

Forge Hands *Feat Power*

Your hands blacken, but a nimbus of red light surrounds them. Metal in your hands is like clay, allowing you to shape it almost effortlessly.

Daily ♦ Divine

Standard Action **Melee Touch**

Target: One metallic object.

Effect: You spend a healing surge and 1d6 hours moulding a non-magical metallic object in your hands. At the end of that time you must pass an Arcana skill check (DC 20), allowing you to do any one of the following things to the object if successful. Failure destroys the item. An item may only have one of these effects in place at a time.

- ♦ Reduce its AC bonus or Damage by -2
- ♦ Increase its AC bonus or Damage by +1
- ♦ Add interesting designs or art, doubling its effective worth
- ♦ Turn one item into another of the same relative size (sword into crowbar, helmet into mask, etc.)

Special: You must take the Forge Hands feat to use this power, gold is too soft a metal to be worked with *forge hands*.



The Interaction of Faiths

The table overleaf shows the general feelings between the various Nueraen faiths. This is not to say that there are not Vulkites that are not allies with Mersmerrons but that the vast majority of their congregations are quite the opposite.

A – Allied; these faiths often seek each other out for companionship and aid.

T – Tolerated; these faiths can co-exist and sometimes help one another in most circumstances.

I – Ignored; these faiths tend to try to avoid one another and only work together in strange circumstances.

E – Enmity; these faiths are opposed to one another and would much rather work against one another than together.

Common Deities in the World of Nuera

The *Wraith Recon* game setting is unique in its own way but it is also a part of the larger universe of information presented in the various Dungeons and Dragons 4E sourcebooks. Although Nuera has several unique faiths to be worshipped and potentially battled against, the common faiths found in the *D&D 4E Player's Handbook* do exist in some form and fashion within the world if the Games Master wishes them to be.

We will not be detailing any major cults or churches dedicated to these common D&D 4E gods and deities but we would be remiss if we did not at least mention their roles and relationships in Nuera.

The following is a quick list of the common gods of D&D 4E and how they are perceived in *Wraith Recon*.

The Good and Unaligned Deities

Avandra – The goddess of change is strong on Parenax and the Wildlands.

Bahamut – Considered secondary to the belief of the All Father in Dardarrick, Bahamut is still well-worshipped wherever goodness is held in high regard.



- 500 Uesificus, a demi-god great dragon, takes the form of an elf and creates the elite *One Thousand Masts*, a seemingly neutral fleet of trading ships. Within his fleet he hides his true self and learns all he can from the peoples of Rardarri for his brothers and sisters.



- 695 The All Father sends dreams to the Guildmaster Baestra, leading to the discovery of the Omnicieix – one of Vulka’s finest creations from the Age of Creation.
- 898 Agents of the Bronze Fist work on both sides of the Lornish border to harbour ill feelings toward the Dardarrian people, making sure to cover their tracks and make it look like ‘natural aggression’.
- 950 An Aphaxusian trade galley successfully defends itself against a powerful Parennaxian pirate ship, discovering several strange ‘machine-men’ in its hold. These warforged samples are claimed by the Lords of the Forge and reanimated by the Sando efreets. Knowledge of the new warforged is kept from King Bandovaur and the first wave of re-engineered mercenaries is sent anonymously to the mainland.
- 995 The *Father’s Stern Hand*, a cell of martyr-paladins take up their swords against Lorn in the All Father’s name. The Dardarrian church of the All Father shies away from their fanatical actions, especially when the war takes members into Torres on what the Leader of the Faith calls a ‘political mistake that befouls our souls’.
- 1,000 The church of the All Father recalls all clergy from the front lines of what they believed was a wrongful and offensive war.



Plot and Mission Hooks

◆ One of the River King’s trading vessels has been boarded by Parrenax pirates and is far off course just off Pierceling’s coast. Uesificus has pleaded with King Archiveltdt to bring his ship back to him – mostly as a test of Dardarrick’s naval assets. The Dardarrian navy could easily bring ships up into the northern waters to bring the ship back in line but Archmage Arcos does not completely trust the situation. It was decided that if the Wraiths can get to the ship and take it back over ‘anonymously’, then perhaps any trickery can be thwarted. The question is however, what will Uesificus think of the mysterious return of his ship without naval action?

◆ A ship in Uesificus’ fleet has been sighted sailing into monitored waters by way of Zritec, a known supporter of Lornish policies. Commander Ruhrk has decided to send a covert Wraith team to the landing sight of the ship, which happens to be completely on the other side of Torres. The team must survive the risks that Torres presents them, find the River King’s landed ship, and investigate it fully before returning. When they find that the ship is utterly empty except for a giant lair-like hold filled with a veritable treasure of furs and leathers made into a large nest, what will they do?

The Sancoatyli

(pronounced *saan-coh-ah-tee-lee*)

The backbone of the Torresh crusade, the Sancoatyli is the singular and plural naming convention for both the cultish order *and* its members. As old as the first holy crowning of a Lord King in Torres, the Sancoatyli are a mix between royal guards, elite special forces, and common militia. Chosen by birthright and shamanic augury, the members of the Sancoatyli are trained through a series of mystical rituals and practices before being sent back to their homes, families and jobs. They are to live normal, pious lives in the name of Mersmerro – until they are Called.

When the Lord King blows the cypress horn (purely symbolically in the last thousand years), he Calls the Sancoatyli from their lives to become his spear and shield. The word of a Calling spreads like wildfire throughout Mersmerron congregations and faithful servants from all over his holy lands set down their ploughs or their leatherwork, pick up their blades, don their armour and move directly to Merstorres for their holy sanction and assignment.

The Sancoatyli are arguably the most dangerous foe that any enemy of Mersmerro (or what the Lord King claims to be). They are completely consumed by their desire to achieve a good death in the service of their god. They are utterly fearless, strengthened physically through drug use and rituals, and selflessly dedicated to their missions. Most members of this secret cult/order are lizardfolk but the recent religious transformation of Torres has seen troglodytes, kuo-toa, humans and even *elves* wearing the tell-tale helm-cloaks of the Sancoatyli.

For statistics on members of the Sancoatyli, see the *Appendix of Enemies* within this book.

Typical Encounters

For typical encounters for the Sancoatyli, see their entry in the *Appendix of Enemies*, starting on page 98.

Plot and Mission Hooks

◆ A small group of Sancoatyli crossed the border into Dardarrick early last week and have since vanished into the wilderness surrounding the crossing point of the Goldpan River. The presence of these fanatical zealots is enough to worry the Commander but knowing that another Wraith team that was active in the area is well over 90 hours past their expected debriefing time has his concerns fully focussed on the area. SpellCom cannot seem to reach them magically and it will be up to another team of Wraiths to find them – and hopefully deal with the Sancoatyli in the process.

◆ The Sancoatyli receive their holy orders from the high priestess of Mersmerro in an elaborate ceremony that often takes several hours. During this time there is prayer, gospel readings, sacrifices, self-flagellation, song and dance. It is a huge event that could be equated to a party or rally of sorts. Command wants to know what these zealous warriors are going to soon be up to and the order ceremony *might* be hectic and haphazard enough to sneak a Wraith Recon team in to get the information at the same time that the priestess gives it to the crusaders. It will very dangerous for Dardarrians to be anywhere near this event and to be caught would surely mean being sacrificed. Good thing for the Wraiths that the SpellCom arcanists have several polymorphing rituals that will make the team into lizardfolk for one full day...



The Smoking Embers of Aphax

Formed by the great King Aphax of Sando, one of the progenitors of the Kingdom of Aphaxus, the Smoking Embers are pilgrims of the Vulkite faith. They go wherever Aphaxusians require their worship and they are almost all fire giants or Sandoan humans. When they were created the Embers were to serve as forward missionaries, building shrine forges and seeing that the teachings of Vulka reach as far as his works did during the Creation.

When they were first applied to the mainland of Rardarri, landing purposefully in the Mersmerron kingdom of Torres, the Smoking Embers made no attempts to be civil to the Torresh. They stormed inland seeking a dry patch of ground to build their first mainland temple – damned be all of the Torresh that got in their way. The resulting bloody battles between the Mersmerro worshippers and the Smoking Embers set the precedent for following centuries. The two kingdoms of Torres and Aphaxus managed to make political allies of one another but the two religions would never be at peace; especially due to the actions of the Smoking Embers.

As their name implies, the Embers never quite stop smouldering. They hold long and heated grudges for centuries, setting situations ablaze wherever they go. They are particularly active along the southern coasts of Torres and Lorn, coming ashore as part of a trading landing long enough to disappear and begin their search on how to wage a religious siege against Vulka's enemies. They are not subtle most of the time and many altars and shrines to opposing gods have been found in ashes after a Smoking Ember arrives in the area.

Typical Encounters

Level 7 Encounter (XP 1,125)

- ◆ 1 warforged captain (level 6 soldier (leader))
- ◆ 2 human mages (level 4 artillery)
- ◆ 3 warforged soldiers (level 4 soldier)

Level 12 Encounter (XP 2,800)

- ◆ 1 fire giant forger (level 18 artillery)
- ◆ 2 azer warriors (level 17 minion)

Plot and Mission Hooks

- ◆ A group of Mersmerron crusaders just south of the Torres/Dardarrick border are being harassed by the arrival of a local member of the Smoking Embers of Aphax and his followers. Commander Ruhrk thinks that it might behoove the kingdom if these two forces do battle with one another – weakening both. The Wraiths have to work both sides of the area well enough to get the two forces into conflict; their religious opposition will do the rest.
- ◆ A new temple to Matriarias is being built near the Wildlands' border in the southwest of Dardarrick and some supply tents have mysteriously caught fire during an otherwise wet season. The Hearth Guard have put in many hours protecting the area since the first incident, only recently discovering that a zealous human Vulkite cleric of the Smoking Embers has decided that the building must be destroyed. SpellCom is worried that the cleric is not alone in his faith in the area, and the Wraiths are supposed to track him to where his cult is practicing and evaluate what sort of threat they might present to the safety of the kingdom, if any.

The Xuchot Enclave

From within their deep and warded complex of tunnels and reverse-space subterranean spires below the black beaches of Sandy Launch in Torres, the ancient and powerful illithid chroniclers of the Xuchot Enclave watch the events of the world unfold. After being left exempt of the Veil of Ignorance due to their astonishingly powerful minds, the Enclave evolved past the ideologies of 'good' or 'evil'; they view the world in an alien way. Seeing events and people as pieces to a puzzle they cannot quite finish, the Xuchot illithids are beyond the comprehension of most mortals. It is only locked away in their diamond and onyx vaults that they have hundreds of thousands of scrolls containing a bottomless font of Nueraen information spanning a million years; the treasured collection of their lives' work.

Being 'psionic cerebravores' (eaters of brains and thoughts), the Enclave requires a steady supply of sentient beings to live and thrive in their underground city. Making thralls of the troglodytes and swamp elves of the Sandy Launch islands, the Enclave frequently sends out for their meals. Deals with Zriteci slavers

from House Xuan keep the illithids well fed and sated as well as supplied with equipment and goods for their thralls but they do not hold the drow in any higher standing over any other non-Enclave race.

Exactly what the Xuchot Enclave is doing with their unfathomable library of information and facts is a complete mystery. They venture out into the occupied world a few times a year to interact with common mortals, often putting on the guise of 'normal' mind flayers in order to avoid detection as the superior beings they truly are. Their supreme neutrality should not be taken as pacifism however and a Xuchot illithid will not hesitate to psionically liquefy a lesser being that pesters it with attempts of heroism or villainy.

Possibly the most enigmatic and mysterious group in all of Nuera, the Xuchot Enclave is the closest thing to an omniscient culture in this reality. They know nearly everything that has happened in this world's past and have theorised and extrapolated what will happen in its future. It is just too sad that no other inhabitants of Nuera think them anything other than brain-eating monsters looking to devour or enthrall the world.

For statistics on the Xuchot illithids, see the *Appendix of Enemies* within this book.

Typical Encounters

Although any number of psychically enthralled or controlled creatures could actually be encountered because of the Xuchot Enclave's machinations, there is no set style of encounter that can be listed here. For typical encounters for the actual Xuchot Enclave, see the entry for Xuchot Illithids in the *Appendix of Enemies*, starting on page 98.

Plot and Mission Hooks

◆ One of the Xuchot illithids has surfaced in Dardarrick to study the strange arcane lay lines that connect most of the world's magical focal points. Unfortunately it was spotted and the local militia was called in to deal

with the 'horrible beast'. The watch came and tried to kill the illithid; a task that failed catastrophically. Now the Enclave has decided to seed the entire area with new thralls to help cover up its presence – just in time for the Wraith Recon team to arrive and have to try and save Dardarrian lives from the mindless hordes.

◆ A self-proclaimed 'psionic' sailor visiting Sandy Launch to do some trading claimed to 'feel a cold mental presence' in his mind unlike anything he had before. He told his captain, who told someone at a tavern, and so on. Eventually the word reached the Arcanist General, who has always been curious about the real applications of psionics in SpellCom. A Wraith team will be assembled and shipped to Sandy Launch, where they will begin the search for the psionic powers in the area. If they actually find what they are looking for, will they possibly be able to survive the full attentions of the Xuchot Enclave?

