and generous kings of the past to watch over their well-being. Then again . . .

Appendix IV: Names

Russian: Male

Afanasy (a-fan-AH-see)
 Alexander/Alexsandr/Aleksandr
 (ah-less-and-ray)
 Alekseev (ah-lech-see-yev)
 Aleksiy (ah-lech-zee)
 Alyoscha (ah-lee-osh-ah)
 Andrey/Andrei (an-DRAY)
 Antipka (an-TIP-kah)
 Antony (an-TOHN-yeh)
 Athanasius (at-an-ahz-yus)
 Baldak (bahl-duck)
 Barma (bah-mah)
 Boris (boh-riss)
 Danil/Daniil (dahn-yil)
 David (da-vihd)
 Dimitri/Dmitri (dMEET-REE)
 Dionisy (dyon-yeh)
 Efrem (eff-rehm)
 Evfimy (ef-fim-yee)
 Fyodor/Feyodor/Fedor (FAY-DOHR)
 Feofil (FAY-O-FIHL)
 Forty (fYOT-TEE)
 Gavriil (gahv-REEL)
 Gerasim (geh-RAH-zim)
 Gleb (LEHB)
 Grigory (Grih-GOR-ree)
 Iakov (yah-kohv)
 Ignatius (yig-NAHT-yoos)
 Igor (EE-gohr)
 Ilja/Ilya (ill-yah)
 Ioann (ee-ohn)
 Iosif (yo-sihf)
 Isidor (is-EE-dohr)
 Ivan (EE-vahn)
 Izaslav (is-YAZ-lav)
 Jaryschko (YAR-is-ko)
 Karash (KA-rash)
 Kassian (CAS-yan)
 Kiprian (KIP-ree-yan)
 Kirill (ki-rihl)
 Kliment (clih-mehnt)
 Konstantin (cohn-stahn-tin)
 Leonty (ley-on-toy)
 Luka (looh-kah)
 Maksim (MAHK-zihm)
 Matfey (MAHT-fay)
 Mikhail (mihk-I-ell)
 Mikita (MIHK-EET-ah)
 Mikola (MIHK-OLE-ah)
 Mstislav (miz-TIZZ-lav)

Neofit (nee-ov-yit)
 Nikifor (nick-EE-fvor)
 Nikita (nick-EE-tah)
 Nikolay (nick-O-lay)
 Oleg (Oh-lehg)
 Pavel (PAH-vehl)
 Pimen (PEE-mehn)
 Piotr/Petra (PEE-ot-ra)
 Porfiry (poh-fi-rey)
 Roman (roh-mahn)
 Rostislav (roh-TIZZ-lav)
 Ryurik (ROOH-RIK)
 Semyaka/Semen (Zem-Yen)
 Sevastion (Zehv-ahz-chon)
 Simeon (Zim-ay-ohn)
 Stefan (zTEHF-ahn)
 Sudislav (zood-iz-lav)
 Svyatopolk (zVYAT-op-ohlk)
 Sviatoslav (zVYAT-oz-lav)
 Timofey (CHIM-oh-fay)
 Tremsin (tREHM-shin)
 Varlaam (VAH-lahm)
 Vasilko (was-ill-kho)
 Vasily (was-ill-yi)
 Vladimir (vLAHD-im-yir)
 Vsevolod (zSEHV-oh-lohd)
 Yakov (YAHK-OHV)
 Yan (YAHN)
 Yaropolk (YAH-roh-polhk)
 Yaroslav/Iaroslav (YAH-rohs-lav)
 Yury/Iurii (YOO-RHEE)

Russian: Female

Afrosinia (ahf-roh-ZIN-yah)
 Agafia (ah-GAHF-yah)
 Aleksandra (ah-less-and-raa)
 Anna (AH-NAH)
 Eugenia (yoo-jheen-yah)
 Ekaterina (ech-aht-REEN-yah)
 Elizaveta (ehl-eez-ahv-ET-yah)
 Evdokia (ehf-dohk-yah)
 Evfrosynya (ehf-roh-ZIN-ya)
 Fanya (fahn-yah)
 Florya (flohr-yah)
 Galina (Guy-een-yah)
 Greta (greht-yah)
 Iuliania (yule-yahn-yah)
 Katya (catch-yah)
 Klara (KLAH-rah)
 Ksenia (zeen-yah)
 Lelya (lehl-yah)

Lidiia (lidj-yah)
 Ludmila (lood-MEE-yah)
 Marfa (MAH-FAH)
 Margarita (mah-REECH-yah)
 Marta (MAH-TAH)
 Marya (mah-REE-yah)
 Milda (MILL-DAH)
 Nadezhda (nah-DEZ-dah)
 Natalya (nah-TAHL-yah)
 Nastassja/Nastassia (naz-TAAS-yah)
 Nikola (ni-KOH-lah)
 Nina (NEEN-YAH)
 Oletschka (OH-letch-kah)
 Olga (OHL-GAH)
 Polina (po-LEEN-yah)
 Praskovaya (praz-cohv-A-yah)
 Raisa (rye-zah)
 Rogneda (rogh-NAY-ja)
 Sophia/Sofia (SOF-YAH)
 Svetlana (svet-LAH-nah)
 Tatiana (tat-YAHN-yah)
 Vera (VEH-RAH)
 Yelena/Helena (yell-ANE-yah)
 Zinaida (zin-YADE-yah)

Russian: Surnames

To keep things manageable, we have used the simplest possible conventions for surnames. “Son of,” is indicated by taking the father’s name, and adding “ovitch” or “ovich.” For example, Fyodor’s father was Ivan, he is therefore Fyodor Ivanovich. “Daughter of,” is indicated by taking the father’s name and adding “ovna.” For example, Marya’s father was Ivan, she is therefore Marya Ivanovna.

“From” is indicated by taking the birthplace or place of residence and adding “ez.” For example, Fyodor is from Vladimir, when he travels he identifies himself as Fyodor Vladimirez.

Royal family identity is indicated by taking the ancestor’s name and adding “ivichi,” “avichi,” or “ichi.” For exam-

ple, if a family traces its descent from Oleg, it identifies itself as the Olgavichi; if it traced its descent from Rostislav it would be the Rostislavichi.

Polish: Male

Adam (AH-DAM)
 Anthony (an-THONE-ee)
 Bartek/Bartos (BAH-thek)
 Bezprym (BETH-prem)
 Boleslaw (BOY-ez-lor)
 Cerny (SEN-yi)
 Daniel (DAHN-ell)
 Danko (DAHN-co)
 Franek (FRAHN-ek)
 Franciszek (FRAHN-CHISSL-ek)
 Henryk/Henry (en-RIK)
 Jan/Janek/Janik (YAN-EK)
 Jas (YAHS)
 Jerzy (YER-ZEE)
 Joseph/Josef/Jozef (YO-SEF)
 Jur/Jurek (YOOR-EK)
 Kapiec (KAP-CHECK)
 Kaska (KAS-KHA)
 Kazimierz (kas-sim-EER)
 Komel (koh-mehl)
 Konrad (cohn-rad)
 Kozka (coz-kah)
 Leszek (lez-ek)
 Maciej (maj-ech)
 Michael (mick-ell)
 Mieszko (MEEZ-KO)
 Mishek (MEESH-EK)
 Odon (OH-DOHN)
 Pietrek (pYET-rick)
 Piotrowin (pYOT-roh-whin)
 Przemysl (pREM-EESH-ul)
 Pshegon (SHAY-GOHN)
 Roch (rosh)
 Siemowit (shem-oh-wick)
 Stanislaw (shtan-ish-law)
 Stas (stahz)
 Sylwester (sill-VEST-er)
 Swietopelk (sWYET-oh-pelk)
 Tomasz (tohm-ASH)
 Wacek (WAH-CHECK)
 Wladek (LAH-DECK)
 Wladyslaw (lad-is-law)
 Wojciech (wo-chee-eck)

Wojtek (woch-eck)
 Zbigniew (zBIG-nee-you)
 Ziemomysl (zeem-om-EESH-ul)

Polish: Female

Adelajda (ad-eel-AJ-ah)
 Agnes (ahg-nez)
 Albina (al-been-ah)
 Anna/Anya (AH-NAH)
 Babitko (bah-bit-ko)
 Balbina (bahl-been-ah)
 Basia (baz-yah)
 Benigna (ben-een-yah)
 Bialka (bee-alk-yah)
 Borna (bohn-yah)
 Cecilia (Sess-eel-yah)
 Dorota/Dorotea (Dohr-oh-tah)
 Elzbieta (else-bYET-ah)
 Eudoksjka (yoo-dosh-ka)
 Eufemia (oo-feem-yah)
 Florka (Floh-kah)
 Frania (fran-yah)
 Gryfina (grif-een-yah)
 Grylowna (grill-ow-nyah)
 Hanka/Hanna (HAN-YAH)
 Helcia (HELL-SHA)
 Helena (yel-ane-yah)
 Jadwiga (yad-wee-gah)
 Joanna (YO-ahn-yah)
 Judyta (yoo-dee-tah)
 Julka (YOOL-KAH)
 Kalina (hal-een-yah)
 Karolcza (kah-rohl-cha)
 Kasia (KAZ-YAH)
 Katya (CATCH-AH)
 Krystyna (krish-teen-yah)
 Kunegunda (coon-eh-goon-dah)
 Lucia/Lucja (loosh-yah)
 Ludmila (lood-mee-yah)
 Magdusia (mahg-doosh-ya)
 Majka (magh-yah)
 Marya/Marysia (mah-REE-yah)
 Matylda (mah-TILLD-yah)
 Merecka (meh-RECK-yah)
 Natalcia (nat-ALSH-yah)
 Nina (NEE-NAH)
 Regelinda (rej-ell-IND-yah)
 Repica (rep-eech-yah)
 Rosalie (rose-ah-lee)
 Rycheza (rich-ez-yah)
 Ryksa (rish-kah)
 Teofila (tay-O-fee-yah)
 Yanielka (yan-yell-ka)
 Zofia (zof-ee-yah)

Polish: Surnames

Chrebnik (shreb-nik)
 Ciak (shee-yahk)
 Ciezki (chez-kee)

Geslikowzki (guess-lee-cow-ski)
 Gicewicz (gich-eh-wicks)
 Glinski (glin-ski)
 Gruszcynski (groosh-zin-ski)
 Karnkowski (carn-cow-ski)
 Klimowicz (clim-oh-wicks)
 Ladowicz (lad-oh-wicks)
 Makuszynski (mac-oo-zin-ski)
 Markowska (mah-cows-kah)
 Mickewicz (mik-you-wicks)
 Morawski (mor-aw-ski)
 Nitechka (neet-etch-kah)
 Parzych (pah-zeech)
 Pietriewicz (peet-ree-wicks)
 Sekowski (sek-ow-ski)
 Skica (skeek-ah)
 Strozik (sTROH-zeek)
 Suchecki (soo-check-ee)
 Swierscz (swee-uhr-ch)
 Swiezbinksi (sweez-bin-ski)
 Szymanek (zim-an-ek)
 Szczepanowicz (shep-an-oh-wicks)
 Wlodkowskia (lod-cow-ski)
 Wolanin (vol-ahn-in)
 Zimniewica (zim-nee-wick-ah)

Mongol: Male

Achu (ah-COO)
 Alghui (ahl-wee)
 Aljai-Timur (ahl-YIE-TEE-moor)
 Arghun (ah-hoon)
 Arik-Buka (ah-RIHK-BOO-kah)
 Bai (BY)
 Baichu (BY-KOO)
 Baidu (BY-DO)
 Barak (bah-RAK)
 Batu (bah-TOO)
 Bayan (BAY-an)
 Bektair (bek-tare)
 Belgutai (bel-GOO-tie)
 Berke (ber-KAY)
 Bodonchar (BO-don-car)
 Bogurchi (BO-gur-chi)
 Borak (BO-rak)
 Buru (BU-ru)
 Buyiruk (BOY-eer-ook)
 Chagatei (SHA-gat-I)
 Chapar (SHA-par)
 Chila'un (SHEEL-a'oon)
 Chomagan (SHOM-ag-an)
 Daritai (DAR-it-I)
 Devlet-Berdi (DEV-let-BER-di)
 Edigu (EH-di-goo)
 Elbek (ELL-bek)
 Erke (ER-kay)
 Erlik (ER-lick)
 Esen-Buga (EH-zen-BOO-gah)
 Ghazan (GHA-zan)
 Ghazna (GHAZ-nar)

Mongol: Female

Very few names of Mongol women are known. Though they had considerable rights under Mongol law, they did not become shamans, ride in the armies, or usually wield power. Four exceptions are Berta (BEER-ta), Ogul-Gaimish (OH-gull-GAY-mish), Turakina (TOOR-ak-een-ah), and Yulun (YOO-lun). These queens and princesses of the royal clan held power as regents during the periods when there was no Great Khan.

Glossary

Old Russian Words and Terms

Baba Yaga (BAH-bah YAH-gah): goddess of death
bannik (BAHN-nee): sprite inhabiting a bath house
Beilbog (byah-WOH-book): white goddess
bogatyri (boh-GAHT-ree): “valiant knights,” supernatural heroes
boyar (boh-YAHR): an aristocrat
byliny (bee-yin-yih): epic songs or poems (also “staryiny”)
cheliad/cheliadin (che-YAHD/che-YAHD-i): slave/slaves
Chernobog (char-NOH-book): black god
chiliarch (hil-ee-yahk): leader of a thousand men
dan (DAHN): tax or tribute
Dazhbog (DAHZHd-book): sun god of creative energy
desiatsky (dess-EE-AHT-cee): leader of ten men
Devana (deh-VAH-nah): goddess of the hunt
Dogoda (doh-GOH-da): minor deity, father of gentle winds
domawiczka (doh-mah-VEETCH-kah): a female domovoi (house spirit)
domovoi (doh-moh-VOY-yeh): benevolent house spirit
druzhina (dROOHZ-yin-yah): prince’s retinue/court/private army
dvorovoi (dvoh-roh-voy-yeh): unpredictable yard spirit
dym (DHYM): “smoke”/hearth/taxable dwelling
Ersvorsh (AIRZ-VORHZ): god of weather
Glubinnye Knigi (gLOOB-yin-ye hNEEG-yee): “books of depth,” books
golovinchestvo (goh-LOV-nee-est-voh): fine paid to murdered man’s kin

gorod (GOH-ROHD): city (capital)
gospodin (GOHs-POHD-in): “Lord,” term of respect
gridnitsa (GRHEE-nis-ya): hall
Iarilo (yah-REE-loh): god of fertility and eroticism
izba (ISS-BAH): heavy log cabin, northern
izgoi (ISS-goy-yeh): destitute man
izgostro (ISS-goys-troh): “usury,” practised in regard to the slave trade
Jarovit (yar-OH-veet): god of war
kholop (KHO-LOHP): indentured craftsman
khoromy (kho-ROHM-yeh): fine house
Khors (KHORs): sun/pagan god
klet/khata (KLEHT/KAH-TAH): frame house of timber and clay, southern
kniaz (NEE-ahz): prince
kniazhenie (NEE-ahz-ehn-yeh): prince’s authority
Kolyada (koh-LYAH-da): deity of winter
kormilets (KHOR-meel-yetz): fosterer to whom a young prince is entrusted
krom/kreml/kremlin (KROHM/Krehm-el/Krehm-leen): fortress/citadel
Krukis (KROO-KHIZ): god of blacksmiths
Kupala (KOO-pah-lah): goddess of women and fertility
kvas (kVAAS): mildly alcoholic drink
Lada Dernyaya (LAH-DAH-den-YAY-yah): goddess of midnight, one of the Zorya
lechet (lech-yet): physician
leshy (LESH-ee): forest guardian
lyudi (IYUD-yi): free craftsman serving in militia
Mati-Syra-Zemlya (MAH-ti SIHR-yah ZHEM-yah): mother earth
mech (mechh): sword
milost (mih-OHST): “favor,” charitable gift to a Vdachi
mir (meer): peace, also the world/village/community
Mokosh (MOH-kosh): goddess of redemption
muzh (moozz): freeman
Myesyats (mYES-YATs): moon goddess of deep wisdom
ovinnik (oh-VEEN-nee): dangerous barn spirit
palo (PAH-LOH): “plow,” a taxable unit of land
Perun (PYOO-run): god of war and thunder
pivo (PEE-VOH): beer
podol (poh-DOHL): urban quarter or district
pogost (poh-GOHST): tax district
pole (poh-LEY): “prairie,” steppe
polevik/polevoi (poh-LEH-week): field spirit or minor deity
posadnik (pohs-AHD-nee): prince’s deputy or a city mayor
pravda (prav-dah): “truth,” also a prince’s testament/code of law/coronation oath
prigorod (PRI-goh-rohd): lesser city
Proven (PRO-vehn): god of justice and oaths
rusalka (roo-SAHW-kah): female wood or water spirit
sirota (SEE-roh-tah): beggar
skomorokhi (sco-moh-roh-key): minstrel or actor
sotsky (soht-cee): leader of a hundred men
Stribog (SHTREE-book): god/father of winds
Svarog (SHVAR-ook): fire and sky god
Svarozhich (shvar-OH-zheech): god of fire
tamga (TAHM-GHA): clan emblem
terem (TEH-REHM): tower
tiun (tee-yun): steward of a prince’s estate
tverd (tVER-ehd): small town
tysiatsky (tis-YAT-cee): leader of a militia
Utrennyaya (YOOT-rehn-YAY-yah): goddess of dawn, one of the Zorya
Varpulis (VAH-pooh-lis): god of storm winds
vdachi (vDAH-chee): man or woman giving up his or her freedom to a lord for a limited period, usually to avoid debt or hardship, a charitable act for the lord
veche (VE-CHAY): city assembly, place where people speak on state affairs
ved’sto (vehd-SHTo): soothsaying
vily (VEE-lee): a fairie, wild spirit
vira (VEE-rah): fine paid to a prince for a murder
vodyanoi (vohd-YAH-noy): malicious water spirits
voevoda (voyh-VODE-yah): general/commander of armies
volkhv (vohl-koohv): pagan priest, also conjuror or sorcerer
Volos (VOH-lohs): god of poetry and commerce
volost (VOH-lohst): power, reigning authority
Walgino (val-GEEN-yoh): god of cattle
zadrugya (zah-DRHOOG-ya): “great family,” extended family composed of several brothers or cousins with their wives and children
zagovor (zah-GOH-vohr): charm or incantation
zakon (zah-COHN): law, state or religious

zakup (zah-KHOOP): indentured labourer, a debtor
zemlia (zhem-yah): land, nation/state

Zhar-Ptitsa (zah-TEETS-yah): the Fire Bird

Zorya (ZOHR-YAH): the fates, three celestial goddesses

Zorya Vrechernaya (ZOHR-YAH VREK-AHN-YAY-yah): goddess of dusk

Old Polish

Words and Terms

Auskelis (or-SKEL-iz): goddess of the evening star

Datan (dat-tahn): a field god

Dievs/Diverik (she-YEHZ): sky god

Dziewona (jeh-VOH-nah): goddess of the hunt

dziwozony (jeh-VOHZ-nee): evil creatures

dziad (jeh-YAHD): wandering troubador/tale-teller

Gabija (ga-BEE-ha): goddess of the hearth

grod (GROHD): tribal stronghold

gzeladz niewolna (ZEL-ahz-NEE-voy-nya): serfs (criminals, debtors, prisoners)

Jods (HODZ): god of destruction and wrongdoing

Juras Mate (oor-ahs MAH-TAY): god of the sea

Kalvaitis (HAL-vay-YEET-is): god of blacksmiths

kasztelan (CATS-A-yan): prince's deputy at a grod

knez/kniaz/ksiaze (NEEZ/NEE-ahz/SEE-az): prince

kurhany (cour-ahn-yee): burial mound

Lawkapatim (LOV-cah-pat-ihm): a field god

Lytuunis (Lich-UHV-nihz): god of rain

Mehnesis (meh-NEH-ziz): moon god

Majas Kungs (mah-has hunz): god of the home

mara (mah-rah): evil spirit

majduszka (nahj-DOOSH-kya): seeress, someone with second sight

opole (op-OHL-yeh): clan territory, group of villages, district

poludnica (poh-wood-NEET-sah): revenant spirit, a haunt

przywilej (ZHEE-wehl-yeh): princely charter

Saule (zaul-AY): sun goddess

rod (ROHD): clans, together composing a tribe, also kin or kinsfolk

starosta/starszyna (sstah-ROHS-tah/sstah-ryhn-yah): chief of a rod

strachy (strah-chee): evil night spirits

Sviaxitx (sVAYX-ticks): god of the pole star, light, and art

szlachta (zlah-ta): gentry

Tawals (ta-vahlss): a field spirit

topielce (toh-pee-el-chee): evil water spirit, soul of a drowned person

upiory (OO-pee-or-ee): vampire

vojt (VOY-TAY): village headman

wiara (VEE-yah-rah): faith

wiec (VEE-ek): convocation of free tribesmen (a governing council)

wili (VEE-lee): fairy, wild spirit

Zemlya (zem-UHL-yah): goddess of the dead

zlotys (Zlo-TEES): polish currency (also "grosz")

znachor (naa-cor): a pagan priest (Russian Volkhv)

Miscellaneous Old Baltic Words

Andai (AHN-DIE): god of war, Lithuania

Antrimpas (ahn-THRIM-pahs): god of streams, Prussia

Gerovit (hair-oh-veek): god of fortitude

Giraitis (heer-ate-ihz): god of the forest, Lithuania

Meidein (may-deen): goddess of the forest, Lithuania

Menuo (mehn-woh): god of the moon, Lithuania

Nenadey (nehn-ah-day): god of ill fortune, Lithuania

Pergrukijs (peh-grook-yus): a field god, Livonia

Picollos (pee-CO-loss): god of the underworld, Lithuania

Porevit (pour-A-veek): a god of the Isle of Rugen

Potrimpo (poh-thrim-poh): god of rivers and springs, Lithuania

Puskaitis (puss-kayt-ihz): god of the underworld, Prussia

Radegost (rah-DAY-gozz): god of the Pomeranians

Rugevit (roo-GAY-veek): a god of the Isle of Rugen

Rugio Boba (roo-he-oh Boh-bah): a harvest god, Prussia

Svantovit (swaan-toe-week): a sun god, Isle of Rugen/Arkona

Telyavel (tail-yahv-eel): goddess of the dead, Lithuania

Triglav (THREEG-yahv): god of cosmic balance, Stettin/Brandenburg

Zemepatis (jhem-eh-PAH-tiv): god of the home, Lithuania

Mongol Words and Terms

arban (AH-ban): troop of ten, with an elected leader

bahadur (ba-ha-door): knight, leader of a jagun, or trooper in the kashik

Il-Khan (eel-caan): Mongol ruler of Persia, subordinate to the Great Khan

jagun (ya-goon): company of one hundred, with an elected leader

kalat (kha-laht): tunic or uniform

kashik (kha-sheek): the imperial guard, elite toumen

kumiz (coo-miz): alcoholic beverage, made from fermented mare's milk

kuriltai (coo-RIL-tie): tribal council

mangudai (man-goo-die): military sub-force, used to draw an enemy out in pursuit

minghan (mee-han): a regiment of one thousand, commanded by a noyan

naccara (na-CAR-ah): kettle drum, used to signal decisive charges

noyan (noy-yan): baron, imperially appointed leader of a minghan or toumen

ordu (ohr-dhu): a camp (anglicized as "horde")

orlock (ohr-lohk): a general, commonly commanding two or more Toumens

ortaq (ohr-tahk): a merchant

Bibliography

Note Codes

- * Recommended
- ** Highly recommended
- A "Academic," rather dry
- C Strong on cultural detail
- P Strong on political detail
- O Outdated
- R Contains only one or two relevant chapters

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Noble Genealogies

Dates are from beginning of rule (r) to end of rule (e) or death (d). [K] indicates a prince who died at Kalka, [M] indicates a prince who died in the Mongol invasion. For any period where there is no ruling prince noted it is safe to assume that the relevant throne was in contention. Where possible each successive ruler is identified according to his relation to his predecessor.

13th Century Russian Rulers

Suzdal (The Grand Principality)

Vsevolod III (r)1176-(d)1212
(son) Konstantin (r)1212-(d)1218
(brother) Yury (r)1218-(d)1238 [M]
(brother) Yaroslav (r)1238-(d)1246
(brother) Svyatoslav (r)1247-(e)1248
(nephew) Andrey Yaroslavich (r)1249-(e)1252
(brother) Aleksandr Yaroslavich
("Nevsky") (r)1252-(d)1263
(brother) Yaroslav Yaroslavich (r)1263-(d)1271
(brother) Vasily Yaroslavich (r)1272-(d)1277
(nephew) Dmitry Aleksandrovich (r)1277-(d)1294
(brother) Andrey Aleksandrovich (r) 1294-(d)1304

Ryazan

Yaroslav (son of Vsevolod III) (r)1208-(e)1211
Ingvar Igorevichi (r)1217-(d)1235
(son) Yury Ingvarovich (r)1235-(d)1237 [M]
(brother) Roman Ingvarovich (r/d) 1237 [M]
(brother) Oleg Ingvarovich (r)1237-(d)1258

Smolensk (Rostislavichi Clan)

Ryurik Rostislavich (r)1180-(d)1215
(son) Rostislav Ryurikovich (r)1215-(d)1218
(brother) Vladimir Ryurikovich (r)1218-(d)1239 [M]
Rostislav Mstislavich (r)1239-(d)1265
(son) Gleb Rostislavich (r)1265-(d)1277
(brother) Mikhaylo Rostislavich (r)1277-(d)1279
(brother) Fedor Rostislavich (r)1279-(d)1299

Chernigov (Olgavichi clan)

Igor Svyatoslavich (r)1198-(d)1202
Oleg Svyatoslavich ("the Old") (r)1202-(d)1204
(brother) Vsevolod Svyatoslavich
("Chermnyy "the Red") (r)1204-(d)1212
(brother) Mstislav Svyatoslavich (r)1212-(d)1223 [K]
(nephew) Mikhail Vsevolodovich (r)1223-(d)1246
(son) Rostislav Mikhailovich (r)1246-(d)?
Pereyaslavl

Yaroslav (son of Vsevolod III) (r)1200-(e)1206
1206-1212: southern civil war
Vladimir (brother of Grand Prince Yury)
(r)1213-(e)1215

Vladimir Ryurikovich (Rostislavichi clan)
(r)1215-(e)1227
Vsevolod Konstantinovich (nephew of
Grand Prince Yury) (r)1227-(e)1228
(uncle) Svyatoslav (r)1227-(e)1228
1228-1240: gathering southern civil war;
intense from 1235; after 1240 Mongol
invasion there was effectively no principal-
ity left to govern
Kiev
Ryurik Rostislavich (Olgavichi clan) 1196-(e)1200
Ingvar Yaroslavich (represents Roman of
Volynia) (r)1200-(e)1203
Ryurik Rostislavich (r)1203-(e)1204
(son) Rostislav Ryurikovich (r)1204-(e)1205
(father) Ryurik Rostislavich (r)1205-(e)1206
1205-1212: southern civil war
Mstislav Romanovich (Rostislavichi clan)
(r)1212-(d)1223 [K]
Vladimir Ryurikovich (Rostislavichi clan)
(r)1223-(e)1234
1235-1240: southern civil war; Mongols
invade 1240 and destroy principality
Galicia
Roman of Volynia (r)1199-(d)1205
Vladimir Igorevichi (Olgavichi clan-ruling
only in Galich) (r)1206-(d)1211
Roman Igorevichi (Olgavichi clan-ruling
only in Zvenigorod) (r)1206-(d)1211
1214-1218 Hungarian control
Mstislav Mstislavich (Rostislavichi clan,
prince of Novgorod, "the Daring")
(r)1218-(e)1219
1219-21 Hungarian control
Mstislav Mstislavich (Rostislavichi clan)
(r)1221-(e)1227
1227-1234: conflict continuous between
Poles, Hungarians, Rostislavichi, and
Daniil of Volynia
Daniil Romanovich (r)1234-(d)1264
(son) Lev Daniilovich (r)1264-(d)1264
1280s: Mongol raids followed by Lithuanian
conquest
Volinia
Roman Mstislavich (r)1170-(d)1205
Anna of Byzantium (Roman's widow —
regent for Daniil) (r)1205-(e)1218
Svyatoslav Igorevichi (Olgavichi clan — rul-
ing only in Vladimir) (r)1206-(d)1211
1214-1218 Polish influence (Leszek the
White of Krakow)

Anna of Byzantium takes control of Vladimir
1214

Daniil Romanovich (r)1218-(d)1264
(brother) Vasil'ko Romanovich (r)1264-(d)1269
1280s Mongol raids followed by Lithuanian
conquest (14th century)

Pinsk-Turov

There is no strong line of princes or clear line
of authority. All major clans marry into the
Pinsk-Turov territory at some time or other.
The principality is absorbed by Lithuania in
the 14th century.

Polotsk

Minor princes occupying various cities
descend from Vseslav the Sorcerer. All
major clans marry into the Polotsk territo-
ry at some time or other. The principality
is absorbed by Lithuania in the 14th cen-
tury.

Novgorod

Svyatoslav (son of Vsevolod III, sent to rule
as an infant) (r)1200-(e)1205
(brother) Konstantin (r)1205-(e)1207
(brother) Svyatoslav (r)1208-(e)1209
Mstislav Mstislavich ("the Daring,"

Rostislavichi clan) (r)1209-(e)1218

(son) Svyatoslav Mstislavich (Rostislavichi
clan) (r)1218
(brother) Vsevolod Mstislavich
(Rostislavichi clan) (r)1218-(e)1219

1219-1222: no prince
Vsevolod (8-year old son of Grand Prince
Yury) (r)1222-(e)1223

(uncle) Yaroslav (r)1223
1224-1230: conflict between Olgavichi and
Grand Prince Yury — city held on occa-
sion by Mikhail Vsevolodovich of
Chernigov and his son Rostislav, and by
Yury's brother Yaroslav and Yaroslav's sons
Aleksandr and Fedor

Yaroslav Vsevolodovich (brother of Grand Prince
Yury) (r)1230-(e)1236

(son) Aleksandr Yaroslavich ("Nevskiy")
(r)1236-(d)1263

Novgorod was ruled by Aleksandr until his
death in 1263, but after he became Grand
Prince, in 1252, he ruled through deputies.
From this point onward the throne of
Novgorod was usually held by the Grand
Prince. The city was often without a resi-
dent prince while the citizens fought for

their rights and tried to resist Mongol taxation.

(brother) Grand Prince Yaroslav

Yaroslavovich (r)1263-(d)1271

(brother) Grand Prince Vasily Yaroslavich (r)1271-(d)1277

(nephew) Grand Prince Dmitry

Aleksandrovich (r)1277-(d)1294

(brother) Grand Prince Andrey

Aleksandrovich (r)1294-(d)1304

13th Century Polish Rulers

Polish territories kept changing in size and number. From one generation to the next rulers seldom held the same borders, so that it becomes impossible (and false) to establish a single line of rulers of, say, Mazovia or Silesia. The lists below start from the basis of five general areas: Krakow (seat of the Grand Duke), Sandomierz, Mazovia-Kujavia, Great Poland (Wielkpolka), and Silesia. Within each of these territories periods of fragmentation are identified [F]; the families that result from fragmentation are identified by the territories that they ruled.

Grand-Dukes And “Kings” Holding Krakow

Casimir II the Just (r)1177-(d)1194

Mieszko III the Old (r)1194-(d)1202

Leszek the White (of Sandomierz) (r)1202-(d)1227

Wladyslaw Spindleshanks (of Great Poland) (r)1228-(e)1231

Henry the Bearded (of Silesia) (r)1231-(d)1238

Henry the Pious (of Silesia) (r)1238-(d)1241 [M]

Conrad I (of Mazovia) (r)1241-(d)1243

Boleslaw V (the Chaste) (r)1243-(d)1279

Leszek the Black (of Leczyca) (r)1279-(d)1288

Henryk IV Probus “the Righteous” (of Silesia) (r)1288-(d)1290

Przemysl II (of Wielkpolka — “King” of Poland) (r)1290-(d)1296

1296-1300: dispute between Wladyslaw the Short and Henry of Glogow

Wenceslas (King of Bohemia) (r)1300-(d)1305

Sandomierz

Leszek the White (r)1194-(d)1227

Boleslaw V (the Chaste) (r)1227-(d)1279

[F] Boleslaw V had no sons, after his death Sandomierz fragmented into the holdings of minor lords.

Mazovia-Kujavia

Conrad I of Mazovia (r)1200-(d)1243

[F] Two way split between Conrad's sons:

- Siemowit of Mazovia: founds the Mazovian family
- Kazimierz of Kujavia

In the next generation the Kujavian territory also splits in two:

- Followed firstly by Leszek the Black, who ruled as Grand Duke in Krakow from 1279-1288, and then by Leszek's brother Ladyslaw the Short, who went into exile in 1300

- Siemowit of Dobrzyn: Founds the Dobrzyn family

Great Poland (Wielkpolka)

Ladyslaw III Spindleshanks (r)1200-(d)1235

Ladyslaw had to share his authority with his younger brothers, Boleslaw of Kujavia, Mieszko of Kalisz, and Odon of Wielkpolka, who succeeded him in 1235

Przemysl I (r)1257-(d)1277

Przemysl II, (r)1277-(d)1296

Silesia

Henry I the Bearded (of Wroclaw) (r)1202-(d)1238

Henry II the Pious (of Silesia and Krakow, Grand Duke) (r)1238-(d)1241 [M]

[F] Four way split among his sons:

- Boleslaw II of Legnica
- Legnica family
- Swidnica family
- Henry III of Wroclaw

Followed by his son Henry IV the Righteous, who gradually came to dominate Silesia, and held Krakow as Grand Duke 1288-

1290

- Konrad I of Glogow

In the next generation splits in three:

- Glogow family
- Zagan family
- Olesnica family
- Wladyslaw (Archbishop of Salzburg) no descendants

13th Century Rulers of the Golden Hoard

Batu (r)1242-(d)1256

(nephew) Sartak (r)1256-(d)1257

(uncle) Berke (r)1257-(d)1266

(great-nephew) Mangu-Temur (r)1267-(d)1280

1280-1299 Mongol civil war in Russia

between:

- (brother) Tode-Mangu (r)1280-(e)1287
- (nephew) Tule-Buka (r)1287-(d)1290
- (cousin) Toktu (r)1291-(d)1312, who finally reunified the horde
- (a cousin) Nogai (r)1280-(d)1299

13th Century Rulers of Lithuania

Mindaugas (r)1219-(d)1263

Treniota (r)1263-(d)1264

Vaisvilkas (r)1264-(d)1267

Traidenis (r)1270-(d)1282

Pukuveras (r)1282-(d)1292

Vytenis (r)1293-(d)1315

Masters Of The Teutonic Knights

Master (Knight Commander) Of Prussia

Herman von Salza (r)1215-(d)1230 (also

Grand Master of the Order)

Hermann von Balk (r)1230-(d)1239

Heinrich von Weide (r)1239-(d)1244

Popp von Osternach (r)1244-(d)1246

Dietrich von Gruningen (r)1246-(d)1259

Hartmut von Grunbach (r)1259-(d)1261

Helmeric von Rechberg (r)1262-(d)1263

Johann von Wegleben (r/d) 1263

Ludwig von Baldersheim (r)1263-(d)1269

Dietrich von Gattersleben (r)1271-(d)1273

Conrad von Thierberg (r)1273-(e)1279

Conrad von Feuchtwanger (r)1279-(d)1280

(Also Master of Livonia)

Mangold von Sternberg (r)1280-(d)1283

(Also Master of Livonia)

Conrad von Thierberg (r)1283-(d)1288

Meinhard von Querfurt (r)1288-(d)1289

Conrad von Babenberg (r/d) 1299

Luder von Schippen (r)1299-(d)1300

Master (Knight-Commander) Of Livonia

Wanno (r)1204-(d)1209 (Captain of the

Knights of the Sword)

Folkwin (r)1209-(e)1237 (Captain of the

Knights of the Sword)

Amalgamation with the Teutonic Knights

Hermann von Balk (r)1237-(d)1239

Dietrich von Gruningen (r)1238-(e)1242

Henrich von Heiburg (r)1243-(d)1244

Dietrich von Gruningen (r)1244-(d)1246

Andreas von Stierland (r)12480-(d)1253

Anno von Sangershausen (r)1253-(d)1256

Burchard von Hornhausen (r)1256-(d)1260

Werner von Breithausen (r)1261-(d)1263

Konrad von Manderen (r)1263-(d)1266

Otto von Lutterberg (r)1266-(d)1270

Walther von Nordeck (r)1270-(d)1272

Ernst von Ratzeburg (r)1272-(d)1279

Conrad von Feuchtwanger (r)1279-(d)1280

(Also Master of Prussia)

Mangold von Sternberg (r)1280-(d)1283

(Also Master of Prussia)

Willekin von Schurburg (r)1283-(d)1287

Cuno von Herzogenstein (r)1288-(d)1290

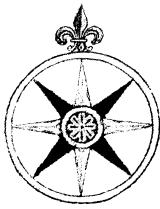
Halt von Hoembach (r)1290-(d)1293

Heinrich von Dumpershagen (r)1294-(d)1295

Bruno (r)1296-(d)1298

Gottfriend von Rogga (r)12982-(d)1306

The Baltic Coast 1200 - 1300AD



SWEDEN

BALTIC SEA

FINLAND

CONTESTED BORDER

NOGOROD

ESTONIA (Danish)

OESEL

GULF OF RIGA

CURLAND

SEMGALIA

SELONIA

SAMOGITHIA

LITHUANIA

PRUSSIA

MAZOVIA (Polish)

VOLINIA

TEUTONIC BORDER 1283

TEUTONIC BORDER 1283

TEUTONIC BORDER 1283

TEUTONIC BORDER 1283

MAP KEY

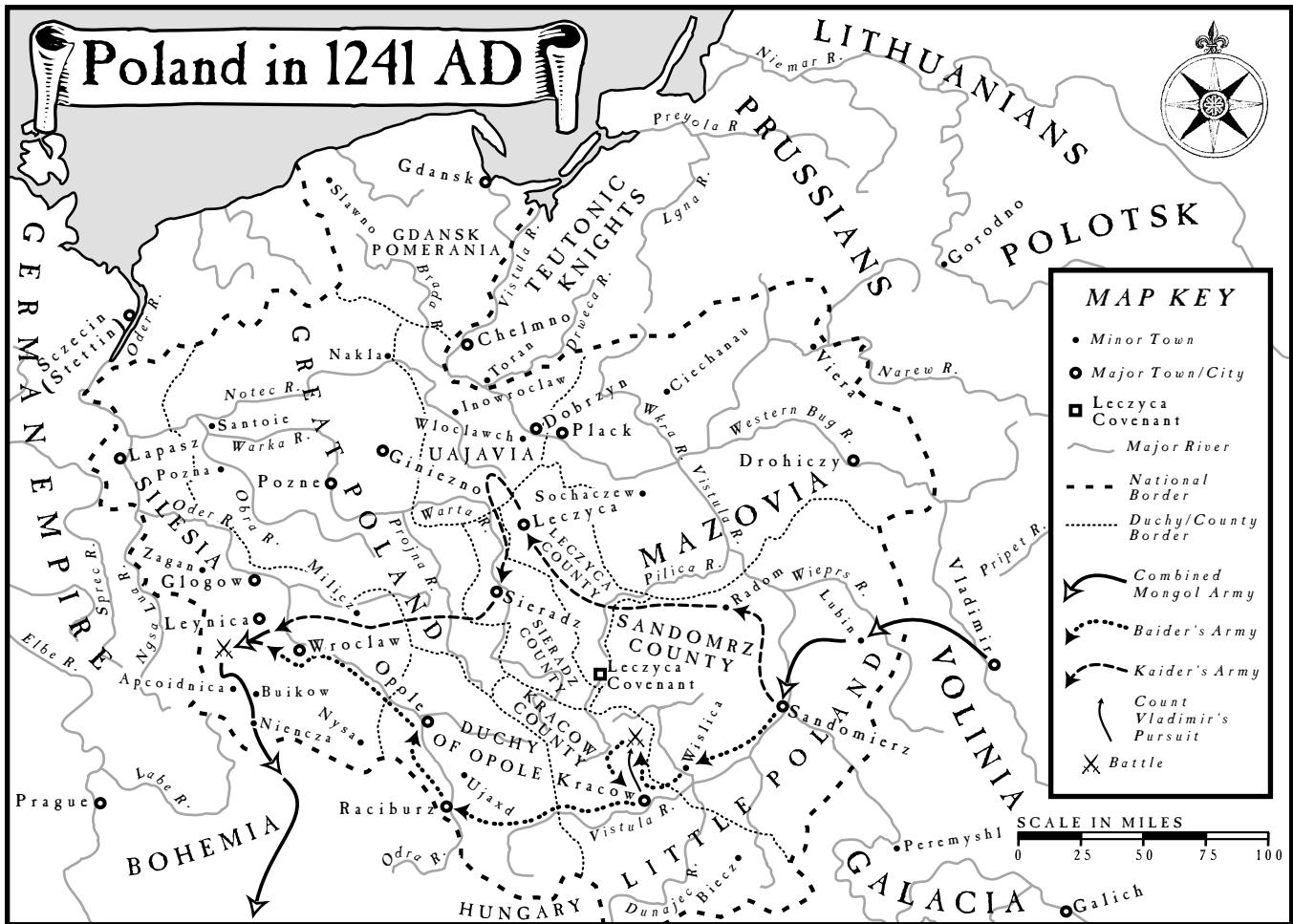
- Minor Town/Fortress
- Major Town/Fortress
- Battle
- River
- Border

(1220) Date of conquest or construction

LIVONIA: Name or region and major local tribe

Scale in Miles

0 30 60 90 120



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