Burning Sands Jihad

A science fiction space opera supplement and expansion for

the Burning Wheel

Please Note

This is a supplement for the Burning Wheel Fantasy Roleplaying System. It requires the Revised Edition to squeeze out full enjoyment. I recommend having the Monster Burner on hand for maximum benefit.

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6-23-7500
This is a work of loving homage and dark nod to contemporary politics

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Jihad

Salt. It is a commodity more precious than life, for it is life. It grants youth; it grants wealth; it grants power. It is the very lever that can move the universe. Through the Salt, the Mahdi was transmogrified from the rebel duke of a devastated and hunted house to the emperor of a thousand thousand worlds.

For aeons, trade in the Salt—the most precious geriatric drug, fruit of one lonely, desperate, desert world—has been regulated by the emperor through his controlling shares in the OCDC Corporation, and upheld by the noble houses that sit upon the OCDC board, each holding a world or even entire systems in fief. Only through the Salt is travel between the lonely stars—and thus intergalactic trade and the Imperium itself—possible. Only through the Salt can humanity reach the peak of human potential and beyond—whether the superhuman logical reasoning processes of the Analyst, the sublime mathematical purity of the Syndicate navigator, or the mysterious witchcraft of the secretive Sisterhood. And as the Salt is life, its absence is death. For once you eat of the Salt, there is no retreat from its power. In truth, the Imperium has but one law: The Salt must flow!

But now the Mahdi—prophet of the savage Fellahin tribes that roam the desert planet that gave birth to the Salt—has seized its very source. And with it, he has seized the Imperium itself, for he who can destroy a thing controls that thing.

But the Fellahin tribes are not content to rule the empire that once sought to grind them into dust. They say that God sent the Mahdi to them. He gave them the power to throw off the yoke of their oppressors—the infidel ancestor worshippers who hold a thousand thousand worlds in fealty. The Shaykhs and Saltmasters say the time has come to burn out the rot of the corrupt nobility. The Mahdi's Davas and Hujjats proclaim that the nobility governs out of pride and misbegotten heritage, that they are brutal and ignorant. They say the nobility does not heed the Mahdi—the prophet come to the desert to lead the chosen tribes to righteous victory. To turn aside from the Mahdi is to denounce and deny God. Heresy, pure and plain.

Now, the Mahdi preaches jihad against the old order. The Fellahin tribes obey with vigor and fervor. They pledge themselves to death in his service. The nobility must be forced to their knees and given one choice at the end of a knife: Convert or burn in the fires of hell.

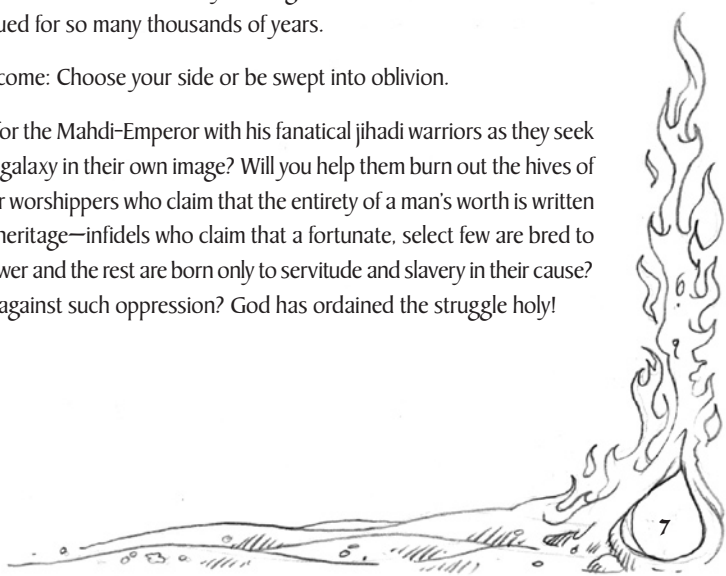
And so, the winds of war whip like a merciless sandstorm across the galaxy. Syndicate ships are disgorging jihadi warriors upon world after world. They come to sweep aside the old order and install a "beneficent" theocracy to govern and control.

Many worlds, and the nobility that rule them, are ready to bow down before the bloody-handed prophet-emperor. Yet, other houses prepare to make a stand, for they know they are avatars of ancient and proud lineages that reach back 10,000 years and more. Noble heritage is clear on the matter: The universe is theirs by genetic right! These doomed houses will never bend knee to an upstart duke with a rabble of ignorant desert savages at his back, not when a million ancestors have marched before them. Most know they cannot succeed. Not when the Mahdi-Emperor controls the Salt, and through it space travel and intergalactic commerce—and their own Salt-addicted lives. But the pride of a million ancestors does not allow for defeat!

As blood wets the earth of world after world, the Sisterhood, like an implacable spider, watches what it has wrought and plots. For millennia, the Sisterhood governed and controlled quietly, behind the thrones of countless rulers, carefully manipulating breeding among the nobility to create a genetic messiah. When their schemes came to fruition in the form of the Mahdi-Emperor, the Matriarchs found they could not control him. Now, the fate of their order is balanced on a knife's edge, as the Jihad threatens to destroy the eugenics scheme the Sisterhood has patiently pursued for so many thousands of years.

The time has come: Choose your side or be swept into oblivion.

Will you fight for the Mahdi-Emperor with his fanatical jihadi warriors as they seek to remake the galaxy in their own image? Will you help them burn out the hives of these ancestor worshippers who claim that the entirety of a man's worth is written in his genetic heritage—infidels who claim that a fortunate, select few are bred to wealth and power and the rest are born only to servitude and slavery in their cause? Will you fight against such oppression? God has ordained the struggle holy!



Will you raise your sword in the defense of the ancient and glorious nobility who have ruled mankind since before Terra was lost? Will you fight for the nobility who claim the blood of heroes and the mandate of the ancestors? Will you spend your life to defeat the tyrannical spread of savage religious oppression and a merciless theocracy?

Or will you heed the words of the Matriarchs, play both sides against the middle, and salvage what genetic material you can from this disastrous war caused by a man too willful to obey the precepts of the Sisterhood that made him what he is?

Choose now, be burned and forever changed.

Allies, Servants and Conspirators

The battlegrounds for this ideological war are the cities and villages of the noble homeworlds. The people are the true prize for each faction, and they suffer the most by it—it is their lives that are ruined when the nobles confiscate property or when the jihadis bomb the factories. Their obeisance, their allegiance, their worship and work: All are necessary to rule. Without them, a throne is an empty symbol.

The Syndicate—masters of intergalactic commerce, banking and communication before the Mahdi-Emperor put his heel upon their necks—appears to have made its choice. They will do nothing to risk the Mahdi's displeasure and its supply of Salt. Or will it? There is no question, the Syndicate chafes under the Mahdi's boot.

And watching from the sidelines, most mysterious of all, are the strange, heretical technologists of 9. They wait and seek advantage. They have the potential to be powerful allies or fearsome enemies. Worse still, they are not nearly as beholden to the Salt as the noble houses. Though they need it, they are not as slavishly addicted as the rest. So, in secret, they pick their allies and enemies—aiding them with their alien technology and forbidden thinking machines.

A World Shall Burn

Before you dive right in and burn up characters for this vivid setting, the players and the GM need to put their heads together and build the core of the conflict. What is the backdrop—the planet on which this war will be waged? What are the Jihad's goals? What are the nobles'? Use the following list of questions and examples to inspire you. After going through this list, the group should have a sense of place, a sense of mission, a sketch of the opposition and how to get their hooks into

them. You want to start off right in the action—you definitely don't want to spend sessions "hunting for clues"—it's space opera after all! The World Burner should help you jump into the action.

The Planet

What necessary resources does it possess? Why does the Jihad need to secure this planet?

Manufacturing facilities (shield/lasgun production, ship production, processing of raw materials for the above items, etc.)

Natural resources (ores for creating spaceships, shields, lasguns, etc.; Important medicines/drugs; agricultural products; etc.)

A famous school for Analysts, Swordmasters, Sisters, Syndicate mathematicians, Imperial scientists, or Court Doctors, etc.

Buried alien technology dating from before the first Jihad against the machines.

An extremely ancient and important temple.

Or something else?

What are the predominant features of the planet?

A jungle paradise? A polluted, industrial wasteland? Rural farmland? Completely urban? A waterworld/desertworld/mountainworld? Or something more varied?

What are the people of the planet like and how do they feel about the nobility/Jihad?

Happy and wealthy, the people love their rulers, but they're soft.

Slaves. The people have been crushed under their rulers' heels for 100 generations. Easy picking for the missionaries if their apathy can be broken. Criminal societies and smugglers are powerful and offer the ambitious an avenue to power.

Poor and angry. These people have lost much in recent years and are ready to rise up against their oppressors. Criminal societies and smugglers are taking root.

Middle class, stolid, hardworking. A rarity in the Galactic Empire, but somewhat common on planets that are home to the important schools. These people are tough, independent and demand fairness from their rulers.

Or perhaps a more foreign, alien culture?

Jihad

What phase of the Jihad exists on this planet?

Early phase—Infiltration

No resources in place, no intelligence networks, no converts. Everything is covert.

Identify objectives: infiltrate Fidahi into important circles, secure converts, establish safe houses, locate Salt caches, build dossiers on important human targets, scout important target buildings/bases/palaces, insert Dahi missionaries.

Identify opposition: Who's trying to stop you? Noble spymasters, Syndicate bankers, smugglers.

Middle phase—Terrorism

Safe houses available, networks of Fidahi if purchased as affiliations, converts available. Dahi missionaries go to work. Everything remains covert.

Identify objectives: begin covertly sowing division among targets, assassinate/convert/neutralize targets that jeopardize continued covert operations (such as spymasters, strategists, Sisters, Master of Assassins, Syndicate Communicators), destroy house shields, family atomics; seize media assets, begin conversions, eliminate/destroy key Temples, secure landing fields for Jihad transports. Take control of Syndicate banks, Salt caches, Smuggler networks, or gain leverage over economic centers. Establish mosques and covert training camps.

Identify opposition: Who's trying to stop you? Noble spymasters, Syndicate bankers/Communicators, smugglers, Sisters, strategists, assassins, house allies, potential resistance leaders, Magnates.

Final phase—War

Jihadis land on planet en masse. Overt warfare under way or commencing. It doesn't end unless the planet converts or the ruling noble house is wiped out. All resources available.

Identify objectives (victory conditions): convert/kill all nobles, complete destruction of Temples, convert population, destroy/convert/disarm military, secure key assets (manufacturing production, planetary resources, etc.), kill leaders that could lead to organized resistance. Establish mosques.

Identify opposition: Who's trying to stop you? The Ur-Baron, Viscount, Count, Duke, etc. or the Warmasters, Swordmasters, Strategists, Spymasters, resistance leaders?

The Noble Opposition

Use the following questions and examples to build up the opposition to the jihad or to create a background for your nobility.

Who is your great and noble Ancestor?

Alexander, Ramses II, Ghengis Khan, Rama, Charlemagne, Xerxes, Muhammad, Confucius, or perhaps another great figure?

What has your line been bred for?

Swordsmen/soldiers, musicians/artists, architects/engineers, mathematicians/scientists or something different?

What have the Jihadis done to tip off the noble house to their presence?

Have they assassinated some powerful figure and drawn attention to themselves? Have they destroyed an important asset? Have they openly declared war and asked for surrender?

Most importantly, this war is a losing battle—it's suicide. Why do the nobles fight?

Noble Allies

Who else has interests on this planet?

Houses Minor, Houses Major in same system, Houses Major in other system, The Syndicate, The 9, The Mahdi, The Sisterhood? Or another mysterious force?

What is the source of their interest?

The nobles owe them a great debt and they are protecting their investment

The planet is the source of a vital and irreplaceable resource.

The planet is the source of a vital manufactured good.

The genetic line is essential to continuing plans (Sisterhood)

The planet has resources/goods that will allow the Jihad to attack the ally next.

What resources can they offer?

Soldiers, escape, forbidden alien technology/weapons, or what?

Populate the Opposition

Once you determine what your side is up to, be sure to outline and sketch out the important characters on the other side. Tie each character to the answers of the above questions. Paint motivations and human instinct into their character sketches.

When determining their stat and skill exponents, use the following guidelines. For equal opposition, use the same limits the player characters fell under. For light opposition, drop the exponent limit by one—if you have 6s, they have 5s. For heavier opposition, raise the exponent limit by one or two. But not more than two.

Nobles should always have shields and access to heavy weapons like lasguns and nukes. Jihadis should always outnumber the nobility, by a lot.

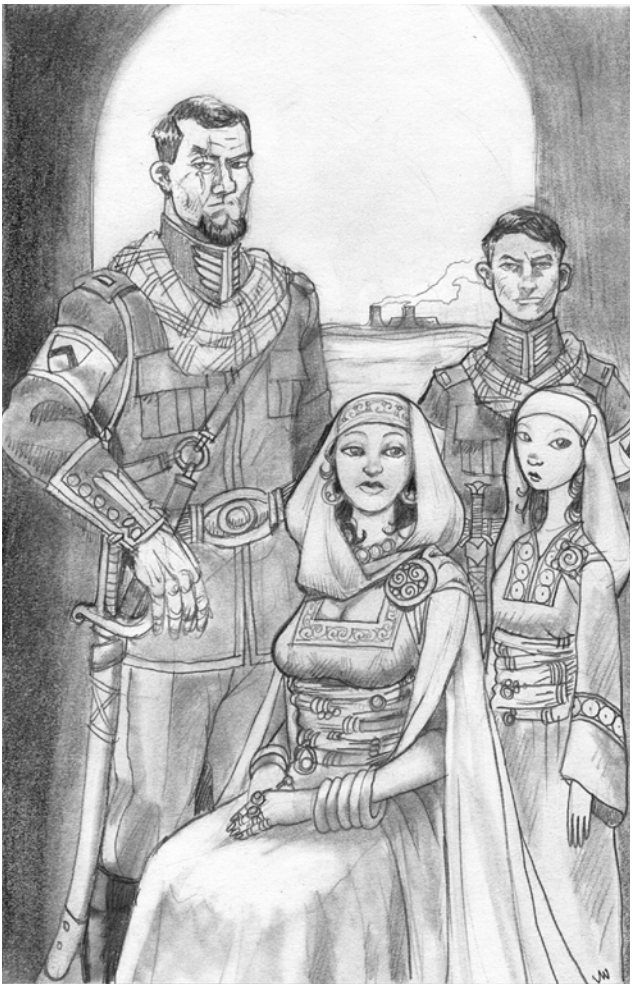
Nobles

Noble Houses consist of a ranking male—Baron, Ur-Baron, Count or Duke—and a number of positions beneath him. Typically this includes a member of the Sisterhood, a Strategist or Warmaster, a Swordmaster, an Analyst and an Assassin or Master Assassin. In smaller houses, the roles will be combined. In larger, more powerful, houses, the roles will be held by upper echelon nobility. For example, in a Duke's household, his cousin, a Count in his own right, may be his Warmaster.

Jihadis

The Jihadi opposition will be lead by a combination of Shaykhs, Saltmasters, Davas and Hujjats. On a very important world, a Pir will be sent personally, but usually he handles interplanetary affairs and not covert operations. The Davas head up the conversion effort. Under them are disparate groups of Mustajib, Dahi and Fidahi—these are the religious "soldiers" in the field spreading the word of the Mahdi. The Shaykhs and Saltmasters work at intelligence and terrorism, and when the time comes, they command the troops in the final battles. They command cells of Rafiq, Fedayin and Veterans. The Hujjat sees to the spiritual welfare of the Jihadis in general. It is his job to keep the religious fervor high. Occasionally, he will be brought forth to pass judgement on the infidel.

In a similar fashion to nobles, the jihadis tend to be related. Family bonds are very strong among the Fellahin. It is not uncommon for whole villages, clans and creches join the jihad en masse. The Mahdi makes sure that these families are then deployed together in order to keep morale and discipline high.



Example of World Burning: Throne of Fire

Thor (as GM): All right guys! We wiped out the nobility on the last world when we played as the Jihadis. Let's play the nobility this time.

Andy: One of the things that I really liked in our last campaign was the nobility's relationship with the technologists of *9*, and the way that relationship was entwined with debts and obligations. I want to explore that more from the Noble side. Let's say the *9* are heavily involved on this planet—they probably have ships on the way, full of fighting machines.

All: Cool.

Thor: That's cool with me, too. But we're getting a little ahead of ourselves. Before we do anything else, we have to set the stage by setting up the world. So the first thing we have to figure out is what necessary resources does this planet have? Why are the Jihadis here?

Anthony: I think the noble house here is one of the backup genetic lines the Sisterhood was watching in case the Mahdi didn't work out. Maybe the Mahdi wants the line wiped out.

Tom: Fine with me.

Thor: Ok, that's great! So you guys are going to want to aim for fairly high Ancestry to reflect your genetic heritage. Let's also say the planet is the source of an ore that is required for making the Syndicate freighters—the ships they use for intergalactic transport. Cool? Maybe that's why the *9* are so interested in this planet. They build the freighters and can't afford to lose the source of their ore. The next thing we need to figure out is what this planet looks like. Is it all jungle, or totally urban or what?

Rich: Well, if the mineral resources are so important, I think it should be a polluted, industrial wasteland. We're just strip mining this place. In fact, maybe we're not even doing it. We've just sold the rights to *9*. Also, I think the world sort of has the look and feel of Egypt back when they were building the great pyramids.

Thor: Huh. Ok. How do the people of the planet feel about their rulers then?

Tom: They're not happy at all. They're especially unhappy about the alliance with *9*. They feel betrayed. But there's not much they can do about it. The Egyptian thing is cool, so I think the nobility should act like they're gods. They don't even live on the planet anymore. They've had an artificial paradise moon built in orbit that serves as their palace. So it's really difficult to infiltrate. Hell, you have to pass genetic testing to even get in.

Andy: Sweet! I bet they made the *9* build the moon as part of the price for the mining rights.

Drozdal*: It's probably shaped like a pyramid.

Thor: All right! That's hot! But I don't want you guys just hiding on your moon the entire time. There's got to be something important on the planet, a reason that you have to come down on a fairly regular basis.

Rich: All our important Temples to the Ancestors are still on the planet's surface. We must come forth to pay homage.

Tom: Definitely. It's not like we could move them. We keep a family seat on the planet too, for when we're on the surface.

Thor: Ok, we've got some good ideas flowing here, but let's try to focus it a little. What phase of the Jihad are we in, and what are the jihadis' victory conditions? What do the Jihadis need to destroy, turn or capture in order to win? Are they just starting off in the infiltration phase, where they're trying to set up their spy networks and training camps? Have they progressed to the terrorist phase, trying to take out your spymasters and Salt caches and stuff? Or are we talking full-on invasion? Personally, I think it would be pretty cool to set it up similarly to how we ended our Jihadi campaign. They've landed, blown up some important temples, seized a couple of nukes, and now have access to the media. The ships haven't landed with their soldiers yet, but it's just a matter of time.

Drozdal: Yeah. That's good.

Tom: Sure. I'm down. I think they need to exterminate the noble family to win.

Thor: Is turning members of the family an option, or do they really need to kill you all?

Tom: Eh. You can turn them if you can think of a good reason why the Jihadis would want them, but I don't really see it.

Thor: Ok. I'll think about it. Any other victory conditions guys?

Rich: If our bloodline is so important, I bet we have a really important Temple to the Ancestors.

Thor: Ah! Nice! That begs the question, who's your most important ancestor? Who's the progenitor of your line?

Andy: Let's stick with the Egyptian theme. How about Ramses II. He was the pharaoh in Moses' time, right? I bet the Temple is filled with relics and mummies of our Ancestors from our entire history on this planet.

Rich: [doing Yul Brynner] Moses...

Drozdal: Also, I think the Jihadis want to sever the planet's relationship with 9. They want to make the nobles and the 9 turn on each other.

Thor: Rock! So the Jihadis' victory conditions are: one, exterminate the family; two, destroy the Temple of Ramses; and three, sever the planet's relationship with 9.

Tom: You know what? I bet the 9 aren't really here for the ore at all. There's a long-lost Temple buried somewhere on the planet. It's really ancient.

Anthony: Yeah! It's so old, it predates the first Jihad against the machines. It's full of ancient and forbidden alien technology!

Tom: Sweet! Finding it might be a "victory condition" for the nobility.

Andy: Oh that's cool. You know what that means? It means we have to get to the root of our Ancestry to win!

Thor: I don't know about winning, but that's really cool. Ok, let's keep this moving. Are there any other planets in this solar system? Any important minor houses?

Anthony: Yeah, there's a planet that's dedicated to agriculture in this system. They are completely dependent on us for trade and their Salt supply. They're fed up with their treatment. I bet they'll turn to the Jihad for the right offer.

Tom: And there's another house on that planet that are just complete brown-nosers. They're less powerful than the first house.

Thor: Ok. Any other important houses?

Andy: Yeah. There's a house on the main planet, the mining planet, that's totally zealous about their Ancestry almost to the point of being criminal.

Thor: Huh. Oh, what if they're ignoring 9's exclusive mining rights, and they make all these guerrilla excavations in hopes of finding the lost temple?

Rich: I bet some of them even feel their Ancestry is greater than the Ancestry of our house. They're looking for the lost Temple because they think it will prove it!

Thor: I love you guys! This stuff is awesome! One last question: Why is your house fighting? I mean, this is basically suicide. The Jihadis control the Salt. That means they control intergalactic trade, they control space travel, and they can cut you off from the Salt at anytime. You'll die without it. So why are you fighting?

Tom: Pure pride. Our Ancestry is better than the Mahdi's. There's no way we're bowing down to him! Besides we've got Salt caches to weather the storm, right?

Thor: Excellent. I think we've got a really good handle on the world at this point. So have you guys got ideas about characters you want to play?

Tom: I want to play the duke. He's a Swordmaster, too. He took over the duchy when his older brother died. One of his Beliefs is: My genetics are superior to all others, and I'll prove it to the universe.

Andy: I really liked the whole propaganda war aspect the spymaster had going on in the last campaign . I want to play the duke's spymaster. I'm definitely taking the Analyst, Propaganda Officer, and Strategist lifepaths. His Beliefs are about protecting the duke's family.

Anthony: I want to play up the Sisterhood stuff. I think it ties in really well to Tom's thing about the purity of his genetics. I want to play a Sister who's on a mission to save the bloodline before the Jihadis kill them all. If it's cool, I want to play a pregnant Sister Concubine, attempting to get her unborn child out of the system. I think she was the concubine of the former duke, Tom's character's brother.

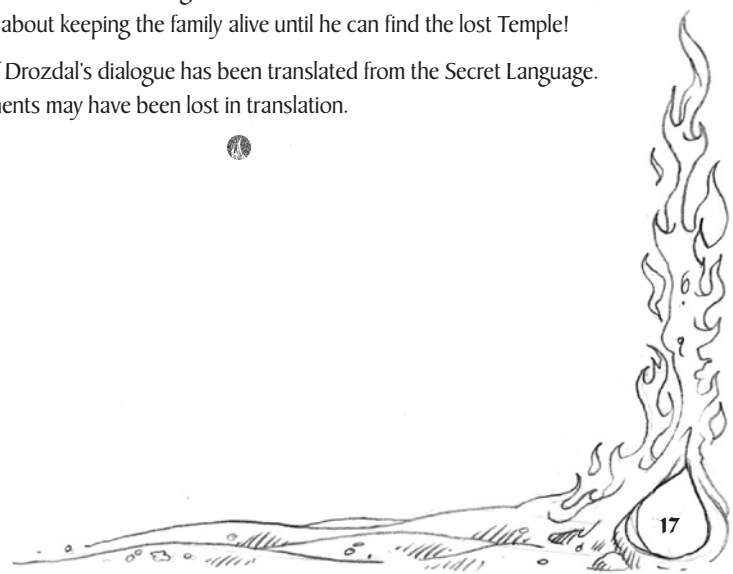
Tom: Well, I've been duke for some years now.

Anthony: Ok, how about it's a 13 year girl? A girl so she can't inherit. I've been giving her the Simhanada Training. Since your character's brother is dead, my character has no status in your household, except as the mother of the duke's niece. Her Beliefs are going to be about protecting her daughter and saving the family's genetic line.

Drozdal: I want to play with the 9 stuff we put in the world. My character is Andy's character's brother, and we're cousins with the Duke. When the family cut its deal with 9, my character was sent to the 9 as a hostage and was raised with them. Now he's returned to the planet as 9's ambassador. He's trying to strengthen 9's ties wit the family by arranging a marriage between Anthony's character's daughter and one of the 9.

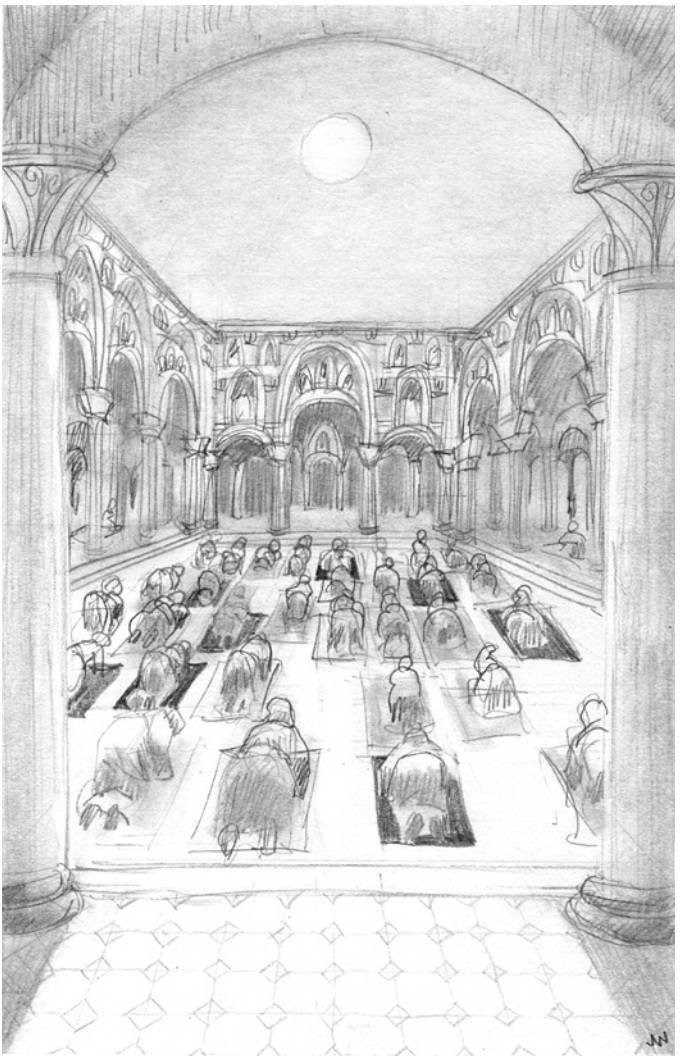
Rich: I really like the house minor that's been performing all the illegal digs. I'm going to make an Ur-Baron/Engineer that serves as the duke's Warmaster. His Beliefs are about keeping the family alive until he can find the lost Temple!

***Note:** All of Drozdal's dialogue has been translated from the Secret Language. Some elements may have been lost in translation.



Jihad Lifepaths

This chapter is meant to be used in combination with the Character Burner. It is important to note for the majority of the settings, players can use the lifepaths provided here, plus what is described in the Character Burner. The



material here is intended to be supplementary. Also, most of the skills and traits listed here are described in the Character Burner. New skills and traits are described in this chapter.

In all cases, I ask for a bit of common sense from the reader. Burning Sands is meant to represent a feudal/medieval culture, but it is also spacefaring and highly technological. Therefore certain aspects of the Character Burner will be inappropriate. These elements must either be translated into the current setting or just ignored. Please refer to this chapter first for guidance, if you can't find what you're looking for, please use common sense.

For example, the following skills should be replaced when found in the Noble, Noble Court or Citydweller settings: Riding may be traded for either Pilot or Driver. Firebombs may be replaced with Munitions. Appropriate weapons include Sword, Knives, Axe, Pistol and Rifle.

Fellahin Setting

The Fellahin are the people of the desert homeworld of the Jihadis. Noble homeworld characters may not take these paths. All Jihadis are Born Fellahin. This setting is unique to Burning Sands and is not found in the Character Burner.

Peasant Leads

Any character who is Born Fellahin may use Peasant Leads from other settings to get back into the Fellahin setting.

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Born Fellahin	8 yrs	5	–	*Outcast*
Skills: 3 pts: General				
Traits: 3 pts: Salt Addicted, Superstitious, Gaunt				
Desert Rat	1 yr	4	–	*Jihadi, Citydweller, Outcast*
Skills: 4 pts: Desert Survival, Desert-wise, Orienteering				
Traits: 1 pt: Respect for the Desert, Xenophobic				
Lazy Stayabout	7 yrs	3	–	*Outcast, Servitude, Soldier*
Skills: 3 pts: Lazy-wise, Fellahin-wise, Wife-wise, Work-wise				
Traits: 1 pt: Scorned by the Tribe				
Fellahin	5 yrs	5	–	*Jihadi*
Skills: 6 pts: Water Discipline Training†, Creche-wise, Foraging, Tribal Etiquette				
Traits: 1 pt: Loyal to the Tribe, Salt of the Earth				

Maker	5 yrs	7	+1 M	*Jihadi*

Skills: 4 pts: Salt Fabrication, Jury Rigging, Weaving, Wetsuit Manufacture

Traits: 2 pts: Frugal, Ingenious, Inventive, Clever

Sandcrawler[1]	5 yrs	6	+1 P	*Jihadi*

Skills: 6 pts: Stealthy, Observation, Weather-wise, Mending, Knives

Traits: 1 pt: Asynchronous Walk, Disciplined

Saltmaster[2]	7 yrs	25	+1 M/P	*Jihadi, Outcast*

Skills: 7 pts: Salt-wise, Haggling, Sand-wise, Pistol, Intimidation, Trader-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Pragmatic, Respected, Affinity for Trade

Midwife[3]	10 yrs	15	+1 M	*Villager, Outcast*

Skills: 5 pts: Apothecary, Midwifery, Omen-wise

Traits: 2 pts: Bedside Manner

Sister to the Tribe[4]	5 yrs	10	+1 M	*Servitude, Outcast, Sisterhood*

Skills: 5 pts: Astrology, Falsehood, Ugly Truth, Tribal History

Traits: 2 pts: Disturbed, Dreamer, Cassandra, Touch of Ages

Father[5]	15 yrs	20	+1 M	*Villager, Jihadi*

Skills: 8 pts: Tribe-wise, Family-wise, Wife-wise, Haggling, Almanac

Traits: 2 pts: —

Elder[6]	50 yrs	5	+1 M	*Villager, Outcast*

Skills: 10 pts: Observation, Persuasion, Ugly Truth, Measurements, Fellahin-wise, Water-wise, Local History, Tribal History

Traits: 2 pts: Wizened, Perfectionist

Shaykh[7]	30 yrs	45	+1 M/P	*Jihadi*

Skills: 7 pts: Command, Instruction, Village and Town-wise, City-wise, Tribe-wise, Rites of Succession

Traits: 2 pts: Traditional, Stubborn, Savvy, Chief

Reverend Mother[8]	40 yrs	30	+2 M	—

Skills: 6 pts: Command, Instruction, Women-wise, Obscure History, Ritual of the Thirst

Traits: 2 pts: Salt Saturated, Well of Memories, Om Tayyib

Fellahin Wife	8 yrs	5	+1 M, P	*City, Villager*

Skills: 2 pts: Child-Rearing, Seduction, Soothing Platitudes, Cooking; also, see note below*

Traits: 2 pts: Human Property, Loyal, Vengeful

*Note: The Fellahin Wife is essentially a slave; she is her husband's property. A player who takes the Fellahin Wife lifepath may also choose her husband's lifepath from the Fellahin setting and may choose from his skills: She gets half of his skill points, rounded down. She also receives half of her husband's resource points.

FELLAHIN NOTES

All requirements as listed in the Character Burner plus those included here. 1: Sandcrawler requires Desert Rat. **2:** Saltmaster requires Father or Sandcrawler. **3:** Midwife requires Fellahin Wife or Sister to the Tribe. **4:** Sister to the Tribe requires Midwife or Desert Rat. **5:** Father requires Fellahin, Maker, Sandcrawler, or Saltmaster. **6:** Elder requires Father or Shaykh. **7:** Shaykh requires Desert Rat and Father or Saltmaster. **8:** Reverend Mother requires Sister to the Tribe and Elder or the Sister lifepath from the Sisterhood.

Jihadi Sub-Setting

The Jihadi Sub-Setting is the Religious Sub-Setting for Fellahin. As such, the following lifepaths are considered included in this setting and may be taken when in the Jihadi Sub-Setting: Porter, Notary, Custodian, Interpreter, and Archivist.

All other Religious lifepaths are **unavailable**.

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Rafiq[1]	3 yrs	7	+1 P	*Outcast, City, Fellahin*
Skills: 9 pts: Soldiering, Jihadi-wise, Doctrine, Martial Arts, Knives, Throwing, Pistol, Stealthy ***Traits:*** 2 pts: Fanatic, Dutiful				
Fedayin[2]	5 yrs	15	+1 M/P	*Outcast, City, Fellahin*
Skills: 12 pts: Stealthy, Rifle, Lasgun Operations, Munitions, Intimidation, Sword, Pilot, Observation, Climbing, Knots ***Traits:*** 1 pt: Martyr, Thousand Yard Stare				
Jihadi Veteran[3]	8 yrs	10	–	*Outcast, City, Fellahin*
Skills: 9 pts: Jihadi-wise, Campaign-wise, Ugly Truth, Doctrine, Tactics, Field Dressing, Command ***Traits:*** 2 pts: Disillusioned, Maimed				
Mustajib[4]	4 yrs	9	+1 M	*City, Outcast, Fellahin, Peasant*
Skills: 6 pts: Doctrine, Literacy, Temple-wise, Jihadi-wise ***Traits:*** 2 pts: Respondent, Obedient				
Fidahi[5]	4 yrs	12	+1 M/P	*Outcast, Court, Citydweller, Villager*
Skills: 11 pts: Inconspicuous, Disguise, Persuasion, Falsehood, City-wise, Noble-wise, Soldier-wise, Poisons, Munitions, Mimicry ***Traits:*** 2 pts: Holy Determination				
Dahi[6]	6 yrs	10	+1 M	*Jihadi, Court, Peasant, Villager*
Skills: 7 pts: Oratory, Suasion, Jihad-wise, Peasant-wise, Soldier-wise, Noble-wise, Priest-wise ***Traits:*** 1 pt: Sworn to the Mission				
Dava[7]	8 yrs	18	+1 M	*Citydweller, Outcast, Fellahin*
Skills: 5 pts: Religious Law, Ritual, Religious History, Command ***Traits:*** 1 pt: Revered, Booming Voice				
Hujjat[8]	9 yrs	20	+1 M/P	*Outcast*
Skills: 9 pts: Interrogation, Amercement, Local History, Torture, Intimidation, Planet-wise, History, Command, Etiquette ***Traits:*** 2 pts: Righteous, Merciless, Suspicious, Cold-Blooded				

Pir[9]	13 yrs	30	+1 M	*Outcast, Court, City*

Skills: 15 pts: Poetry, Composition, Propaganda, Administration, Jihad-wise, Noble-wise, Obscure History, Planet-wise, Strategy, Logistics, Syndicate-wise, 9-wise, Ancestry-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Demagogue, Domineering Presence

JIHADI NOTES

All requirements as listed in the Character Burner plus those included here. 1: Rafiq requires Desert Rat. **2:** Fedayin requires Rafiq. **3:** Jihadi Veteran requires Fedayin or four previous Fellahin or Jihadi lifepaths (including born). **4:** Mustajib requires Rafiq or Fidahi. **5:** Fidahi requires Rafiq or Fellahin Wife. **6:** Dahi requires Mustajib or Fidahi. **7:** Dava requires Mustajib. **8:** Hujjat requires Dava. **9:** Pir requires Hujjat.

Peasant Setting

Use the Peasant Setting in the Character Burner, plus the paths listed here, for low born characters who are from the Noble homeworld. Characters who are not Jihadis or Fellahin use these paths. Players who are playing Fellahin may not choose paths in the Character Burner Peasant setting unless they take the Mustajib or Fidahi lifepath.

Unavailable Lifepaths Include: Augur, Recluse Wizard, Itinerant Priest, Peasant Pilgrim.

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Collaborator	1 yr	8	+1 M	*Citydweller, Villager*
Skills: 4 pts: Peasant-wise, Persuasion, Jihad-wise, Doctrine, Soldier-wise				
Traits: 2 pts: Collaborator				
Dahi[1]	4 yrs	8	+1 M	*Jihadi, Citydweller*
Skills: 6 pts: Peasant-wise, Country-wise, Road-wise, Doctrine, Suasion				
Traits: 2 pts: Determined, Charismatic, Cruel				

PEASANT NOTES

All requirements as listed in the Character Burner plus those included here. 1: Dahi requires Mustajib.

Villager Setting

The Villager Setting is tied to the Noble homeworld. Only characters from the homeworld may be Born Villager. Jihadis may not be Born Villager, but they may take these LPs if you are playing in a post-initial-invasion game. Convert any Read and Write skills to a single Literacy skill for purposes of this setting.

All Village Setting lifepaths are available except the following:

Unavailable Lifepaths: Acolyte, Failed Acolyte, Village Priest, Venal Priest, Bowyer, Farrier, Apprentice, Journeyman, Master Craftsman

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Repairman	6 yrs	10	–	*Citydweller, Servitude*
Skills: 5 pts: Repair, Machine-wise, Auto-wise, Tool-wise				
Traits: 1 pt: Grumbling, Scavenger				
Fabricator	8 yrs	15	–	
Skills: 6 pts: Fabrication, Machine-wise, Cloth-wise, Plastic-wise, Metal-wise				
Traits: 1 pt: Hard-Work, Exhausted				

Citydweller Setting

Citydweller paths are available to all characters, but only characters native to the noble homeworld may be City Born. Fellahin and Jihadis may choose these paths, but they may not be City Born. Convert any Read and Write skills to a single Literacy skill for purposes of this setting. Ride becomes Drive.

All Citydweller Setting lifepaths from the Character Burner are available except the following:

Unavailable Lifepaths: Armorer, Dilettante (use the one listed here), Bishop, Privateer, Neophyte, Sorcerer, City Guard, Pilgrim, Apprentice, Craftsman, Master Craftsman, Temple Acolyte, Temple Priest

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Smuggler[1]	6 yrs	15	+1 M/P	*Outcast, Villager, Court*
Skills: 7 pts: Black Market-wise, Haggling, Fat Merchant-wise, Pistol, Climbing, Intimidation ***Traits:*** 2 pts: Street Smart, Nose for Trouble				
Royal Guard[2]	6 yrs	10	+1 P	*Court, Soldier*
Skills: 7 pts: City-wise, Sword, Pistol, Brawling, Streetwise, Elite Guard-wise ***Traits:*** —				
Fabricator	9 yrs	20	—	*Village*
Skills: 6 pts: Fabrication, Machine-wise, Cloth-wise, Plastic-wise, Metal-wise ***Traits:*** 1 pt: Greasy, Hand-Eye Coordination				
Syndicate Rep[3]	9 yrs	60	—	*Noble Court*
Skills: 10 pts: Accounting, Administration, Syndicate-wise, Space Travel-wise, Currency-wise, Ship-wise, Economics, Planet-wise, Systems-wise, Salt-wise ***Traits:*** 1 pt: Salt Addicted, Schemer				
Dilettante	3 yrs	9	—	*Jihadi*
Skills: 4 pts: Jihad-wise, Soothing Platitudes, Doctrine, Falsehood ***Traits:*** 1 pt: Callow, Flatterer				
Mustajib[4]	4 yrs	7	+1 M	*Jihadi, Fellahin, Peasant, Villager*
Skills: 5 pts: Doctrine, Prayer Chanting, Literacy, Soothing Platitudes, Convert-wise ***Traits:*** 2 pts: Respondent, Devoted				
Dahi[5]	7 yrs	10	+1 M	*Jihadi, Court, Peasant, Villager*
Skills: 7 pts: Oratory, Suasion, Jihad-wise, City-wise, Streetwise, Guard-wise ***Traits:*** 1 pt: Sworn to the Mission				

CITYDWELLER NOTES

All requirements as listed in the Character Burner plus those included here. 1: Smuggler requires one previous underworld/criminal/outcast lifepath or Captain, Quartermaster, 9 Ambassador or Syndicate Rep. **2:** Royal Guard requires Man-at-Arms or Sergeant. **3:** Syndicate Rep requires Student, Minister, Merchant, Courtier, or Treasurer. **4:** Mustajib—the respondents to the prayers of the priests—requires any Fellahin lifepath, Collaborator or Dilettante. **5:** Dahi requires Mustajib or Fidahi.

Noble Setting

This is the primary setting for the noble rulers of the jihad-targeted homeworld. Players may choose from paths described in the Character Burner, excepting those listed as Unavailable below. Also, add 5 years of time to any path of noble entitlement (Lord, Baron, etc.), to represent the rigors of planet-wide domains and interplanetary travel. Please use the Born Noble path listed below, not the one in the Character Burner.

Houses Minor are headed by Baron- and Lord-level nobility. These houses are concerned with planetary politics and commerce. Houses Major are headed by Ur-Baron-level nobility and upward. These houses are concerned with *interplanetary* politics and commerce. Viscount, Count, Duke, Noble Prince and Prince of the Blood have an additional lifepath trait available to them in their list: OCDC Directorate. It is first in their list, pushing Noblesse Oblige to second.

Also, in the skills section, Crossbow becomes Rifle and Riding becomes Pilot. Armor Training is discarded—there is no armor in this setting. Convert any Read and Write skills to a single Literacy skill for purposes of this setting.

Unavailable Lifepaths: Arcane Devotee, Religious Acolyte, Knight

Restricted Lifepaths: Noble Prince and Prince of the Blood may only be taken by members of the Imperial House

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Born Noble	9 yrs	15	—	*Any*
Skills: 5 pts: General; 2 pts: Literacy, Poisons-wise				
Traits: 2 pts: Ancestry, Salt Addicted, Your Lordship, Your Eminence, Your Grace				
Ur-Baron[1]	13 yrs	60	+1 M/P	*Court, Soldier*
Skills: 1 pt: General, 3 pts: Intrigue-wise, Poisons, Noble Rank-wise				
Traits: 1 pt: Regal Bearing, Pompous, Sharp Dresser, Callous, Noblesse Oblige, OCDC Directorate				

NOBLE NOTES

All requirements as listed in the Character Burner plus those included here. 1: Ur-Baron requires the Your Eminence trait. **Note:** Ignore the Knight requirement for all Noble and Noble Court lifepaths.

Noble Court Sub-Setting

In the court we find the bulk of the nobility's household: their planners, strategists and elite warriors, not mention their servants, governesses and torturers.

In the skills section, Crossbow becomes Rifle and Riding becomes Pilot. Mounted Combat becomes Driving. Armor Training is discarded—there is no armor in this setting. Convert any Read and Write skills to a single Literacy skill for purposes of this setting. Shield Training refers to the skill in this book, not in the Character Burner.

The players may choose from the paths listed here, plus those in the Character Burner. The following lifepaths are unavailable:

Unavailable: Armorer, Man-at-Arms, Knight, Court Sorcerer, Noble Chaplain, Atilliator, Master of Horses, Justiciar

Restricted: Advisor to the Court. Taking this path requires GM and group permission. The path was intended to be taken for 1-3 years. Additional years may be added, but against my recommendation.

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Analyst Candidate[1]	4 yrs	10	+2 M	*Citydweller, Outcast*
Skills: 7 pts: History, Geometry Training, Estimation Training				
Traits: 2 pts: Intelligent Eyes, Analyst Training, Eidetic Memory, Rainman, Quick Study				
Concubine[2]	3 yrs	9	+1 M/P	*Citydweller, Noble*
Skills: 8 pts: Etiquette, Dance, Musical Instrument, Seduction, Soothing Platitudes, Fashion-wise				
Traits: 2 pts: Light Sleeper, Beautiful, Lesser Muse				
Herald[3]	3 yrs	7	+1 M	*Villager, Servitude, Noble , City*
Skills: 4 pts: Heraldry, Oratory, Conspicuous, Etiquette				
Traits: 1 pt: —				
Man-at-Arms[4]	6 yrs	12	+1 P	*Soldier, City Dweller, Outcast*
Skills: 9 pts: Shield Training†, Brawling, Intimidation, Etiquette, Pistol, Sword, Knives, Pilot				
Traits: 1 pt: —				
Bannerman[5]	5 yrs	8	+1 M/P	*Soldier*
Skills: 4 pts: Conspicuous, Banner-wise, Heraldry-wise				
Traits: 1 pt: Loyal, Stoic, Tough				

Assassin[6]	11 yrs	15	+1 M, P	*Any*

Skills: 12 pts: Inconspicuous, Stealthy, Climbing, Poisons, Apothecary, Pistol, Knives, Garotte, Exotic Weapons, Disguise, Falsehood

Traits: 1 pt: Cold-Blooded, Quiet, Penetrating Gaze

Court Doctor[7]	12 yrs	15	+1 M	*Soldier, Outcast*

Skills: 6 pts: Anatomy, Etiquette, Apothecary, Surgery, Soothing Platitudes, Ugly Truth

Traits: 2 pts: Conditioned

Imperial Scientist[8]	12 yrs	15	+1 M	*Soldier, Outcast*

Skills: 7 pts: Science, Planetology, Planet-wise, Scientist-wise, Court-wise, Quantum Physics

Traits: 1 pt: Insightful

Elite Guard[9]	5 yrs	10	+2 P	*Soldier, Outcast*

Skills: 13 pts: Martial Arts, Sword, Pistol, Rifle, Lasgun Operations, Survival, Climbing, Stealthy, Knots, Tactics, Sensorium

Traits: 2 pts: Loyal, Tough, Fearless

9 Ambassador[10]	15 yrs	30	+1 M	*Citydweller*

Skills: 9 pts: Etiquette, Persuasion, Soothing Platitudes, Syndicate-wise, 9-wise, Noble-wise, Salt-wise, Alien Technology

Traits: 2 pts: Odd, Technophile, Chronologue, Speaker of the Secret Language

Swordmaster[11]	10 yrs	30	+1 P	*Soldier, Citydweller*

Skills: 10 pts: Instruction, Sword, Martial Arts, Knives, Two-Fisted Training†, Conspicuous, Intimidation

Traits: 2 pts: Loyal, Ambidextrous, The Killer, Artful Dodger

Analyst[12]	15 yrs	20	+2 M	*Citydweller, Soldier, Outcast*

Skills: 10 General points. These points must be spent on non-martial, non-physical type skills.

Traits: 2 pts: Salt Addicted, Human Property, Quick-Witted, Cynical

Master Assassin[13]	15 yrs	20	+1 M/P	*Any*

Skills: 16 pts: Food-wise, Cooking, Drink-wise, Crowd-wise, Weapons-wise, Fortress-wise, Shuttle-wise, Sporting Event-wise, Assassin-wise, Extortion, Tracking, Persuasion

Traits: 1 pt: Calm Demeanor, Savvy

Warmaster[14]	15 yrs	35	+1 M	*Soldier, Citydweller*

Skills: 7 pts: Strategy, Tactics, Command, Army-wise, Supply-wise, Weapon-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Cool-Headed, Booming Voice, Commanding Aura

Strategist[15]	15 yrs	25	+1 M	*Soldier, Citydweller*

Skills: 5 pts: Logistics, Supply-wise, Strategy, Strategy Games, Games of Chance

Traits: 2 pts: Mind for Small Details, Meticulous

NOBLE COURT NOTES

All requirements as listed in the Character Burner plus those included here. 1: Analyst Candidate must be the second lifepath and may only be chosen once; Candidate counts as any Student requirement. **2:** Concubine may not be the character's second lifepath and requires that the character be female.

young and nubile or have either Fidahi, Harem Slave LP or the Virgo lifepath in the Sisterhood. **3:** Herald requires Page, Man-at-Arms or three lifepaths from the Professional Soldier setting. **4:** Man-at-Arms requires Squire or Stormtrooper. **5:** Bannerman requires Squire or three Professional Soldier lifepaths. **6:** Assassin requires Stormtrooper, Elite Guard or two Desperate Killer lifepaths. **7:** Court Doctor requires Student or Analyst Candidate. **8:** Imperial Scientist requires Analyst Candidate, Student, Young Lady, Judge, Steward or the Your Lordship trait. **9:** Elite Guard requires Man-at-Arms, Sergeant, Veteran Soldier or Royal Guard. **10:** 9 Ambassador requires Doctor, Merchant, Engineer or Artisan. **11:** Swordmaster requires a gray Sword skill plus Elite Guard, Stormtrooper or two Duelist lifepaths. **12:** Analyst requires the Analyst Training trait and one additional Noble Court lifepath. **13:** Master of Assassins requires Assassin or Analyst. **14:** Warmaster requires Swordmaster, Analyst, Captain, Baron or Lord. **15:** Strategist requires Analyst Candidate, Quartermaster, Captain, Master of Assassins or Sister.

Sisterhood Sub-Setting

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Aaliyah[1]	3 yrs	10	+1 M, P	*Servitude*
Skills: 5 pts: Literacy, Observation, Etiquette, Sisterhood Etiquette				
Traits: 2 pts: Secretive, Simhanada Trained, Guarded				
Virgo[2]	3 yrs	10	+1 M	*Servitude, Citydweller*
Skills: 7 pts: Persuasion, Falsehood, Soothing Platitudes, History, Hand Speech				
Traits: 2 pts: Graceful, Charming, Charismatic, Ear for Voices				
Libra[3]	3 yrs	10	+1 M	*Citydweller, Court*
Skills: 7 pts: Psychology, Trance, Ugly Truth, Noble-wise, Obscure History				
Traits: 2 pts: Poised, Iron Will, Omphalic Focus				
Sister[4]	5 yrs	10	+2 M/P	*Court, Fellahin*
Skills: 7 pts: Command, Linguistics, Instruction, Doctrine-wise, Religious History				
Traits: 2 pts: Cynical, Perfect Pitch, Mysterious, Sixth Sense, Tenacious				
Mother of Business[5]	50 yrs	85	+1 M	*Court*
Skills: 6 pts: Economics, Economics Engineering, Accounting, Administration				
Traits: 2 pts: Ruthlessly Practical, Affinity for Economics, Crone				
Matriarch[6]	50 yrs	75	+1 M, P	*Court*
Skills: 7 pts: Ancestry-wise, Genetic Engineering, Religious Engineering, Sisterhood History, Missionaria-wise				
Traits: 3 pts: Immanence, Well of Memories, Imperious, Domineering, Discerner, Crone				

SISTERHOOD NOTES

Aaliyah, Virgo and Libra may only be taken once each. 1: Aaliyah requires Born Noble and must be the second lifepath. **2:** Virgo requires Aaliyah and the Simhanada Trained trait. **3:** Libra requires Virgo or Sister to the Tribe. **4:** Sister requires Libra. **5:** Mother of Business requires Sister. **6:** Matriarch requires Sister twice, Mother of Business or Reverend Mother.

Soldier Sub-Setting

The Soldier Setting describes the non-noble, planetary military forces, not the invading jihadis. Characters born on the noble homeworld may take Soldier Lifepaths in order to fight for their planet's freedom from religious tyranny. Characters Born Fellahin may not. All Shield Training entries refer to the skill in this book, not the one in the Character Burner. Riding may be taken as Driving or Pilot.

Available Lifepaths: Runner, Scout, Sergeant, Veteran and Captain.

Unavailable Lifepaths: Musician, Archer, Foot Soldier, Crossbowman, Sailor, Herald, Bannerman, Cavalryman, Engineer, Armorer, Atilliator, Chaplain, and Wizard of War.

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Soldier	4 yrs	9	+1 P	*Outcast, Servitude, Villager*
Skills: 6 pts: Soldiering, Soldier-wise, Brawling, Knives, Pistol, Rifle				
Traits: 1 pt: Fucked				
Soldier Medic	5 yrs	11	+1 M	*Outcast, Servitude, Citydweller*
Skills: 5 pts: Field Dressing, Apothecary, Survival, Injury-wise				
Traits: 2 pts: Burnt Out, Cold Hearted				
Machinist	5 yrs	11	–	*Citydweller, Villager*
Skills: 6 pts: Repair, Driving, Machine-wise, Groundcar-wise, Military Vehicle-wise				
Traits: 3 pts: Greasy, Machine Speaker, Garrulous, Taciturn				
Pilot[1]	4 yrs	12	+1 M/P	*Citydweller, Outcast*
Skills: 6 pts: Pilot, Sensorium, Ornithopter-wise, Jury-rigging, Fuel-wise				
Traits: 1 pt: Fly boy, Reckless, Stupid, Brave				
Lasgunner[2]	3 yrs	12	–	*Citydweller, Outcast*
Skills: 5 pts: Rifle, Lasgun Operations, Heavy Weapons, Shield-wise				
Traits: 1 pt: Stoic, Paranoid				
Armorer[3]	6 yrs	18	+1 M	*Court, Citydweller*
Skills: 5 pts: Munitions, Weapon Fabrication, Weapon-wise				
Traits: 1 pt: Burn Scars, Diligent				
Engineer[4]	6 yrs	20	+1 M	*Court, Citydweller*
Skills: 5 pts: Engineering, Architecture, Fortifications, Munitions				
Traits: 2 pts: Smart				

Stormtrooper[5]	5 yrs	15	+1 M, P	*Court, Citydweller, Outcast*

Skills: 8 pts: Battle Language, Brawling, Sword, Streetwise, Shield Training, Throwing, Exotic Weapons

Traits: 1 pt: Arrogant, Cold-Blooded, Gloryhound

Propaganda Officer[6]	6 yrs	20	+1 M	*Citydweller, Outcast, Court*

Skills: 6 pts: Propaganda-wise, Interrogation, Falsehood, Persuasion, Propaganda

Traits: 2 pts: Bitter, Cynic, Realist, Slippery, Tenacious

SOLDIER NOTES

All requirements as listed in the Character Burner plus those included here. Replace any references to Foot Soldier with Soldier, any references to Knight are substituted with Elite Guard and/or Stormtrooper. 1: Pilot requires Soldier or Squire (to reflect necessary experience without putting in a lame Flight School lifepath). **2:** Lasgunner requires Elite Guard, Veteran, Stormtrooper, Sergeant, Squire or two Soldier lifepaths. **3:** Armorer requires Fabricator or Machinist. **4:** Engineer requires Armorer or Student and one Soldier setting LP. **5:** Stormtrooper requires Veteran, Sergeant, Elite Guard or Man-at-Arms. **6:** Propaganda Officer requires Veteran, Sergeant, Stormtrooper or Analyst Candidate.

Outcast Sub-Setting

Players may choose from the Outcast paths listed below and from the paths in the Character Burner. See the Restrictions and Unavailable paths.

Restrictions: In the standard Burning Sands setting, no character may end his lifepaths in the Outcast setting. All must either end in Noble, Noble Court, Jihad or Soldier. In subsequent games, characters may end their paths here only with the approval of the other players and the GM. Noble or Fellahin characters who end their paths in the Outcast setting lose their access to Salt. They may not purchase Salt with their rps. They begin the game in Salt withdrawal as described in the Salt Special Rules section in this chapter.

Unavailable: Smuggler, Outlaw, Pirate, Strider, Mad Summoner, Rogue Wizard, Crazy Witch, Cultist, and Heretic Priest.

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Mulhid[1]	3 yrs	9	–	*Noble Court*

Skills: 4 pts: Heretical Doctrine, Oratory, Conspicuous

Traits: 1 pt: Heretic

Wild Prophet[2]	4 yrs	5	+1 M	*Fellahin*

Skills: 5 pts: Cult Doctrine, Powers That Be-wise, Guard-wise, Oratory

Traits: 2 pts: Crazy Eyes, Booming Voice, Fanatic

Outcast Smuggler	7 yrs	20	+1 M/P	*Citydweller, Soldier, Noble Court*

Skills: 9 pts: Haggling, Prospecting, Observation, Pilot, Wasteland-wise, Satellite-wise, Hideout-wise, Pistol, Camouflage

Traits: 2 pts: Suspicious, Cutthroat

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Tribal Exile[4]	2 yrs	3	–	–

Skills: 5 pts: Foraging, Scavenging, Stealthy, Water Theft-wise

Traits: 1 pt: Outlaw (to the tribes)

OUTCAST NOTES

All requirements as listed in the Character Burner plus those included here. 1: Mulhid requires Dava. **2:** Wild-Eyed Prophet requires Tribal Exile. **3:** Outcast Smuggler requires Freebooter, Insurrectionist, Bandit, Fence, Blackmailer, Criminal or Citydweller Smuggler. **4:** Tribal Exile requires Desert Rat.

Servitude Sub-Setting

The Servitude Sub-Setting from the Character Burner can be used as is plus the following:

Lifepath	Time	Res	Stat	Leads
Slave Gladiator	2 yrs	3	–	*Soldier, Outcast*

Skills: 4 pts: Brawling, Slave-wise, Exotic Weapons

Traits: 1 pt: Brutalized

Jihad Burner

This chapter uses the standard rules for character burning found in the Character Burner, pages 12–38. However, there are many new traits and skills presented in this chapter. Be sure to read through the material here before burning a character. In particular, pay special attention to the Salt Addicted trait as it has a strong bearing on Character Burning.

Lifepath Traits

Most of the traits in the Burning Sand lifepaths are from the Character Burner. Traits not listed in the Character Burner are described in the Special Lifepath Traits section below.

Character Traits

As is customary, character traits are not defined, but merely provided so you may include color and detail in your game. The list of character traits in the Jihad setting is as follows:

Arrogant, Beautiful, Bedside Manner, Bitter, Brave, Burn Scars, Callous, Callow, Cassandra. Clever, Crone, Cruel, Cynical, Demagogue, Determined, Devoted, Diligent, Disciplined, Domineering, Dutiful, Flatterer, Fly boy, Frugal, Fucked, Garrulous, Gaunt, Greasy, Grumbling, Guarded, Hard-Work, Imperious, Ingenious, Insightful, Intelligent Eyes, Inventive. Loyal to the Family, Merciless, Mind for Small Details, Mysterious, Obedient, Odd, Paranoid, Perfectionist, Pompous, Pragmatic, Reckless, Regal Bearing, Respect for the Desert, Righteous, Salt of the Earth, Secretive, Sharp Dresser, Smart, Superstitious, Suspicious, Taciturn, Traditional, Wizened,

Traits Described in the Character Burner

Affinities, Ambidextrous, Artful Dodger, Booming Voice, Calm Demeanor, Charismatic, Charming, Chronologue, Cold Hearted, Cold-Blooded, Commanding Aura, Cool-Headed, Disturbed, Domineering Presence, Dreamer, Ear for Voices, Eidetic Memory, Exhausted, Fearless, Gloryhound, Graceful, Hand-Eye Coordination, Iron Will, The Killer, Lesser Muse, Light Sleeper, Loyal, Maimed, Meticulous, Noblesse Oblige, Penetrating Gaze,

Poised, Quick Study, Quick-Witted, Quiet, Rainman, Savvy, Scavenger, Schemer, Sixth Sense, Street Smart, Stoic, Stubborn, Stupid, Tenacious, Thousand Yard Stare, Touch of Ages, Tough, Your Eminence, Your Grace, Your Lordship

Special Lifepath Traits

Analyst Training *Df*

Certain children of exceptional aptitude are taken and trained as Analysts—essentially human supercomputers. This training allows them to perform complex calculations and probability analysis without aid of external devices.

If the character has the Ancestry trait, Analyst Training prevents him from using the rules described under Ancestry and Artha. Instead, he may spend a Persona point to temporarily shadeshift his Perception and all Perception-rooted skills he possesses. The shift lasts for one scene. A Deeds point allows him to double his dice **and** shade shift for one test. Analysts may use Roots Run Deep and The Blood that Flows Through Me Is Not My Own.

If the Analyst fails the test he spent his artha on, he must immediately pass a Steel test. The hesitation obstacle is increased by his margin of failure. Hesitation, in this case, results in a "crash." The character may not act or call on his training for minutes equal to the number of actions hesitated.

Ancestry *Df*

The bloodlines of the noble families of the Imperium stretch back thousands of years. Eugenics and clever marriages have focused some of these lines into exemplars of their race and people, while some have fallen into desuetude and corruption. This trait allows the player to open up a special emotional attribute called Ancestry. See the Ancestry Special Rules at the end of this chapter.

Asynchronous Walk *Char*

Fellahin have a peculiar way of walking when they are out on the sand.

Burnt Out *Df*

The Soldier Medic is Burnt Out from patching holes in his comrades. Reduce hesitation from fear and pain by two. Characters with this trait may not **practice** any of the skills in their current profession. (Use the last lifepath taken to determine current profession. The player may not use the practice rules for the skills listed on that path until this trait is voted off.)

Chief — Df

This trait grants a +2D affiliation with a specific tribe of Fellahin and a +1D reputation among all Fellahin. The tribe must be named in order to gain the bonus. You never know, you might find some of your tribe-mates out here on jihad...

Collaborator — Df

Collaborator grants a +1D infamous reputation in the character's current setting: +1 Ob to deal with his people, but +1D to deal with the enemies of his people.

Conditioned — Char

Court Doctors are specially conditioned for loyalty—the nobility need doctors, of course, and it is vital that they not be assassins! A Conditioned character may not act in a directly harmful or knowingly indirectly harmful way against his benefactors. The player must nominate his character's benefactors before play begins.

Disciplined — Df

Subtract one from hesitation due to fear or surprise.

Discerner — Df

The Matriarch may discern another character's intentions. When a character attempts to use any social skill in the presence of the Matriarch, the old crone may make a Perception test versus the social skill roll. Success indicates that the opposing player must divulge the intent behind his words.

Disillusioned — Df

Veteran Jihadis often become disillusioned with their roles in this war of conquest. -1D to starting Fanaticism for each time the Veteran LP is taken. (Yes, this is special case. Since you can't take a trait multiple times, this trait penalizes you for taking the lifepath multiple times.)

Fanatic — Df

This trait opens the Fanaticism attribute for Fellahin characters. Each Belief the character possesses that relates to his mission on the jihad, the religion or the Mahdi adds +1D to the attribute. If the Beliefs change during the game, dice may be added and lost as appropriate.

Holy Determination — Df

This trait adds +1D to a Fellahin's starting Fanaticism attribute.

Human Property — D4

This character is owned by another. The player must choose his owner at the start of the game. Also, increase the Higher Station penalty for Circles from +1 Ob to +2 Ob.

Immanence — D4

The Matriarchs of the Sisterhood are all tested before they are granted the rank of Mother of the Black Hood. The Motherhood candidates are infused with a powerful, toxic draught of the Salt Water. In order to pass the test, they must use every ounce of bodily control and training in order to attack and purge the poison with their very cellular structure!

This trait may be used as a call-on for Health for recovery tests. It also allows the Matriarch character to actively resist any poison or drug ingested or injected. Test Health against the obstacle used to create the toxin. Success indicates the toxin is purged without harmful effect.

Machine Speaker — C-O

Call-On for Repair or Jury-Rigging when dealing with a machine that has previously resisted repair attempts.

Martyr — D4

When the Fedayin accept their missions in the Jihad, they prepare themselves for death—they are fully prepared to lay down their lives for the cause. This trait adds +2D to the character's starting Fanaticism attribute. Also, it counts as a call-on for Steel when the character is about to die. If the Steel test is still failed, the player must Death Rush his opponent/target. All hesitation actions are played as Close positioning tests rather than Run and Scream Withdraw.

Nose for Trouble — C-O

Call-On for Trouble-wise.

OCDC Directorate — C-O

In addition to managing their fiefs, all higher nobility are voting members on the board of the OCDC, an intergalactic corporation. This corporation governs trade and diplomacy between the known worlds. The trait acts as a call-on for Resources.

Om Tayyib — D4

Reverend Mothers are accorded special privileges and respect among the Fellahin (and sometimes the Sisterhood). This trait counts as a +2D reputation among the Fellahin and Sisterhood as one who has imbibed the Salt Water, the "Water of Thirst," and survived the test. She now sees what others cannot!

Omphalic Focus — D4

A Libra with Simhanada Training and the Psychology skill may utilize the Omphalic Focus to condition a subject to hesitate when a certain word is uttered. First, the subject must be placed in a pleasurable, meditative trance, usually achieved through sexual congress with the Libra. She may then test her Psychology against an Obstacle equal to her subject's Will. If successful, when the word is uttered in his hearing, the subject will Stand and Drool for one action (plus one for each extra success on the Psychology test).

Perfect Pitch — D4

This is a gestalt trait. It only works with Simhanada training and the Psychology skill. The Sisters are trained to combine their Simhanada control, their observational abilities and their psychological studies into a technique often simply known as "The Voice." Through this technique, the sister may pitch her voice in tones most effective against a **registered** character (see the Psychology skill for registering). If she successfully registers a character, the sister may designate one of her social skills to act as gray shade in a Duel of Wits against that character. If attempting to sway a crowd with Oratory or Command, she must register one member of the crowd at +1 Ob in order to earn the gray shade skill.

Respected — C-0

The Saltmasters are highly respected among the various tribes—they earned their position by an exacting attention to detail and a fair disposition. This trait counts as a call-on for Circles in the Fellahin setting only.

Respondent — D4

The Mustajib is the aide to a Dahi missionary or Dava priest. Players with this trait may purchase a relationship with their character's master at half cost. The relationship must still be a part of the Jihad.

Revered — D4

Dava priests are revered for their faith and diligence in service to the Mahdi. This trait grants a +1D reputation within the Jihad.

Ruthlessly Practical — D4

The Mothers of Business have refined their financial and economic skills across centuries of study and millennia of tradition. This trait allows the player to reroll one failed die per test on any Resources, Economics or Economics Engineering test.

Salt Addicted

The Fellahin homeworld produces a unique Salt that bestows incredible benefits upon those who ingest it. In modest amounts, it is a geriatric drug, preserving a youthful physique for decades beyond the natural human lifespan. Characters who are Salt Addicted start with a minimum of 7 mental points and 14 physical points on the stat/age chart. Add LP bonuses on top of that base.

However, it is brutally addictive. Once a character has been hooked on the stuff, removing it from his diet will cause him to sicken and die in a matter of days. (Days equal to Health to become addicted. Days equal to Health to sicken and die.) See the Salt Special Rules section.

Salt Saturated

In order to become Reverend Mothers, the candidate Sister of the Tribe must imbibe an immense and potent draught of Salt Water. To survive, she must control her body's minutest functions and convert the poison to tonic. Once the test is passed, she becomes Salt Saturated. She may now convert any toxin imbibed. Test her Health against the obstacle to create the poison, success indicates the toxin has no effect.

Scorned by the Tribe

The Lazy Stayabout is tolerated among the tribe because he is family, but he is also rebuked and treated ill. This trait grants a +1D infamous reputation among the Fellahin plus a +1 Ob Resources penalty for dealings among your own tribe.

Simhanada Trained

The Sisterhood trains its initiates in supernormal levels of body control. The Aaliyah sisters learn to become aware of and control every muscle—voluntary or involuntary—in their entire physiology. This grants them numerous benefits (many of which require additional traits and training to tap).

The Simhanada Trained may use their raw Stats in place of any physical or martial skill. No Beginner's Luck/Double Obstacle Penalty is applied to these tests. No tests are earned toward aptitude, tests are counted toward advancing the stats. No physical or martial skills may be learned. But, any Sister can pick up any weapon and use it with near mastery.

Also, spending a Persona point allows the Simhanada Trained character to shade shift her Observation for the purpose of *one* test.

Lastly, the Simhanada Trained have perfect recall and may even recite conversations they've observed using the tones and speech patterns of the speakers. In play, it should be assumed that the Simhanada Trained character can remember and recite any conversation or detail perfectly. It is acceptable to offer an advantage die for this if the player can bring this ability into play in an interesting manner.

See the Focus and Immanence traits and the Linguistics and Psychology skills for more on this deadly and powerful art.

Simhanada Trained characters may not use their Ancestry for the **Blood That Flows Through Me Is Not My Own** rule. They may use the **Roots Run Deep** rule. (They may not use Ancestry as a stat for Simhanada Training.) They may not use Ancestry Persona points (they may use Persona points as per the standard rules). They may spend Deeds points to add Ancestry to a roll.

Sworn to the Mission — Dahi

The Dahi is the Fellahin missionary. He is sworn to spread the word of the Mahdi, to convert the infidels and to preach the jihad. This trait allows the player to add a fourth Belief to his character. It must be centered around his mission. This trait also allows the player to remove the Respondent trait if he so desires.

Technophile — C-O

The denizens of 9 are renowned inventors and technophiles. This trait acts as a call-on for any skill test (including Beginner's Luck) involving electronics, computers or weird technology.

Well of Memories — Dahi

The character must have the Immanence or Salt-Saturated trait in order to take the Well of Memories. For most Matriarchs and Reverend Mothers, passing the test of Immanence grants her access to what is called the Well of Memories—ancestral memories contained within her body's cellular structure! The Matriarch may now use her Ancestry attribute as a universal wise skill, as she explores the avenues of her ancestral past. Tapping these memories requires deep concentration. Every time the Well of Memories is used—as a wise skill, as help or as a FoRK—the Matriarch must pass a Steel test or become momentarily trapped in her ancestral memories.

Special Traits

Ancestry — Df — 5 pts

See the lifepath trait description.

Conditioned — Char — 1 pt

Any character may be specially conditioned for loyalty. A Conditioned character may not act in a directly harmful or knowingly indirectly harmful way against his benefactors. The player must nominate his character's benefactors before play begins.

Fanatic — Df — 5 pts

See the lifepath trait description.

Salt Addicted — Df — 4 pts

See the lifepath trait description.

Spy — Df — 4 pts

Any character may be a spy for the other side. This trait can be used to negate one lifepath trait of the player's choosing—Conditioning, for instance. However, the player must detail the nature of his subterfuge in his Beliefs. Also, a relationship with his spymaster/benefactor must be purchased and brought into play in the game.

Special Skills

Skills to be Found in the Character Burner

Accounting, Administration, Almanac, Amercement, Anatomy, Apothecary, Architecture, Astrology, Brawling, Camouflage (MB, page 352), Child-Rearing, Climbing, Command, Composition Conspicuous, Cooking, Dance, Disguise, Doctrine, Engineering, Estimation Training, Etiquette, Falsehood, Field Dressing, Foraging, Fortifications, Games of Chance. Garotte, Haggling, Geometry Training, Heraldry, History, Inconspicuous, Instruction, Interrogation, Intimidation, Knives, Knots, Local History, Logistics, Martial Arts, Mending, Midwifery, Mimicry, Munitions, Musical Instrument, Obscure History, Observation, Oratory, Orienteering, Persuasion, Poetry, Poisons, Religious History, Ritual, Seduction, Soldiering, Soothing Platitudes, Stealthy, Strategy, Strategy Games, Streetwise, Suasion, Surgery, Survival, Sword, Tactics, Throwing, Torture, Tracking, Two-Fisted Training, Ugly Truth

Wises

9-wise, Ancestry-wise, Armored Vehicle-wise, Army-wise, Assassin-wise, Auto-wise, Banner-wise, Battle Language, Black Market-wise, Campaign-wise, City-wise, Cloth-wise, Court-wise, Creche-wise, Crowd-wise, Currency-wise, Dahi-wise, Dava-wise, Desert-wise, Doctrine-wise, Drink-wise, Family-wise, Fashion-wise, Fat Merchant-wise, Fellahin-wise, Fields-wise, Food-wise, Fortress-wise, Fuel-wise, Groundcar-wise, Guard-wise, Heraldry-wise, Injury-wise, Intrigue-wise, Jihadi-wise, Jihad-wise, Lazy-wise, Machine-wise, Metal-wise, Missionaria-wise, Noble Guard-wise, Noble Rank-wise, Noble-wise, Omen-wise, Ornithopter-wise, Peasant-wise, Planet-wise, Plastic-wise, Poisons-wise, Propaganda-wise, Road-wise, Salt-wise, Sand-wise, Scientist-wise, Shield-wise, Ship-wise, Shuttle-wise, Soldier-wise, Space Travel-wise, Sporting Event-wise, Supply-wise, Syndicate-wise, Temple-wise, Tool-wise, Trader-wise, Tribe-wise, Village and Town-wise, Water-wise, Weapon Fabrication, Weapon-wise, Weather-wise, Wife-wise, Women-wise, Work-wise

Special Burning Sands Skills

Alien Technology — Per

The 9 spend their lives immersed in strange and foreign technology. This skill can be used to attempt to operate any unknown technological device.

FoRKs: Engineering
Skill Type: Sorcerous **Tools:** No

Battle Language — Per

A complex, coded language used by many of the major house military forces.

FoRKs: Hand Speech, Linguistics
Skill Type: Military **Tools:** No

Desert Survival — Will/Per

The Fellahin know the secrets of the desert: They know how to find their compass points, how to conserve and dowse for water, locate food and find shelter.

FoRKs: Water Discipline Training
Skill Type: Physical **Tools:** No

Driving — Per/Agi

This skill allows the character to operate motorized ground transportation. The Driving skill is used when making positioning tests involving ground vehicles.

FoRKs: Pilot
Skill Type: Special **Tools:** A groundcar or truck

Economics — Per

The social science that studies and describes the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services and their management.

FoRKs: Economics Engineering
Skill Type: Academic **Tools:** No.

Economics Engineering — Will/Per

The technique of designing and implementing whole economic models and systems.

FoRKs: Economics
Skill Type: Academic **Tools:** Yes, lots of books.

Exotic Weapons — Agi

This skill allows the combatant to use all manner of strange weapons to injure and kill his opponents. Weapons like chains, whips, cestuses, and wrist blades.

FoRKs: Brawling or Martial Arts
Skill Type: Martial **Tools:** An exotic weapon.

Fabrication — Per/Agi

The art of using raw materials, tools and machines to create refined goods.

FoRKs: Engineering
Skill Type: Craftsman **Tools:** Yes.

Genetic Engineering — Per

The science of the manipulation of the human genome in order to produce a specific desired result.

FoRKs: Science or Appropriate Wises
Skill Type: Sorcerous **Tools:** Yes.

Hand Speech — Per/Agi

The communication of complex concepts via hand movement (rather than speech or writing).

FoRKs: Battle Language
Skill Type: Academic **Tools:** Yes

Heavy Weapons — Per/Agi

The operation of slave guns, rocket launchers and heavy lasers in combat situations.

Skill Type: Martial **Tools:** A big gun.

Jury-Rigging — Per/Agi

This skill allows a character to temporarily repair a malfunctioning machine. A successful Jury-Rigging test renders the broken machine functioning again for a single test/use.

FoRKs: Mending, Repair, Fabrication, Engineering
Skill Type: Peasant **Tools:** No

Lasgun Operations — Per

Lasgun Operations allows a character to calibrate, maintain, repair and refuel a lasgun weapon. It is not a combat skill. Lasguns come in various shapes and sizes.Use the appropriate skill, Rifle, Pistol or Heavy Weapons, for actual firing. This skill may be FoRKed into combat skills when using lasers. See the Special Weapons section.

FoRKs: Engineering, Alien Technology
Skill Type: Military **Tools:** A lasgun

Linguistics — Per

This is a Simhanada gestalt skill. Characters with Simhanada Trained trait and this skill may decipher spoken languages by using minute and subtle clues in the speaker. Test Linguistics vs the obstacle, success indicates the character understands what is being spoken.

FoRKs: Appropriate Wises
Obstacle: Dialect, Ob 1. Same culture, different language, Ob 2. Same language family, Ob 3. Unrelated language, same planet, Ob 4. Same species, different planet, Ob 5.
Skill Type: Sorcerous **Tools:** No.

Literacy — Per

Reading, writing and basic arithmetic in one skill!

Skill Type: Academic **Tools:** No.

Measurements — Per

The precise measuring of water and Salt is key to the survival of the tribe. The Elders use meticulous methods and microgram accurate tools to ensure that not one drop or grain is lost.

FoRKs: Estimation Training
Skill Type: Craftsman **Tools:** Yes

Quantum Physics — Per

The dictionary defines this skill as: "A theory in physics based on the principle that matter and energy have the properties of both particles and waves, created to explain the radiation of energy from a blackbody, the photoelectric effect, and the Bohr theory, and now used to account for a wide range of physical phenomena, including the existence of discrete packets of energy and matter, the uncertainty principle, and the exclusion principle." Theoretically, this skill could be used to design or modify shield systems and trans-space navigational systems. If a player manages to actually bring the skill into the game in a meaningful way, give them a Persona point.

FoRKs: Science
Skill Type: Sorcerous **Tools:** A Science Workshop.

Pilot — Per/Agi

Use the Pilot skill for Positioning tests when using ornithopters and shuttles.

FoRKs: Sensorium, Estimation Training
Skill Type: Seafaring **Tools:** A shuttle or ornithopter

Pistol — Agi

Bang, bang. You're dead.

Skill Type: Martial **Tools:** A gun

Planetology — Per

The immense study of an entire planetary system—from ecology and climatology to tectonics and geology, and everything in between.

FoRKs: Science
Skill Type: Academic **Tools:** no—but an Analyst helps.

Prayer Chanting — Will

The mustajib issues the call to prayer and chants passages from the holy text during the services.

FoRKs: Oratory
Skill Type: Musical **Tools:** No.

Propaganda — Will/Per

The noble houses all maintain expensive and complex recording, post-production and broadcast facilities. These are used to project the desired image of the ruling house and their actions. This skill allows the character to produce slick propaganda and distribute it via the mass media. See the Propaganda War Special Rules.

FoRKs: Falsehood, Rhetoric and appropriate wises
Skill Type: Military **Tools:** Workshop.

Psychology — Will

This is the core skill of the Sisterhood training program. It is enhanced by Simhanada Training and many other traits. At its most basic, the Psychology skill may be used to read another character in order to discern his traits. This process is called "registering."

Registering requires that the Sister make one (legitimate, in-game) social skill test against her quarry without use of bonuses or traits. The test can even be a failure. Once the test is made, the player may make a Psychology test for her desired effect. See below for obstacles.

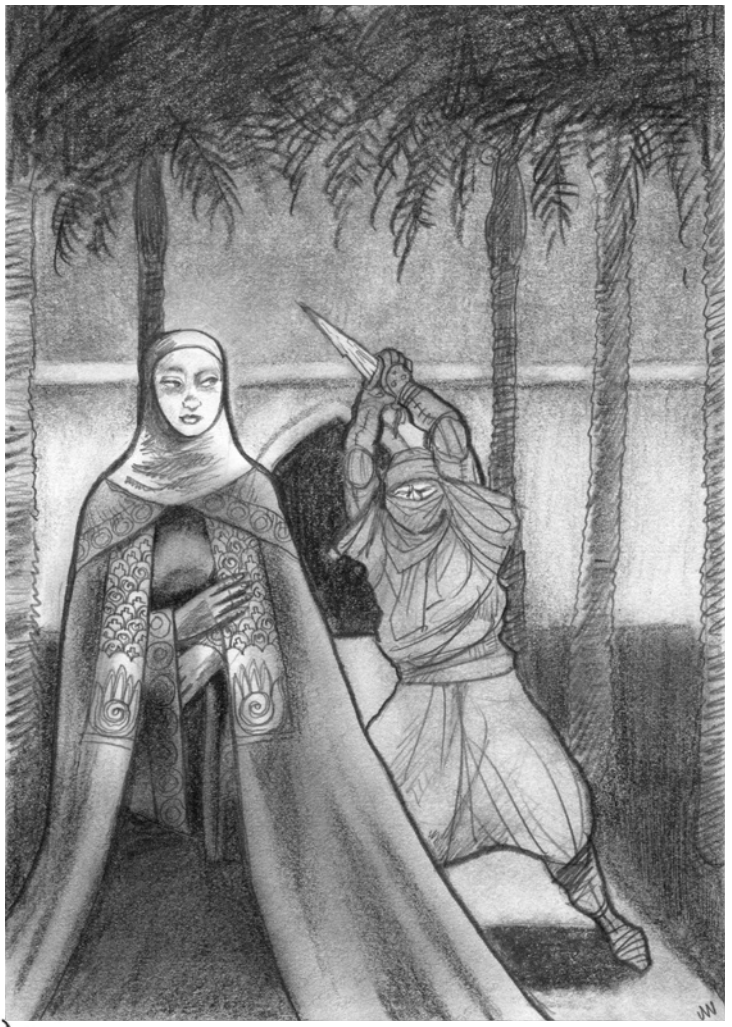
Once a character is registered, the skill allows the Sister to turn those traits against her quarry or negate them completely! This only applies to traits with social implications: Sisters can block the use of a registered call-on, negate an obstacle penalty-causing die trait and take the dice from a bonus die trait and use them for herself on her own tests. The Sister player must choose how it will be used when the trait is registered.

Note that combined with the Omphalic Focus trait, the Psychologist can implant keywords in a victim's psyche and cause him to hesitate. See the trait description for more.

FoRKs: Linguistics, Religious Engineering

Obstacles: Registering: one character trait, Ob 2. one call-on trait, Ob 3. one die trait, Ob 4. one Instinct, Ob 5. Omphalic Focus implantation, Ob equals target's Will. She may only register one aspect of her target character per Duel of Wits or applicable social skill test.

Skill Type: Sorcerous **Tools:** No.



Religious Engineering — Per/Will

The manufacture and design of mythology and religion.

FoRKs: Religious Law
Skill Type: School of Thought **Tools:** No.

Religious Law — Per

The study of the legal structure within a given religion. In this case, it is the laws and penalties of the Mahdi's Jihad. This skill may be used as Rhetoric in a Duel of Wits.

FoRKs: Doctrine
Skill Type: School of Thought **Tools:** No.

Repair — Per/Agi

The ability to repair machinery and mechanical devices like fabricators, groundcars and even ornithopters.

FoRKs: Jury-Rigging and any skill related to that which is being repaired
Skill Type: Craftsman **Tools:** Yes.

Rifle — Per/Agi

The Rifle skill bestows knowledge and experience of both marksmanship and combat rifle tactics. Slave rifles and laser rifles all may be used under this skill.

FoRKs: Appropriate and situational wises for marksmanship tests, Tactics for Range and Cover combat.
Skill Type: Martial **Tools:** A rifle of some sort

Rites of Succession — Will/Per

It is vital for the Shaykh of the tribe to understand and properly adjudicate the rites for advancement and position within the tribal families.

FoRKs: Tribal History, Tribe-wise
Skill Type: School of Thought **Tools:** No.

Salt Fabrication — Per

The Fellahin are an incredibly resourceful people. Life in a desert with little or no resources has left them no other choice but to use what they have. Centuries of experimentation and tradition have led them to develop not only edible salts from the desert, but to use that salt to manufacture durable plastics and crystalline instruments useful for navigation and water purification. This skill allows a Fellahin to either convert harvested Salt into an edible foodstuff, or to transform it into industrial materials. The industrial materials lose all of their drug properties, of course.

FoRKs: Salt-wise
Skill Type: Craftsman **Tools:** Yes.

Science — Per

It's poetry in motion. Eee-ooo-ououou.

FoRKs: Metaphysics, Genetic Engineering, Engineering, Planetology.
Skill Type: Academic **Tools:** For knowledge-based tests, no.

Sensorium — Per

The ability to read and interpret vehicular and installation Sensorium panels. ("What's that blinking red light for?!")

FoRKs: Pilot, Engineer
Skill Type: Seafaring **Tools:** Kind of—you need sensors!

Shield Training — Pow/Spd for aptitude only

The use of the personal deflection screens, commonly known as "shields," requires specialized training. Shields produce odd side effects to the wearer's actions, this training skill mitigates some of those side effects. Characters without Shield Training are +1 Ob to all physical actions (like walking) while wearing a shield, +2 Ob to any vigorous physical action like fighting or running an obstacle course. See the Shields special rules for more on the devices and their uses.

Skill Type: Martial Training **Tools:** A shield

Sisterhood Etiquette — Will/Per

The Sisterhood is a culture and clique unto itself—they do not obey the standard rules of etiquette. This skill allows the character access to their mysterious and rigorous ways.

FoRKs: Sisterhood History
Skill Type: Social **Tools:** No

Sisterhood History — Per

The obscure and twisted history of the Sisterhood.

Skill Type: Academic **Tools:** No.

Trance — Will

This is a Simhanada gestalt skill. The Sisterhood teaches its members how to induce a trance upon themselves so they may rest while maintaining their awareness. Mechanics as Meditation (CB, page 250). Also, the Trance skill allows the Simhanada trained to slip themselves into a self-induced coma—slowing their pulse and respiration to the absolute minimum required to keep them alive. This reduces the amount of oxygen, water and food required to survive in desperate conditions—if trapped under sand or lost in space, for example.

Skill Type: School of Thought **Tools:** No.

Tribal Etiquette — Will/Per

Proper etiquette among the Fellahin tribes is paramount.

When an outlander is in the presence of a Reverend Mother or Shaykh, a Tribal Etiquette versus test must be passed. If the outlander meets or exceeds the Reverend Mother's or Shaykh's successes, he has impressed the tribe and may be accorded respect. If he wins by two, he gains +1D to his next social or Circles test in the tribe. If he fails the test, he is just another foolish outlander to be ignored—all Duel of Wits or Circles tests within the tribe are at +2 Ob. If he fails outright (no successes), I recommend a complication like a challenge to a duel or a trial of survival.

FoRKs: Tribal History, Tribe-wise
Skill Type: Social **Tools:** No.

Tribal History — Per

The history of the Fellahin tribes.

Skill Type: Peasant **Tools:** No.

Water Discipline Training — Will/Per for aptitude only

Water conservation is of the utmost importance to the survival of the tribe. Characters with this skill know intimately how to preserve and extend their water supplies, whether in their creches, out in the desert or on jihad.

FoRKs: This skill FoRKs into Desert Survival.
Skill Type: Peasant Training **Tools:** No.

Wetsuit Manufacture — Per/Agi

This skill allows character to manufacture the special Fellahin "wetsuits." These garments efficiently trap the body's moisture and recycle it, allowing the wearer to survive for great lengths of time in the desert without additional water.

FoRKs: Fabrication
Skill Type: Craftsman **Tools:** Workshop.

Weapon Manufacture — Will/Per for aptitude only

Using this skill, the character may build slave pistols, rifles, guns and stunners.

FoRKs: Fabrication
Obstacles: This is the point at which I break down and give up on my simulationist gamer tendencies. I'm not researching gun manufacture. It's not important to this setting. Then why have the skill?! I ask myself that every day.
Skill Type: Craftsman **Tools:** Workshop.

Resources

Arms	See Description	Poison Dog	12
Missiles	See Description	Poisoner's Kit	12
Personal Shield	45	Medikit	15
Lasgun	30	Workshop	20
Bombs	15	Property	See Description
Deathwire and Recorder/Handles	25	Groundcar	15
Translink	3	Ornithopter	25
Clothes	1	Shuttle	65
Traveling Gear	1	Frigate	130
Fellkit and Wetsuit	5	Syndicate Communicator	105
Finery	5	Interplanetary Crystal	75
Skill Toolkit	7	Salt	See Description
Printed Volumes	10	Salt Cache	See Description

Arms— Arms covers the necessary hand weaponry to suit a character's idiom. In this setting, the most predominant weapons are a sword and dagger for the nobility or simply a pair of fighting knives for the lower castes.

Run of the Mill Quality Arms— 5 rps. Base Ob 1 to use, and they have the run of the mill stats for weapons. This may include exotic weapons if the character has the skill.

Superior Quality Arms— 20 rps. Base Ob 1 to wield. Use the superior quality weapon stats. The Fellahin crystal knife is a superior quality knife. Characters with the Rafiq lifepath may purchase the knife for 5 rps.

Missiles— Throwing knives are 3 rps. Slave pistols are 5 rps. Slave rifles are 10 rps. Stunners are 15 rps.

Poor Quality Missiles— half resource points cost rounded up. Poor quality missiles are all +1 Ob to hit.

Superior Quality Missiles— 3x rps cost. Superior quality missile weapons grant the character a +1D bonus balance die. This is added to his skill every time he takes a shot (not while positioning).

Personal Shield— Shields are available only to characters with the Shield Training skill in their lifepaths. See the Shields special rules section for mechanics. Characters whose last lifepath is Stormtrooper or Elite Guard may take a shield for 22 rps.

Lasgun— Man-portable beam weapons, commonly referred to as "lasguns," are only available to characters with the Lasgun Operations skill.

Bombs— Use the stats for Iron-cased Bombs in the Burning Wheel but without the misfire die. These are only available to characters with the Munitions skill or Elite Guard, Rafiq or Stormtrooper lifepath.

Deathwire— The imperial homeworld exports a peculiar and vital product to the empire at large. Colloquially known as deathwire, this is a biomechanical thread with a tensile strength one thousand times greater than spider's silk. It can be used as a fantastic cutting instrument, but far more bizarre are its properties as a recording media. The molecular polymer chain that comprises deathwire can be configured to hold massive amounts of data—video, sound, and text. A single strand the length of a man's arm can hold an entire day's video capture from a single camera. Given its compact nature, deathwire is a favorite accoutrement among spies. It is also hideously expensive. Lastly, if fitted with special handles, the stuff can be used as a wicked garrotte—Power 3, Add 1, May only be used on Locked opponents, no shield protection possible.

Translink— A personal, earbead communications device common to just about anyone who has business to conduct.

Traveling Gear— This is all the necessary bits, odds and ends and what-nots that are needed for survival on the road—candles, matches, flint and steel, a pocket knife, a rain cloak, a rain hat, a good sturdy rucksack, a thick leather belt, a money purse or wallet, a warm coat, etc.

Fellkit and Wetsuit— Desert survival gear. A must for any self-respecting Fellahin. Adds +4D to any Desert Survival test. Only characters with the Desert Rat LP may purchase this.

Groundcar— This is an efficient wheeled vehicle common to most homeworlds. Standard models seat four, but smaller two seaters and larger cargo models are available. Groundcar fuel cells last for thousands of miles of driving, but their biggest drawback is they require roads or flat terrain to operate at top efficiency. See the Vehicle rules in the Special Rules section for more details.

Ornithopter— These are winged aircraft, commonly called hornets, that use the flapping of the crafts' wings to achieve lift and to augment thrust. The hornet design originated from the Mahdi's homeworld—optimized for the harsh weather conditions there—and has since spread across nearly all the noble homeworlds. Ornithopters are strictly atmospheric craft, but they serve roles as civilian transport and military combat craft. They can be small and light enough to accommodate two passengers or large enough to hold a crew of 12. See the Vehicle rules in the Special Rules section for more details.

Shuttle— Shuttles are orbital landers used by the noble, mercantile and military organizations to ferry relatively small loads from the planet surface to interstellar spacecraft waiting in orbit. The smallest of the vehicles can accommodate a half-

dozen passengers. A medium-sized shuttle can haul two truck loads worth of cargo—easily over a hundred passengers. The largest can accommodate large military vehicles or five to six hundred passengers. See the Vehicle rules in the Special Rules section for more details.

Frigate— A frigate is a large spacefaring ship used by the nobility both as a pleasure craft and as a military vehicle. Many frigates are outfitted with special anti-gravitational devices that allow them to operate in atmosphere—acting as a massive assault landers or merely threatening displays of power.

Skill Toolkits— Many skills require tools. If a skill is listed with "Tools: Yes," then a character must spend resource points on a toolkit in order to be able to adequately perform skill tests. Tests without tools (for skills that require them) are at a double obstacle penalty.

A toolkit that has finite supplies—like medicine for Apothecary—can run dry. Each use after the first, roll the DoF. If a 1 comes up, the kit is empty. The character must make an Ob 2-5 Resources test to replenish it. The GM may set the obstacle depending on how rare the contents of the kit are. Ob 2 for carpenter's tools, Ob 4 for surgeon's tools, Ob 5 for sorcerous tools.

Clothes— This resource purchase includes all of the clothing a character would need for everyday life in his station (including shoes!). It is not just one outfit. Like the Arms purchase, Clothing allows the player to take what he needs to trick out his character (short of Finery).

Finery— Finery covers specialty clothing and expensive items that one would wear either on special occasions or when trying to make a point. Courtly regalia for nobles, vestments for priests, uniforms for swordmasters, etc. Like Clothing, this purchase includes a whole wardrobe, not just a single outfit. Take as much or as little as you like.

Workshop— A workshop is just a big toolkit. It is used for science, artisan and craftsman skill tests that require more than just simple tools. Purchasing this gives the character an appropriate room/building/tower to house the workshop. This counts as property when factoring resources.

Printed Volumes— A player may purchase books or scrolls containing lore, history or stories for his character. Choose what is appropriate for the story and for the character's lifepaths.

Property— A leaky shack, shallow caves, a bed at a flophouse, 1 rp. A rented room, private room in the tribal warren, 3 rps. A rented apartment, 10 rps. A house, office or cave system, 15 rps. A small business (a workshop, a cargo ship), a secure and livable safe house, 20 rps. Moderate-sized business, a bunker, 30 rps. Manor or estate, an urban hôtel, a mosque, *40 rps. A small factory, a fortified manor, *45 rps. A large business, a keep, a temple, *60 rps. A fortress or moderate-sized estate,

covert training camps, *75 rps. A military complex, a large fortress, an underground cave network, a smugglers warren complete with hidden landing pads, *90 rps. A palace, *105 rps. Property obviously counts as property when factoring resources.

*Note that only Noble Born characters or characters with the Shaykh, Saltmaster, Minister, Town Official, Merchant, Magnate, Steward, Master of Horse, Master of Hounds, Bailiff, Coroner, Constable, or Treasurer LPs may spend more than 40 rps on property. Other characters simply may not own that degree of property (unless otherwise specified). The property purchase comes with appropriate and attendant staff, buildings and accoutrements. It does not provide the character with other free purchases from the Resources list.

Poisoner's Kit— This kit allows the erstwhile assassin to mix poisons. All of the ingredients necessary for concocting the poisons listed under the Vile Poisoner skill in the Character Burner are present in this kit. After each use, roll the Die of Fate. On a 1, the supplies have run out and the character must refill the kit via a Resources, Foraging or Scavenging test (or another means sanctioned by the GM).

Poison Dog— The Poison Dog is a small robot designed to inhabit noble living quarters and kitchens. The unobtrusive device is equipped with molecular analysis devices that enable it to detect poison and foreign substances in food and drink. The Poison Dog has a G6 Observation skill specifically directed toward detecting poison in food. Test the robot's skill against the Poisoner's successes. If he generates more successes, poison is detected and identified. If he ties the poisoner, he deems the food suspect and unsafe, though no poison can be accurately identified. If he generates fewer successes, the poison has slipped through undetected.

Medikit— This is a semi-robotic medical kit that adds +1D to the Field Dressing skill.

Salt— Salt. The most necessary of substances, one of the building blocks of life. This purchase represents that the character has a stock of the drug called Salt. Every 5 rps spent represents a couple of doses—that's a generous discount. Acquiring a week's supply of Salt for one character in game starts at Ob 3 Resources and is subject to availability. Salt counts as property.

Salt Cache— A player may invest his rps in a Salt Cache. It costs 45 rps to buy-in. Players may invest additional resources in 15 rp intervals. Divide the final total result by 15. The result equals a cache of dice the player may add to Resource tests. Follow the rules for caches described on BW page 92. Salt Caches count as property.

Note: When playing characters who are Born Fellahin and part of the Jihad (not collaborators), the group starts with a 3D Salt Cache for free. The individual players may invest additional RPs in it to increase the size and gain more dice.

Syndicate Communicator— A Syndicate Communicator is a rare and much sought-after commodity. To the world at large, he looks like a grotesque crystalline statue of a man, immobile and unfeeling. But within the shell lies the soul of a man who has

completely given himself over to the Salt. He is the only crystalline structure known to be able to communicate across interstellar or intergalactic lines. Nobles may be able to communicate between worlds via their Interplanetary Crystals, but only the Communicator can transmit across galaxies. In order to maintain their posts on the OCDC board and remain in the favor of the emperor (or Mahdi!), the major noble houses require the services of these bizarre creatures. The Syndicate obliges by leasing them to the houses, installing them and maintaining them—for obscene sums of money. The Dukes and Princes benefit via the instantaneous intergalactic communication.

Interplanetary Crystal— An Interplanetary Crystal is an extraordinarily large chunk of Salt crystal that may be made to resonate with other crystals on planets in the same system. This allows for instantaneous communication within the system. A necessity for the major and minor houses governing their various worlds!

Burning Sand Special Rules

The following section describes either rules unique to this setting, like the Salt, or variations on mechanics in the Burning Wheel or Character Burner, like Artha, Ancestry and Fanaticism.

Artha

The Burning Sand setting uses special artha rules. Peasants, villagers, city-born and soldiers are merely pawns in the game. Players whose characters are Born Peasant, Born Villager or City Born may only spend Fate and Persona artha. They may not spend Deeds points. That's right, you're nothing in this setting unless you're a noble or a fanatic.

Players whose characters are Born Fellahin and Born Noble may spend Fate, Persona and Deeds as normal. However, players whose characters have the Ancestry, Fanaticism, Analyst Training or Simhanada Training traits have special restrictions and bonuses placed on their artha expenditures. See the individual trait descriptions and special rules in this section for more.

Salt

The Salt is taken either in the form of crushed crystal powder straight on the tongue or as an admixture with liquid and sugar. Both forms have the desired effect, the latter is simply easier on the palette. Those who take the Salt straight on the tongue liken the sensation to plugging one's tongue into a wall socket. Momentarily painful, ultimately exhilarating.

The Salt crystals bond with amino acids in the body and quickly work their way into the DNA structure of the host. Once bonded, the aggressive crystalline structure begins to modify certain aspects of the living host's core. In almost

every way, it is a beneficial effect for the host, as the Salt's influence counters the effects of aging and cellular deterioration. The main drawback is that the Salt itself degrades rather rapidly, leaving the DNA structure weakened. Without regular infusions of the mineral, the host will indeed sicken and die. With regular infusions of the stuff, a user can easily live two or three times the typical human life span.

Addiction and Withdrawal

One dose of the Salt gives the imbibing character the Salt Addicted trait. See the Lifepath Trait in this setting.

If the Salt is imbibed after character burning, and the character has fewer than 14 physical points, each dose of Salt grants +1 P until the character reaches 14 points total. (This doesn't apply to wounded characters.) The player may decide where the points are allocated, but it is best to raise the lowest stat first. Two points may not be allocated to a stat until all physical stats have gained one die. Three points may not be allocated to a stat unless all physical stats have gained two dice. Adjust Health, Reflexes and Mortal Wound according to the new numbers.

However, once these benefits are reaped, the character becomes Salt Addicted. A character may go for days equal to his Health without Salt. Thereafter, his Health drops by 1D per day. Once Health reaches zero, the character is comatose. If it drops below zero, the character dies.

Ancestry

Ancestry allows the player to tap his character's breeding and utilize it in ways that low born men and women cannot even conceive.

Starting Ancestry

Ancestry starts at B3. The Salt Addicted trait adds +1D. The Your Lordship trait adds +1D. Your Eminence adds +2D. Your Grace adds +3D.

Roots Run Deep

During character burning, the player may nominate one skill category (as per page 49 of BW) to be rooted from Ancestry instead of its normal roots. For example, a character who is born to play the sitar might put his Ancestry in Musical skills. All skills in that category are rooted from Ancestry when opened in burning or play. If a skill has two roots, simply count Ancestry as the sole root. Ancestry is also used for learning skills and using Beginner's Luck for skills in this category.

The Blood that Flows Through Me Is Not My Own

Once per scene, if a player is called on to make a stat test, he may choose to replace his character's stat with his Ancestry exponent and roll those dice instead. He may not spend Persona or Deeds on this test.

Ancestry and Artha

Ancestry allows a player to spend Persona and Deeds points to tap his mysterious past. A Persona point allows the player to add +1D per Belief related to his birthright, heritage or ancestry to any stat, Resources or Circles test. A Deeds point allows the player to add all of the dice from his Ancestry attribute to a stat, Resources or Circles test. (Not skills!) This is done instead of doubling the dice.

Characters with Ancestry may not benefit from Boon or Divine Inspiration artha. Their players must use the Persona and Deeds Ancestry and Artha rules described above. However, all other artha expenditures are available as normal.

Failing Your Ancestors

If any test involving the Ancestry attribute is failed, the ability is taxed (like Resources). When using Ancestry to replace a stat or when spending a Deeds point to tap Ancestry, the margin of failure is taxed from the attribute. When spending a Persona point, subtract -1D from the attribute for each Belief die added, up to a maximum of the current roll's margin of failure.

If Ancestry is taxed to zero, reduce the overall exponent by 1. If the actual exponent is reduced to zero, the player may no longer access this character's Ancestry.

Father, Forgive Me

Ancestry may be recovered like Taxed Resources. The "get a job" type skill is Etiquette, the cycle is annual. Using Etiquette (and appropriate FoRKs), the character must pay homage to and venerate his ancestors at their shrines and tombs. For the Sisterhood, this involves Sisters paying their respects to the Great Mother and the Mother Superior until they are suitably chastened and reminded of their lineage.

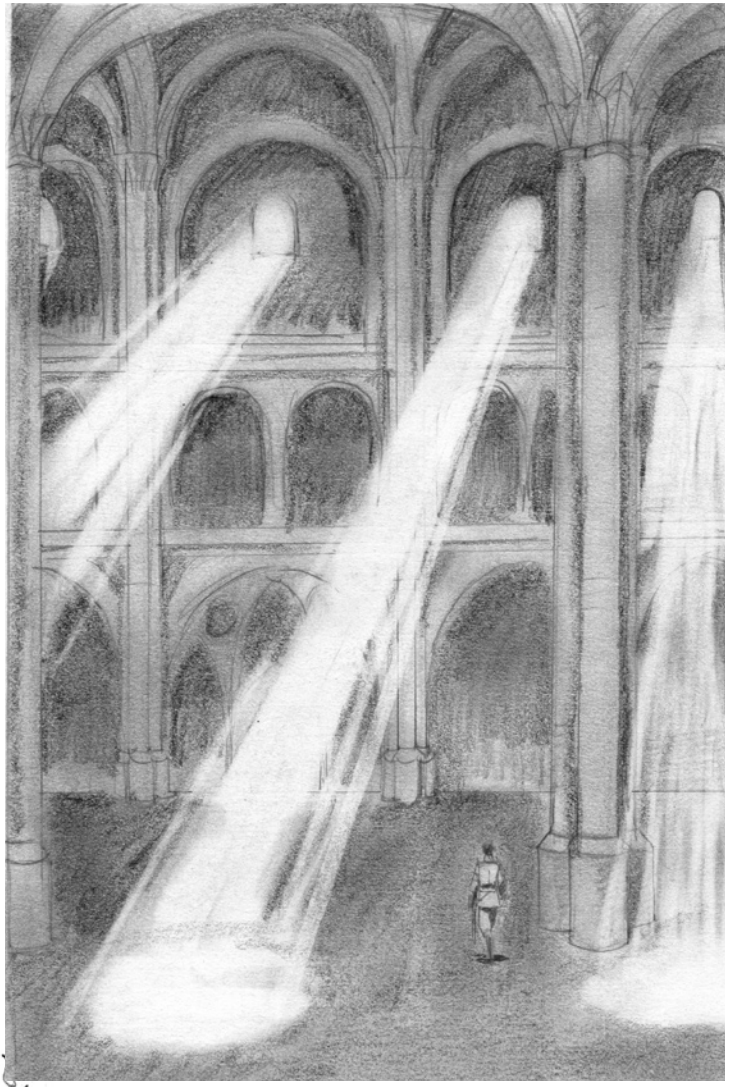
Ancestry and Advancement

Ancestry advances like a stat (BW, page 44). Tests for advancement are earned as normal when Ancestry is used for the Roots Run Deep tests. If adding Persona point dice, the number of dice added counts as the obstacle for a test against Ancestry. If using a Deeds point to add the Ancestry dice to a test, it counts as a Difficult test for advancement.

These artha-derived tests are noted separately from any tests earned from the ability being tested. A player spending a Persona point can earn a test toward Ancestry and a test toward his stat.

My Fate is Not My Own

If a player with the Ancestry attribute spends a Fate point for Luck on any test, he does **not** earn a test for advancement for skill or stat or Ancestry. (The Fate point does still count toward epiphany, though.)



Ancestry, FoRKs and Help

Ancestry is out there on its own in the world. No FoRKs, no help. (Linked tests are ok.)

Fanaticism

Fanaticism is the sister to and opposite of Ancestry. The fires of belief and conviction fuel the action and initiative of the Jihad. Without Fanaticism, the Jihad would be just another peasant uprising destined to die on the shores of some foreign world. But Fanaticism fuels the fires of war—it is pure proof that God is on the side of the jihadis.

Starting Fanaticism

The Fanatic trait opens the Fanaticism emotional attribute at B0. Each Belief the player ties into the jihad and his mission or his devotion to the Mahdi adds +ID to the starting exponent. If these Beliefs are lost or changed, the dice are lost. Belief dice may be regained with additional (or different) appropriately fanatical Beliefs.

Holy Determination adds +ID to the starting exponent. The Martyr trait adds +2D. Disillusioned subtracts -ID from the exponent for each time the player took the Veteran Jihadi lifepath. If earned in play, Disillusioned subtracts -ID from the exponent. (Essentially, it negates the Holy Determination trait.)

It is God's Will: Fanaticism and Artha

Fanaticism is a rated attribute with an exponent and a shade. Fanaticism may be used to modify stat, skill and attribute tests (not Resources or Circles). When spending a Persona point, the player may add +ID for each of his Beliefs relating to the jihad or his particular mission. For example, a particularly devout Dahi with the Sworn to the Mission trait could add up to four dice to a test to convert a group of infidel peasants.

Rather than double dice, a Deeds point allows the character to add his full Fanaticism dice to the stat, skill or attribute test.

Characters with Fanaticism may not benefit from Boon or Divine Inspiration artha. They must use the God's Will rules described above. However, all other artha expenditures are available as normal.

I Will Not Be Turned from My Holy Purpose

In a Duel of Wits, Fanaticism is rolled along with the dueling skill when determining the base of the body of argument so long as the argument regards faith, religion, the mission or the jihad. If arguing about more worldly matters, use the character's Will exponent as the base as normal. No Deeds or Fate artha may be used on those bonus Fanaticism dice.

The Leap

If a player encounters an impossible situation—a *challenging* test for any skill or stat—he may opt to test his Fanaticism instead of the appropriate stat, skill or attribute. The test is open-ended. However, no FoRKs or help may be used, and no artha may be spent. He may only take this leap of faith once per scene. Note that Fanaticism may not otherwise replace a stat or skill in a test (like Ancestry can).

In a versus test, have the jihadi's opponent roll first in order to set the obstacle and so the player knows if he needs to use a Leap of Faith or not. (This somewhat problematic with Counterstrike and Rebuttal. We recommend you not use the Leap for tests like those.)

Failing in the Eyes of God

If **any** test involving the Fanaticism attribute is failed, the ability is taxed (like Resources). This includes The Leap, spending Persona points to add Beliefs or spending Deeds to add Fanaticism.

When using Fanaticism in the Leap or when spending a Deeds point to tap Fanaticism, the margin of failure is taxed from the attribute. When spending a Persona point, subtract -ID from the attribute for each Belief die added, but limited to the margin of failure.

If Fanaticism is taxed to zero, reduce the overall exponent by 1. If the actual exponent is reduced to zero, the player may choose to rewrite his Beliefs so that his character no longer has access to the emotional attribute, the trait may be voted off by the group at large or the player may opt to have his character atone. See below for atonement.

Atoning for Weakness in the Eyes of God

Fanaticism may be recovered like Taxed Resources. The taxed jihadi must participate in a ceremony officiated by a character with the Ritual skill. The cycle is monthly. The obstacle for the ritual is equal to the dice lost. The Fanatic may aid in his individual restoration by offering to do penance. If he offers

penance, the officiating Hujjat may determine the penance and give the player a new goal or mission in the jihad. Penance allows the atoning character's current Fanaticism to help the ritual.

During the ritual, the officiating Hujjat may question the atoning player character's fanaticism. Doing so indicates that the atoning player must change one of his Beliefs. The Belief to be changed and the new one to be written are up to the owning player. However, the Hujjat may withhold atonement dice as he sees fit if the new Belief fails to focus on the Jihad and its goals. Some or all of the dice may be withheld. It is best to keep your Hujjat happy. If atoning after dropping permanently to zero, the player must change his Beliefs and focus them on his fervor for the jihad. Each Belief so rewritten, gains him +ID of Fanaticism.

I am God's Instrument: Advancing Fanaticism

Fanaticism advances like a skill (BW, page 44). Spending Persona points to add dice can count as a test for advancement for Fanaticism. The number of dice added counts as the obstacle for the test. Consult the advancement table to see what type of test this counts as.

Spending a Deeds point to add Fanaticism dice to a test always counts as a Difficult test for advancement for Fanaticism.

The artha-derived tests for attribute advancement do not affect the skill or stat test. The player earns two tests to advance two abilities—Fanaticism and the skill/stat being tested.

When using the Leap, compare the obstacle of the stat/skill test with the Fanaticism exponent as per the standard procedure for advancement.

My Fate is in God's Hand

If a player with the Fanaticism attribute spends a Fate point for Luck on any test, he does **not** earn a test for advancement for that skill or stat. (The Fate point does still count toward epiphany, though.)

The Black Market

The Burning Sands setting is one of war and strife. Under such circumstances, the price of goods generally skyrocket and the fabric of civil society slowly breaks down.

Basic Sample Resources Obstacles

These obstacles illustrate a world (or even system) untouched by the jihad. These would only be appropriate to use if playing nobility on a world where there is no obvious Jihad presence. Once the invasion/infilitration is on, use the obstacle modifiers below based on how far along the war is on the target world.

Ob 1— Food for the day. Lodging for the night. Clothing, shoes, and other simple, mundane material goods. Day laborer's wages.

Ob 2— A cheap pistol (poor quality). Rent in a rundown urban neighborhood. Traveling Gear. Tools. Printed Volumes. Translink units. Pay for a medic or soldier.

Ob 3— Poison Dog. Medikit. A cheap rifle. A decent slave pistol or sword. Finery. A veteran soldier's or pilot's pay.

Ob 4— Fellkit and Wetsuit. A slave rifle. A groundcar. Cheap explosives. Poisoner's kit. A cheap stunner. A workshop. A safe house. Pay for an Elite Guard or a Stormtrooper.

Ob 5— A couple of doses of Salt. A lasgun. An ornithopter. Explosives. Deathwire. An armed groundcar. A decent quality stunner.

Ob 6— An armed ornithopter. A shield belt. Basic surveillance system. An Imperial Scientist's stipend. Fees for a Sister Concubine.

Ob 7— A cheap shuttle. A bunker. Basic security system. Retainer for an Assassin.

Ob 8— Industrial equipment. Small estate. Covert training camps. Strategist's, Warmaster's or Swordmaster's stipend.

Ob 9— A large, unarmed, cargo shuttle. A small fortress. An Analyst's or Master of Assassin's wages.

Ob 10— A frigate. A Syndicate Communicator. An installation, fortress or super-secret smuggler's den. A Salt Cache (5D).

Ob 11— A massive and imposing temple or mosque.

Ob 12— A gigantic, mind-numbing palace.

Ob 13— Family atomics.

Human Resources

All Resources tests to acquire services must be preceded by a successful Circles test—the player must be able to make contact within his Circles before he can proffer money for the services. Any of the pay, stipends or retainers for characters merely indicate the basic cost of services for these character types. The obstacle may be raised or lowered as deemed appropriate by the GM and the situation at hand.

Circles, War and The Black Market

Once the full-on war is on, the black market gets into full swing. All Resources tests must be preceded by a Circles test. The character must have Circles relating to the item or goods he seeks. You can't just go out and buy food. You've got to know who's selling it and when. Then you show up with the cash or trade goods and make your purchases. If a player can't bring an appropriate Circle to bear, he can't make the purchase. The Circles test counts as a Linked test (BW page 29). The following sections describe various conditions and modifiers leading up to that point.

Infiltration

During the infiltration phase of the invasion, it's the Jihadis who are at a disadvantage. Food and clothing, etc. remain at Ob 1. However, Ob 2-5 Resources tests suffer +1 Ob. Ob 6+ tests suffer +2 Ob. This penalty does not apply to Salt. So long as the jihadis have an appropriate relationship to help them maintain their supplies, they never suffer an obstacle penalty for acquiring Salt.

Terrorism

Typically, in the Jihad invasions, there is a period of time where the Jihadis have established bases and training camps on the target planet and are using them to fund and supply missions to subvert and destroy.

Resources tests from Linked Circles tests incur no penalty. Resources tests not preceded by a successful Circles test are +1 Ob. Resources tests preceded by a failed Circles test incur a +2 Ob (+1 for failing the linked test, +1 for the scarcity penalty).

All military and weaponry purchases are at +1 Ob, even if made within the character's Circles.

Nobility and the general populace only suffer a Resources obstacle penalty under these conditions if they are trying to acquire something that the Jihadis have destroyed or made scarce. Or if they trying to force through unreasonable purchases in a terrorism-plagued district.

Life During Wartime

Once the jihadis land and the invasion begins in earnest, the price of goods skyrockets. The standard distribution chain breaks down and most goods can only be found on the black market.

Foodstuffs and basic commodities treble in price— Food and clothing are Ob 3 purchases. Slave pistols, stunners, rifles and explosives are -1 Ob (at least). Cheap housing is -1 Ob. Heavy military gear, like vehicles, is +2 Ob—due to scarcity. Everything else is +1 Ob.

Shields

The elite soldiers and affluent nobility protect themselves from harm with personal deflection fields, more commonly known as "shields." These devices produce an energy screen surrounding the wearer—this screen deflects incoming energies (including kinetic!) away from the shield bearer.

The shield itself is worn as a medium sized belt-buckle. The controls for operation are simple—a straight-forward dial lets the wearer increase the intensity of his shield, from 0 to 7.

For the untrained, shields cause a +1 Ob to basic physical actions (like walking) and +2 Ob to vigorous physical actions (like fighting).

Shield Dice

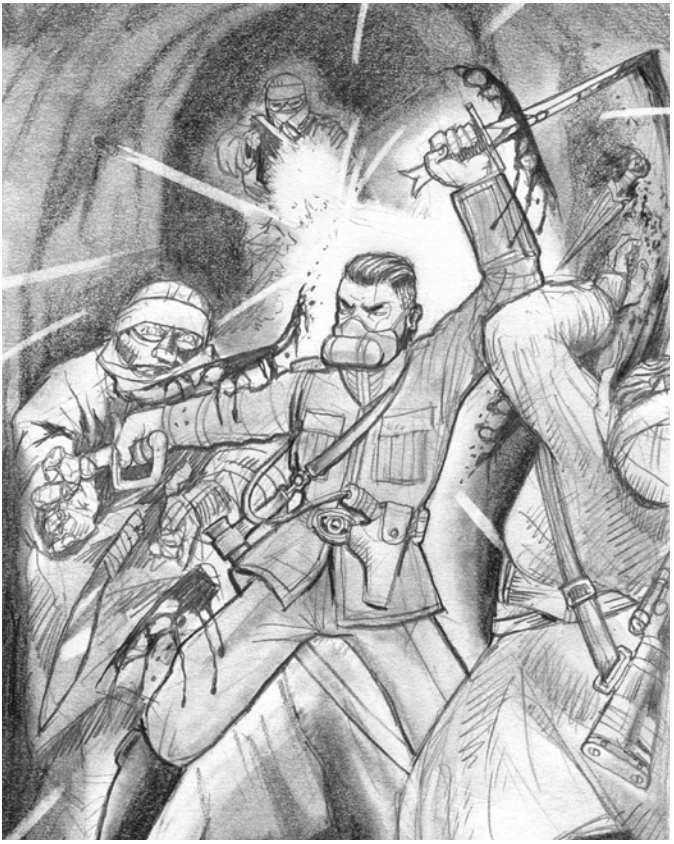
Whenever the wearer of an active shield is struck, roll the shield dice against Ob 1. If the test is passed, the blow is completely deflected—no damage is done. The shields themselves are also unharmed and undepleted by attack (1s don't mean anything).

A shield may be dialed from one to seven dice. Each level after 2D has certain side-effects.

1D— No penalty. At this level a shield is virtually undetectable (Ob 9 Observation test.)
2D— No penalty, default setting for most shields.
3D— +1 Ob to Perception and Observation tests.
4D— +1 Ob to Perception, Observation, Agility tests, Throwing and Stealthy.
5D— +1 Ob to Perception, Observation, Agility tests, Throwing, Climbing, Stealthy and Speed. 5D also incurs a +1 Ob exhaustion hazard. See Shield Exhaustion.
6D— Same penalties as 5D, but with a +2 Ob exhaustion hazard.
7D— Same penalties as 5D, but with +3 Ob to exhaustion.

Shields and Great Strike

Shields are unaffected by the +1 VA from Great Strike.



Shield Training

Characters with Shield Training gain intimate knowledge of shields—how to use them, and how to defeat them. Primarily, the training skill negates the +1/+2 Ob penalty that wearing a shield untrained causes. In addition, the following list details modifications to the existing martial actions that the training skill grants:

Strike— Strike always acts as the first test in a Linked test for a Feint or Counterstrike. (This counts as long as the obstacle is met. It doesn't matter if the blow is deflected.)

Counterstrike— Counterstrike "strike half" successes may be split between damage, location and shield penetration. Each die put into shield penetration raises the shield obstacle by one.

Feint— Extra Feint successes may be split between damage, location and shield penetration. Each die put into shield penetration raises the shield obstacle by one.

Shield Training also grants an additional martial maneuver:

Shield Strike (Aggressive, counts as Strike for all counters)— Shield Training teaches combatants how to move and fight with their shields up, but it also teaches them how to slow their Strikes down to better penetrate their opponent's shields while maintaining the full force of their intended blow. A Shield Strike can be performed in two or three actions—with the dice rolled on the final action of the Shield Strike. While not as powerful as Feint and Counterstrike, it can be useful: A two-action Shield Strike raises shield obstacles by one. A three-action Shield Strike raises the shield obstacle by 2.

Shields and Natural Defenses

Shields add their current dice level to the natural defenses against Throw, Push, Lock and Charge.

The Counter Lock maneuver negates the shield dice bonus to natural defenses.

Shield Exhaustion

Shields can be dialed so high that they impede the exchange of air to their wearer. Using shields at this level in combat is exceptionally dangerous—breathing and air flow are paramount to winning a martial contest!

If a shield is dialed up to 5D or higher, the player must make a Forte test against exhaustion at the end of every exchange. The base obstacle is 0. Use the following modifiers. Total the penalties for all consecutive volleys across all exchanges:

5D Shield, +1 Ob exhaustion per volley after the first volley at this level
6D Shield, +2 Ob exhaustion per volley after the first volley at this level
7D Shield, +3 Ob exhaustion per volley after the first volley at this level

If the Forte test is passed, the character may fight on without penalty. If the Forte test is failed, the character hesitates for a number of actions equal to the number of volleys he's had his shield at 5D or higher. If this number is equal to his Reflexes, he hesitates for a whole exchange and must make another Forte test for exhaustion—he's choking at this point. Add on another exchange worth of penalties and make the test. If he continues to hesitate for whole exchanges, someone better turn his shield belt off, or he's going to suffocate. People usually die from suffocation in two or three minutes. Use your best judgement here.

When factoring the Forte test obstacle, total all of consecutive exhaustion penalties. If the shield has been at 5D for 6 volleys, the Forte test is Ob 6. If the shield-bearer drops his shield to 4D or less for one volley, the modifiers resets to 0.

Shield Dialing

It costs one action in the script to change the settings of your shield or one die of action in Range and Cover to get a breath of air and negate exhaustion. If a tie results in Range and Cover, that means there was no time to dial the shield as things got hot and heavy. Be sure to make a special little exhaustion check at the end of the volley.

Shooting From Within a Shield

Characters may not fire missile weapons when their shields are up. If they do, they lose a limb if they're lucky, die if they're not.

Shields and Range and Cover

Shields tend to make one a bit more confident when under fire. Imagine a commander standing in the open on a hillock, ordering his troops to advance, as slave rifle rounds simply glide off of him. To that end, shields grant +2D to the Steel Close and Steel Withdraw maneuvers.

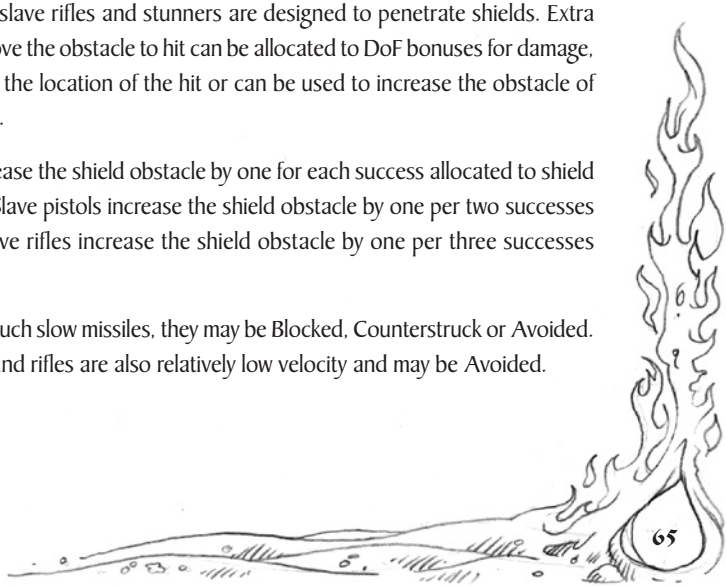
Since characters may not fire while their shields are up, shielded characters may not spend dice to fire in Range and Cover and may not benefit from weapon positioning dice. They may benefit from help, though! Especially with help from guys with rifles.

Anti-Shield Missiles

Slave pistols, slave rifles and stunners are designed to penetrate shields. Extra successes above the obstacle to hit can be allocated to DoF bonuses for damage, used to move the location of the hit or can be used to increase the obstacle of the shield test.

Stunners increase the shield obstacle by one for each success allocated to shield penetration. Slave pistols increase the shield obstacle by one per two successes allocated. Slave rifles increase the shield obstacle by one per three successes allocated.

Stunners are such slow missiles, they may be Blocked, Counterstruck or Avoided. Slave pistols and rifles are also relatively low velocity and may be Avoided.



Shield Dice and Laser Weapons

When a highly focused beam of coherent energy touches a shield device, a feedback loop is created and the metapoint that allows the shield to exist collapses and changes to antimatter. The antimatter reacts violently with its real matter surroundings. This results in a small nuclear explosion—usually less than one kiloton, but always enough to kill both the shielded character and the suicidal laser-wielding maniac.

During the game, if the shield is hit with the laser, test the shield as normal. If the roll is **failed**, no explosion results. The target takes damage as normal. If the roll is successful, there is an explosion with a GI2 Mark (DoF for IMS), 500 meter long range and 20 open-ended gray positioning dice.

Crystal Knives

Fellahin crystal knives disrupt shields. Shield tests against these weapons are always at +1 Ob. In fact, if a character wearing a shield is using a crystal knife, his shield suffers a +1 Ob to all tests due to the knife's resonance distortion.

Can't I Just Wear Armor?

There is no armor in this setting. Not personal armor, not vehicular armor. Laser weapons or nuclear stand-off munitions efficiently destroy any material resistance put in their way. The reason why the Soldier gets the Fucked trait is because he doesn't have a shield. Guess who they turn the lasers on during the pitched battles?

And the jihadis shun such personal protection—they are armored by their faith in the Mahdi.

Special Weapons

Fellahin Crystal Knife

SQ knife: Shortest, Fast, Power 1, Add 1. Also, **Crystalline Shield Disruption**: +1 Ob to shield tests made against the knives.

Slave Pistol

IMS: B4, B7, B10. Magazine: 10. Optimal, 1D. Extreme, 1D. Max range, 40 meters. DoF as a bow. **Low Velocity**: +1 Ob to hit due to slow velocity. In Fight!, Avoid successes reduce shooter's successes. **Shield Penetrator**: Every two extra successes allocated to penetration increases shield obstacles by +1 Ob.

Slave Rifle

IMS: B5, B7, BI1. Magazine: 15. Optimal, 1D. Extreme, 2D. Max range, 120 meters. DoF as a bow. **Low Velocity**: +1 Ob to hit due to slow velocity. In Fight!, Avoid successes reduce shooter's successes. **Shield Penetrator**: Every three extra successes allocated to penetration increase shield obstacles by +1 Ob.

Slave Gun

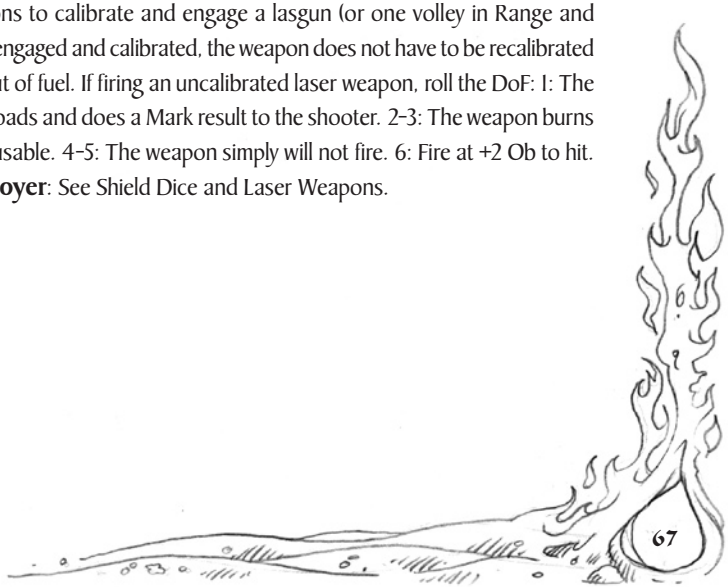
IMS B5, B9, BI3. Belt: 500. Optimal 2D, Extreme 3D. Max range, 1000 meters. DoF as a bow. **Machine gun**: The Slave Gun fires high velocity ammunition in rapid succession. It is a vehicular-mounted, light anti-vehicle weapon. When firing the weapon, the player can choose to do a controlled burst or a full burst. A controlled burst counts as a single shot. For a full burst, roll two DoF and choose the higher result. Use the Heavy Weapons skill to operate this device.

Stunner

IMS: B3, B5, B7. Magazine: 8. Optimal, 2D. Extreme, 1D. Max range, 10 meters. DoF as a bow. **Parabolic Shot**: +1 Ob to hit due to slow velocity. In Fight!, Avoid, Block and Counterstrike successes reduce shooter's successes. Counterstrike's attack dice allow the defender to deflect the stunner pellet back at another target. Roll to hit with the strike-half dice. **Shield Penetrator**: Each extra success allocated to penetration increases shield obstacles by +1 Ob.

Lasgun Rifle

IMS: G5, G9, GI4. Power Pack: 12. Optimal, 2D. Extreme, 4D. Max range, 500 meters. DoF as a bow. **Temperamental**: Requires an Ob 3 Lasgun Operations skill test before the power pack can be engaged and the weapon discharged. It takes 10 actions to calibrate and engage a lasgun (or one volley in Range and Cover). Once engaged and calibrated, the weapon does not have to be recalibrated until it runs out of fuel. If firing an uncalibrated laser weapon, roll the DoF: 1: The weapon overloads and does a Mark result to the shooter. 2-3: The weapon burns out and is unusable. 4-5: The weapon simply will not fire. 6: Fire at +2 Ob to hit. **Shield Destroyer**: See Shield Dice and Laser Weapons.



Ammo Check

The Ammo Check mechanic represents that characters are firing off bursts of wild rounds with their slave pistols and rifles. The player need only log magazines worth of ammunition rather than individual bullets.

After an exchange of Range and Cover conflict, each player who participated makes a Pistol, Rifle or Heavy Weapons skill check for his character. This represents the character ducking behind cover for a moment and popping his magazine to check his rounds. The better skilled he is, the more likely he'll be able to conserve ammunition and really make his magazine last.

Test the skill at the end of each exchange at Ob 0 (yes, zero) and apply the following obstacle penalties:

+1 Ob for each volley in which the weapon's positioning dice were used

+2 Ob for each Steel-based maneuver performed

+2 Ob for a full burst fire described under the slave gun

The above modifiers are for total volleys for the Range and Cover conflict. They can stretch across multiple exchanges.

Add bonus dice to the test based on the following conditions:

+1D if your magazine/belt/power pack is larger than your opponent's

+1D if your weapon has a longer range than your opponent's

+2D if your magazine/belt/power pack is twice as large as your opponent's

If you fail the test, you've burned a magazine/belt/power pack of ammunition. Mark it off your gear list. If you pass, you're fine for another exchange.

Out of Ammo and Reloading

Fail the Ammo Check test, and you may not shoot on your next volley. Instead, you reload during that volley.

If you managed to win the positioning test while you're out of ammo, you can still maneuver, buy cover and prevent your opponent from shooting at you!

Also, very important, if you begin a volley with an empty magazine, you can't use that weapon for positioning dice in that volley.

You're Out, Buddy!

After a particularly intense burst of fire in one volley—in which both players discharged their weapons—either player may spend a Fate point to call for an ammo check right then and there. Both players test their skill against their current Ammo Check obstacle. If either fails, he is subject to the Out of Ammo rules above.

Vehicles

Vehicle Specifications

Let's face it, a science fiction setting isn't complete without some machines. In this particular setting, harrowing chases through the desert canyons, dogfights over the arroyos and desperate flights into orbit are what's called for. In that vein, I've provided a number of generic vehicle types and their stats. I'll try to keep it simple.

Vehicles have 10 stats, some of them are for color, some of them are mechanical. They are as follows: Vehicle Type, Structural Tolerances, Integrity, Control, Sensorium, Engine Multiplier, Profile, Capacity, Hardpoints, and Ordnance.

Type— The vehicle Type describes what kind of machine it is, so we know what skills to use for operating the machine, which mechanical penalties are appropriate to apply and which situations the vehicle is appropriate for.

Structural Tolerances (ST)— Structural Tolerances are the vehicle equivalent of the PTGS. Vehicles have three tolerances: Surface damage, Breached and Destroyed. Surface damage is the equivalent of Superficial wounds. The difference is that vehicles never suffer the +1 Ob for Superficial Wounds (they feel no pain), but they do suffer -1D from three Surface damage results. Breaches are the Light Wound equivalent for vehicles. The dice lost due to Surface and Breach damage are subtracted from the Integrity stat listed below. The final result is Destroyed. Pretty self-explanatory. It's the Mortal Wound equivalent for vehicles. If you want to shoot people inside of a vehicle, your shot must cause a Breach result first.

Integrity—Integrity describes how tough and durable the overall structure of the vehicle is. It is essentially the equivalent of the Forte stat. Dice lost from damage are subtracted from this stat. If Integrity reaches zero, the vehicle breaks down. "Engine points per die" indicates how much damage the engine can take. It's described in detail further on.

Control— Each vehicle has a rating describing how difficult or how easy it is to control when piloting or driving it. The Control stat can range from an obstacle penalty (+1 or +2) to bonus equipment dice. Apply the penalty/bonus to tests to maneuver the vehicle.

Sensorium— The sensorium is the vehicle's instrumentation and sensor apparati. Sensorium dice are added to the Sensorium skill when trying to get a fix on other craft. The base obstacle for Sensorium tests is 10 minus the target's Profile. Margin of success is added to any positioning tests made against that vehicle.

Engine Multiplier— This number delineates the overall top speed of the vehicle. It's an abstract number that is used to generate bonus dice in the maneuvering system.

Capacity— A piece of color description that denotes how much the vehicle can carry. Useful for narrative/story purposes and that's about it.

Profile— This stat describes the overall bulk of the ship and its energy output. It is used to generate an obstacle for Sensorium tests.

Hard Points— A limit on how many weapons may be mounted to the vehicle's chassis. Hard Points consist of fixed mounts, pintles and turrets. Each affects the range positioning dice of vehicular weapons. See below for more on that.

Ordnance— The exact weaponry mounted to the vehicle and where it's located.

Shields— Vehicular shields use the same rules as personal shields, but the rules for exhaustion count instead as Power Drain. Test Integrity vs Power Drain obstacle as you would Forte vs Exhaustion. Translate the other penalties like so: Speed penalties apply to Driving or Piloting. Perception/Observation penalties apply to Sensorium tests.

Groundcar

Type— Ground. Passenger Vehicle.

Structural Tolerances— Surface, B7. Breach, B10. Destroyed, B16.

Integrity— B6 (2 Engine points per die)

Control— +1 Ob

Sensorium— none

Engine Multiplier— x13 (Ram base damage B9)

Profile— B4

Capacity— 1 driver, 4 passengers

Hard Points— none

Ordnance— none

Shields— no

Ornithopter

Type— Air. Atmospheric Transport.

Structural Tolerances— Surface, B6. Breach, B9. Destroyed, BI5.

Integrity— B5 (4 Engine points per die)

Control— +ID

Sensorium— B2

Engine Multiplier— x20 (Ram base damage: B9)

Profile— B5

Capacity— 2 crew, 2 passengers

Hard Points— none

Ordnance— none

Shields— no

Military-Grade Ornithopter

Type— Air. Atmospheric Combat Craft.

Structural Tolerances— Surface, B6. Breach, B9. Destroyed, BI5.

Integrity— B6 (3 Engine points per die)

Control— no bonus, no penalty

Sensorium— B3

Engine Multiplier— x20 (Ram base damage BI0)

Profile— B6

Capacity— 2 crew, 1 passenger

Hard Points— 3. Chin pintle mount and two fixed under wing mounts

Ordnance— Chin mount slave gun (3D), pair of fixed under wing slave guns (2D ea)

Shields— no

Mid-Sized Shuttle

Type— Air. Orbital Military Lander.

Structural Tolerances— Surface, BI2. Breach, GI4. Destroyed, GI6.

Integrity— G4 (5 Engine points per die)

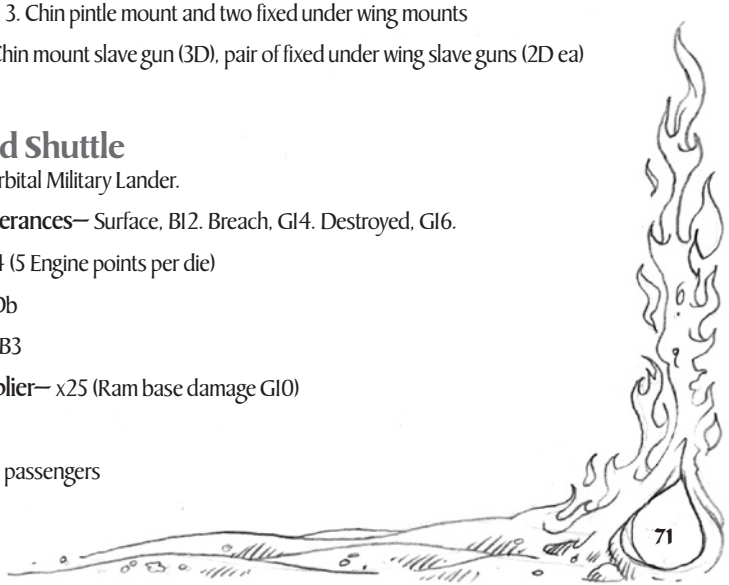
Control— +1 Ob

Sensorium— B3

Engine Multiplier— x25 (Ram base damage GI0)

Profile— B7

Capacity— 50 passengers



Hard Points— 2, Chin Pintle Mount and Underbelly Turret

Ordnance— Slave Gun (Chin 3D), Lasgun (Turret 5D)

Shields— Yes—0 to 7D as controlled by the gunner.

Frigate

Type— Air. Orbital Military Lander, Space Battle Craft.

Structural Tolerances— Surface, G6. Breach, GI6 Destroyed, WI0.

Integrity— G8 (2 Engine points per die in atmosphere, 3 Engine points in space)

Control— +2 Ob

Sensorium— B5

Engine Multiplier— x16, Atmospheric. x32 Space (Ram base damage G8/GI2)

Profile— B9

Capacity— A lot of people and vehicles

Hard Points— 18, 2x chin mount and 2x underbelly turret, 2x cupola batteries, 6 broadside batteries per side.

Ordnance— Lasgun (Chin and Batteries 4D), Lasgun (Turret/Cupola 5D)

Shields— Yes—0 to 7D as controlled by the gunner.

Vehicular Pursuit and Escape

Pursuit and escape are two prime conflicts involving vehicles. These rules follow the same basic guidelines as The Chase is On rules on page 239 of the Burning Wheel. Test Pilot or Driving for the conflict. Add bonus dice from Control or the Sensorium if applicable.

The faster vehicle gains bonus dice: Compare the Engine Multipliers of each vehicle. The higher multiplier gets +ID to the positioning test. For each four points of difference, the faster vehicle gets +ID to keep away from, overtake or escape his opponent.

If in urban conditions or rugged terrain, the smaller vehicle (lower Integrity exponent), gains +ID to position.

Make a versus test. If the fleeing vehicle wins, he has lost his pursuer and may proceed to his destination undetected and unimpeded. If the pursuing vehicle wins, the fleeing vehicle cannot break contact before he arrives at his destination. The pursuer may choose to hold his position and continue the chase or he may choose to engage his quarry in a firefight. (See below for more on that.)

Run and Gun

The Run and Gun rules described here are meant to be used for hot pursuit—a chase involving weapons. The vehicular combat system in Burning Sand is based heavily on the Range and Cover system (pages 127-138) in the Burning Wheel.

To begin, the opposing pilots/drivers make initial positioning tests against one and another. The winner may choose to start in Optimal Range, Extreme Range or Out of Range. The players then script their Close, Maintain and Withdraw actions as per usual. The winner may spend his successes to fire or maneuver for a better position (i.e., take cover on BW page 130). It costs one success to fire each weapon on the vehicle. Aiming may be done from moving vehicles, but at an increased cost of two successes to buy one aiming die.

In the maneuver choices, Speed is replaced by the driver's skill—Speed Close becomes Driving/Piloting Close, for example. Stealth and Steel maneuvers are not possible with vehicles. That leaves Driving Close, Driving Maintain, Driving Withdraw and Perception Maintain. The special rules for Speed Withdraw apply, but only if there is room to run, dodge and swerve. Not, for example, if both cars are careening down a highway vying for position.

For the initial positioning test, add the Extreme Range dice for all weapons mounted on the vehicle or for any weapons held by the passengers of groundcars or ornithopters. For subsequent positioning, the vehicles may only benefit from certain weapons.

If Closing, a vehicle may use positioning dice from any forward, turret or side-mounted weapons. If Withdrawing, only rear- or turret-mounted weaponry may be brought into play. If Maintaining, it is important to determine who is the lead vehicle and who is trailing. Lead vehicles may only use side-, rear- and turret-mounted weaponry. Trailing vehicles that are maintaining distance may only use forward- and turret-mounted weapons. In all cases, use common sense to judge what's appropriate.

Passing Gear

It's cool to imagine groundcars racing through the tight streets of urban hives blasting away at each other, trying to reach a Salt cache before their opponents do. The winner of the initial positioning test determines who's in the lead and who's trailing. In order to pass or overtake another vehicle using these rules, the trailing car must Close to Too Close to Shoot. He must then successfully

Withdraw stating his intent is to take the lead (and not to veer off, for example). If he wins, then he has taken the lead. If he continues to Withdraw, he can pull ahead of his opponent and eventually pull out of range.

Shootin 'Em Up

Firing weapons mounted on a moving vehicle incurs a +1 Ob penalty to shoot. Firing sidearms or otherwise unmounted weapons incurs a +2 Ob penalty to shoot.

Too Close to Shoot—Ram!

Once in the Too Close to Shoot range, the winner of the current positioning test has the option to ram his opponent if he so desires. Test the vehicles' current Integrity against each other. Both vehicles use their ram damage against one another, but the winner damages the loser a bit more. Use the base ram damage listed with each engine multiplier. Add +3 Power for Close, +1 Power for Maintain, non bonus for Withdraw. Extra successes from the Integrity test are added to the result as well. This is the Mark result for the crash.

For example, Tom Closes and wins the positioning test by two successes with his ornithopter. He's now Too Close to Shoot and wants to ram the frigate. He tests his B5 Integrity vs the G8 Integrity of the frigate and loses, three successes to five. That means Tom is rammed by the frigate at the big ship's damage—G8 plus the two extra successes plus the frigate was on the maintain, another +1 Power for a total of G11 Mark.

A ram counts as a missile attack. Roll the Die of Fate to determine damage: 1-2 Incidental, 3-4 Mark, 5-6 Superb. Extra success on the positioning test can be used to aim the ram to a specific location or add a bonus to the Die of Fate roll as per the rules on BW page 175. The loser of the integrity test takes the damage according to the DoF roll. The winner takes the loser's ram damage at one step less than the result on the Die of Fate. If an Incidental result is generated, the winner doesn't take any damage.

The frigate leans into Tom's ornithopter as he comes. Tom's going to die now—the gray damage is going to incinerate him—but he won the positioning test by two. He opts to ram in the frigate in the control tower (See Damage and Wrecks below). Thor rolls the DoF for the frigate—a 6! Tom's tiny ship takes a G16 Superb result. The frigate suffers a Mark result hit from Tom. The ornithopter has a B9 ram and Tom was closing, for a total of a B12 Mark. Assuming the shields are down so the frigate can fire, the frigate is just going to shrug that damage off. Next time, pack a nuke.

If vehicles are shielded, just roll for the shields first. One success deflects a ram.

Too Close to Shoot—Fire Anyway!

If a player chooses not to ram his opponent when he's Too Close, he may instead fire weapons (he's still got to pay successes). Weapons against the facing pointed toward his target suffer no penalty. Turrets and weapons facing away may not fire (unless really appropriate). Weapons on odd facings, or pintle mounts, fire at +2 Ob. Sidearms fire at +1 Ob.

Dogfighting

Aerial combat uses the same general rules as Run and Gun. Variations are listed below.

The High Position and Diving

In aerial combat, it is important to know which craft has the high position, in addition to the lead position. To gain the high position, the pilot must either win a positioning test by two or win two consecutive positioning tests. Either way, two dice must be allocated to "cover" (BW, page 130). The vehicle in the high position may then Dive as a subsequent action. Diving can be used to Close, Maintain or Withdraw. It doubles the vehicle's Engine Multiplier for one volley. Once he' dives, the pilot no longer has the high position—even if he wins the current positioning test. He must fight to regain it.

Weather

Weather conditions are of paramount import to pilots. The GM may determine the day's conditions before the battle or chase begins. He may also opt to have the weather conditions change during extended chases or pitched battles.

No Weather—clear skies. +ID to Sensorium tests.

Light Weather—some clouds and wind. No bonus, no penalty.

Moderate Weather—clouds, rain and fog. +1 Ob to Piloting/positioning tests.

Heavy Weather—storm conditions. +3 Ob to Piloting/positioning tests, +1 Ob to Sensorium tests.

Facing Optional Rule

Frigates and large shuttles are massive enough vehicles that their individual faces can be counted as separate entities in dogfights. Assume that attacking ships start at broadsides with large ships. Winning a positioning test by two, or winning two tests in a row, allows the attacking craft to change the facing he's attacking. (Those successes may not be used to take other actions, of course.) Each facing may only use weapons applicable to that location. Turrets and cupola dice must be declared for a particular facing per volley. They can fire left, right or up, you just have to specify which.

Crash Optional Rule

If a pilot rolls no successes on a positioning/Piloting test and then subsequently fails his next positioning test, his vehicle crashes. In ye olde real world air disasters are not pretty things. See Wrecked in the following section.

Damage and Wrecks

Vehicle damage is a bit sticky in a character-driven roleplaying game. Generally, you have situations where important characters are operating the machine in question. When the machine is rendered inoperable while travelling at high speeds, our "America's Scariest Police Chases" instinct kicks in and we start thinking dark thoughts.

Damaged How and Where?

The default damage location for a vehicle is on the hull. Damaged dice here are subtracted from the vehicle's Integrity stat. There's no further penalty for losing these dice. However, attacking characters may spend their extra shooting successes to target other locations.

It costs one additional success to target the Engine. If Integrity dice are lost from an Engine hit, the vehicle loses speed. Subtract the number of points from the Engine Multiplier listed next to the Integrity of the vehicle. If the Engine Multiplier is reduced to zero, then the vehicle can no longer move. It may still position with its weaponry, though.

It costs two additional successes to target a weapon system. One Integrity die lost will knock out a fixed or pintle mount weapon. Turrets and cupolas can lose two dice before they're knocked out of commission. Weapons that are knocked out like this can't be used for positioning tests..

It costs two additional successes to target the control systems of a vehicle. Each Integrity die lost in a Control hit subtracts from any Control bonus dice. If Control is "—" or an obstacle penalty, each damage die counts as +1 Ob to positioning tests.

It costs three additional successes to target the Sensorium. The Sensorium can withstand one die of damage.

It costs four additional successes to target a shield generator. These modules can withstand one die of damage.

Grounded

A pilot whose engines are knocked out while in motion must pass an Ob 5 Piloting/Driving test or crash. If passed, the vehicle churns up the highway, but is still marginally operable—any system not knocked out may still be used. (Like guns and shields!) If the test is failed, see Wrecked below.

Wrecked

Once a vehicle loses all of its Integrity dice or it is hit with a Destroyed result, it's knocked out of commission. If the vehicle was in motion when it was shot up or rammed, an Ob 6 Driving or Piloting test will prevent the vehicle from crashing. If this test is failed, the vehicle plows into the turf and breaks up. I recommend rolling a Die of Fate for each character on board. On a 1, they survive miraculously unharmed. On a 2-5 they're hurt badly—Severe or Traumatic wounds. On a 6, it's a Mortal Wound.

Sensorium Modifiers

Add Sensorium equipment dice to the Sensorium skill. Sensorium obstacles are 10 minus Profile stat. Reduce obstacle by one for each of the following conditions: the target craft is using shields, afterburners, lasguns, or sensorium. Increase the obstacle by one each for rugged terrain, bad weather, strange natural phenomena or urban conditions.

Hard Points and Range and Cover

Turrets— +1D to optimal and extreme range for weapon range dice.

Pintle— No bonus, no penalty to optimal and extreme range for weapon range dice.

Fixed— -1D to optimal and extreme range for weapon range dice.

Security and Surveillance

Security devices are highly advanced in the Burning Sands setting. They have to be. Assassination is an art—with many young practitioners eager to prove their mettle. Infiltration into the noble sanctums and temples is extremely difficult—special sensorium are used to detect intruders and trespassers. Disguise and deception are a safer bet, but even those tried and true methods can be outed by security.

Surveillance vs Stealthy

Temples, fortresses, mosques etc., are outfitted with security surveillance devices that constantly monitor the perimeter and sensitive internal areas. Surveillance systems have the Observation skills and are designed to spot stealthy intruders.

B4 Observation— Basic security, secure offices or homes

B5 Observation— Moderate security, a temple or mosque, a military installation

B7 Observation— High security, a military installation on alert, a Salt bank

B9 Observation— Crazy security, a noble's palace

G8 Observation— Paranoiac insanity, remote military installation built into a mountain

Test Observation vs Stealthy as normal. If the surveillance system wins, then the infiltrator has been detected. A message is sent via translink to all available personnel and other appropriate measures are taken—security doors are automatically locked, dogs dispatched, poison gas released, etc.

Security vs Disguise

Certain security systems (different than surveillance systems) can be used to detect infiltrators who are using disguise or deception. They can be used to detect any fool using prostheses, wigs, or make-up to change his appearance. Test the security system against an obstacle equal to Disguise successes. If the system wins, the disguise has been detected. If the character wins, then nothing untoward is detected. This type of security is rated in a similar fashion to surveillance, but it is a separate system altogether and must be purchased and rated separately.

Countermeasures and Detection

Surveillance systems and vehicular sensorium can detect other active security and surveillance systems. Test the detecting system's dice against an obstacle equal to 10 minus the target system's exponent.

Propaganda War

There are many fronts to this war. The jihadis excel at terrorism, but the nobles have a decided advantage in the **propaganda war**. This a war fought for the hearts and minds of the populace—fought to convince them whose side is more righteous, whose actions are more atrocious. It is played out over the long term, not moment to moment. Each act of terrorism, each broadcast "state of the crown address" is but one thrust in this duel.

A propaganda war plays out like a Duel of Wits. The stakes are to either convince the populace that the jihadis are the enemy invader and must be destroyed or, in the case of the of jihadis, to convert the populace en masse.

Body of Argument

The Will of the Populace

The homeworld body of argument is dependent on how resolute the populace is to start. Look back to the questions answered in the World Burner: Poor and angry populace have 12D in their BoA. Slaves have 14D in their BoA. Happy and wealthy populace start with 16D base in their BoA. Middle class, stolid, hardworking, 25D in their BoA. Alien cultures have at least 20D in their BoA, possibly as much as 30D. These dice aren't rolled. They count as the Will of the populace.

Test the Propaganda skill plus applicable FoRKs and add the successes to the Will of the Populace (just like you would test the dueling skill and add it to Will.)

The Will of the Jihad

For player character jihadis, total the Fanaticism exponents. That counts as the Will of the Jihad. If any of the characters have the Propaganda skill, roll it and add the successes to the Will of the Jihad dice. If not, test the Will of the Dahi, Dava or Hujjat and add half the successes rounded down.

If you're running the jihad as the opposition to player character nobles, the Will of the Jihad is determined by the phase of the invasion. Infiltration is 14D, terrorism is 20D, full-on war is 25D.

Dueling Skills

Propaganda is the only dueling skill applicable to this type of Duel of Wits. Other skills may be used as FoRKs and help, but only Propaganda can be used to make the maneuvers without a double obstacle penalty.

Dueling Maneuvers

Propaganda war dueling maneuvers differ from regular Duel of Wits maneuvers. They aren't spoken character to character in conversation, but acted out via terrorism, news broadcasts and retaliations over the course of weeks and months.

Due to the nature of this conflict, players do not plan three moves ahead. Each side describes what their characters are doing in the game when they are about to take action. It's ok to talk about stuff that hasn't happened yet or about something that is about to happen. Before any dice are rolled, each side privately chooses a Duel of Wits maneuver to represent the intent of their action in the propaganda war. Once the upcoming scenes are described and the Duel of Wits actions noted play out the conflict in game. If the conflict doesn't center on the PCs—the GM is retaliating, for example—just reveal the maneuvers and roll for propaganda!

Thor, as GM, privately notes that he's conducting a Point. He announces to Tom and Rich that the jihadis will kidnap a well-known high official. They don't know about Thor's Point, but Tom and Rich decide to strike at the zealots with a Point, too. They announce they are dropping leaflets in all the outlying mountain villages describing how the jihadis sleep with dogs and bury pigs with their dead.

After playing out the attempted kidnapping of Andy's character, both sides reveal their maneuvers. Rich tests his spymaster's Propaganda skill plus applicable FoRKs. His successes remove dice from the Will of Jihad total. Thor tests for the jihadis. They don't have Propaganda yet. So he rolls the Hujjat's Will and takes half the successes rounded down. Those are subtracted from the Will of the Populace total.

In the next scene, Thor privately notes that his jihadis are conducting a Feint. He tells Tom and Rich there will be a suicide bombing. Tom and Rich decide there will be a news broadcast downplaying the casualties, but also describing the capture of one of the jihadis. They privately decide that a Rebuttal is in order after Thor's last Point. Well, Feint beats Rebuttal. When the actions are revealed after the scene is played out, Thor gets to test the Hujjat's Will. His successes are subtracted from the noble's body of argument.

Jihadi maneuvers initially come in the form of bombings, suicide bombings, kidnappings and raids. Public and visible acts of violence that resonate through the community they are meant to intimidate or convince. But as the war progresses, the tactics become varied and quite deep.

The following list describes the actions associated with the individual maneuvers: Avoid involves going to ground. Obfuscate involves spreading false rumors via informants and spies. Points and Rebuttals involve attacks and counterattacks: bombings, suicide bombings, kidnappings and raids. Points can also come in the form of publicly issued fatwahs and inflammatory sermons—once the jihadis have their own broadcast stations, of course. Incite involves breaking up public rallies, burning the nobility in effigy, publicly defacing temples and tombs or other attacks on the nobles' honor. A Dismiss could involve destroying the nuclear stock piles, Salt caches, ancestral temples or even the palace. Feints can involve any combination of the ideas listed above.

In general, noble maneuvers involve news broadcasts, live broadcasts (of arrests and stuff), educational programs, rallies, staged events, and leaflets/pamphlets.

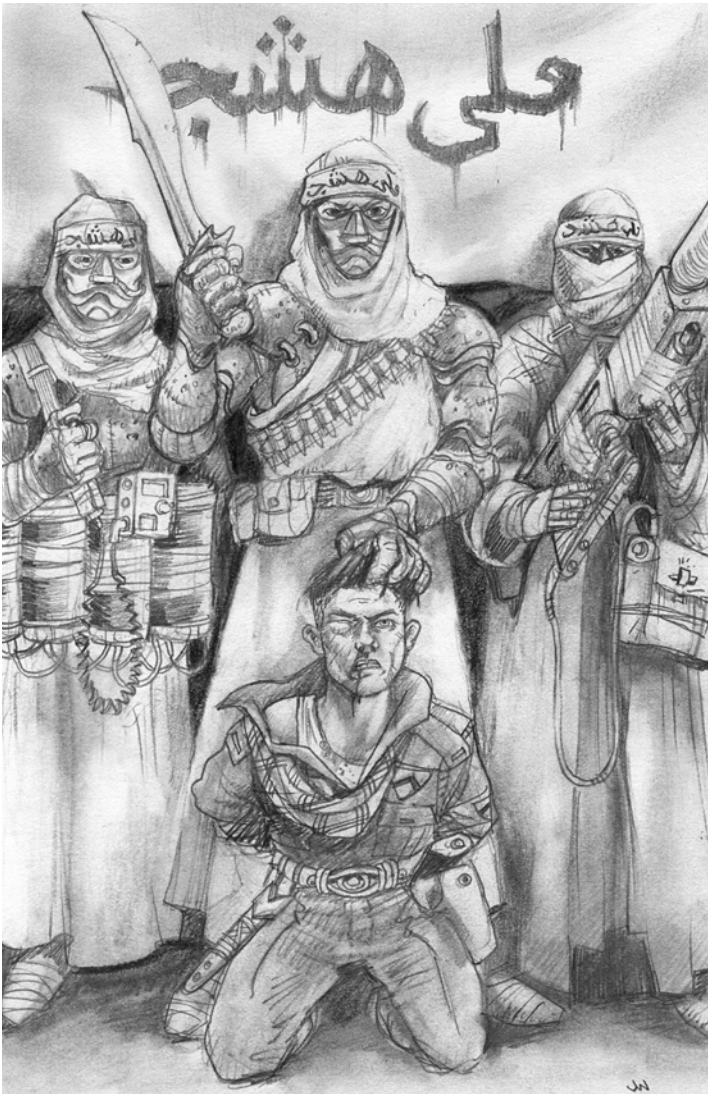
Specifically, Avoid involves not covering the jihadi attacks in the news at all—no matter how ruinous the attacks were. Obfuscate involves broadcasting incongruous programming—like children's shows—instead of any news or staging military parades and rallies while all hell is breaking loose. Incite involves publicly attacking the Mahdi, publicly humiliating captured jihadis, posting public notices containing disinformation or shutting down mosques. Point and Rebuttal involve attacking jihadi cells, mass arrests, raiding training camps, starting concentration camps, capturing jihadi Salt or broadcasting public executions. Dismiss involves major military maneuvers or the capture and destruction of whole jihadi cells.

Of course, once the jihadis learn the Propaganda skill and capture a few media outlets, they can use some of the nobles' tactics against them. And once the nobles have lost their grip on their media network, they'll be forced to resort to the bombing and terror tactics of the jihad.

Don't forget! The players can't take a Propaganda Duel of Wits action unless they accompany it with some in-game play and a roll of the dice. It can be as complex as a raid or as simple a Circles test backed with a Resources test. Either way, the Propaganda war is meant to supplement the situations played out in the game, not be the main focus.

Realigning Your Argument

Extra successes from the defense half of a Rebuttal or Obfuscate maneuver can be added back into the Body of Argument.



Controlling the Media

The nobility start the game controlling their homeworld media. Each Workshop the noble players buy for their Propaganda skill counts as a media broadcast station, a publishing house or a volunteer corp ready to do the will of their masters. Each Propaganda Workshop also adds +1D to Propaganda skill tests.

An Interplanetary Crystal also allows nearby noble homeworlds to help each other in the propaganda war. Nearby sympathetic worlds each add +ID to Propaganda skill tests. The number of sympathetic worlds needs to be discussed and agreed upon prior to play.

Each Propaganda Workshop and Interplanetary Crystal also represents a potential target for the jihad. Capturing Propaganda Workshops and using them grants the jihad player the +ID advantage, and takes it from the nobles, of course. Destroying the media stations or wiping out volunteer corps simply takes that particular advantage die away from the nobility.

Win, Lose, Compromise

A total jihad win means the populace converts en masse and rejects their former rulers. A total noble win means the populace irrevocably rejects the precepts of the jihad. They can never be converted.

Compromise involves portions of the population converting. A major compromise in the noble's favor means, though small pockets convert, the jihad must retreat from this phase as they have no popular support. A major compromise in the jihad's favor indicates that the population accepts the new rulers, though they may not convert. Often, at this point, the nobles must go into exile.

Influences

The following list contains the combined biographical and filmographical lists for myself, Dro and Thor. We felt that it was worth adding, considering that so many of our readers thought we drew this work from a single source.

Fiction

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Dune Messiah, by Frank Herbert

Children of Dune, by Frank Herbert

God Emperor of Dune, by Frank Herbert

Heretics of Dune, by Frank Herbert

Chapterhouse Dune, by Frank Herbert

Mother Night, by Kurt Vonnegut

Midnight's Children, by Salman Rushdie

Things Fall Apart, by Chinua Achebe

A Bend in the River, by V.S. Naipaul

Deus Lo Volt!: Chronicle of the Crusades, by Evan S. Connell

Gates of Fire: An Epic Novel of the Battle of Thermopylae, by Steven Pressfield

The Looking Glass War, by John le Carre

The Bourne Identity, by Robert Ludlum

Non Fiction

Rather than reprinting it, I would like to refer the reader to the Nonfiction Bibliography contained on page 303 of the Burning Wheel. I drew on many of the same sources listed there, plus what is listed here.

Salt: A World History, by Mark Kurlansky

The Assassins: A Radical Sect in Islam, by Bernard Lewis

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Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia, by Ahmed Rashid

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Jarhead: A Marine's Chronicle of the Gulf War and Other Battles, by Anthony Swofford

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Dragons at War, Daniel P. Bolger

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The Seduction of Unreason: The Intellectual Romance with Facism from Nietzsche to Postmodernism, by Richard Wolin

Against All Enemies: Inside America's War on Terror, by Richard A. Clarke

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Fading Suns, Holistic Design, 1996.

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