



BLACK DYNASTY

GUIDE 2023

FOREWORD

HUA! Black Dynasty and those who want to become part of it!

In this basic guide you will find everything that is important for your entry into the faction. In addition, the guide provides basic knowledge and creates the foundation of how to portray and embody a member of the Black Dynasty.

The Black Dynasty is a faction that emerged from the Black Ice when the Amôn'Kharr, a god-like entity, was destroyed and the Black Prince was crowned.

Here you will learn how the Black Prince created his people and how they are slowly changing under his rule.

The era of the Black Dynasty has begun!

Please feel free to forward this guide to every NPC who hasn't had a chance to read it yet. But remember that this is a guide for portraying an NPC faction in the world of Mythodea. Please do not share the information listed here with players to keep the game fun.

Lastly: Equality in LARP is very important to us which is why we decided to use gender-neutral language in this guide as much as possible so everyone is included!

Thank you very much and happy reading!

Ready? Let's go!

WHAT IS AN NPC?

NPCs (Non-Player Characters) can experience just as intense and exciting gameplay as Player Characters (PCs). They only have specific requirements for their appearance, behavior, and back-story. Their character development and even their character death are subject to the direction of the game masters. They help the organizer bring the intended plot to life, set the framework for players, and create the desired atmosphere at the event. It is a very important and fulfilling task. Sometimes there are repeated assignments, so-

metimes NPCs are asked if they want to jump into other roles, and sometimes last-minute changes are made - everything is very close to the core of the event, the collaborative story that makes up a LARP. Thank you to each and every one who fulfills these roles!

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CHAPTER I: THE BLACK DYNASTY IN 10 PHRASES

„You were created to be a tool for Him!“



1. Once, the Ancient Rulers created the Essence, a mercury-like black substance, from which the members of the Black Ice could be formed - and to which they reverted once they die.

2. For the longest time, the Amôn'Kharr (AK), a god-like entity that many believed to be the personified consciousness of the Essence, ruled over the Black Ice - until the Black Prince confronted the AK and the Essence deemed it unfit to rule. Therefore the army abandoned the AK and the Prince was able to kill it and take the lead.

3. The Black Dynasty is the next step in the evolution of the Black Ice. Once an unfeeling hive mind striving for perfection, its members are now suddenly developing feelings and individuality.

4. The ordinary warriors of the Black Dynasty are called Acolytes. They are divided into two main currents: the traditionalists (Rakh) and the fanatics (Valun).

5. The supreme leader of the Black Dynasty is the Black Prince, also known as the Amôn'Valar. He commands the Grand Masters and their Orders. These, in turn, are divided into Circles, containing about 30-40 Acolytes, led by Masters.

6. The magically gifted Mirrors are responsible for resurrecting fallen Acolytes from the Essence and restoring their identities. Each passage through the Essence gives the Acolytes more emotions and individuality in the process.

7. Not all emotions are desirable. The Black Corrective, with its Overseers and Correctors, ensures that undesirable emotions are banished into crystals, which the respective Acolytes then wear on their armor.

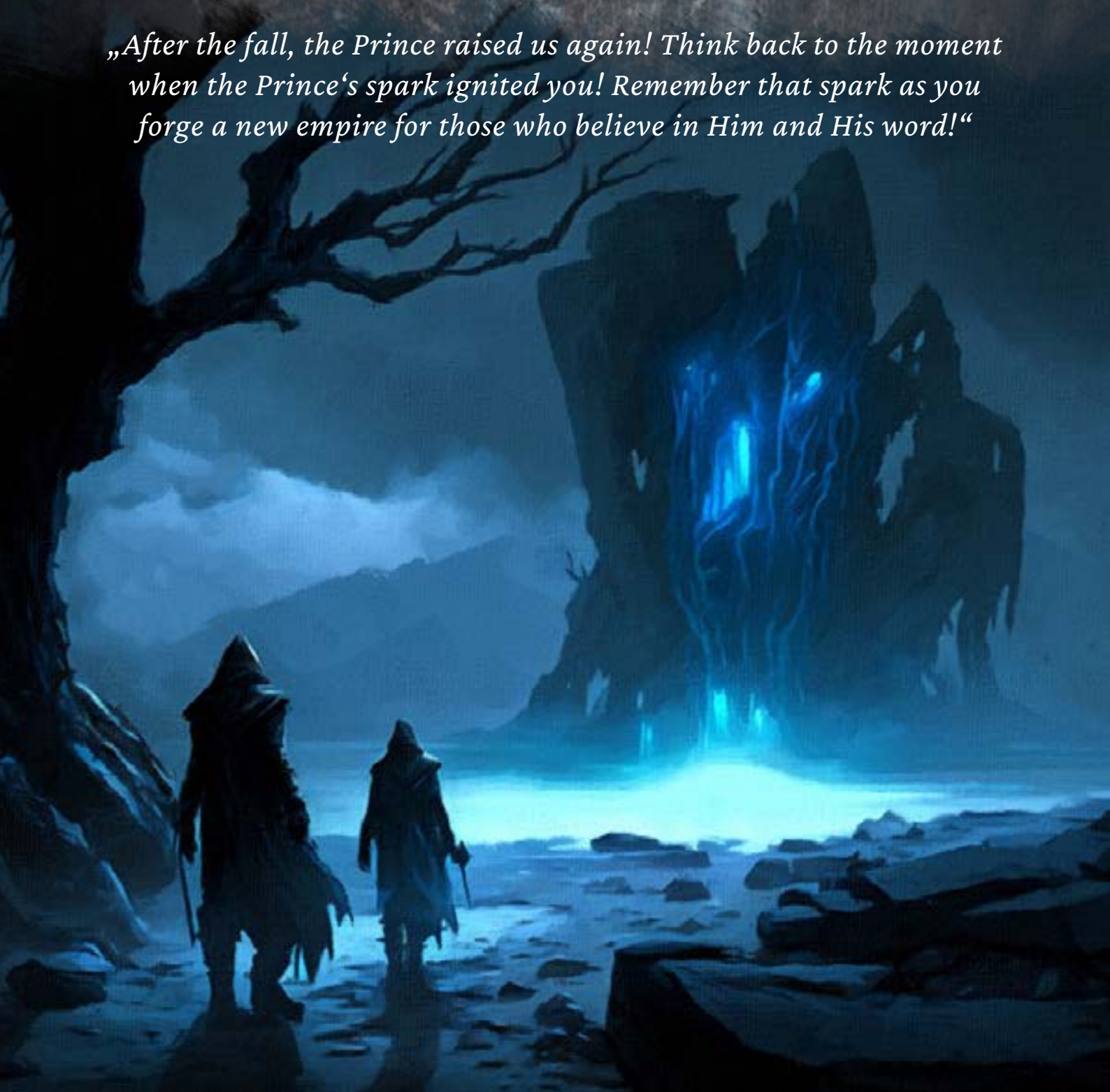
8. There are special Chosen Ones who were formed by the Black Prince himself and carry a particularly large spark of him in their cold chest. They are the champions of the new creation, the first among equals, they are inspiration and motivation.

9. The Acolytes' main task now is to forge a new empire for their newly evolved people from the fragments of their old homeland. They have formed an alliance with the Skargen and the Undead Flesh, and together they are fighting the settlers of Mitraspera.

10. The main colors of the Black Dynasty are black and blue. Their struggle with individuality and emerging emotions is inspired by movies, video games and characters like Star Trek's Seven of Nine, Equilibrium, and Detroit: Become Human.

CHAPTER 2: HISTORY AND WORLDVIEW OF THE BLACK DYNASTY

„After the fall, the Prince raised us again! Think back to the moment when the Prince's spark ignited you! Remember that spark as you forge a new empire for those who believe in Him and His word!“



The Black Dynasty - children of the eternal Essence, rising from archaic perfection to new power. The Ancient Rulers once created the Essence so soldiers could be formed from it. It's a black mercury-like substance that is incredibly cold to the touch, to the point where it actively hurts and injures those who try. Soldiers formed from it were not individuals but part of a hive-mind that only worked towards one goal: perfection and order. Ruled by the Amôn'Kharr, the leader created by the collective consciousness of the Essence, they ruthlessly and without emotion tried to weed out every imperfection on Mitraspera.

But everything changed when the Black Prince woke up from his slumber.

When he was raised, it was already clear that he was an awakened being. For the Prince could feel - and what he felt was disappointment in himself and his creation, his capital Viria, and the stagnant weakness of his army, for the Essence had devoured and assimilated his people as well as his family, thus depriving them of any spark of individuality - a spark that is now being returned to them and will let them grow!

„Who would have thought it? That everything would fall into place, that it was all planned?“

He devised a plan that ended in the destruction of the Amôn'Kharr and broke the chains of the Essence; nothing now stood in the way of progress! As the first act of his reign, he gave individuality to the Essence by mutating it, by changing its very nature at its core. While the soldiers continue to be drawn from the Essence, something is different, something is slowly changing. For formerly the Essence united everything, but now it and the unity structure seem to be evolving.

“A mistake? Maybe.

Evolution? Only time will tell.

It remains to be seen how powerful this new weapon of the Prince really is.

But one thing is clear! You are not yet perfect, but I will see to that!“

- a Corrector to a failed Acolyte

For in individuality the Prince saw a power that had previously been denied to them, a power that was capable of destroying gods! Great heroes emerged from the new creation, the Chosen and the Prince's Black Corrective. The Acolytes could now aspire to greater things, could arm themselves with courage and abhorrence, making them powerful and allowing them to grow beyond their old limits. Nevertheless, the new creation had a downside, for it also brought with it pain and a wide range of overwhelming emotions, closing off the path to the archaic form of perfection.

Now the Black Prince, the „Destroyer of Chains“, gathered his young, awakened people around him. With the waning of magic, the Black Prince used the ancient crystalline powers to build new outposts at the tip of the southern continent, centered around a monolithic temple.

The people were now being recreated and carefully forged, step by step, into a mighty weapon, all under the watchful eye of the Black Corrective, fanatically ordering and shaping the Dynasty according to the Prince's will, no matter what they encountered.

But the feelings also brought unrest to the Black Dynasty, for what was now the meaning of their existence? What was their goal, now that the path to perfection was blocked by the awakened feelings? The Black Prince had not yet revealed what his real goals were - some said he wanted to mold the Essence in his image, others rumored he had very personal motives for his actions. Only time would tell what he was really up to.

*„Learning from mortals has proven... problematic, you say?
Through power and hatred they shall bend, I care not if
they break! Their power shall be mine!“
-a voice in the dark*

TRADITIONALISTS AND FANATICS

*„Did the Black Corrective create fear to control us better?
What good does it do me?“
„Keep your voice down, they have eyes and ears in the dark.“
-two Acolytes talking about fear ... in fear?*

Within the Black Dynasty there are two currents. On the one side, there are the Traditionalists who long for the old way into the Essence and want to become numb, that is, have their feelings cut out completely by the Corrective. They like to be called Rakh, a term from ancient times. They worship the Prince and hope one day to be transferred by him into the Essence once their sacred task is accomplished!

On the other side we have the Fanatics, calling themselves Valun. They are absorbed in individuality and long for more feelings to use against the settlers. They hope not to be absorbed in the Essence and enjoy their new life. They would do anything for the Prince who destroyed their chains and made them what they are now.

Both streams exist for depth of play and to encourage ingame conflict play. As usual, all play opportunities are optional, not a must, alongside the battle shifts.

You can read more about ingame conflict play in CHAPTER 9: PLAYING AIDS.

CHAPTER 3: ROLES AND STRUCTURES OF THE BLACK DYNASTY

„Equals among equals, all made in His image.“

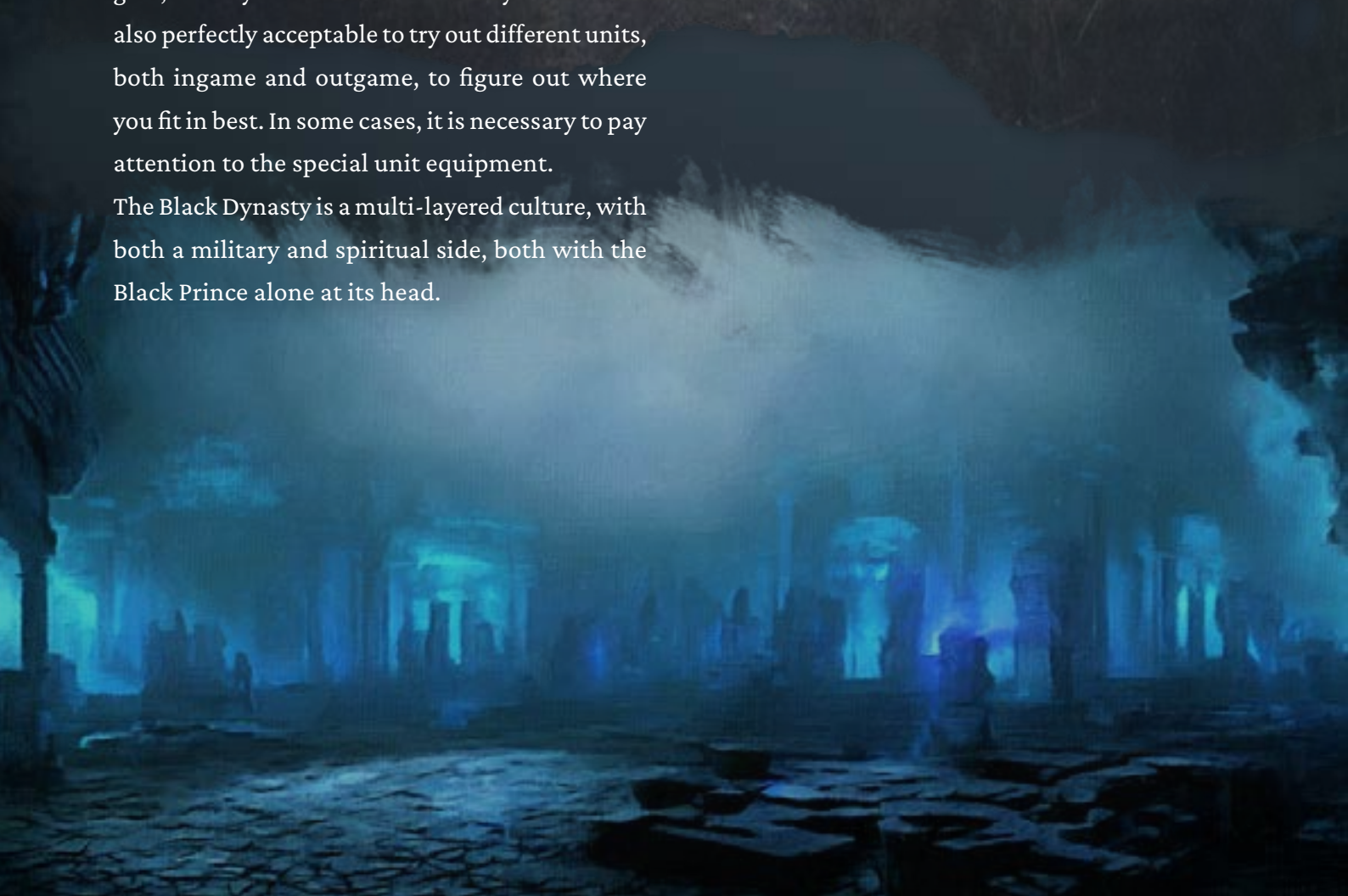
„An unstructured group full of individuals is just a wild bunch. Unworthy of order and His glory!“

The following structures aim to give you flexibility in the outgame assignments of the units. While it makes sense to stick to your unit, it is entirely possible to march out with another unit in your gear, when you do not have a shift yourself. It is also perfectly acceptable to try out different units, both ingame and outgame, to figure out where you fit in best. In some cases, it is necessary to pay attention to the special unit equipment.

The Black Dynasty is a multi-layered culture, with both a military and spiritual side, both with the Black Prince alone at its head.

„Boy. If you see a Fist of the Dynasty, the Circle cannot be far. So pack your necessities and find a new home... If you can make it, get on a ship. Otherwise they will find you!“

-a peasant woman to her son



TERMS AND ROLES

The Black Dynasty

... is the Black Prince's new people, which is now rebuilding their homeland with no regard for the lands of the settlers. The backbone of the Black Dynasty and thus the normal fighters are the so-called Acolytes.

The army

... of the Black Dynasty has a military structure, with two main group assignments. One is the Order to which the Acolytes' Circle belongs and the other is the Circle itself, which represents the Acolytes' new family and home.

The Order

... consists of 3 to 5 Circles and is commanded by a Grandmaster. The Orders differ from each other, depending on their purpose, origin and which emotion is dominant.

The Circle

... is the new home of every fighter. Each Circle has a Master at its head and consists of 30 to 40 fighters, most of whom are Acolytes. The Master is supported in their role by their second officer, the so-called Hand of the Master. Within a Circle there are always representatives of the three pillars of the spiritual arm: a Corrector, an Overseer and a Mirror, each with an apprentice or peer if desired.

Out-game, a Circle looks after its own water supply on the battlefield.

The Black Prince

At the top of the multi-layered culture stands, lonely and awe-inspiring, the Black Prince. His word is law, his will absolute! His motivation and true goals can only be guessed. His fighters do not hesitate, ever.

*„You are created in my image, a spark of perfection in a distorted world. I will reorder it and you shall be my tool. To the deed, my Acolyte!“
- a voice in the dark*

The Black Guard

The Prince is followed by the Black Guard, his personal Circle. When the Prince is present, the Guard rallies around him and carries out his orders. In his absence the Guard represents His lordship on the field, led by the Master of the Black Guard. They are all to be classified as fanatics, none among them will openly admit to being a traditionalist. The Guard is the least heavily armored Circle. Every Guard is a duelist and a living example of martial superiority over the settlers. They are elegant spear dancers and are able to captivate anyone with their fluid movements.

„When I watch the spear dance, it is ... beautiful. One day I will also have the honor of protecting the Prince and becoming part of his Guard!“

*„Stop dreaming, we have work to do, we have killing to do!“
- somewhere at the front line of a Circle*

*(Application and acceptance by the AP
(contact person) and the VBs
(responsible supervisor).)*

Grandmasters

The Grandmasters of the Black Prince instruct the officers of the Circles and count as the military mouthpiece of the Prince. They are extremely powerful and are accompanied by one or two Chosen Ones each. Grandmasters command 3-5 Circles each. They wear the symbol of their order, the Black Dynasty numerals under the Dynasty star. At the same time, the number of every Order gets its own border circle.

„This! This is true perfection! Do you think the Prince will help us all to such power?“

*„I know I will rise. The Prince, he sees me, I'm sure of it!“
- Acolytes watch the elevation of a Grandmaster*

(Application and acceptance by the VBs.)



BLACK GUARD

GRANDMASTER

The Chosen Ones

In addition to the officers as persons of respect, there are self-sufficient champions in the Black Dynasty, the Chosen Ones who stride across the battlefield either alongside the Grandmaster or on their behalf. Each Grandmaster can have a maximum of two Chosen Ones. They are heroes that every Acolyte looks up to, that every Acolyte emulates. They inspire the Black Prince's troops and are powerful duelists who are expected to give the players fine fights or occasionally break up a line of battle.

*"Relentless.
Inexhaustible.
Unstoppable.
An effigy of steel and death."*

(Application and acceptance by the VBs.)

The Master

... is the supreme commander of a Circle. Masters direct and command their troops according to the orders of the Grandmasters and consults with the other Masters of the Order.

Outgame, they are the most important interface between game leadership and the Circle. Furthermore they are the first organizers and contact persons for worries and needs of NPCs of "their" Circle.

*"Master! We are being pulverized here!"
„You will stand, die and rise again. Stand your ground.“
- cold-hearted command of a Master in a hopeless situation*

(Application and acceptance by the VBs.)

Hand of the Master

The second officer next to the Master.

Hands ensure discipline in the troops with a loud voice, are the mouthpiece of the Master and their representative in their absence. In battle, the Hands are responsible for ensuring that the Circle functions and that the formation is maintained. In addition, they are the swords of the Master, their duelists and forerunners in battle.

*„You are my voice in case I fall.“
„Aye, my lord.“
- Master to a Hand*

(Application and acceptance by the Master of the Circle.)



CHOSEN ONE

MASTER

Enforcer and the Fist

“Enforcer” is a temporary title a Master can give to an Acolyte on the battlefield. The Enforcer will be in charge of a Fist, which works as a small strikeforce for a specific mission. A Fist will typically consist of 6 Acolytes and has dedicated orders until their mission is completed.

The Fist will generally follow their Circle, but has authority to act independently under the direction of the Enforcer.

“Follow me, Fist! For the Prince! FORWARD!”

„Rakh, Rakh, Rakh!”

- an Enforcer addresses their assigned Fist of Acolytes.

(On-the-spot division by the Master).

Black Acolytes (Rakh and Valun) - Virians

Black Acolytes are the cornerstones of the Black Dynasty. They are the army, the dark fist that strikes through the ranks of the settlers and sows fear in the hearts of the elementals. They call themselves either Valun if they fanatically follow the Prince and his cause, or Rakh if they yearn for the ancient way of the Essence. Ingame, however, every foot soldier is called an Acolyte to simplify coordination.

The Acolytes wear the symbol of their Circle, the Black Dynasty star inside their Circle’s wreath. They may also add their Order’s symbol, numerals under the Dynasty star. Make sure you know what Order your Circle belongs to for this.

*„We are strong, we are many, we are the Essence.”
- thousands of dark voices bathed in blue light*



HAND OF THE MASTER

SPECIAL MAGIC ROLES

Mirrors

Mirrors provide the respawn for the Circles.

Beyond respawn mechanics and other sinister magic, the Mirrors are tasked with creating role-playing opportunities for the Black Acolytes and, of course, for players nearby. They are mystical, mysterious figures who raise the Acolytes from the Essence, guide them in spirit and imbue their weapons and tools with powers from the Essence. They are also often seen in places of Essence and act much like an oracle.

Whilst the Correctors are entrusted with the control of the emotional and individual Acolytes, the Mirrors are those trusted by the Black Prince to mold and shape his people into the new era of the Dynasty. They experiment with and shape the Essence by the addition of emotions and feelings, attempting to create the vision that has been bestowed upon them by the Prince.

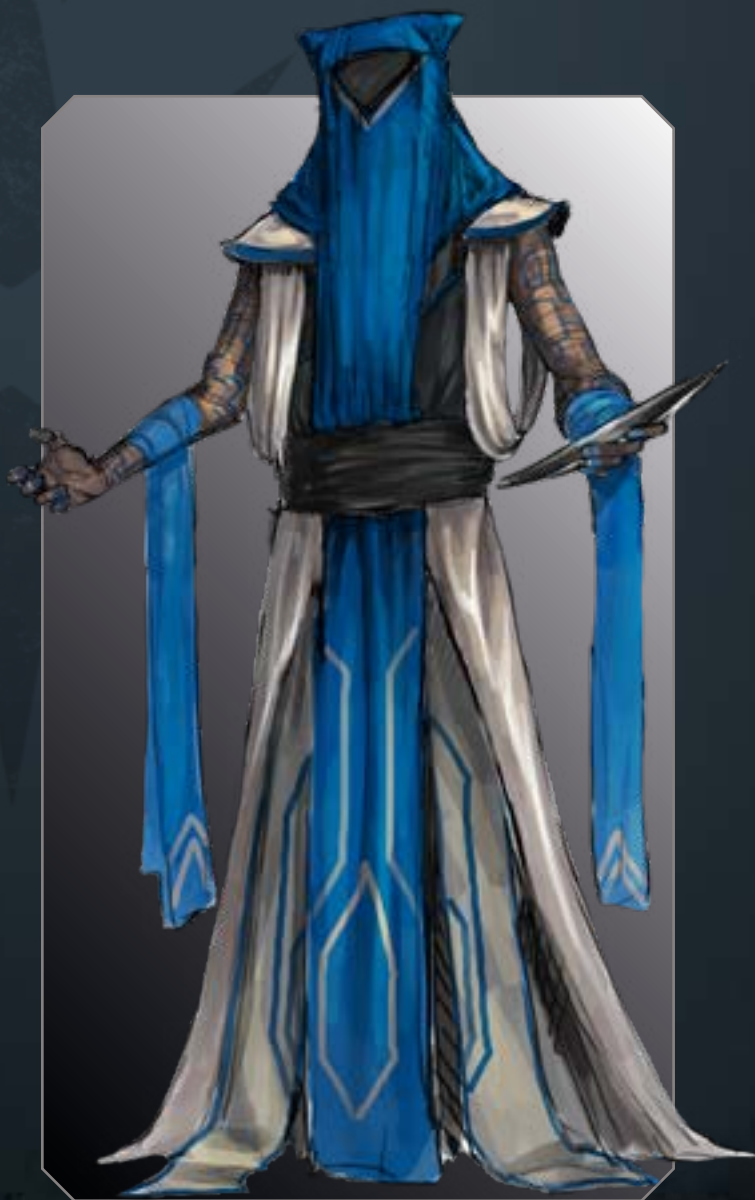
As they are the shapers of the Essence, they are also considered to have a deeper understanding of it, the mutation and the new creations. In that regard, they often act as benevolent guides and educators of young Acolytes.

Magic and its portrayal appear in further guide supplements. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the VBs at any time.

„Come, young Acolyte, you have much to learn. Come, let us go to the Essence Lake.“

- carefully, the Mirror forms an Acolyte

*(Application and acceptance
by the AP and VBs)*



MIRROR

The Black Corrective

The Black Corrective is the all-seeing eye of the Black Prince, which orders the Dynasty and constantly monitors its changes. Whether settlers or fanatics, everyone fears its intervention. Traditionalists hope to appease its members so that one day they can return to the Essence. Correctors are ubiquitous, giving speeches at the monoliths and steles to keep the Orders' morale high and to emphasize their own presence.

„Hold him down. I need to get into his chest with my tool. He will suffer great pain and will not tolerate it.“

- a Corrector speaks to his Overseer, ignoring the Acolyte

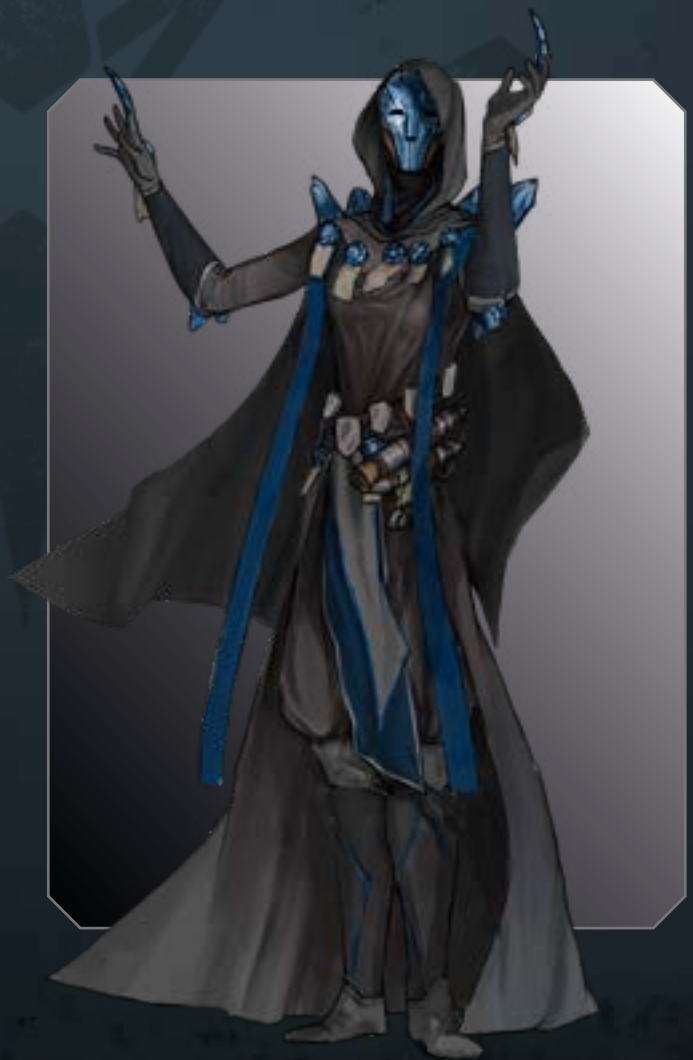
On the field, Correctors provide role-play through their interactions with Acolytes and also players should they dare to save a wounded player character left on the battlefield. Emotions changed by the Correctors should always be seen as a game offer to the players, either increasing or weakening an emotion for a short time, perhaps even extinguishing it. This mechanic can also help to rush wounded player characters back into their own ranks.

Magic and its representation appear in further guide supplements. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the VBs at any time.

„I learn from within you. I thank you, your body and emotions have done much for the Black Dynasty. Go now and kill your own. It is His will.“

- a Corrector to his subject, a settler

*(Application and acceptance
by the AP and the VB.)*



CORRECTOR

Overseers

The Overseers are the long arm of the Black Prince's Corrective and are deployed wherever the Corrective needs it. They ensure that the young, unsteady people remains united, orderly and motivated, despite the various currents that run through the Acolytes.

In the ingame camp, the Overseers support the Corrective and underline its menacing appearance; they are the executive of the Correctors and thus of the Black Prince.

On the battlefield, they subordinate themselves to the Circle as a supporting role-playing and fighting unit of the Corrective, or are briefed before battle that they are the vanguard on the field as their own Circle.

Some might call their function on the battlefield a "Kaleph wedge", a combat technique from ancient times.

In addition, the Overseers are known for their loud, rousing speeches praising the work of the Black Prince and keeping morale high in their own ranks.

„Overseer, this Acolyte displeases me. Back to the Mirrors with them. Smash their neck with your hammer.“

„Corrector, it shall be so.“

- an Overseer performs their duties

*(Application and acceptance
by the AP and VB.)*

Apprentices

Mirrors and Correctors are encouraged to have another caster of their kind at their side, preferably an Apprentice. Apprentice and fully trained caster can swap roles with each other. There is always an ingame trust relationship between the apprentice and the caster. Apprentices are excellent at playing out magic flubs that can lead to further play and also ingame conflicts between caster and apprentice. The role of the apprentice provides an excellent opportunity to introduce new performers to the role.

„I failed.“

„Try again. I will not tolerate failure.“

- a Corrector to their timid Apprentice.

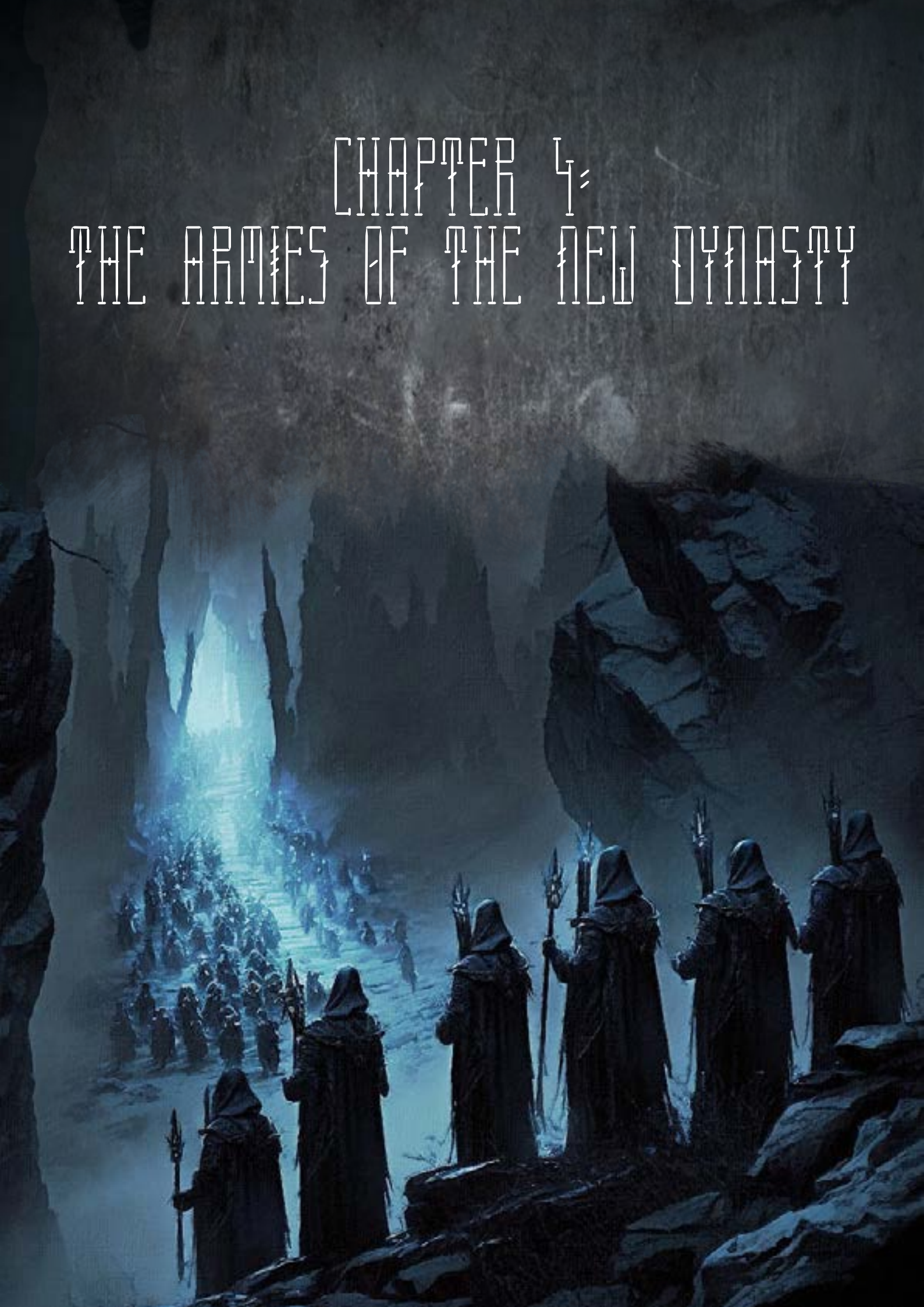
*(Application and acceptance
by the AP and VB.)*



OVERSEER

BLACK ACOLYTE

CHAPTER 4: THE ARMIES OF THE NEW DYNASTY



THE ORDERS

Several Circles (3 to 5) form an Order. An Order is commanded by a Grandmaster who is in contact with the Masters of the Circles on the field. Orders also provide the framework within which a Circle can define their own background and style. When we talk about the Orders, we will use the titles, e.g. Order of Viria, rather than calling them 1st and 2nd Order.

Order of Viria

- 1st Order - Home Order

The Order (of) Viria has been formed from especially pure Essence and is the shining protective wall of the Dynasty. These young individuals try to please the Prince by all means. Their armor is clean and often dark. Some Essence crystals can be seen on them, breaking the neat image, as well as crystalline jewelry and trinkets.

Once new lands have been claimed for the Prince, this Order begins establishing the new order that will once rule all of Mitraspera. They begin laying down the works of magic, stone, and Essence that truly make land their own, changing it and bringing it closer to perfection.

Order of Pulvis

- 2nd Order - The Expeditionary Order

The Prince's Expeditionary Order is exactly what the name promises. It is the Order that is sent into unknown territories to establish the new holds for their Prince, search for remnants of the Essence and of course to turn every stone in search for more crystal deposits.

As the Black Prince is furiously experimenting with the crystals and emotions to improve his people, the Order (of) Pulvis, also called Second Order, is sent to scour Mitraspera for them. Whilst this is one of the most important missions in the Dynasty, it doesn't come without risk.

The process of extraction and mining is incredibly complicated and dangerous. Many attempts have led to exploding crystals, leaving residue and shards on the Acolytes.



VIRIA

PULVIS

RELATIONSHIP OF THE MILITARY TO SPIRITUAL ROLES

While we encourage conflict play between the different roles of the Black Dynasty, it is important to consider the circumstances and implications of it. Generally, any kind of conflict play should be discussed beforehand with the SL (yellow bag and/or sash), or at least the Masters and Grandmasters.

While such conflict play can take place during down time or in a quiet moment between NPCs, ideally it would mostly happen when it can be witnessed by any number of players to give them more insight into the everyday life and struggle - and imperfections - of the Black Dynasty and its members.

Example: A Master or one of their Acolytes has to prove their devotion to the Dynasty and the Prince before the Black Corrective.

„An Acolyte saw that you spared a woman.“

„I made a mistake, I felt remorse.“

„We will see if you have softened, let me take a look inside you. If I find anything I don't like, I'll scrape it out of you.“

- a Corrector questioning an Acolyte

CHAPTER 5: VIRIA IN CHANGE - CULTURE, TRADITION, BEHAVIOR

*„The source of all evil; deep in the heart of the
dark lands pulses Viria!“*

*„This is Viria, the city of peace. A place where we could live out our
newfound passions, a place to study and do research. A place to live!“
- different views on the capital of the Dynasty*



THE PERVERTED LAND OF THE DYNASTY AND THE CAPITAL VIRIA

The Black Dynasty's homeland in Mitraspera has become a barren unnatural land due to the dark mercurial Essence that always flows through it, rarely solidifying into transparent blue, white, black and metallic Essence crystals.

The black and gray rocks that characterize the landscape are only broken up by Essence lakes, crystalline outgrowths, bulky black trees and cave complexes.

The exhalations of Essence are heavy in the air, like sticky liquid mist and dark haze, so that the land is always overcast and gloomy. The barren flora and fauna make a desolate impression. The few unsullied living beings in Viria's no-man's land must always be on guard against the merciless, creeping grip of the Essence.

"There, do you see it? The man-sized spider, crouching? Not the behavior of a hunter, but of a hunted creature. Do you see the Essence dripping from the trees, moving towards it, overflowing the monster? Unnatural screams and hisses, then silence.

Wait a moment. Yes, wait!

Now! Look! Now it lies motionless, the Essence is gone. Its eight eyes gleam blue, mandibles snap together, ready to serve its new masters. Flee!"

- an observation in Viria's no man's land

VIRIA

- The origin of all evil -

Viria, the proud capital of the Black Dynasty on Mitraspera. In its center stands the monolith of the Prince, a menacing blue glow emanating from it.

Since the Prince transformed the warriors of the Essence into Acolytes, Viria has also changed. Roads of dark stone run through the entire country, leading to Viria from all fronts and the numerous fortresses on the settlers' borders.

For the first time in eons the city is alive, for the warriors of the Essence no longer dissolve as they once did, no longer return to the Essence after a fulfilled task - now they must remain and watch eternally.

In addition to the many small surrounding monoliths and Essence lakes, geometric buildings, similar to Mesopotamian ruins, now stand in a circle around the Prince's monolith, where Acolytes camp or perform a craft. Here, the light-bringing gemstone masons carry out their work, shaping crystals into objects of art. The Acolytes of Viria wear these gems with pride! In addition, the jewelcrafters have perfected the ability to make some crystals sing so that they glow blue, bathing gloomy Viria in a mystical blue light. Every now and then you find Acolytes carrying these blue lanterns. The jewelcrafters prepare the powers of the crystals for the Correctors, so that the untreated crackling crystals do not burn them.

In addition, more and more mortal traits emerge in the Virians over time, such as breathing, eating, or sleeping. This in turn leads to luminous fungi farms being cultivated near the crystal mines and wells being drilled in Viria to satisfy the Black Dynasty's newfound need for nutrition. A settler would be hard pressed to describe Virian tastes, and for them the side effects of their food would be most unpleasant.

Another very unusual new phenomenon can be observed on the streets: There is hustle and bustle everywhere in the city. Since the Acolytes no longer flow back into the Essence after their use, they have to keep themselves busy when there is no task to be done. Conversations are held, practice sessions are planned, food and other everyday items are produced, etc. ... Suddenly a day feels much longer than it used to.

Similarly, at the smaller monoliths and stelae in Viria, one finds silent Correctors and their Overseers waiting to hear the Prince's word and obey it.

At the Essence lakes, the Mirrors and their apprentices gather. To preserve their bond with the transformed Essence, they bathe in the lakes and draw new Acolytes to awaken with the Prince's spark. Whilst the Mirrors' predecessors used to mold weapons directly from the Essence, this is no longer the practice. After the transmutation of the Essence, this has become too difficult. To assure that weapons and tools are still produced, and to have something to do, many Acolytes have taken up blacksmithing. Once crafted, worthy works of the Dynasty are taken to the Mirrors to be imbued with the Essence. Like the Acolytes themselves, they become part of the Essence, returning to it when destroyed, only to be conjured up again by the Mirrors when needed. More powerful than their profane counterparts, all things permeated by the Essence share a natural bond. An Acolyte's blade is a part of themselves, providing them with a natural mastery - all the more important now that the skill of the hivemind is but a distant whisper.

This new need for production is also the reason for Viria's deep mining system as many valuable crystals and natural resources lie far below the land through which the Essence flows. Among the recovered treasures are solidified Essence crystals which Mirrors are able to transform into liquid Essence.

Endless fields of crystals, arrayed in incomprehensible geometric patterns, cover the black land around Viria. Mirroring them under the surface are systems of mine shafts, lined by ever more crystals. After the Dynasty quickly depleted the natural deposits, the Black Prince has ordered to sow and harvest useful crystals in his domain.

Mercilessly the crystal rods drain the land's strength, letting the few remaining plants wither, and even the sunlight seems faint where they spread. Not even the land itself is spared, as they drain useful ores to grow. Harvested by servants of the Dynasty the crystals provide both material and magic powers for its war machine.

No fires burn in Viria's forges, which are filled by the sheen and pulsing light of the crystals.

Even in lands recently claimed by the Dynasty, Acolytes are driving crystal rods into trees and ground, devouring all resources for their expansion, until all that is left of once lively forests are ash and ever more crystal fields.

While the Dynasty demands more resources and thus more land to plant its crystals, a greater need drives its expansion. The more rare and powerful crystals allowing to harness and control emotion can not yet be grown. So the Prince has fanned the cold flames of war on all borders with great success, driving the settlers back, and having

his armies scour the land for deposits of this new weapon, wounding it with the deep shafts they drive into it.

With the individuality of each Acolyte, Viria remains constantly in flux as clusters of Circles form their own neighborhoods and contribute to the formation of Virian culture.

Viria is truly ever-changing!



THE FEAST OF THE GREAT AWAKENING

The darkest of traditions to emerge is the annual celebration of the Great Awakening.

The Black Prince addresses his people on this day and gives a speech, the Black Dynasty pays homage to him and asks him for his wisdom while he mingles with his people. Here as well, emotions are publicly bound into crystals, including those called Black Diamonds who hold and harness more positive and rare emotions.

Naming of the individuals

Every Acolyte can have a name by which they can be called. For many this is a new, unusual concept, for others a daily confirmation of their individuality. Many of the young Acolytes have yet to find a name.

As naming and individuality is a rather new concept in the Black Dynasty, there has yet to come a traditional way of naming. So far, the Acolytes have used their number within the order and categorized themselves after this.

However, with the need for individuality and validation, the Acolytes have begun using nicknames or something that ties them to their Order, e.g. “I am Pulvis 1.”

While Rakhs often base their name around the familiar numbering, the Valun tend to be more creative. Similarly, many Rakh use the plural “we” or “this Acolyte” to refer to themselves, as they are used to think of themselves as part of a group first. Valun are more comfortable speaking in terms of “I”.

THE PERFECTION OF BALANCE

- Virian “religion” -

If the Black Prince is the prophet and herald of the new order, the Collective of the Essence is the god that elected him as its champion. While the Prince may know fear, none could imagine him bowing to it. Yet, some may wonder whether he fears sharing the fate of his predecessor, should the Essence ever be displeased with his progress. The thoughts of the Collective span the minds of every servant of the Black Dynasty, too great for any individual Acolyte to comprehend. But they can always hear its distant choral whispering.

At the heart of the Dynasty is the struggle for perfect balance of emotion and logic. Emotion gives strength through the crystals, while cold thought provides wisdom.

Outside battle, Acolytes are seen in rituals spurring each other into ever new heights of emotion. In other places, through calm, meditative ceremonies, they listen for the whispering of the Collective, trying to glimpse at its wisdom and learning to control their emotion.

Few dare imagine the time when the Acolytes finally master this balance and how to stand against the Dynasty when that day has come.

DARK REFLECTIONS

- Assimilation in the Dynasty -

Maybe the most fearsome aspect of the Black Ice has been its ability to devour its enemies, taking away their innermost self, and make their strengths its own - assimilation.

The Dynasty may have different ways, but the change in the Essence has not freed Mythodea from this scourge.

In the past, worthy opponents were taken to the priests of the Black Ice, who poured the black Essence itself down their throats. Taking control of their bodies and minds, the victims immediately became drones of the Swarm, all traces of individuality consumed by the Essence. But the Dynasty's methods are even more insidious.

Not wasting any Essence on the body of the enemy - as no mortal body would be the equal of those formed from that substance itself - the Mirrors, priests of the Dynasty, only attack the mind. When worthy enemies are captured, they are forced to look into the black mirrors, seeing a dark reflection of what they could become if only they let go of their past and be initiated as Acolytes. With each glance into that darkness, the image in the mirror becomes more complete, and so does the seed of it in the victim's mind, slowly replacing it with the dark vision.

Until, finally, both are aligned, the Essence welcomes a new mind into its choir and a new Acolyte kneels before the Mirrors to receive their blessing.

Even those settlers liberated by their comrades will never quite forget the lure of their dark alter-ego. Often, Mirrors will even deliberately send their victims back before the process is complete. A short time with the mirrors will already let the dark image take temporary control of their body, and they are sent to infiltrate or even kill their former friends while this trance lasts.

CHAPTER 6: THE BLACK CORRECTIVE

„Hate is a very underestimated emotion.“



THE BLACK CORRECTIVE

- Wanted and unwanted emotions, and how to deal with them -

The Black Prince strives to awaken feelings in the Essence and to give each Acolyte individuality. He was only able to destroy the Amôn'Kharr, the controlling entity of the Essence, through his rage and fury, and he now wants to awaken these feelings in the Acolytes in order to forge them into even more powerful weapons.

To this end, he called into being the Black Corrective, a sinister sect to which the Black Dynasty now adheres. They aim to mold emotions in the Acolytes that are useful to the Prince. Emotions are often formed when an Acolyte is repeatedly raised by a Mirror, even if the nature of the emotion seems to be left to chance.

The work of the so-called Correctors is done in crystal ceremonies, cruel and painful but necessary rituals. Here, crystal seals are used to bind unwanted emotions or those that are out of control - a process that is not at all pleasant.

The Correctors constantly use fear, pain and delusion in the quiet moments before and after battle to arouse useful emotions in the Acolytes. The tortured screams of the victims of the Black Corrective often echo across the fields and sow fear in the hearts of the settlers. What being would do such a thing to its people? What being would willingly endure it?

While there can be exceptions, play involving the Black Corrective should mostly happen in between battles at ingame locations where players can witness it.

DESIRED EMOTIONS

- and how they are controlled -

The first feelings, emotions and sensations that arise in the once perfect warriors are dark, evil and destructive ones. This pleases the Black Prince, as they are quite useful for his cause. While fear of the invader's misguided deeds, for example, makes his subjects careful and protective of their fellow Acolytes, pain can create ever deeper, more sinister feelings like rage, that guide the Acolytes into battle.

Even though all Acolytes are united by their devotion to the Prince, two different currents have developed among them: those who want to banish their emotions into crystals to be rid of them entirely, and those who want to keep their emotions because they see strength in them.

The crystals that can hold the emotions are very specific, rare crystals, not equal to crystalline Essence. The Black Dynasty wants to control areas where these stones can be mined. The stones can sometimes be captured by players if the NPC likes to reward them, and are a resource for magic. Specifically prepared „empty“ stones can sometimes also „absorb“ players' feelings, or specially

prepared „filled“ stones can occasionally transfer feelings to players. Of course, this is only an offer for play and we will never force it on players; they can always decide if and how long they want to play around with the concept after a run-in with the Black Corrective.

As stated, the Black Prince has focused on nurturing destructive and dark emotions that can be channeled in the right ways. Many of these negative feelings are related, but differ in personal nuances, though they all strengthen the Dynasty. All Acolytes must have one of the desired emotions to express on the battlefield and in scenes with players.

These are examples of emotions desired by the Black Prince:

Rage, hatred, anger, resentment, irritation, disgust, bitterness, fanaticism, jealousy, envy, contempt, greed, cruelty, condescension, arrogance, etc.-most of them of course targeted at the settlers and the elements.

COMMON EMOTIONS

What all Black Dynasty Acolytes have in common is that they feel pain and even fear in various degrees of intensity and also have an irrepressible longing for order on the battlefield. While once they were all part of one hive-mind, an entity with thousands of bodies but a shared consciousness, now that they developed individuality, they also actively desire to be part of something bigger than themselves - a difference that they might not yet be able to comprehend. After all, a genuine desire for anything, really, is something that they have never had before. Equally confusing is the fear of dying; never before did they wonder if they might not actually be formed again from Essence to return to the land of the living.

While these thoughts and doubts usually get repressed on the battlefield, the Acolytes still struggle with them - and the resulting anger and confusion is being utilized to hit the enemy even harder.

Should any emotion, whether actively bred or outlawed by the Corrective, work against the Black Dynasty internally, it should always lead to play with the Corrective to create many interesting and educational scenes for players and NPCs. But ultimately, all Acolytes always feel brotherhood, a sense of unity, a sense of swarm, even amongst the fear and pain. This is what makes you a cult, an impenetrable wall of fanatics! Stronger than ever before! HUA!

OUTLAWED EMOTIONS

- Black Diamonds -

Once in a while, the Essence will give a newly formed Acolyte emotions that are commonly seen as good - and that are therefore entirely unwanted by the Black Dynasty: we're talking about love, forgiveness, friendship, and the like. Acolytes that are born with them are called Black Diamonds, and the second they realize their emotions, life will become tough.

Not only do they have to come to terms with these new conditions and deal with them, no, while they experience these drastic changes within themselves, they are mercilessly pursued by the Corrective, the entire rest of the Dynasty and even the Prince himself and his Guard - because everyone agrees that those with positive emotions are unnatural spawns.

But it's not only the fact that in the eye of the Corrective these Acolytes are damaged and

that there is a risk of these positive emotions spreading (just like pain and fear attract further negative feelings) - there seems to be something else happening. The Prince is obsessed with collecting the emotions of the Black Diamonds, as if they held the key for something greater ...

Emotions making a Black Diamond include: hope, love, compassion, trust, doubt (of the Prince and the Dynasty), love of freedom.

(Whether your character is allowed to take on this role/possesses these emotions must be clarified with the VBs and/or the Regie beforehand.)

CHAPTER 7: RESPAWN-MECHANIC

„You may be able to temporarily disable or even strike down one of our warriors, but you will succumb to the Circles!“

- An Acolyte, speaking what he knows to be true



The Acolytes of the Dynasty, like members of other battle NPC factions, do not die permanently but are brought back via a respawn mechanic to further advance the battle and plots.

Ingame, when an Acolyte dies, it bursts or melts back into unformed black Essence. Mirrors then collect the Essence and form almost exact copies of the fallen Acolytes since the Essence stores a tiny fragment of each member of the Dynasty in it. The copy has the same memories and emotions as before, hence ensuring that each Black Dynasty character can have continuous play and development.

However, going through the now mutated Essence again and again has its price: each raising changes the Acolytes of the Black Dynasty, makes them a little more mortal and brings forth new, dark feelings. For some this means they seek out the most dangerous missions for their Prince, to be changed further and further by the Essence when they fall, since they believe it is in

his interest. Others might dread or even fear the journey through the Essence, believing that it will eventually change them too much, make them too human or too emotional, too different from the perfection they once sought - or that they might lose a part of their new precious self.

Outgame, fallen Acolytes may, according to the situation, throw some black holi (dyed cornstarch or similar environmentally friendly material) on the ground where they fell to represent the Essence. While this doesn't make too much sense during bigger battles, it adds a nice touch in smaller scenes.

The location of the respawn is usually portrayed with the help of lights, mirrors, crystals, blue smoke and occasionally a fitting sound played through loudspeakers. If you have different ideas about how to create a good looking, immersive respawn, talk to your VBs.

FINAL DEATH IN THE DYNASTY

On paper, this concept seems like the Black Dynasty is an unbeatable foe since every time the warriors fall, they come back, angrier and stronger than before, creating wave after wave of enemies. However, not all Acolytes can be formed from the Essence again, some are lost forever. Reasons for this vary: sometimes the mind of an Acolyte has been damaged too much, or emotions have corrupted their memory so that the Mirrors can't sense it anymore; magic might have changed the Acolyte in their very, well, essence; players have found creative solutions and should be rewarded; a plot demands it and offers an ingame explanation.

An Acolyte that is completely annihilated, so much so that a Mirror is unable to grasp any remnant of consciousness or memory to rebuild, gets entirely lost in the Essence. For traditionalists, this is a dream come true, since they think it's the perfect form to exist in.

This is a special, intense role-playing moment, both for traditionalists and for the burning fanatics of the Prince. Entering the Essence is the supreme and usually unattainable moment for traditionalists, so when they learn

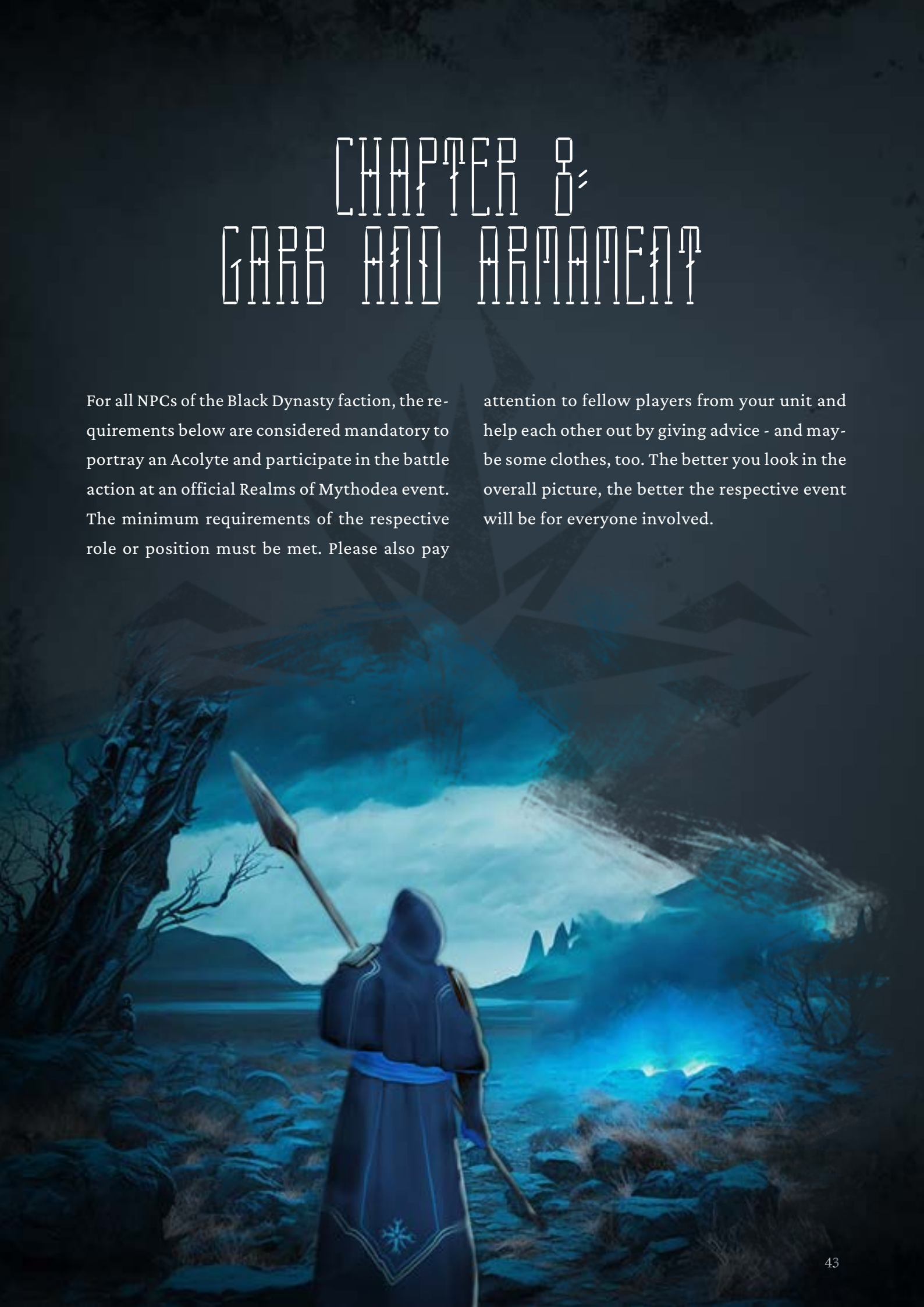
that one of their own managed to reach this goal, they will be filled with pride but maybe also with envy. Meanwhile, for fanatics it's a rough time because they are losing a precious comrade-in-arms, an Essence sibling, a friend out of the Dynasty lines, forever - something that can be paralyzing, considering that they are just starting to experience emotions like grief for the first time.

In the end, very few Acolytes die a final death. Most of the time, when a permanent death is happening, it's a special role whose story comes to an end because it advances the story. But if someone has another reason for their character to end (quitting the hobby, looking to create a different character, changing to another faction etc.), they might also choose to let them permanently die to create play for other NPCs or the players. Please remember to talk to your VBs if you plan your character's death and talk about the why, how and when to get the approval.

CHAPTER 8: GARB AND ARMAMENT

For all NPCs of the Black Dynasty faction, the requirements below are considered mandatory to portray an Acolyte and participate in the battle action at an official Realms of Mythodea event. The minimum requirements of the respective role or position must be met. Please also pay

attention to fellow players from your unit and help each other out by giving advice - and maybe some clothes, too. The better you look in the overall picture, the better the respective event will be for everyone involved.



BASIC REQUIREMENTS OF BLACK DYNASTY GARB

- Main colors are black and blue with silver accents.
- Mostly dark or darkened medieval armor, may include dark fantasy elements, inspired by cultists and black paladins.
- Old Black Ice garb can still be used with small changes and a slightly altered look, towards the Black Dynasty. If in doubt, check with your VBs.
- Special roles must meet the basic requirements of Black Dynasty garb in addition to their extended requirements/features.
- Since Acolytes are reborn from the Essence after they die, their outfits should look neat and clean (the wear and tear from their last battle before they fell lost in the Essence) - but there is leeway for this considering that the Black Dynasty is changing. Talk to your VBs about ideas on how to portray slight imperfections.
- Each Acolyte usually wears long flowing robes, even in a layered look over or under the robes from the NPC deals #TheDarkOnion.

- For inspiration for the style, think Red Templars from Dragon Age: Inquisition, the Wild Hunt from Witcher 3, or the Necromongers from Riddick.
- Good cultist portrayals can be found in the Sons of the Harpy cultists from Game of Thrones, or the silent dark Sith cultists from Star Wars.

Basic guides are written for the long term (approx. 5 years).

From the time of publication, the changes are to be adopted gradually until ConQuest 2024 at the latest. There will be goodwill especially in the transition phase.

THE BLACK DYNASTY SYMBOL

The Dynasty symbol must be visible on the front of every Acolyte, it may be painted, embroidered or otherwise drawn on the cowl/chest plate, or on a central panel of fabric between the legs, similar to a loincloth. A belt patch is also an option, but not quite as impressive and recognisable from a distance. An Acolyte is proud of their affiliation to the Dynasty!

The Order symbol (Dynasty numerals) may appear under the Dynasty symbol. Make sure you know which Order you are in!

Finally, the Circle symbol forms a wreath (laurel wreath, spiked wreath, crystal wreath) around the Dynasty symbol and ends to the left and right of the order number. The Circle symbol/wreath must be approved by the VB. Make sure you know which Circle you are in! The symbols may be worn several times on the body and also individually without the combination.

Each Circle must carry its own symbol combination (see above) on a banner into battle.



ORDER FEATURES

Order I/The First Order - Order (of) Viria - Home Order

The Virian Order wears mostly dark armor, more so than other Orders. Some translucent Essence crystals can take root and grow on their armor, breaking the neat image; there might also be crystalline jewelry and trinkets attached to it.

Crystalline Essence on the armor can be portrayed by using small foam trimmings, optionally made of LED foam with LED tape running through it, and painted white. Here you can also work with black light to make the pigments of the Second Order glow. Tighter-fitting trimmings of Worbla are also possible. Try to use this element sparingly, often less is more!

Crystalline pendants and trinkets can be amulets, bags of crystal dust and other small treasures that an Acolyte of the Order Viria may have attached to their armor or carry on their belt

Order II/The Second Order - Order (of) Pulvis - The Expeditionary Order

Neat asymmetry and burns on one half of the body (black with bright blue pigments) are the theme of this Order. Matching asymmetrical armor or armor worn on just one side can create a nice overall look for an Order. Asymmetry does not have to be present throughout the entire costume, but it is a desired element.

Burns on one side can break up the image and contribute to the asymmetry. Here we recommend to sparingly rub in blue glow-in-the-dark color into the folds, edges or waves of black clothing. This way, you can create a glimmering, sparkling effect, not a full-on glowing surface. Next to glowing structures (black light installations on the lawn or in the NPC camp) or glowing Acolytes of the First Order, it can have a stunning effect! Members of the second Order may also use soot marks as make-up.

Additionally, a role within the Order should be defined to set the concept of the Circle (e.g. Scouts, Tombs Guards of the Order Pulvis, or Paladins, Outer Guards, Armor Breakers of the Order Viria). This can help to create an individual garb framework, determine average armor levels and define small external characteristics to create an identity.

BLACK DYNASTY GARB OVERVIEW

Undergarment and footwear

MUST HAVE:

- Covered/camouflaged footwear
- Underclothing appropriate to the weather

NICE TO HAVE:

- Good ingame footwear
- Supportive socks

No Go:

- Light footwear (sandals, trainers), wrong colors etc.
- Barefoot
- Large areas of uncovered skin (leather straps do not count as covering)



Basic garments, head and face

MUST HAVE:

- Black Dynasty robe
- The symbol of the Black Dynasty boldly on the front of the robe
- Alienation of the face that fits the concept of the Order/Circle (hood, half-mask, mouth veil, helmet, black geometric lines painted on your face)
- One or more gemstone seals (especially for traditionalists)
- Plain trousers under the robe

NICE TO HAVE:

- Black geometric lines on the skin
- Piercing blue or black contact lenses
- Prayer plates, especially for fanatics (elongated octagonal shapes are preferred, but rectangular can also work)
- Bandages, gloves
- Combat skirts
- A braided band around the head to fasten a hood (black, blue, silver)
- Further layers of garments in onion-look; #TheDarkOnion
- Cowl
- A black or blue sash around the belly

No Go:

- No headgear
- No face alienation
- Beret, visible medieval headgear
- Visible „pirate shirts”
- Other non-style undergarments
- Other contact lenses without consultation
- Unadjusted facial prostheses

Notes basic garment:

Alienation of the face: something to cover the face, uniform in the Circle, as it is an identifying feature; uncovered faces carry black geometric lines on the face that must be fixated.

Robe: It is sufficient to wear the Deal Robe for starters, with the symbol of the Dynasty. This reflects the dark, mystical, cultist style, enhances the overall image and representation of the whole faction!

Symbol: The symbol of the Black Dynasty should be applied with great care and as neatly as possible (embroidery, painting, etc...), as there is a high emphasis on order in the game, which the garb should reflect. This is also a big difference to the Undead and the Skargen! Look for fine lines, continuous color gradients, and nice borders..

Geometric lines: When drawing black lines on your skin, make sure you are not allergic to the respective products, such as Jaguar Ink, black henna, waterproof make-up and make-up setting spray/powder.

Upper garment, armor, helmet

MUST HAVE:

NICE TO HAVE:

No Go:

- Increasingly burnished armor (European medieval, fantasy, paladin): Barbuta or similar, large shoulder plates with optional LARPsafe blade breakers, beard collar, striking breast plates, leg and arm tubes.
- Burnished chain mail (optionally with mouth guard)
- Silver/steel color accents

- Full leather armor (individual elements are fine)
- Armor of other races/cultures: Dwarves, Orcs, Elves, Asian, Oriental, Nordic
- Rust

Note on the armor:

For an Acolyte of the Black Dynasty there is no obligation to wear armor, it works just as well to represent a dark cultist, but should fit into the concept of the respective Circle/Order.

If armor is worn, we recommend the fantasy paladin look. Example: Closed Barbuta helmet, larger shoulder plates, conspicuous breast plate.

Weaponry

MUST HAVE:

- A main weapon corresponding to the concept of the Circle/Order
- Plain steel weapons
- Common: Crossbow, spears and long weapons, swords, maces, one-handed and two-handed hammers, shields (More rectangular shapes, tower shields, pavises)
- Rare: Axes and bows

NICE TO HAVE:

- Short woven bands in black/blue/silver at the pommels
- Dark weapons
- Plain ornaments, flourishes, depending on character (Valun/Rakh)
- Few/no wooden elements

No Go:

- Weapons of cultures that do not fit the Black Dynasty style guide example: katana.
- Wear, rust
- Round shields, fist shields



APPEARANCE OF THE SPECIAL ROLES

Grandmasters

A Grandmaster wears a silver crystal wreath (similar to the shape of a laurel wreath) and a small crystal back/shoulder prop containing the Order number in the center.

Chosen

A Chosen One wears a blue crystal wreath. They are armed at least as heavily as a Master. Chosen Ones are the highest warriors. They wear only the Black Dynasty symbol and their own wreath around it. There are Chosen spots that are subject to application. They have a special appearance that must be portrayed correctly.

Master

A Master wears a blue crystal wreath on their headgear. They also wear two painted besagews (axillary shields) and ornate fabric panels run underneath, a cloak tapered in the middle in black with blue accents, and the entire composite symbol is painted large on the back.

In addition, the garb of the Masters is the most elaborate of the Circle, depicts the features of the Circle more prominently and has an increased degree of armor. The appearance of the Master role is always coordinated with the VBs.

Hand of the Master

Higher degree of armor than the rest, features of the Circle more prominent, but somewhat less so than the Master. The Hand of the Master wears a painted besagew (axillary shield).

Correctors

Unarmored to lightly armored. Habit (long overcoat with hood). Predominantly black (little blue, little silver). Emotionless crystalline full mask. Many gemstone seals. Many prayer plates. LED gloves, index finger has a crystal outgrowth. This can glow to bind the emotion into a crystal when touched. The crystals could also manifest up the arm towards the shoulder, as if they were growing out of the skin of the Corrector. Remaining crystal seals to bind emotions and create role play. Application required.

Mirrors

Wear mostly blue and silver (little black). As an opposite to the Correctors, they are the only roles that do not wear gemstone seals and also show some skin that is interspersed with black geometric lines. They wear a long blue veil. Dresses and light clothes are appropriate here, similar to sirens or other mystical figures. Reflective surfaces or mirrors are welcome on the dress, fingernails, veils, etc. To represent magic, mirrors work with black food bowls and blue liquid, blue smoke bombs, mirrors, light sources, black holi powder and crystals. Application required.

Black Guard

Each guard wears a black overlapping cloak and the symbol of the Guard on the left side of the chest. The garb stands out from the others of the Dynasty, with elegant pageantry, many prayer plates, streaming fabric panels, trimmings and ornaments. They have a particularly mysterious and elegant appearance. Special features of the

Black Guard: A long ethereal face veil in blue. Their armament includes only fine, elegant spears, for they were once called the Black Spears. The Black Guard is at most lightly armored, for heavy armor would only hinder a guard in duels. Guards impress with their elegance and fighting skills. Where the Overseer wields the brute hammer, the Guards are artists with the spear. The concept of the Black Guard is reviewed by the VBs.

Overseer

They wear mostly black (little blue, little silver), are heavily armored and carry hammers into battle. All overseers wear a habit over their armor as a symbol of their status in the Dynasty and the Corrective. Typically, the habit is worn with an open front to show the impressive stature and armor of the overseers.

CHAPTER 9: PLAYING AIDS

*„Now I am... myself... and who are you? What purpose
do you serve for the Dynasty?“
- an individual awakens*



BASIC OVERVIEW

The play style of the Black Dynasty is „dark, cultist, mystical“ in the primarily cinematic sense. The game should mainly portray the malicious and fearsome side of an NPC faction. The Dynasty plays on the struggle with the newfound, alien emotions and evolution of the Dynasty’s people. Here the game takes its cue from the following references: Detroit: Become Human, I Robot, Ex Machina, Vampyre. What is explicitly important here are not the sci-fi elements but the actions, emotions and the inner struggle of the characters.

The appearance of the Black Dynasty is reminiscent of sublime beings such as dark elves, dark unmutated cultists and malicious paladins (for this, see the Red Templar from Dragon Age: Inquisition, the Wild Hunt from Witcher 3, the Sons of the Harpy cultists from Game of Thrones, The Dark Elves from Thor 2, or the silent, dark Sith cultists ... think choral singing!).

TRANSFORMATION OF THE BLACK ICE INTO THE BLACK DYNASTY

- ROLE-PLAYING FRAME FOR THE PORTRAYAL OF A BLACK ACOLYTE -

The common soldier of the Black Ice was played as a sublime, uncaring drone back then. For the Dynasty, this play style gets mixed up and updated.

Unlike the uncaring drone, Black Dynasty individuals now have to breathe, sleep and feel, and they also are getting exhausted. In the game, these changes can be met with confusion. “Why is my body doing this?” These changes slowly set in with each new embodiment (respawn) through the mirrors; while the hunger might just be a quiet thought in the back of the characters head in the beginning, with each reincarnation the need for food (and water and rest) might get stronger and stronger.

In the transformation to the Black Dynasty, the Acolytes lost the ability to resist toxins, and they also can’t lift 300kg anymore (the new form is more efficient to raise from the Essence).

The Black Dynasty remains a sublime people and its members do not clumsily insult enemies on the field, that would be beneath an Acolyte. Moreover, it is a military, orderly people. The Black Dynasty strives to stand straight in line, march and fight. At the same time, it is also okay to be exhausted outgame and to play with exhaustion ingame, we are all just LARPer after all and now more than ever, it is also logical that the Acolytes feel the same way!

The desire to see oneself as a part of a unity persists, but now individuality also plays a role. The Black Ice could be understood as an ant colony, the Black Dynasty is more of a brotherhood of soldiers. One is subordinate to the Black Prince and sworn in with one’s unit.

OF TRADITIONALISTS AND FANATICS

- WORLDVIEWS OF INDIVIDUALS -

The Black Dynasty knows two world views:

On the one hand, the traditionalists, who call themselves Rakh instead of Acolytes, are those who want to lose as quickly as possible any feelings that may arise. They miss the Essence in mass and perfection, and want it to remain as orderly and cold as it once was. They mourn the Essence in its original form, distrust and fear the new way and find it deeply confusing. The irony here is that it is precisely through their belief that they unconsciously experience and enjoy the new way! Feeling individual grief, hatred and anger makes them a „someone“, no longer a „something“. These traditionalists will have to learn that for themselves.

On the other side, there are the most ardent followers of the Black Prince, who proudly call themselves Valun. These fanatics relish in their newfound empowering emotions and long to receive more of them with each resurrection. They worship the Black Prince as their liberator, their savior from the restraints of the hive mind who is leading them to so much power! Some of them try to throw themselves into the ranks of the settlers especially often in order to transform and evolve more quickly.

The Black Corrective keeps these two opposites, each highly dangerous in their own way, in check. There are, of course, (ingame) conflicts under the surface among the Acolytes of the Black Dynasty.

The Black Corrective controls the Black Dynasty through banishing emotions into suitable gemstone seals. These crystals are extremely valuable and are collected, revered, worn like jewelry or sometimes even worshiped!

!Attention!

Ingame friction is there to tell a story, create a deeper background for the faction and provide more drama for the NPCs and players; not to drive a real outgame wedge between the groups!

Ingame enemy = Outgame friend!

Outgame, you should get along well as Black Dynasty members. This will be briefed before/at every event and mentioned by the leadership roles every now and then. If you are not sure about a conflict you want to play upon or are afraid you stepped over a line in a scene, don't be afraid to have a calm conversation with the people involved during a quiet minute over a cool drink or a cookie.

A Valun's first thought

Today is a good day, my first day!

The Black Prince formed me from the Essence, a part of Himself and something foreign. I was created in His image to fight in His name!

Here I am, one of thousands of Acolytes, existing, willing, feeling... for the very first time!

What do I feel deep in my breast?

I hate those who stand in the way of the Prince's great moves!

I distrust those who have not emerged from the Essence!

I adore His glory and strive to be a better instrument to Him, to be more like Him in all my facets!

It is glorious to be! I thank the Prince for this, my, opportunity!

The feelings flow through me like cold fire!

Oh could I but hate more, to be an even better tool!

For He broke the chains that bound me, through Him

I MAY be.

HUA!

A Rakh's first thought

Today is a day, today I exist.

The Black Prince formed me from the Essence, a part of Himself and something foreign. I was created in His image to fight in His name.

Here I am now, one of thousands of Rakhs, existing, having will, feeling ... the very first time.

Why do I feel, why does it not stop, why am I flawed now!!!?

I miss being part of the Collective Essence!

I fear my own actions, but the Prince will know what to do!

I adore His glory and strive to feel less, to become merciless and cold!

The Prince demands this state, so I will serve His great plan!

I hope the feelings will not distract me.

For He took away the chains that guided me, through Him I MUST be.

HUA!

IN GENERAL, REGARDING FANATICS AND TRADITIONALISTS:

1. The traditionalists want to get rid of their feelings, and while it would make sense ingame for the Black Corrective to take them away, for dramaturgical reasons they will not.
2. The same goes for the fanatics. They want to keep their emotions, but for dramaturgical reasons, the Black Corrective will keep taking them away.
3. Those who want to experience intensive role-playing can quarrel with these motives and continue to be distressed ingame.
4. Everyone may decide which way to play with emotions.
5. You don't have to throw yourself too deeply into the struggle game yet, you can slowly ease into the intense role-play! It is always a can, not a must.

HOW DOES A DYNASTY ACOLYTE BEHAVE, HOW DO YOU CREATE PLAY FOR YOURSELF AND THE PLAYERS?

- Be stoic, calm and sublime. Speak only as many words as necessary.
- All Acolytes respond to being called ‚Acolyte‘. In addition to that, traditionalists will react to Rakh and fanatics to Valun.
- Available emotions can be played out with wonderment to generate play for others. From the list of available emotions (found under the item: The Black Corrective), the respective NPC chooses one and then very slowly brings it into play. This approach to the game is not intended to be ridiculous. Dark emotions can be chosen freely, light, positive emotions are extremely rare and have to be coordinated with the organization.
- Players who get positively involved and respond properly to the play with emotions should be rewarded with player successes and background information on the Dynasty.
- Should a player receive a crystal through role-playing with an Acolyte, it acts as an offer for role-play. Carrying the crystal could potentially strengthen the corresponding emotion inside the new bearer - or make it so the new bearer gets overwhelmed by it. Players and NPCs can decide in which direction they want to take the role-play offer.
- After 24 hours at the latest, every crystal loses its effect if it is not in the hands of the Black Dynasty. Of course, there are a few powerful exceptions to this.
- Emotions that are locked in a gemstone seal can no longer be felt by the individual of the Dynasty. This absence of the emotion in question is also to be understood as a role-play offer. Should players point out the loss of certain emotions to the Acolyte, they should be rewarded with a reaction of remorse, grief, anger etc.
- In some aspects, vague memories of the old days can be integrated into role-play, especially by traditionalists: the golden age when all were still one and united in the Essence. But the memories increasingly feel like those of a different person.
- Why would a traditionalist never rebel against the prince who took away perfection and gave them feelings? Easy: The collective will of the Essence has chosen him as their leader. Rebellion itself would be the supreme crime against the Essence and thus unthinkable!
- This situation is monitored by the watchful eyes of the Black Corrective, ready to rearrange these feelings for the greater good of the Dynasty! At the same time, the Black Prince holds the key to the return to the Essence, the goal of every traditionalist. Every traditionalist longs for the return into the Essence, the highest reward after fulfilling their service to the Prince!

WHAT DOES A DYNASTY ACOLYTE DO WHEN NOT ORDERED INTO BATTLE?

- Go on a pilgrimage to the Black Dynasty ceremonies that will take place at steles, monoliths and crystals.
- Listen to a sermon from the Black Corrective and the Mirrors, or seek advice from them in person to be able to deal with the new, confusing feelings and, of course, fail again.
- Go to the Black Library, write down information there, learn the new script ingame and include players who play into it (invited, snuck in, etc.) and choose selected pieces of script and carry them (have them with you when you fall in battle) out into the game. Players are treated in a relatively „neutral“ way, but in the end they pay a price, so that the hostile image is still maintained. More on this in the Compendium.
- Seek moderate conflict with the other factions that are part of the dark alliance.
- Question player characters to amuse players.
- Approach the Black Corrective and be tested, if necessary allow them to intervene and make you better, for the good of the Dynasty!
- Stand before the Black Monolith and praise His Glory, the Prince! Ideally together!
- Harvest crystals that are collecting magic powers from the land, and transport them around
- Work on such crystals to make them useful for the Dynasty.
- Learn and perform a craft, often using crystals as a resource or component. Present worthy results to the mirrors to be imbued with Essence.
- Participate in rituals trying to increase each other's emotions.
- Meditate and chant, listen to the whispering thoughts of the Collective in the Essence, learn to control your emotions.
- Remember, while no player is in sight, think of what you're doing as a „theater rehearsal“ and simply repeat it again when a player sees you! Always assume when you are on the field or in the ingame camp that a player is secretly listening/ watching you. If you want to take a break and drop out of character, please visit the outgame locations for that.

HOW DOES THE BLACK DYNASTY VIEW THE OTHER FACTIONS?

The Undead Flesh

Beware Death made flesh!

They know honor and have long used hate as a weapon. This must be studied. But do not lose yourselves in hatred as they do! They will be our allies until our goals misalign.

Skargen

Let the savages blaze a trail for us. There are many lessons to be learned from their ruthlessness. Their quest for strength is like ours for advancement within the Dynasty.

And yet they seem like settlers, even if there is something different about them. Do we underestimate them? Those who underestimate the Skargen should seek out a Corrector and ask for an intervention.

Family of Doubt and the Oily Pestilence

Two dying cultures.

And yet they exist, the settlers are unable to eradicate them completely.

Perhaps there is something to learn from them, but keep your distance.

They have become what the Prince saved us from.

Settlers

Be their false friend, or their most bitter enemy! Our culture will replace theirs, their people will be absorbed into ours, or forgotten in time. Learn from them, guide them on the right path.

But if together they stand bitterly against you, then stride gracefully through them. Do not forget! You are young, but you will take our world back from them.

CHARACTER QUESTIONS

Answer the questions for your character for more fun and depth in the game:

1. What name have I chosen for myself?
2. What feeling has filled me more often lately? Which emotion from the catalog do I want to play on and how? How does this particularly intense emotion run through everything I do?
3. How do I like to feel? Am I a traditionalist or do I burn fanatically for the new individuality? What are the advantages of this feeling for me? And what are the disadvantages?
4. What is my secret? What do I secretly want to experience as a new individual? What excites me about my newly acquired existence? Am I proud of the burn marks I wear or do I find them ugly?
5. In a minute of doubt, would I rather go to a counseling Mirror or ask a Corrector for an intervention? Choose one and explain why!
6. What do I think about the settlers? What is my view on them? Can they be learned from, used, or would a world without settlers be a better one?
7. What am I afraid of (This is new and strange for me, so it's a secret - of course I will let it slip by accident at some point)? Do I find the process of eating creepy? Do I enjoy it? Does breathing scare me? Am I afraid of something „normal“? Is fear generally a problem for me? Am I afraid of the mines or the crystals?
8. Do I burn for battle, or do I find it regrettable that the Black Prince's goals can only be achieved through destruction?
9. How do I feel about the Black Diamonds with their rare, positive feelings? Fascinating and sad, or despicable and unnatural? Is there a danger of contamination, or am I just wishing for it?
10. What do I hope for in my future? Do I want to rise up the ranks and become more, or am I content with the position bestowed upon me by the Prince?

CHAPTER 10: BATTLE BEHAVIOR

“He is the Prince, for Him we will fight!”



The Black Dynasty is one of the battle NPC factions. It presents a large, impenetrable front to the settlers. Fighting in rank and file, the Black Dynasty is more orderly than the other NPC factions, here the military aspect is strongly emphasized compared to the decaying corpses of the Undead Flesh, or the savage Skargen.

You are not on the field to win, but to deliver great battle play to the players. Your leaders and SLs (Spilleitung/Game Masters), and in some cases the Battlemasters, will give you input on how much you should endure in each case, and how much pressure each battle needs. The respawn units, in consultation with the SLs, will ensure an appropriate deployment frequency, so that sometimes the players have more chances against you and sometimes they lose - depending on the dramaturgical requirements of the story. As a rule, you know how the battle will/should end before you go out.

Sometimes the players must win the battle to further the story and sometimes they must lose.

However, even in a situation where the players lose, they can “win” an experience. Typically, this will be in the form of an NPC rewarding great play, with an emotion crystal, some info, a Dynasty artifact or maybe even more play through a prison scene.

The only thing left is to play nice! If you are hit, show a reaction, show (the new and surprising for you) pain, involve your opponent in play accordingly and you will notice that the players will start to play along. From time to time you will be confronted with individuals who will not play along: Don't let them upset you, don't let your performance suffer and play on calmly.

Here are a few more tips:

- Do not interfere in duels, but give the duelists space, perhaps you will cheer them on and thereby elevate the scene!
- Try to assess your opponents. If they seem outgame shy or afraid, try to encourage them by playing slower and more obvious. Give them the chance to be a hero!
- Reward good play from the players, remember you are playing with each other, not against each other!
- When the players play to support one of their own as a hero, support their portrayal with a bit of awe so that the role has an appropriate effect on all sides. Players will start to do the same for the NPC side!
- Try to fight nicely: lunge, give players a chance to block or dodge. Flailing or waving your weapon quickly is not nice.
- Endure damage according to your armor and then die nicely, players will love you for it! You'll certainly get a feel for this quickly if you haven't already!
- A shield wall is not meant to be a test of strength. It can be immensely rewarding when players get to break a shield wall. Don't be afraid to give the players the satisfaction.
- If there is a problem during battle (e.g. people repeatedly fighting unsafely), please report to the leadership roles and do not start an argument or discussion on the field. These leaders will then talk to the SLs or the players involved after the battle. You can of course address urgent matters or quickly resolve smaller issues - use your own judgement to keep things safe and enjoyable for everyone in the scene.
- While marching, as a good Acolyte, make sure to march in step. The clanking of plate armor is music in your leader's ears. The word Rakh may be said while marching to announce the dark Orders on the battlefield.
- Should your character be captured by the settlers, keep in contact with SL or your leaders to decide how long you should play along. If the captivity takes too long, does not help the story/scene or you feel out of your depth, your character (sometimes dramatically) dissolves back into the Essence. It has noticed you are no use in your current situation and returns you to the Dynasty.

COMMANDS AND COMMON BLACK DYNASTY MANNERS

<i>Hua!</i>	Acknowledgement of orders, agreement
<i>Rakh!</i>	A tradition from ancient times, often murmured or shouted while marching on each left step
<i>Common orders:</i>	
<i>Rakh Vhor</i>	<i>Line up/march formation</i>
<i>Rakh Rhun:</i>	<i>Forward march</i>
<i>Rakh Deleen:</i>	<i>Halt</i>
<i>Rakh Harnak:</i>	<i>Battle Formation/Attack</i>

FINAL WORDS

Please note that this guide is only an introduction to the basic structure of the Black Dynasty. The detailed versions on culture, garb, individual special roles, etc. can be found in future guide supplements and larger works.

Finally, it only remains for us to thank the fantastic community for their diligence and patience. Special thanks go to those of you who

have helped in one way or another in the creation of these guides.

May the Black Prince watch over you!

The Regie team, the VBs and the creatives

If you have any questions or suggestions, you can always contact those responsible at

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Alternatively, leaders, VBs and the organizers are always available on the events themselves.

IMPRINT/LEGAL NOTE

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