

Bara'kaa

Sacred Grounds Racial Packet



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BCHART '14

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"It is a wealth of knowledge, enlightenment and learning. It is a lesson of peace and prosperity to all peoples. It both teaches us how to live our lives and structure our communities. It is a story of old, a perspective on the present, and the harbinger of the future. It is The Word."

She looked down over the dunes, the edges of her Keffiyeh blowing back into her face. The wind was beginning to pickup, and with night falling soon her quarry was in great danger of falling victim to the Shol. Taking a step over the dune and allowing herself to slide down the far side, she rejoined her traveling companions. Of the four Teek standing in the shadow of the dune, the youngest Eltin was the first to speak, "Did you pick up the trail again?"

She nodded once, "The outsider was headed south; but it's like I feared, the trail has turned to the east." The demeanor of the group visibly soured, she continued "We have to find them before they cross into the Dekk or they will be lost." True to their training, the Teek soldiers quickly and quietly picked up their gear and were off behind her, following the trail that refused to be followed. After another hour of pursuit she chanced another look at the sun; starting to touch the horizon it symbolized only impending doom to her, in less than two hours the Shol would go from unbearable heat to freezing cold. Not turning back now meant that her and her men would have to march through it for at least an hour before they could return to the riis. Her hand unconsciously touched the U'let symbol on her right cheek, and her determination came back to her. She could not quit, she could not withdraw, but she knew someone would die in the desert tonight.

Thirty minutes later her band caught up with her target, she thrust her hand downward and her men dropped flush with the sands. He was moving away from them and injured, as expected, but her chase was moving with more determination than she had predicted. She stood upright to call out to him, taking out a water skin that he would need desperately need by now, their mission of mercy was finally at an end. Suddenly she felt her blood freeze, she was following a Lettdekk, a Wild Elf, and he had led her into a trap.

When the other Elves burst from the sand before her, they took her by surprise, as did the volley of arrows that quickly followed. Suddenly Arehgard was in front of her, his shield ringing loudly as the arrows struck it. "Get down!" he call to her, "This is no longer a place for you, QaaU'let." He was right, her escorts were now in charge of the mission. The air around her suddenly began to glow, and she knew what came next. Shielding her eyes, she moved towards the rear of the group. Pentin stepped before her, the runes on his sword glowing in the twilight; calmly gesturing with his off hand, he launched goutts of flame at the coming Elves, not to harm, but to deter. As Arehgard called out to the Elves, bidding them to back down, she realized that Eltin was not in position; then she saw him slumped in the sand. She raced to him, pulling out her medicine pack, but the young Teek had caught four arrows in the ambush and his riis already colored his thawb. She looked down at his face, but his eyes were focused on the cosmos above. "My Plaa didn't help today," he murmured spitting up blood as he spoke, "why has The Word left me undefended?"

She removed an arrow from the young man and saw a glistening purple substance on its tip; the arrow was poisoned, there was nothing she could do for him. "Those people know nothing of our faith Eltin, and The Word never condones murder of the peaceful. Place your vela at ease and embrace the dekk with courage, A'rezPlaa."

He stiffened as she called him by his Coven name, a tear ran down his face. His eyes finally focused on hers for a moment, his lips quivered once and she leaned in close to hear his final words, "U'gonVela, QaaU'let." His body now limp in the sand, she used her hand to close his eyes for the last time.

"Go with The Word, Eltin. You will be remembered in its letters."

The Bara'kaa are an enlightened race, which sometimes make the other races look upon them with disdain or envy, but rarely anything that can be considered favorably. Seen as naive by the world at large they do not believe in an economy as the rest of the world does, which makes them outlandish in the eyes of the other civilized races. The government of Sholbara is called the Vela Domain by outsiders, or simply "The Vela" by the Bara'kaa themselves, it is a meritocratic government, meaning that the better a person is at their given job or place in society, the higher their rank amongst their peers. The Bara'kaa do not see it as offensive or demoralizing when they are passed in rank, but merely a reminder that they can do more to benefit their race as a whole, and empower the strength of The Word on Aularia. Bara'kaa hierarchy is structured into one of three, yet equal, groups in the Vela: the Bael, their arcanists and knowledge-seekers; the Cron, the faithful and historians; and the Teek, their military and defense forces.

Over 99% of Bara'kaa, and some of the other races from the areas around Sholbara, follow the faith of The Word. It is an ancient religion, as old as the Bara'kaa themselves. It speaks of great power through unity and mutual growth, it governs the set of rules that make up Bara'kaa society and it preaches that understanding and acceptance are the best types of foreign relations. The Word itself is from an ancient language of origin that is thought to predate Aular City. The Bara'kaa have discovered many parts of this ancient language and have incorporated it into their common vernacular. While the entirety of the language, and its true origins, may forever be lost to time, many of the Bara'kaa dedicate their lives to uncovering the lost remnants of this language, as they believe it will strengthen the race's understanding of their faith. Bara'kaa are easily distinguishable from the other races, as though they are near-human in appearance, they are born with two of the ancient letters of their forgotten language clearly visible upon their face; these two letters make up the individual's "Coven name," and speak something of the newborn's destiny amongst his people. Bara'kaa often dress in

the clothing of their homeland, a scorching desert called Sholbara. Common clothing for either gender is a simple thawb, or robe that is colored very light (whites or earth tones) or very dark (grays and blacks) for either day or night travel. Their heads are often covered by a keffiyeh (with agal), designed to protect them from direct sun exposure and to keep blowing sand out of the mouth and eyes.

History

The Foundations of the Word, the Cron, and the First Crusade

The Bara'kaa, or in the language of The Word "Rune Sages," were created in the beginning of the Age of Knowledge. During the Dawn Wars, the now ancient struggle between the fabled first human city, the reclusive Elves, and the savage Orcs, the ancient humans discovered that there was much more to the world than Aular City. It was while they were exploring and learning about these new lands that they found hints of civilizations that had come and gone before them. Far north from the front lines of the conflict, a small group of researchers found a set of ruins in the northeastern region of what is today Sholbara. It was there, hidden amongst these ruins, that the first letters of the word were discovered. The discovery was not a quiet one, upon reading these ancient letters, their powers were released upon the world. The once fertile lands that covered the rolling hills and plains of the central continent were obliterated in moments and replaced with the desert that lies there today. The once human researchers were no longer completely human; marked by their historical discovery, they had runes emblazoned on their faces and began to understand the mysterious letters. Upon leaving the ruins, they found others had also been changed from the experience; in fact all of the human expeditions that were in the region, and their descendants, were forever changed in that moment.

Panic was the first reaction by the masses, but when the researchers let the people know what had happened they were surprised at how quickly the pop-

ulation became agreeable to learning more about these strange figures. They found that the ancient tablets were hidden with a massive codex, the codex described a society where there was no violence or strife, but instead there was unity amongst chaos. The scholars that had quickly calmed the people became hosts of intelligent discussion and debate over the changes that were to take place. They became known as the Cron, and using their perspective on recorded history and the studies of the artifacts, they became the leaders of the blossoming peoples.

The people learned that the letters and names of things were very important, and so too would be their name. They called themselves the Bara'kaa, important for many reasons. It translates in their ancient language to "Rune Sages" or "Those who learn The Word"; it is the union of both the first and last of the greater letters of The Word, "Bara" and "A'kaa"; and, as combining the letters, represents the journey of the race: as Bara represents the basics of any study and A'kaa is considered to be a master of a given discipline.

The Cron sent messages and invitations to all of those changed by the event and also to their homes in Aular City. The Bara'kaa that lived far and wide across the desert reacted relatively well, being invited into the discovery and exploration of their new existence appealed to them, after all they were the bravest explorers and soldiers that Aular City had to offer. Representatives from across the rugged land travelled to meet with the Cron, and were met with open arms and taught of the great discovery.

When the news finally reached Aular City, it was not taken anywhere near as well. The First City was already waging against two opposing sides in the Dawn Wars and was appalled to hear that not only were they now separated from their front lines by a massive desert, losing contact with not only their troops that were fighting there, but the troops that were in the region of this event had begun to study this mysterious heretical text, and had lost their way from the path laid out to them by Jaejal and the Church of En. The City of Man

lost focus on their battle with the Orcs and Elves and focused their rage against the Bara'kaa, beginning the First Crusade. It took them a few years to muster additional troops against this new threat to the Church, but they were unfamiliar with the harsh terrain in the desert and the Bara'kaa defenders had the advantage by the time the attacks came. Whenever Aular City would gain ground in the desert, the Bara'kaa would simply fall back and make the invaders chase them over the dunes; they were unable to repel the counter attacks of the Bara'kaa, and the Rune Sages never pushed past the edge of the desert. The war lasted over a hundred years and Aular City's losses vastly outweighed the losses of the Bara'kaa.

During Aular's crusade in the north, the southern reaches of the desert were plagued with the roving Orcs that survived the Dawn Wars. With the military might of the desert dealing with Aular's invasion, the residents of the desert abandoned the south half of the desert and regrouped on the shores of the Tanta river. There they insured that the Orcs would have to travel for days over the arid dunes and wear themselves out well before they reached the meager defense force.

The Bara'kaa survived the two-front assault and reinforced their position in the desert. Cast out of their home in the First City, seen as heretics and alien by the world around them, they found solace in their own people, finding strength through unity, as told in the ancient writings.

Introduction of the Bael and the Founding of Shol-Vela

In the latter half of the Age of Knowledge, the Bara'kaa entered into a relative time of calm; crusaders from the north had lost much of their fighting spirit and their attacks were widely separated, additionally Orcish raiders from the south had almost stopped their attacks entirely. The original members of the Cron had passed from our realm and their followers had lead the Bara'kaa to a great creative age where the desert dwellers had tried their hand at a number of technological marvels, not the least of which were the great stone aque-

ducts that channeled water from the Tanta river to the far reaches of the Desert.

It is around this time that, on a near crusade of their own, a group of Bara'kaa dedicated their lives to exploration of the great desert. Operating under the simple belief that the ruins that held the first parts of The Word and the corresponding codex might not have been alone in their construction, they spent years combing the sands to find similar structures to expand on the knowledge of the Bara'kaa; they found more than they could have hoped for. Discovering a number of lesser parts of The Word, the researchers changed the understanding of The Word forever. Led by Ahran Ehddev Quaha'kaa, this group began to call themselves the Bael, a word representing Arcane prowess and the mysteries of the world. The Bael was quick to share knowledge with the rest of the desert and begin study on the new letters, and what they added to the existing ones.

The Cron quickly invited the Bael into a new era of discussion and how the letters, both old and new, should reflect on Bara'kaa society. It was this new merging of minds that began to forge a new government for the Bara'kaa, the Bael chose the location of the meeting place for this new government in one of the largest settlements formed during the Age of Knowledge, a place where those seeking shelter from the crusade and the Orcs met in the middle of the desert. Renaming the city Shol-Vela, or "Heart of the Desert," it became the home of the new meeting ground, and the home of the Bara'kaa society.

The Era of Peace

For more than the next 2000 years the Bara'kaa lived in near total isolation. They have a history of trade and a long standing peace agreement with Capriana since the Age of Knowledge, but in all of the conflict the world sees in the intervening years from Sea Dwarves, to demonic incursions, to Bael'Ogres, the Bara'kaa refuse to do anything beside defend their own borders. After years of only minor conflict, the Bara'kaa engage in disarming their old forts and boundaries. Feeling that they



are above the need for violence, the Bara'kaa stop training soldiers and cease forging new weapons. They instead turn their focus inwards, working on the studies of Arcane magic, and the faith of The Word, governed by the Bael and the Cron, respectfully. It is during this Era of Peace that the Cron discover a variety of divine magic that intermingles with arcane magic and that the Bael magically binds all of the Bara'kaa bloodlines to be incapable of casting Supernal or Infernal magic.

The Second Crusade and the Foundation of the Teek

About one hundred years into the Age of Heresy, Ostlea, the cultural descendants of Aular City, began a second crusade against Sholbara, nearly 2500 years after the first one. They blamed the Bara'kaa for the loss of the First Human City, saying that it was the fault of the Cron that Aular was weakened enough to fall during the Age of Salt. Their attack was vicious and without warning. After years of peace and prosperity, the Bara'kaa offered next to no resistance when the Ostelean crusaders marched on their settlements. The crusaders brought violence to a scale unknown to the now peaceful Bara'kaa and the Rune Sages paid for their years of peace with thousands of lives lost over the next few months. They had no plans to regroup or anyone to decide how to react. It took the leaders in Shol-Vela days of debate to open the historical codices and teach some able Bara'kaa how to fight like their ancestors had.

Showing the capability of learning that the Bara'kaa are famous for, a large fighting force was trained in a very short order of time. While these brave soldiers were training, the Bael and Cron sent their best to the front lines to keep the crusaders from making the invasion any worse. Within fifteen years, the Bara'kaa began their counter attack. Using the terrain and their superior arcane magic, the defenders of the Shol made quick work of the invasion forces who were not used to the strange mixed tactics of the desert folk. It was another two decades of bloody conflict but eventually the warriors were able to reclaim the desert

and avenge the deaths of all those that had died in the unprovoked attack.

To pay homage to the brave volunteers that fought and died to defend the Shol, the veterans of the war to reclaim the desert were proclaimed by the Bael and the Cron as the Teek, the stalwart defenders and protectors of all of those who pass through the Shol. The Teek were given equal footing with the Bael and the Cron politically, and they established a number of strongholds in the northern regions of Sholbara, and a token number of keeps in the south. New practices were put in place so that the travesty brought on by this second crusade would never be repeated, and the Teek found a place in society even during times of peace. While the Bael and the Cron may still consider themselves for the most part above violence, the Teek teach that in a world of difference there is a world of strife.

Knowing that the surprise counter attack on the crusading forces might have been a fluke victory, the Teek dedicated themselves over the next decades to come up with original fighting tactics and styles to protect their borders.

The New Vela Domain and the Third Crusade

Recovering from the Second Crusade was difficult, but the changes in the culture, and the addition of the Teek to the Vela Domain gave new life to the vitality of the Bara'kaa. In the hundred years after the Crusade, the Teek had maintained their place as one third of the voice of the Vela. They have become responsible for the doctors, smiths, crafters and soldiers of the Shol. With the addition of a third voice in the government, Bara'kaa society had began to become very secular; a person at a young age became a member of the Cron, Bael or Teek through apprenticeship. Being a meritocracy, Shol-Vela's Ministers are selected by the skill and capability shown by members of the three political groups; therefore one seeking political office need only choose their path in life and excel at it. The Vela Domain as a whole endorses the division in the culture, as it encourages discussion and debate amongst the people; one of the major fears of the Domain is to again become complacent.

Another part of Bara'kaa history that did not erode were the Ba'rez (Rune Swords) and the Cro'rez (Clerics), members of the Bael and Cron respectively, that never laid down their weapons after the Second Crusade; perhaps not as skilled in combat as a Teek soldier, but more than capable in both their martial talents and the arts of their oratory. The fighting forces of the Shol were invigorated as never before when Ostlea attacked again. Where the Second Crusade has grand memorials built for the lost and thousands of deceased well recorded by the Cron, the Third Crusade was simply an exercise by the Teek in grand strategic combat and expert execution of ancient battle tactics, rumored to be handed down from the Gods of old Aular City itself. Even when asked by their ally, Capriana, if they should join the fray on the side of the Bara'kaa, the notion was rejected; the Bara'kaa were winning a landslide victory. Though the Crusade was cut short by Capriana's surprise attack on Ostlea, not condoned by the Vela Domain, the crusade had very few losses for the Shol comparatively and is barely a foot note in Bara'kaa historical texts.

The more important history lesson to be learned relating to the Third Crusade was a Vela transition of power, something that happened first during the crusade and only a handful of times since. During the times of need, the Vela has the authority to transition political power from the three oratories to a single group, in this case the Teek. For the duration of the crusade, the Teekvela became the single ruler of the Bara'kaa people, when it was clear that Ostlea's attack was over, the power safely found its way back to the balance of the triad.

The Origins of the U'gonbiot and Venturing Out into the Zuul

During the Age of Man, about three hundred years ago, the Human culture of the Zuul was becoming more and more pronounced. Compared to the Secular nature of the Bara'kaa the Humans were adaptable and talented in a number of skills as opposed to a single set of them. Interested in learning about their neighbors and distant cousins,

a number of Bara'kaa found themselves learning more than one discipline, or leaving the Shol and living amongst the outsiders. As the years passed, more and more Bara'kaa began to leave the traditional ways and enter into mixed discipline study or head out of the Shol. Although those that left the Shol faced many different challenges in the Zuul, the government was more concerned with mixing the political factions and the impact it might have on both the study of The Word and the Bara'kaa way of life.

With the Vela Domain now based on the concept of the sacred hymn...

Ɱ γ τ ξ
Ɱ γ τ ς
Γ γ τ ε

*"The Cron are the sages of The Word of the past,
the Bael are the decision makers of The Word for the
future,
the Teek hold the wisdom of The Word in the present."*

...it was evident that each of the three factions had a specific voice and place in the following of The Word. How these Bara'kaa that belonged to more than one faction would change those voices worried the Vela. A decision was made by those that deviated from the scriptures of The Word, now calling themselves the U'gonbiot, that by learning the ways of more than one discipline they agreed to leave their affiliations of the Cron, Bael and Teek behind and find their own way, be them in the Shol or in the Zuul. The Vela still would do its best to protect the U'gonbiot but their voices would be silent; in place of their voice would be the Ministers of their individual disciplines. Many U'gonbiot make this choice willingly to understand the outside world and to try to experience the world from more than one perspective. They are not seen as a separate class of people, even in the Shol, and though they have no representation in the Vela, they may still speak in the halls of Shol-Vela, in

fact their outside perspective is highly valued by the Bara'kaa who have never left the Shol or the classic structure of The Word. Some Bara'kaa even coined a phrase added to the above hymn, not for satire, but for purpose and vindication:

ψ ξ γ τ ≡

“The U’gonbiot have knowledge of The Word and the flow of life”

Impressing the fact that the U’gonbiot are ready for the ever changing world, but belong to the traditional ties of the teachings of Shol-Vela, this expression drives many U’gonbiot out of the Shol every year to learn of the world and how its many songs and walks of life interact with The Word.

Those Bara'kaa that left the Shol, be them U’gonbiot or still tied to their faction, have often had difficulty integrating into new societies. Life in the Shol exists without an economy, every member of society has a place and a task and they all work together to better the people around them; in the Zuul people are valued by how much monetary wealth they have accumulated, or how many people they interact with on a regular basis. These conflicting lifestyles make integration more difficult, but many Bara'kaa find their unique talents sought after, be them ancient crafting or combat tactics of the Teek, the thousands of years of magical heritage belonging to the Bael, or the Cron and their intact knowledge of the ancient world. To be fair to those that leave Sholbara, The Vela Domain created a position in the government specifically to represent those that live outside the desert and to interact on the Vela’s behalf with outside governments. The Zuula’kaa does not have a voice in the triad, but sits on their council and offers insight whenever he can about the outside world; while each faction in the past has held this position at one point or another, the only requirement is that they are a member of the Cron, Teek, or Bael in good standing and have travelled out of the Shol for at least five years.

Bara’kaa in the New Age

For the most part Bara’kaa are the same now as they have always been. They are a people that rely strongly on tradition and protocol, that believe they have a set position in society and excel at whatever they do. Most Bara’kaa belong to one of their three political factions, however the number of U’gonbiot (those that left their factions to explore two or more different disciplines) has never been higher than in this new age. Additionally Bara’kaa have been found integrating into a great many places outside of their sacred desert; from teachers of magic and history in the universities of Capriana, or military advisors in Gethanar near the Daltanic border, to intrigued scholars and explorers eagerly waiting to plumb the depths of the Sacred Grounds and find out what these new mysterious islands have to offer the study of The Word.

While the Zuula’kaa (leader of foreign relations) is by law set to be responsible for and represent all of these individual travelers as they traverse Robara, there are no real borders in Sholbara and all peoples are free to come and go as they please. Outsiders in the Shol are welcomed and treated to free room and board as long as they stay in the non-cloistered cities; Bara’kaa leaving the Shol for the first time, that go through the proper channels, are given a small amount of currency by the office of the Zuula’kaa and encouraged to roam far and wide to learn all that they can and to spread The Word to all who would listen.

Few nations in Aularia have a problem with Sholbara, they have a centuries old standing mutual peace agreement with Capriana and healthy trade through Gethanar. They have little contact with Daltanica and Mag’duar given their respective geographic locations, though they have been at war with Ostlea on three separate occasions. While the Cron have forgiven Ostlea for their misguided, unprovoked attacks, the Teek are always cautious of their religious rivals and watch for evidence of a fourth crusade carefully.

When presented with the Sacred Grounds Pact, the Zuula’kaa strongly encouraged the Vela to join

in the agreement. The Bara'kaa have only once before made a written agreement with an outside power, and are unsure of the ramifications that this agreement will have in the long term, but they are hopeful. These newly discovered lands, untouched by the thousands of years since the incursion, are the perfect place to search for new evidence of The Word, an opportunity that any Bara'kaa would be remiss to ignore.

Important Figures

Ahran Ehdev Quaha'kaa: Founder of the Bael

Ehdev was a visionary. In his time the Cron were a small council that lead the Bara'kaa peoples using the nine arcane symbols they had discovered in an ancient tomb. They did well in the early days, but constant conflict with savages and a nearsighted metropolis strained their rule. Like countless Bara'kaa of his age, he was a refugee. The Orcs of the southern continent had conquered the western coast and sent raiding parties throughout the southern sections of the desert, pillaging and murdering the holdouts and those fleeing the south where they found them. As a young man he studied the eight greater letters of The Word, and the origins of the letter Cron; seemingly a ninth letter, it had few traits in common with the other eight. He surmised, as many did in his time, that Bara'kaa only had some of the ancient alphabet, and that more must be hidden somewhere in the vast desert of his people.

As he aged he became a talented engineer, and joined with many a relief group that would travel through the desert to assist those displaced by the horrors of battle. During one of these expeditions, about a day east from the Tanta River, a sandstorm forced the expedition into a desert cave. While securing the cave the expedition found a mysterious stone slab in its depths with the eight greater letters set into it. Over the next year Ehdev would lead a number of Bara'kaa in wearing down the barrier; it is there that the second greatest discovery in the history of the Bara'kaa people was made.

The artifact they found, that would later be called

the Seeker's Tablet, had six letters never before seen by the Bara'kaa, and used connections between these letters in fashions that were not seen in the Codex of the Cron. Word scholars flocked to study this new discovery and the Cron quickly realized that they were witnessing history unfold. When the Cron sent their own people to take the tablet to Plaacron an altercation started to form. It was Ehdev that stepped forward and suggest that the Cron and the traveling scholars find a way to work together to learn about the tablet.

According to the Codex of the Cron, these events led to Ahran Ehdev Quahak'aa becoming the founding leader of the Bael, and in time a master mage. Over the rest of his life he spent more time than any other individual with the tablet and not only was involved in connecting the Bael to the government, but founding the nation's capital of Shol-Vela on the spot where the cave had been found. It is ironic that he is remembered as mage in the Codex more than as an engineer, but by his example many Bael across the desert abandoned their studies of engineering, and advancing Bara'kaa technology, and started instead to practice arcane magic as spoken of on the Seeker's Tablet. Today arcanists widely outnumber the engineers of Bara'kaa society and the Bael have moved the ancient tablet, but though the times may be different it is clear that modern Bara'kaa society was established by a simple man with a powerful intellect that wanted only the best for his people. The Seeker's Tablet, named for Ehdev's coven, is still studied by the Bael today, as it's letters are said to predict the future based on the interpreter's translation.

Phairi Asrill Baraplaa: Crona'kaa of the New Age

Phairi Asrill is the Crona'kaa or Minister of the Faith; she and her advisors represent one third of the Bara'kaa government. She has a charismatic and approachable personality and always seems to wear a warm smile. Like many members of the Cron, as a young girl she became an apprentice in the holy city of Plaacron. She was a good study and was a naturally proficient healer, even in her

early training. When she was in her early twenties she was placed in charge of one of the many Oratories of Plaacron; never having left the city she could always be found keeping her doors open late into the night, speaking to the travelers from the far off lands about their great adventures and long journeys.

Lettdekk attacks were nearing Plaacron at the time, and to avoid an attack on the city itself the Crona'kaa at the time had requested a Teek battalion be moved into Plaacron to protect the ancient city. When the Teek arrived it was well before the residents of Plaacron heard that the number of soldiers in the city would be doubling. A number of priests quickly organized in front of the barracks being used by the Teek and were demanding that they leave the holy city in the hands of the Cron, where it had been for thousands of years.

Asrill's past dealing with travelers and warriors came to her aid that day; she approached the Teek as an equal, unlike the condescending priests outside, and was able to ascertain their purpose. Though the miscommunication had very little chance of coming to violence, Phairi was credited by the Cron as being able to turn the difficult situation to one of accord very quickly and efficiently.

Her time as Minister of the Faith has been as successful, she has led the Cron with a careful, understanding hand. Though, at only twenty seven years old, she is the youngest Minister chosen by the Bara'kaa in recent history, she is a competent



leader, and the host of an old soul. She remains as approachable today as she did in her training, and whenever time permits her she travels through the oratories of Shol-Vela to speak with the Bara'kaa and the outsiders alike that can be found there.

Raelin Aedai P'ethu'let: Baela'kaa of the New Age

Little is known about Minister Aedai's personal life and he is rarely seen outside of the Vela; he has a serious demeanor and often seems distracted or distant. Ministers in the Vela are required by tradition to have a council of advisors under

them, they can often be found speaking either to one or all of their advisors in the open areas of the Vela. The current Minister of the Arcane, however, is known infamously as rarely meeting with his advisors, but having them meet and discuss all of the topics that the Vela are to discuss in their next closed meeting and send him the minutes of that meeting.

In all other ways Aedai is very traditional. He strictly believes that the place of the Bael is preparing and providing for the future of his people. He is known to believe strongly in the powers of prophecy and make trips every year to the cloistered Bael city of Adalis, the rumored home of the Seeker's Tablet.

Halae Dreusun Barau'gon: Teeka'kaa of the New Age

The longest standing of the three current members of the Vela, Minister Dreusun spent most of his time in the Teek as an U'gon stationed at the edge of the Dekk. He learned how to fight as he believes most Teek should, in the thick of the desert with only your weapons and your fellow soldiers to aid you. He has trained a great deal of Teek in combat in what he calls the "Forgotten War" against the Wild Elves that are fiercely territorial on the fringes of the Shol. He has asked the Vela multiple times to consider bringing the battle back to the Elves, as they and the Bara'kaa stand apart in life too far for diplomacy; the Vela has never agreed to war on any people however, and there are thousands of years of tradition working against him.

Though the Minister of the Shol has his disagreements with the Vela, he is still a staunch believer in the fact that the Vela works and he has vowed that he will not let, including through inaction, any harm come to the Bara'kaa people.

Aesur Ilorin Qaaplaa: Zuula'kaa

A child of two citizens of Julios, Ilorin often found himself as a boy on frequent trips to Bajjira. He knew that the people there were different than he and his parents, but that only made them more fascinating. Always feeling like an outcast, either

among the varied races in the trade capital of the south, or at home in Sholbara where he told seemingly outlandish stories of Humans, Vaniri, Orcs and City Elves, Aesur didn't know which of the two places were really home.

As he aged, he became an apprentice of the Bael. Learning how to control the arcane was something he was good at, and Ilorin did well as a student, but he suffered from wanderlust his whole apprenticeship. When he was finally a competent mage, he left the Shol and headed for Capriana. It was there in the foreign land that he found purpose. He became a highly regarded teacher in the University of Tassica. Teaching aspiring mages of all the different races there, it felt as if he could explore the entire world through the eyes of his students. After two decades of service to the university he was requested to return to Sholbara by the office of the Zuula'kaa; still a faithful member of the Bael, he complied. It was not until then that he learned that the previous Minister of Aularia was stepping down and he had been selected to replace her. Though teaching was his passion, he sent a message to the university to not expect his return. The Zuula'kaa has been in his office for twelve years and he has proven more than capable. He often speaks to young Bara'kaa that are soon to join a political faction and always pronounces three things proudly: He is a proud member of the Bael, the best part of his life was teaching in that far off university, he has never lost his faith in The Word. When the Sacred Grounds Pact was proposed to the Bara'kaa people, Minister Ilorin personally intruded on a closed meeting of the Vela to convince them to accept it.

Considered non-traditional, Minister Ilorin is a fan of social integration and has been pushing outwards on the old boundaries of the Shol for his entire term. He feels that the times when Sholbara were most isolated is also when it was weakest, and to keep up with the outside powers of the world that it must involve itself in those powers.

Eolan Kaelly A'ez'kaa: U'gonbiot

A faithful member of the Cron for years, Eolan was a priest dedicated to the teachings and the

faith of The Word. He was trained in the oratories of Plaacron, but moved at the request of the Cron to the Teek settlement of Iljast, near the edge of the western Dekk. It was there that Eolan saw the struggles of the Teek for the first time. While many hear of the constant battles between the Teek and the inhabitants of the Dekk, since the battle has persisted for centuries it is imagined that the battle has calmed down, or that the Bara'kaa have been involved in the battle for so long that they somehow got "better" at fighting the Lettdekk. The truth is that dozens of Teek soldiers die or go missing monthly on the edges of the Ro, with the Lettdekk pushing further in every year, the Teek lose soldiers constantly against the combined forces of the Wild Elves and the wastes. It was here amongst the death and loss of the Teek that Eolan had a crisis of faith. He still believed in The Word, but how could the plan of those that have come before possibly allow for loss on this magnitude. He asked to travel with the Teek soldiers, but was not a Cro'rez and was therefore not allowed by the laws of the Cron. It was then that he saw his path. Leaving the Cron, and with it his political standing and future as a leader of an oratory or of other priests, he began training as a Teek.

Today Kaelly still serves with the Teek on the western Dekk. He answers to no one above him and lives his own path. His faith in The Word has never been stronger, and he has saved countless lives; he may have been shunned by the Cron for his actions, but Eolan knows what he did was for the right reasons. He is not Cron, he is not Teek, but both helped him find his way, and both need his talents daily. He is U'gonbiot. His letters serve The Word.

Important Locations

The First Oratory

Located in the center of Plaacron, The First Oratory was the place where the first nine letters of The Word and the oldest codex of the Cron were discovered. This hallowed place is now more of a

museum than a standard house of worship, though it is always staffed by at least one priest. A number of plaques and mosaics now adorn the outside of the structure explaining how the researchers from the ancient city of Aular discovered the timeless ruins over 3200 years ago. It was this location that was the epicenter of the birth of The Word during the Age of Knowledge, giving birth to the Bara'kaa race.

The inside of the oratory today is kept as close as possible to how it was when it was first discovered, short of scaffolding added so that visitors may examine the writings higher in the underground structure. The halls only allow for a few visitors at a time in the ancient sections of the ruin, but the Oratory Annex that the Bara'kaa added to the structure after its discovery hosts a plethora of people of all different races coming and going constantly, speaking to the local and visiting Word Scholars that can always be found here.

The ruins themselves have defied being dated; even today the wisest scholars can debate for hours when the original structure was built or sealed. It has been argued that the structure may originate from the Age of Aular, or the time of The Incursion, or possibly even from The Age Before. Regardless they do agree that the building was very old when it was discovered those three millennia ago and the Cron's historians and art restoration experts are in a constant fight against time to keep the ruins in their present state.

The Vela

Called The Vela Domain by outsiders to Bara'kaa culture, The Vela in this context is the building at the heart of the Bara'kaa political system. This building serves as the residence and workplace for both the Vela's Ministers and their advisors, it also holds common forums for people to come from the corners of the Shol or outside in the Zuul to speak to the advisors or the Ministers themselves so that the political leaders hear the voices of their fellow party members.

The Vela is located in the capital city of Shol-Vela, one of the first cities named by the Bara'kaa people, hence the different naming style. It was within a

mile of this spot that the founding members of the Bael discovered The Seeker's Tablet and founded the government that the Bara'kaa still use today; not counting the Dwarven cultures, this building has hosted the longest running single government in all of Aularia, having been formed when Aular City still stood.

There are many places that host free lodging in the areas around The Vela, and many outsiders that find themselves in the Shol are there for some business in or around the capital building. The Vela itself has special spectator chambers and hallways that are used to teach outsiders the nuances of Bara'kaa politics, this ensures they do not interfere with the Ministers but they have full view of the three sections of the building, used by each of the factions; these rooms and hallways are the only places where the U'gonbiot are allowed to step foot in the structure.

Baelbara

One of many translations, "Arcane Basics" is a building situated on a lost Aular colony. Located by an archeological team ages ago it became the home of a number of Bael researchers that had found a vast collection of Aular artifacts, mostly Arcane in persuasion. In the years that followed more and more Bael came to the site to study the relics, most of them bringing their students or apprentices. The result of this population swell was the founding of Gaian, named for one of the archeologists, and the construction of Baelbara.

A great hall connected to a series of dormitories, Baelbara is considered by some to be the headquarters of the Bael; while it is true that many high ranking party members of the Bael do live and work here, the structure is best known for the mages, sorcerers and Ba'rez that are trained within. The largest building in the Shol for the training of Arcanists, Baelbara teaches only members of the Bael or outsiders that prove their determination to the teachers there. Life is hard for the outsiders as admission is often difficult and the only nearby settlement of Gaian has become a cloistered town for the Bael and non members are not allowed within its walls.

Over seventy percent of the Bael, and even a fair amount of current day U'gonbiot, started their training at Baelbara and teachers are always in high demand there. It is one of only a few remaining places in the Shol that still teach the ancient arts of the Rune Swords, and as their numbers in the Bael thin the lack of protection at some of the Bael cloistered cities is becoming more and more obvious.

Fort Ilodar

Named by the Ostlean Crusaders that built the structure during the second Crusade, Ilodar is the only building mapped out by the Bara'kaa that exists inside of the Dekk. Northwest of Shol-Vela it lies on the road that leads to Fort Cross in Gethanar. A long time ago a number of Bara'kaa looked at the continued struggle against the Wild Elves that have been raging in the Shol since the Age of Dawn and tried to find a new solution. Since the Elves were vehemently against the practices of the Bara'kaa, a number of these Bara'kaa tried to live as the Elves.

While nature magic is not forbidden in Sholbara it has no place in the politics or in the religion of its people. Those that left to learn from the ways of nature magic were instantly stripped of political faction and labeled U'gonbiot. The "Robara" as they are known today, sharing the Bara'kaa name for Aularia itself, exist between two worlds; they have been shunned by their own kind and are still unloved by the Elves. While it is true that they no longer meet in regular conflict against the Elves, they have no true homeland of their own due to their self exile, and only their small part of the unforgiving desert to call their own.

If they had one ally at all it would be the people of Gethanar. The Robara depend on trade with their northern neighbors for survival, and while they still do not use currency with their fellow Robara, they will take offerings of coin or supplies to safely escort caravans from Fort Cross in the Dustlands to the Ro of the Shol, where the Teek take over. These merchants and traders gladly pay whatever small stipend the Robara ask for, as it is a small cost by their standards and any groups that

decide to attack the wayward Rune Sages are often surprised at how well they mix their ancient teachings with the primal forces of nature.

Role-Playing a Bara'kaa

The Bara'kaa consider themselves the most enlightened race in Aularia. While it is true that the Fae have practiced magic longer, and that the Dwarven Religions claim to go back well before the First Age, the Bara'kaa are resolute in their positions in using their faith to understand the world around them. To the Bara'kaa faith isn't an ethereal concept, it is not even enough to say it is part of who they are.

They are instead a part of their faith.

The letters that exist on their flesh and their being since birth and after death are a piece of the understanding of their faith. They do not need ancient stories, or divine blood, they need only to glimpse into a mirror to see their faith's scripture. They are the ancient stories and the holy blood. They are taught that the letters on their face tell a tale that exists as part of The Word, and their experiences help form their faith on a daily basis. Bara'kaa always act as if was the day of their judgment, they have strong, specific morals and stick to them adamantly; not to say that they are all good Samaritans, they also believe in striking off the hand if it threatens the arm. Bara'kaa from the same Coven, those being born with the same letters, often find kindred spirits in each other, as their paths in life are similar.

It is these reasons that the Bara'kaa have outgrown a number of things that the other civilized races still cling to, like currency. It is enough in Sholbara to give from yourself to another that is in need to strengthen the unity of the group, but in the lands of the outsiders this is not the case. To a Bara'kaa from Sholbara money is an alien concept; it is not enough to be hungry to get food, but you must have enough to trade or they will let you starve. Bara'kaa that find their kin on the outside do not always have a smooth transition back to their strength in unity, especially if they have

collected some trust issues in their travels.

Bara'kaa at a young age join one of three groups that co-exist to give structure to their government. Upon their joining and forever after they have a place in their society, based on their skill and competence the next step in their advancement is offered to them by their superiors. While the Bara'kaa are skilled at what they do their social isolation sometimes stunts their understanding of other race's social interactions.

The three factions themselves sometimes orient the personality of their members. The Cron are usually very stoic or thoughtful, they are excellent teachers and love to talk for hours on end. The Bael are thinkers, always cautious of the consequences of their actions; they are capable of debate, but not to the extent of the Cron. The Teek are passionate and tend to live more in the moment; they are the most morally guided of the three, ready to make the tough decisions quickly and let the historians figure out if they were right or not.

While the faith of The Word is important to the Bara'kaa, it is also a part of their every day. All Bara'kaa are well versed in the letters of The Word (see below) and use them when applicable in everyday speech. When asked by one who does not understand one of their letters, their descriptions are sometimes seen as condescending; they have understood these concepts since childhood and often explain them as a teacher would explain to a child. Above all the Bara'kaa believe in taking the high road. They try peace before warfare and knowledge before ignorance. They feel that the people of the world have the freedom of choice, but those choices should bring us closer together. Dedication to your cause should be the motivation of your life. No matter how they live they know that their letters will go on forever as part of The Word.

Opinions of Other Races

Dwarves: The Dwarves of Aularia have a rich history and long memories, which the Bara'kaa highly respect. While they may be more quick to anger or judge than a Bara'kaa, they from Mag'duar have

much in common with the Rune Sages.

Elves: On the edges of their desert nation the Bara'kaa have fought a bitter war against the Wild Elves for almost three thousand years. The Bara'kaa do not trust the Elves, and while that doesn't extend to all varieties of Elf, the sins of their brothers cannot be forgotten.

Fae: Ancient and mysterious, the Fae have a balance with nature that the Bara'kaa lack. The Fae folk know the answers to many questions that have been unasked for generations and they cannot always be trusted.

Grobs: For generations, grobs have troubled the humans in the north and are a constant threat in the Dekk, with some being bold enough to come into Bara'kaa cities. Rarely does any relationship with a grob of any kind go well.

Humans: Their cousins and closest allies, Humans have also brought three crusades against Sholbara. They speak about how isolated the Bara'kaa are, yet each human is a nation to themselves, each with their own motivations and goals.

Orcs: An old race that is still on the border of savagery, Orcs are crude but capable. Their skill at crafting has made them welcome more than once in the Shol.

Seraphim: A race considered holy by those that have sought to erase The Word, Seraphim are not inherently set against you. Their dedication often matches that of the Bara'kaa, which can make them strong allies or dangerous enemies.

Sideshow: Marked by a higher power, but not one that can be trusted. The Sideshow are too new to this world for judgment to be made about them.

Totemic: Often seen as allies of the Wild Elves, the Totemic are a race that have never actively attacked the Shol. Their simple tendencies have made them easy neighbors for ages.

Vaniiri: Longstanding allies of the Bara'kaa, the Vaniiri are a brilliantly cultured people that understand tradition and how to listen to their own people.

Lexicon

“The Word” is a massive conglomerate of ideas, a way of life, a religion and the rules for operating an entire society. Each piece in the Word represents something similar to a letter of our alphabet on the surface, but to the Bara'kaa it means so much more. As they dedicate their lives to the study of these ‘letters’ these “greater parts” and “lesser parts” reveal meaning all of their own, all small elements of The Word itself, each part of the word describes a part of the Bara'kaa belief or their way of life. Some of their commonly used parts are listed below. Note that each part has multiple definitions, all based on the context of the letter as it is used. Every Bara'kaa has a coven name from birth that is made of two greater parts, those Bara'kaa identify strongly with those two parts of The Word; if a Bara'kaa is of the coven Baraa'rez, they are both Bara and they are A'rez, (They are not a Bara, they embody Bara itself)

Greater Parts of The Word

Bara(Bar-ah):

Symbol: **Ɱ**

Physically: A rune, or The Word in its entirety.

Philosophically: The basic parts of, or the elements of something. A child learns this letter first, starting essentially with the “ABC’s”.

Coven: Stalwart and sturdy, the Bara are the backbone of Bara'kaa society, the same way that the runes of The Word make up the structure of the language.

Common Usage: The Bara is the name of the Pawn in A'kaateek. Bara is the name of the lowest rank in the Teek forces.

P'eth (pah-eth):

Symbol: **ρ**

Physically: An arcanist or a knower of secrets, a student of the arcane.

Philosophically: One in touch with arcane

magic, P'eth is trying to advance on to become A'kaa (see below) and is frequently used to describe one who is at a midpoint in their journey.

Coven: P'eth is one who is progressing constantly. Always learning new things and striving forward.

Common Usage: The P'eth is the name of the rook in A'kaateek.

Qaa (Quah):

Symbol: Φ

Physically: One who seeks. A hunter, tracker or members of law enforcement could all be considered Qaa.

Philosophically: To never be content with what you have and to always be looking off at the horizon. Many Qaa believe themselves to be destined for greatness and they spend most of their lives in anticipation of that moment.

Coven: Qaa is an adventurer, a travelling scholar. Always feeling that greatness can be found in between the moments of life.

Common Usage: Qaa is the second rank in the Teek forces, just over Bara.

A'rez (Ah-resh):

Symbol: Σ

Physically: The blade or the warrior, considered the same object in the eyes of The Word.

Philosophically: A'rez does not always imply a true weapon, one who is very charismatic can be considered a blade as they enter into and control a social scenario. Anyone who gracefully and succinctly accomplishes their task is A'rez.

Coven: The blade is a person that cuts through destiny like cloth. Those around them are often caught in the wake of their path, for better or worse.

Common Usage: The A'rez is the name of the Knight in A'kaateek. A'rez is the name of the third rank in the Teek forces, just over Qaa.

U'let (ooh-let):

Symbol: U

Physically: The unrelenting or the fearless, sometimes to the point of recklessness.

Philosophically: U'let is resolute in the face of failure, partially because it does not understand the concept.

Coven: U'let are champions of their cause and sometimes make good leaders, though sometimes they are too headstrong. U'let feel they have nothing to lose and are the most reckless of the Bara'kaa.

Common Usage: U'let is the name of the fourth rank in the Teek forces, just over A'rez.

Plaa (plah):

Symbol: \acute{O}

Physically: The faithful. The Plaa is dedicated to their cause but thoughtful.

Philosophically: Plaa is often considered lucky because it is the most strongly tied to the divinity of The Word. Plaa is considered an achiever at whatever they do.

Coven: The faithful is always fortunate and seems to see the silver lining of every cloud. An eternal optimist it knows that it is protected by The Word.

Common Usage: The Plaa is the name of the bishop in A'kaateek.

U'gon (ooh-gone):

Symbol: Ψ

Physically: One who is complete. A fulfilled individual, lacking the flaws of some of the other letters.

Philosophically: Confident and capable, U'gon is an art masterpiece or the master that crafted it.

Coven: U'gon is without doubt. It makes a decision and stands by it. When push comes to shove U'gon can complete any task it sets its mind to.

Common Usage: The U'gon is the name of

the queen in A'kaateek. U'gon is the name of the fifth rank in the Teek forces, just over U'let.

A'kaa (ah-kah):

Symbol: Υ

Physically: The sage. The wise one and decision maker.

Philosophically: A'kaa is the last greater part of The Word, as such it is considered to be a desirable state of being. It is used after a first letter to imply that that is the highest possible achievement for that letter, for example the Ministers of the Bara'kaa use the letter a'kaa in their titles.

Coven: A'kaa is a teacher and one who is capable of speaking or demonstrating on their skill for hours if requested. They understand the world around them and seek to help their fellows do the same.

Common Usage: The A'kaa is the name of the King in A'kaateek. A'kaa is the name of the sixth and highest rank in the Teek forces, over U'gon. The Ministers of the Bara'kaa, the leader of the Vela are the Teeka'kaa, Baela'kaa and the Crona'kaa.

Lesser Parts of The Word

Bael (Bail)

Symbol: ⚡

Politically: The group of Mages and arcane users that represent the other Bara'kaa in political or diplomatic situations.

Physically: Arcane magic in its raw form, representing both all and none of the Arcane schools.

Philosophically: Talent, power, forgotten mysteries

Common Usage: Ba'rez (Bah-resh): (shortened form of Baela'rez) "Rune Sword" The group of Bael mages trained in using their arcane powers to fuel their martial prowess.

Biot(Buy-ot)

Symbol: ξ

Physically: The past, recent or ancient.

Philosophically: The experiences that brought a person to this point. One's life story, or the story so far.

Common Usage: U'gonbiot: "Completed past" Members of the Bara'kaa that have sacrificed their political stations to study multiple disciplines of Bara'kaa arts.

Cron (Cron)

Symbol: Ν

Politically: The clergy and devout that represent the other Bara'kaa in political or diplomatic situations.

Physically: Divine Magic, Faith, devotion.

Philosophically: Always listening, strength of will, calm and focus

Common Usage: Cro'rez (Crow-resh): (shortened version of CronA'rez) "Faith Sword" Usually clerics of The Word, they are a number of Cron that are trained in marital tactics.

Dekk (Deck)

Symbol: Q

Geographically: "Past the red line," Section of the desert where Bara'kaa do not travel.

Physically: Desolation, emptiness, Underworld

Philosophically: Loss, absence, Death

Common usage: Plaadekk (Plah-deck): Equivalent of 'Rest in Peace,' referring to death or a meditative state.

Evek(Eh-vek)

Symbol: Ε

Physically: The present time or place.

Philosophically: The problem or situation that is currently most vital in a situation.

Common Usage: Lettevek (Let-Eh-vek);

The unseen problem, the actual catalyst for a series of unfortunate events.

Lett (Let)

Symbol: ζ

Physically: The future, what is yet to come.

Philosophically: The unknown, the unseen.

Common usage: Lettdekk (Let-deck): An age-old, and mostly superstitious, term used to describe “Hidden Death,” that lurks on the edge of the Dekk, or out in the Zuul. Told to small children to keep them from straying out in the Shol. Also used to describe militant or aggressive Wild Elves that live in the Dekk.

Riis (Reese)

Symbol: ≡

Geographically: “The blue line,” the section of the Shol that has water within a day’s walk. Considered the safest places to travel in the Shol. Smallest section of the desert.

Physically: Water, or blood.

Philosophically: Life force, Chi, flowing motion or change.

Common Usage: U’letriis (oo-let-reese); the Tanta River, or “Unrelenting Stream”

Ro (Row)

Symbol: ϑ

Geographically: “The green zone,” The area of the desert that does not have standing or running water, but is still able to support life. Second smallest region of the desert.

Physically: Nature magic, living places, the Fae folk (sometimes wild elves)

Philosophically: Persistence of life, succeeding against all adversity

Common Usage: Robara (Row-bah-rah): Bara’kaa term for Aularia translates to “Nature’s foundation”, the same term is used for Zuul Bara’kaa who live in the northwestern Dekk and practice nature magic.

Shol (Shol)

Symbol: ↷

Geographically: The desert that is home to Sholbara and most of the Bara’kaa race

Physically: Any harsh place or inhospitable surroundings.

Philosophically: Outwardly devoid of life or useless, seemingly without purpose, hidden potential.

Common Usage: Sholbara (shol-bah-rah); “The desert of The Word”

Teek (last syllable in antique)

Symbol: ⊥

Politically: The martial arm of the government, barred from casting magic by their own vows, that represent the other Bara’kaa in political or diplomatic situations.

Physically: A soldier or capable combatant in toe to toe fighting, often without magic.

Philosophically: The defender, the brave.

Common Usage: A’kaateek (Ah-kah-Teek); a game that Bara’kaa play from early childhood that test strategic and original thinking. “The Wise Warrior” or commonly, Chess.

Vela (Vell la)

Symbol: O

Politically: The name for the central government of Sholbara (Shol-Vela) or any local government.

Physically: A government, or place of talking (diplomatic or debate), town square, The philosophical translation of a word.

Philosophically: The heart or core of a thing. The essence of a thing. A soul.

Common Usage: U’gon Vela (oo-gone-Vell-la); Traditional courteous farewell, literally translates to ‘Completed Soul’, or the more accepted “May your soul find fulfillment,” colloquially translates to (and the proper response in friendly

context is) “Go with The Word”

Zuul (Zool)

Symbol: ζ

Geographically: The world outside of the desert.

Politically: Outsiders that are against the Shol or its peoples.

Physically: Any object or force that is working against the order of the cosmos, or more specifically The Word. Chaos or Entropy

Philosophically: Something that is either working unpredictably, or that has its true intentions blurred or obscured.

Common Usage: The title given to those who serve with the Teek that are not members of the faction, be them of another faction or U’gonbiot.

Pop-Culture / Inspirations

The Medjai from the Mummy franchise have similar garb and act as guardians of an ancient secret. The Brotherhood of the Cruciform Sword from the Indiana Jones series live their faith and are always prepared for their death, living their lives as their god demands them; to show their dedication they tattoo the crest of their brotherhood onto their flesh.

The Assassin’s Brotherhood from the Assassin’s Creed franchise (closer to Assassin’s Creed I) also has appropriate garb and concept, if not methodology. The Bara’kaa can be more peaceful than the Assassins, though they are not opposed to taking life if there is no other option. More than that, two parts of the Assassin’s three tenants of never harming the innocent and never compromising the brotherhood speak more to the Bara’kaa ideals; additionally the creed itself, “Nothing is true, everything is permitted” speaks to a deeper meaning to the world around us, much like the letters of The Word.

The Fremen of the Dune franchise exist in a world with great splendors, but live their own lives in an arid desert that has a language and a faith all its own. Their traditions are one of the most important parts of their culture, having relied on them for generations to survive the unforgiving desert.

