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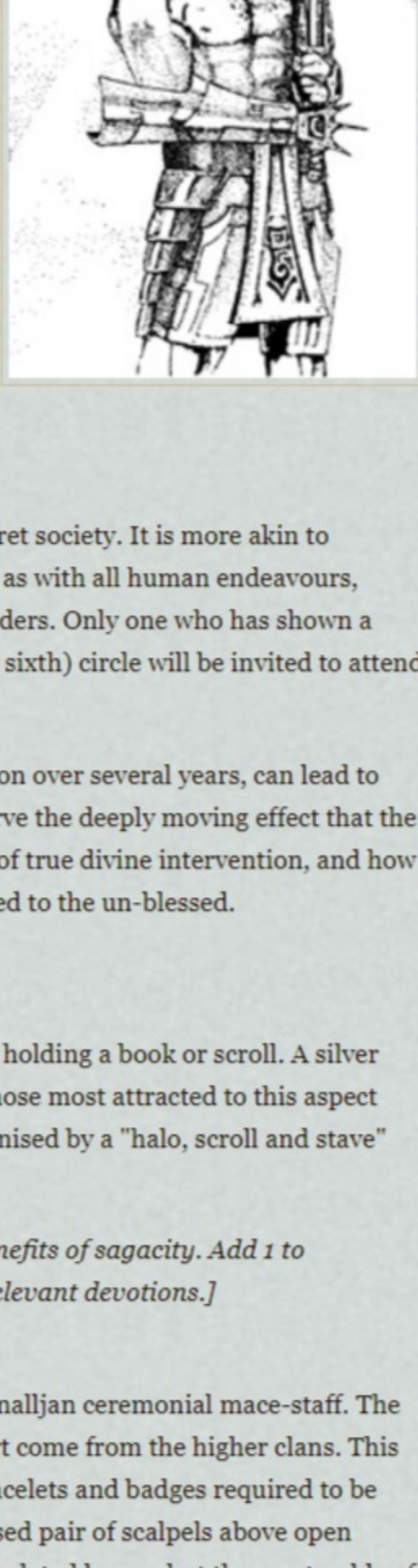
The Forty-Seven Names of Thúmís

Beginning a short series in which David Bailey sheds light on the god's various aspects and suggest how TIRIKELU rules may take specialised worship into account.

[True Tékumel Devotees will know that this will be superseded by Mitlanyal when published, but this article has been tailored to users of the TIRIKELU rule system while the canonical text is written.]

Worshippers of Thúmís, as with all other gods, tend from an early age to show signs of being aligned to a particular aspect or feature of their patron. People don't usually develop strong preferences early in their lives, but there comes a time when many decide to adopt a stricter pattern of devotion.

Tsolyáni religions don't evangelise, and are really quite secretive. For instance, not all worshippers will know all of the names of the aspects of their chosen god. The vast majority will know only of the Outer, or public aspects; knowledge of the Inner Aspects is restricted to devotees. The knowledge of the first rank of the inner shrines will be restricted to those admitted to membership of a temple, or to a few ritual or scholar priests in each town. Knowledge of the deeper mysteries and the secret shrines is closely guarded, known only to their members and to the high priests of the temples in which they occur (and sometimes not even to them). In order to conceal the inner and secret aspects from the outside world it is common for one to adopt lay or initiate fellowship of a 'public' aspect and to profess that as one's calling. It is generally accepted that badges of less common aspects are worn discretely, but can be worn in daily life. (It is interesting to contrast this with the temple of Ksarul where the inner aspects are unknown to even the high priests of large temples, and where no visible signs of affiliation are worn outside the temple.)



The worship of a particular aspect is not the same as membership of a secret society. It is more akin to choosing to attend the morning service instead of the evening service. Yet as with all human endeavours, those of like mind will tend to socialise and act together and exclude outsiders. Only one who has shown a preference and who has achieved at least the third (sometimes the fifth or sixth) circle will be invited to attend meetings of worship and discussion.

Full acceptance of the inner doctrine of a chosen aspect, and active devotion over several years, can lead to real blessings being conferred by the god. Even the most cynical can observe the deeply moving effect that the Ceremony of Blessing has on devotees. How much the blessing is a result of true divine intervention, and how much is a result of intense, punishing and well tutored study is not revealed to the un-blessed.

The Outer Aspects and Their Shrines

The Sage of the Almighty Gods

The First Aspect is represented by a seated, scholarly figure in grey robes, holding a book or scroll. A silver staff is in his other hand and a silver and gold halo spins over his head. Those most attracted to this aspect tend to be politically motivated and yet scholarly. They can often be recognised by a "halo, scroll and stave" cloak or kilt-pin.

[TIRIKELU: Worshippers closely associated with this aspect gain the benefits of sagacity. Add 1 to Reasoning and Cleverness after several years' prayer and study of the relevant devotions.]

The Staff of Beneficence

The Second Aspect is pictured as a raised Engsvanyali or (rarely) late Bednalljan ceremonial mace-staff. The same emblem is worn as a badge by most adherents, who for the most part come from the higher clans. This may be because of the great cost of the steel, silver, sapphire and ivory bracelets and badges required to be worn by worshippers even in the lowest Circles. (It actually depicts a crossed pair of scalpels above open scissors). The expense of the robes of Master Surgeons is not to be contemplated by any but the most noble of birth. Members jealously guard their knowledge of surgery and non-magical healing in a way quite unlike most other aspects.

[A Master Surgeon will have the ability, once each month after fasting and rituals, of doubling their skill. With this they may even be successful in excising cancers or of repairing damage made untreatable by bodedged magic. Large fees are the norm for this service.]

The All Seeing

Devotees of the Third Aspect wear a cloak of grey with three hundred and sixty human eyes embroidered on the hem. The pattern of colours of the eyes reveals a lot about the wearer's preferences, status and role in the Temple! It appeals to students of the study of man, (some would say spies and gossips) and is held as a slightly lesser calling by the others. In reality there are several powerful members of the Intelligence arm of the OAL who subscribe to the doctrines.

[The blessing won is of a low level of clairvoyance, ensuring the worshipper is never surprised. (Act d6-2 initiative stages before event). Devotees are known as uncanny investigators with a knack of having the right 'hunch'.]

The Lord of Wisdom

The Fourth Aspect is the most common and, in effect, the central doctrine of modern Tsolyáni worship of the god. The ubiquitous statues of the Grey Lord writing a scroll are the sign of this aspect; the sign of quill and scroll is the more portable badge of membership.

[Members gain scholarly specialist skills, or knowledge of the arcane at half of normal tuition costs from fellow members, and can join especially intense study groups to learn in reduced time.]

The Inner Aspects and Their Shrines

The Brother of Supernal Wisdom

The Fifth Aspect is shown as a young scholar, but deflecting a black dart with the palm of his hand. The 'hand and dart' badge is not normally worn openly. Followers tend to be of a military leaning, specialists in historical battles as well as active legionaries.

[Followers progress to blessing faster in serving legions, where the ceremony is often conducted before the first battle a member reaches after induction. Once blessed a follower will be more courageous and honourable in any stressful situation, and gain benefits similar to low levels of 'control of self'.]

The Victorious Globe

In a few sanctums a levitated featureless silver sphere marks the shrine of this, the Sixth Aspect. How this is achieved is known only to the most enlightened worshippers. The calling reaches cartographers and mountaineers most often. The arcana give knowledge of the celestial spheres and the ways of the moons and planets. A few of the most blessed are claimed to be able to rise from the earth at will, but only when the stars are in favourable alignment! Many claim that worship gives protection from dangerous falls.

[Followers take only half damage from falls, and escape miraculously unhurt from any fall by rolling 1 or 2 on a d20.]

The Ivory Staff

A staff of old, cracked, dzor ivory is usually given as the sign. Other similar materials are often used. It espouses the path of true healing, specialising in the rarest and most dangerous conditions. Its adherents are equally likely to be sorcerers or surgeons, and are rarely admitted before the fifth circle.

[Members of the outer circles can usually find a colleague to lend them any article needed for healing (at a price); those initiated in the inner mysteries of life have increased chances of healing and revivification (+2 and +1 respectively)]

The Lintel of Granite

A simple three piece granite arch holding up the blue sky is placed at the entrance to the shrines of this aspect. Devotees wear an enamelled badge with this motif, and do so proudly. Many of them are guards and soldiers. Those blessed, in a ceremony which involves "joining the arch", are found to be toughened and rugged.

[Roll all stamina checks required because of wounds or intoxication twice and take the best. The deepest secrets of the aspect, which are obtained through especially meritorious service to the Temple, give a once a day 'guarding' spell for objects and structures which is always cast correctly.]

The Hidden Seeker of Eternal Knowledge

A small sect whose adherents are cloistered book-worms and curators of ancient things. As one may suspect, they are accorded profound respect by the rest of the Temple. They display a bas relief of a scholarly face with ritual head-wear of the Imperial Library of Engsvan hlaGanga. A few may be found outside the Temple in pursuit of 'that special something'. All of the members display an innate 'sense of magic', whether this is a blessing or a prerequisite is not known!

[After a few years one would be able to correctly identify three quarters of all magical items as being magical (though not how to use them or repair them) without further assistance, and to make a good guess at the provenance of most items of one chosen type (i.e.: vases from Jannu).]

The Fountain of All Knowledge

Often dismissed as a parlour trick, the mercury fountain found in the portico of such shrines is indeed 'showy'. A necklace or gorget collar in the form of a spray of silver arcs is more subtle. The aspect is favoured by more women, and younger, than many others. Followers are usually middle-clan and active in business, society or travelling parties. Followers displaying an uncanny knack of identifying the origin of any stranger, and usually their profession and main skills, they are often found advising others.

[At higher levels, adherents have 66% chance of success. Sorcerers can try to resist this disclosure as if it were against a spell cast at twelfth level]

The Knower of Arts

Sculptors and artists flock to these shrines, and the worshippers do a fine trade in small objets d'art as well as acting as brokers and appraisers. Many of the Empires finest artists have had a passing acquaintance with this aspect. The shrines are always well decorated, and tradition tends to place a large abstract sculpture as a centre piece. The costume of the worshippers tends away from the sombre tones of the Temple, much to the displeasure of the current Grand High Priest!

[All who follow the muse's call consider themselves blessed, but a few of the initiates are especially gifted. Followers have a ten percent chance per year of gaining the ability to double their effective level of any performance or artistic skill for a period of one to twelve months. Every performer is entitled to be a star once.]

The Preserver of Wisdom

Similar in many ways to the 'Hidden Seeker', this aspect is concerned with preserving and disseminating knowledge, rather than acquiring or assessing it. They form the core of the library service, and are renowned for their beautifully illuminated, embossed and bound works. Production of such a work is required for membership.

[The secrets of the aspect involve preservation of the written record (equivalent to five additional ranks of curator skill), and oratory (three more ranks). Higher circle members, say twelfth or more, can raise their Intelligence by 1 after one month of intense rituals (during which time they are unable to do anything else. (Fifty percent chance, failure reduces Stamina by 1, critical failure leads to several months in the asylum).]

The Benign Hands

Symbolised by two outstretched hands, one holding a scroll case, the other a phial of clear liquid. The aspect is involved in charitable deeds, alms and healings. It is also one of the chief 'recruitment' bodies for the lesser legends, encouraging the poor and dispossessed to seek glory in this life. Many poor non believers wear the sign of two open hands as a declaration of gratitude to the sect. It was once fashionable for the noble clans to wear the sign as indicative of their charitable nature, but this is currently not so.

[The inner doctrines impart healing abilities and spells to members: once a day any healing of injury or wounds by skill or magic has the fullest possible effect and fewest side effects. Devotees also have a chance (ten to thirty percent, GM decides) of pacifying any person or creature, even an injured and enraged zrne, if they honestly do not intend harm to it.]

The Guide on All Paths

The various clans of navigators, caravaneers and guides swear oaths on the little silver cross (shaped like the road sign at a cross-road) which marks this aspect. The shrines are well, if not spectacularly, endowed in all parts of the Empire and beyond.

[Grand Navigators and High Cartographers of the inner shrines gain up to five levels of their crafts from studies in secluded seminaries. Junior faithful have good sense of direction and are right about nine times out of ten about ground and seven out of ten below. GM can modify for terrain, etc.]

The Reliever of Affliction

Whenever a sick child is healed, offerings to this aspect are appropriate. The symbol is generally that of a water jug with pearl and silver handles. The aspect is a favourite of village priests and the rural poor. The midwives and birth helpers of the temple often come from this sect.

[True believers find themselves blessed (often at an unexpected time) by a peculiar pallor of the fingers. They become better at healing sicknesses (as for Benign Hands, but for diseases).]

The Lord of Markets

The natural calling of the devout merchant classes, and one which has an enormous following in the southern regions and large river towns. The symbol is of a pair of silver balances, or more rarely a stylised head of doun grain.

From an early stage membership confers the benefits of a trade association, and there are said to be ways taught of bargaining and appraisal of goods.

[The inner temple blesses its devotees with the ability to judge one long term project each year correctly for its business value, although considerable periods of meditation are required, and several members may be involved in the one decision. (85% chance)]

The Artful One

Swordsmen and weapon smiths form the bulk of the devotees, placing an icon of a silver dagger being drawn from a piece of slate or grey stone around their necks or in their forges. It is an especial favourite of Warrior-Priests. Blessing is rarely before the sixth or even seventh priestly circle. Similarly to the devotees of the Knower of Arts, smiths can find themselves able to produce truly fine pieces when touched by the cool hand of their god. In displays of pure skill, and perhaps even in the arena, blessed devotees can produce a move of legendary finesse

[This may be attempted for any one action in a single engagement or display. Discuss with GM or write down your desire before the roll. Roll under priest skill less any warrior levels; success ensures that the desired result is obtained. At no time can the maximum damage that would have been possible from skill and weapon be exceeded, nor can other rules be breached. If successful, remember that this will affect reputation!]

The Scribe

Either painted or sculpted and coloured, the sign of the, charcoal stick (in silver holder, against a parchment ground) is certain to lead one to a scribe of care and skill. Followers practice the core business of the Temple, and are therefore generally under-regarded by most other worshippers. It is one of the rare ways that a person of less noble birth can raise themselves to better things.

[Devotees gain new current languages at twice the rate of other students, blessed scribes may find themselves fluent in a tongue of the ancients (ten percent chance once each year of membership to gain two to five levels). For some this can lead to fame and fortune, but for others it can lead to long travels and the purging that comes before greater glory.]

The Dispellor of Illusion

A group devoted to piercing the vale of illusion that covers the world. Their sign is a silver lantern, sometimes placed behind a gauze curtain. This aspect is popular with sorcerers of the more active sort.

[Blessed followers have a fifty percent greater chance of perceiving illusions, fakes or forgeries than they would normally have, but which is exhausted by being used more than four times a month. At higher levels the aspect's blessing is given in the form of additional spell casting points (2d20 after relevant years of devotion)]

The True Mirror

Imperial Investigators, tax inspectors, fortune tellers and gatherers of information all assemble in the shrine of the mirrored cube. It is said that the inside of the cube is not mirrored, and that demons can be trapped within it. A quaint ceremony each year smelts the old mirror and then traps the light from a small candle within the new cube.

[Blessed followers have a fifty percent better chance of realising a lie or falsehood than they would otherwise have. This skill is exhausted if used more than four times in one month.]

The Knower of Spheres

Symbolised by a fabulous sculpture of interconnecting spheres, arcs, and lines these shrines are devoted to knowledge of the denizens of the planes beyond. Rare, hidden and not often spoken of, these shrines are a wonder to the eye. Members of this sect know of the demons of the essences of stability, and concentrate on dealing with them.

[The most blessed members can navigate through the planes beyond, and have a bonus when dealing with demons (fifty percent for those with the essences of stability, but only ten percent for those of change. This bonus is negative for those change demons who hate or eat priests of the lords of stability!)]

He Who Calls

Teachers and orators are favoured by this aspect. A small trumpet is sometimes worn as a badge of faith. Favours from the god can include ranks of oratory: roll once a month and gain one to ten ranks for that month or temporary improvements to the physical appearance of the faithful (one or two points)]

The Shield of Pearl

A black bolt of lightning broken across a square pearl shield is the badge of the most noble warriors in the temple legends. The nearest that a non-flame jewel would get to fanatics, with the emphasis on the inspired, rather than dogged, defence of all that the temple stands for. True nobility and a high degree of personal control are prerequisites.

[Intimates of the doctrines can deflect one extra blow each combat round as if half parrying. The truly blessed warriors of Thúmís may deflect a single spell cast at them each month, dissipating all of its effects. To do so they offer a short prayer under their breath (tell the GM...)and the next spell is deflected, whatever it may be.]

The Perfect Crystal

Again the symbol of star sapphires is used, a single gem on a silver chain is worn by many adherents, most of whom are gem smiths and appraisers of precious items.

[The blessed can add up to five levels to relevant skills, and are usually fully employed on the religious antefacts and decoration of the temples. The Gifted of True Sight can, once a year, cut a gem with astonishing precision thereby increasing its value by half again. They require a whole month of solitary meditation for this.]

The Just One, Glory of Truth

Lawyers and the judiciary are called to this aspect, which is also beloved of accountants and the higher levels of Imperial Bureaucracy. The symbol is a highly abstracted 'T' in silver on a steel or slate background. They claim to be devoted to the search for ultimate truth, whatever that is, but in reality they are often political animals. Non-adherents often fail to spot the blessings of accuracy and fidelity that accrue to all work done by the devoted to this aspect.

[All mathematical work has an extra three effective levels and all descriptive works an extra two effective levels in 'getting the message across']

The Grey Stone Pyramid

An aspect that venerates hard physical work and the building of mighty structures, such as the sakbe towers. Also the aspect is generally chosen by those who must endure great tests of stamina, such as couriers.

[The 'schools' teach ways of raising stamina (by up to d2 points) and of raising morale under adverse circumstances.]

The Key of Time

The temporal object is the hourglass filled with mercury, meditation upon the drips is a favoured pastime. Followers tend to be drawn from the performing arts: dancers, poets, and the like. Shrines approximate to stages for displays of religious works and recitation of epics.

[An excellent sense of timing accrues to worshippers, lending them a permanent additional three levels in poetry or dance and a ten percent chance of raising their dexterity by one point each year through study to a maximum of two more points. (Non-poet, non-dancers can gain one dexterity point)]

The Sweet Song

Crystal bells and silver mīyalun are the beloved instruments of Thúmís. The standard pitch of all music in Tsolyánu is set by twelve bells and a mīyalun in the temple at Avanthar. Perfect pitch and a fine musical or singing ability are required of worshippers, who form the temple choristers and musicians. To hear them play at the high festivals in Avanthar is to come as close to Thúmís' halls as it is possible in this life.

[True devotees gain an almost mystically pure tone or playing skill (plus five levels). Initiates are found in almost every temple in the Empire.]

The Pool of Perfect Peace

A semi-mystic aspect which encourages meditation and introspection. Symbolised by a silver disc or silver bowl of scented water.

[Adherents can sleep anywhere, anytime. They are sought after as oracles and sages. (Once a month will answer a question or solve a puzzle in a truly oracular fashion, 66% chance of being right, GM can use the I-Ching or similar annoyingly imprecise method)]

The Gate of Light

The 'Jacob's Ladder' seen after a storm is held by the worshippers as the most perfect symbol of their beliefs. Shrines usually have a lantern above a skyight as the sole illumination. Believers concentrate on being good examples to their fellows as a sort of passive proselytising.

[Blessings are said to comprise of the ability to see well in the dark; down to single candles at five meters; and to know the true faith of others (seventy percent chance)]

The River of Life

Drover types and the rural rich subscribe in droves to this aspect, worshipping as it does the use of knowledge to thrive in the world of nature. It is favoured by botanists, arborists and traders in exotic natural products (ivory, woods, resins and fibres).

[The ultimate gift of adepts is to be able to live off the land under harsh circumstances. Others prefer to study, during two or three years of retreat, some related natural area; thus gaining ten or more ranks of a scholarly topic.]

The Angel of Sweet Repose

The deaths of all Thúmís worshippers are the purview of this aspect, symbolised by an outflung net of silver wires, weighted with bells. They pass on bodies to the relevant clans, arrange services for the dead, and liaise with the temple of Belkanu.

Little is said of the inner circle worshippers, but it is rumoured that they have the ability to lay undead to rest and soothe angry spirits.

[Once a month, devotees may cast 'lay the dead' as if fifteenth level]

The Hidden Shrines and Secret Aspects

The Smiter of the Dark Ones

The startling image of a silver octuplex humaniform using silver daggers against amorphous black slugs is presented above altars in the inner shrines. The aspect is almost a cult, attracting the most aggressive warrior priests. Their agenda is usually to expunge any trace of the inimicable races from human lands. Followers tend to be averse to magic.

[Blessed Warriors add two to their bladed weapon skill when acting against their historic enemies. Once a day they can choose to do maximum damage on a selected blow, but must still roll to hit. They can, of course special hit. For Shining Warriors of the Inner Mystery this blow will damage creatures as if a steel weapon had been used, even if it is really only chlen hide.]

The Grey Wand of Glory

Symbolised by a plain silver grey staff, but one which appears to shimmer in the best made examples. The tenets of this aspect involve understanding of other planar travel, and devotees are few and very devoted. Good magical abilities are considered essential.

[Those in the inner doctrines cannot be involuntarily removed from their location by magic. (add ten effective MRF levels to any save against being teleported, sequestered or 'gated')]

The Chief of Steel

Stoically androgynous figure holding a steel stave by his side, the rallying point of those warriors who cultivate the skills of the body for the arts of war.

[Rare in the Empire, adepts study the martial arts and gain one point in dexterity, stamina and psychic reservoir over the four additional years of ascetic discipline. These adepts are noted for their utter reliability and immense discretion.]

The Stone Peak

A deeply mystical group, almost tending to stylites and hermits. They meditate on images of mountains and desolate plains of stones.

[Adepts never panic, always feel serenely calm and can withstand enormous pain and temptation without apparent discomfort. A few adepts return to the main political streams, where they are often very successful as they cannot be swayed or discouraged.]

The Spear of Retribution

The outward looking expansionist units often encourage worship of this aspect, as do the missile using units of stability legions. Much of its popularity has come from periods of Sárku resurgence and persecution of Thúmís worshippers. The symbol is a silver bolt through the eye of a blackened skull.

[After many months of study a worshipper can add one level to their basic missile skill, and can aim a shot at a specific location for no additional penalty other than range and do maximum damage. A full round of focusing is needed. (The shot can, of course still miss, but if it hits maximum damage is done). Upon reaching the inner mystery members will bind a silver wire around the head of each arrow; such arrows strike as if steel against creatures of sorcery or demons.]

The Grey Mist

An elusive and highly secretive aspect, well described by its adopted sign of a puff of steam. Shrines, if one can locate one, have no door but have alooves curtained with gauze shot through with silver thread. Adherents are said to be mystics and powerful sorcerers.

[The aspect imparts to its most honoured worshippers the ability to bend time itself; equivalent to prorogation or festination spells. It is whispered that their true purpose is defending the world against the inimical powers. Highest level blessing is thought to be increased chance of banishment of demons and servitors of the un-named ones.]

The Imperishable Defender

A huge set of enchanted steel armour encrusted with star sapphires is said to be held in Avanthar as the sacred symbol of this aspect. Many warriors have smaller star sapphires, or star-blue quartz if poor, embedded in sword pommels, armour and shields in the belief that they will have protection from opponents.

[Imperishable Warriors, the truly blessed, add one to parry chances, and one to their chance of getting a shield in the way, if they have used real star sapphires. At higher levels they gain three or more tactical knowledge ranks and add one to the chance of a special parry, disarm or riposte]

He Who Treads the Vile Ones

As recounted in the legends of Hrugga, this is the aspect of a sapphire bejewelled, silver scaled, lizard-like creature which struck down the demon Qu'u. Worship is restricted to those demonologists who watch the actions of the gods of change and, study the acts of the demons of change on this world.

[Adepts can guess at the weakness of opponents, and are right 7 times out of 10. They also add one to their chance of a special success when acting against servants of change.]

The Giver of the Gifts of Honour

Of particular attraction to delivers and merchant adventurers, this aspect tends to the use of knowledge to amass wealth and privilege. All shrines of the Giver of Gifts act as a clearing house for rumours of finds and the latest 'good deals'.

[Skills of treasure appraisal, five additional ranks, and a thirty percent increased chance of finding a sought after item accounts for the blessed. Note that the chance may only have been one percent to start with and will therefore increase to one and a third percent.]

The Citadel of Steel

Those who recognise the Fortress of Hrugga as the stylised emblem of this aspect are probably already inner circle worshippers. Architects and engineers are the main adherents, and gain much professional standing from the association. Lowly builders and stone masons are also commonly found as associates.

[It is said that no place designed or built by those with inner knowledge ever fell unless pushed. Add one rank of mason or architect each year if employed. A College of Masons can 'bless' a building in a lengthy ceremony. In which case add one to its appearance and reduce by 50% all damage from fire, flood, earthquake and subsidence.]

The Splendid One

A loose association of body worshippers and aesthetes, held in reasonably low regard at present. In the past they have produced powerful statesmen and military leaders.

[Initiates do not speak of their rituals, although some associations with the lady Avanthé are known. Increases to comeliness are seen after acceptance of the blessings (plus d3 on any rolls to do with seduction, personal appearance or fertility)]

The Breath of Purity

The ultimate mystics in the temple, they tend to retreat to windswept tree tops or mountains and listen for the voice of god. They give up possessions and tend to avoid political life. Their badge, if it can be so called is a tiny square of silver gauze sewn into their hair. They are given to sudden lucid dreams and have acute powers of observation.

[Followers have immunity to most poisons, abstracted by increasing Stamina by 3 against poison. Also a 10% chance of convincing anyone who can understand them of the futility of aggression and the beauty of stability.]

The Divine Voice

A tiny shrine is found in every temple where the 'Voice of God' can be heard. It is also the place where official temple messages tend to be posted. The aspect is that said to be responsible for the Great Agreement between man and Thúmís. The temple orator and public announcer are usually initiates.

[Add two to all oratory and double the effective range of the public speaking voice of a true believer.]

The Grey Disc

The aspect devoted to intricate mechanisms and technology. They also form the keepers of at least one Imperial Air Car and maintain the Lightening Bringers. For the most part they are dusty and reclusive students of decaying texts who have a surprisingly short life expectancy.

[Blessed adherents have an extra ten percent chance of success in any action involving technological or mechanical devices after a minute spent in prayer and meditation.]

The Unknowable

The mystery by which Thúmís can be known only in his paradises. To worship this aspect is to be transcended after death. Used as an analogy of dead high priests. ("He worships the Forty-Seventh.")

