

BROTHERHOOD SOCIETY

As no doubt intended by the Vobians, the Brotherhood is a strict theocracy that makes no bones about being one. All of the higher tiers of the society are manned by a hierarchy of priests. At the top of the pile are Bishops governing over cities and groups of settlements, and at the very highest ladder is the single Cardinal that is the leader over the entire Brotherhood.

THE GOVERNMENT

The government is structured into a three-tier model that has been retained essentially unchanged from the time of Cardinal della Rovere. Under the Cardinal there is the Concilium of Bishops who forming an equivalent of a parliament. Below that is the executive arm of the government consisting of the Four Directorates. These four not only encompass the bureaucracy of the government but also the military, the sciences and in fact all the task requiring any form of higher education.

THE CARDINAL

The Cardinal is appointed by the Concilium of Bishops in a special session unofficially often known as the Curia. He (the position is not open to women) holds considerable political powers, above and beyond those of any democratic leader of the modern day Earth, including a veto on much of the propositions and decrees passed by the Concilium. While he is in practice unable to govern without a number of advisors from various Directorates, his crucial political role backed up by the fact that he is also the spiritual leader of his people makes him a very formidable individual indeed. Unfortunately, this arrangement also subjects the Brotherhood to the possibility of poor leadership should the Cardinal not be up to his task.

While the office of the Cardinal is technically not for life, it is in practice very difficult to force a Cardinal to retire even if the Concilium can agree on the need for replacing him. Several Cardinals since della Rovere have held the office until their deaths.

THE CONCILIUM

The Concilium of Bishops holds the position as the primary legislative body and forum for political and religious discussion (which often are seen as inseparable by the Brotherhood). Unless called up on the matters of national security or to act as the Curia, the Concilium is in session only four times a year for 28 days at a time (of which 4 days are obviously enough reserved for religious duties only), so the Fourth Directorate in fact handles the main part of the legislative preparations and acts as the real venue for politicking.

The Bishops sitting in the Concilium are those of the Brotherhood Bishoprics, currently 73 in number. The Concilium also has a post for the most senior Bishops from each of the Four Directorates, should they not have a Bishopric of their own (this is the case primarily with the First and the Second Directorates), making the total number of the Bishops in attendance vary from 73 to 77. Although each Concilium appoints an acting Chairman and an executive Board consisting of 8 members, each Bishop still has but a single vote and most decrees are passed by a simple majority. If the result is still a draw after three separate castings of votes, the Cardinal is called upon to arbitrate.

THE FOUR DIRECTORATES

The main executive and plenary body of the government has been divided into Four Directorates, each obviously enough tasked with handling a different aspect of the society's functions. Each Directorate further divides into smaller hierarchy of Cells that handle the more specific tasks in the operations of the Directorate.

Upon entering any branch of the Directorate, every apprentice has to swear the Vow of the Cardinal. The Vow consist of a pledge of general allegiance to the Cardinal, a promise of maintaining silence about the affairs of the state and an agreement to obey every word of a superior. It is an all-encompassing oath, which forever binds one to the service of the Brotherhood and one that the Brotherhood society as a whole takes very seriously. Any hesitation to adhere to this most sacred pledge is treated with great severity. Whole divisions within the Second Directorate monitor the members of every Directorate (including their own) and maintain vigilant observance of their devotion.

The Directorates are numbered from First to Fourth, and are in that order:

- **First – The Keepers of the Arts:** the most reclusive of Directorates, the Keepers have been tasked with advancing the arts and sciences and weighing their spiritual impact on society. Where the Third Directorate is concerned with application, the First concerns itself almost solely with theory and doles out their knowledge in portions considered suitable for other Directorates and the general populace to accept. Over the years, their shady behavior has earned them the nickname of Mystics. While most Keepers are never

seen outside the walls of the research monasteries, the First Directorate does have a small number of field operatives, including a standing military force to back up the Second Directorate with experimental weapons and specialist advice. Due to the leaders of the Directorate being concerned with matters outside the day-to-day life and hence rarely ending up with Bishoprics, the Keepers of the Art usually only hold a single seat in the Concilium. This post is filled by the most senior Bishop in the Directorate, also known as the "Dean".

- **Second – The Inquisition:** the Inquisition's function is to protect the Brotherhood society from all threats, be they internal or external, secular or religious. The leadership and organizing of the Brotherhood's military falls under this Directorate, as does the Brotherhood equivalent of police, the Cell of Revisors. More information on the duties of the Second Directorate can be found in the chapter 'Military' below. The Inquisition is lead by a high ranking Inquisitor Major who has the status of Bishop, although officially his title is "Sheriff". Similarly to the Dean of the First Directorate, the Sheriff is almost always the sole representative of the Second Directorate in the Concilium. His word tends to carry much more weight than that of the ordinary Bishops though.
- **Third – The Mission:** by far the largest of any of the Directorates, the Mission is comprised of the most mundane of Brotherhood functionaries. They form the "white collar" workforce of the Brotherhood society, performing all manner of leadership and expert roles from operating the hospitals and overseeing industrial production to preaching on the street corners and even cleaning the Cathedrals -- which is considered too prestigious a task to be left to regular citizens. Among the most important Cells under the Mission are the Armorers, the Bankers, the Doctors and the Missionaries. The Bishops of the Mission tend to come from this latter Cell although more technically-minded do rise to the position on occasion.
- **Fourth – The Administration:** the management of the Brotherhood, comprising of its accountants, organizers, planners and also diplomats, observers and advisors. Due to the complicated hierarchy of the Brotherhood, leaders may come from any of the Directorates, but obviously enough the Administration is the Directorate primarily concerned with directing the day-to-day civilian operations. As a result, the majority of the Bishops in the Concilium tend to be from this Directorate, a fact which is known to have created some tension within the government during the Brotherhood's history.

GENERAL POPULACE

The vast majority of the Brotherhood citizens obviously enough do not enter into the Directorates. Only menial tasks are available for these "unwashed masses", and education and training given to them are entirely deliberately rather poor (it does contain a considerable amount of what can only be described as religious indoctrination). They also have no right to vote or otherwise directly influence the way the government is run. Given the fact that maintaining such a large and controlled underclass can hardly be considered a sign of any form of democracy, a regular Brotherhood citizen in fact has a reasonably high standard of living. They also enjoy various "free" (that is, paid with collected taxes) benefits such as health care provided by the Mission's hospices.

Brotherhood society, while rigid and disciplined, is also relatively meritocratic, provided a member wishing to advance into the Directorates embraces the doctrines of the Church. That is not to say that various families enjoy a stratified "high society" position where almost all family members eventually advance to clerical ranks, but many human societies across the galaxy in fact display a much clearer class structure.

Citizens are also often trained to operate advanced technical equipment such as wireless communications gear, although they have little or no grasp of how such devices work. Such knowledge is on need to know basis, for example to facilitate safe operations of a desert waystation, and taught mostly by rote.

ARTS AND SCIENCES

Scientific advancements of the Brotherhood society tend to be of practical rather than highly theoretical nature. While basic research is necessarily practiced in the First Directorate's monasteries, the primary goal of science has always been producing applications. Partly this is the legacy of the demands of running the HELL colony in the early years, partly due to the Church's certain aversion of scientific knowledge for its own sake. Brotherhood theoretical science also does not have the materialist ethos of the modern Western science practiced on Earth. As an example, their theory of evolution takes the form of "scientific creationism" and is in many ways close to the idea of the so called Intelligent Design movement that has recently attempted to gain some foothold in USA.

Arts are even more controlled than science. Artistic works are strictly censored throughout by a special branch of Revisors and religious subjects are highly encouraged, although not compulsory. Techniques and subjects have seen little change over the last two centuries (if anything, the choice of subject matter has narrowed down since della Rovere's day), although some influence of Mishiman art has crept into the very latest work of some artists who due to their high standing in the Brotherhood society can avoid the strictest limitations placed on artistic endeavors.

MILITARY

As can be expected, the Brotherhood maintains a very structured and quite disciplined military organization orchestrated by the Second Directorate, the Inquisition.

Every member of the Brotherhood's Four Directorates, from the Inquisitors to the mundane clerks of the Administration, is trained for their duties in Ecclesiastic Academies. When a Brotherhood citizen petitions for admittance into the Directorates and is accepted, the first stage in their indoctrination is extensive physical training and psychological conditioning. The process takes months to complete but in the end, every member of any Directorate is trained to make war. While the rigid training and lifestyle of the Directorates and to a lesser extent the Brotherhood as a whole makes for a smooth transition into a force for war, the Directorate workers also maintain their skills in rotations of active service. Certainly some are more gifted at war than others, and they join the Second Directorate there to be shuffled into areas that best apply their talents. This provides the Brotherhood armies with several standing military units and forces manned by professional soldiers.

Unlike Mishima who fields a massive lower tier of basic soldiers, the Brotherhood provides all its warriors with the best it can in arms and armor. Obviously the equipment doled out still gets better the higher on the ladder of experience, training and even authority one goes. At the very top of this chain are the few powered armor suits available, marvels of microprocessors and bionic enhancements that rival those produced by Human Confederacy in all but the numbers they can be fielded in.

Where Brotherhood can boast a well equipped and trained infantry, they are shorthanded in the armored fighting vehicles department, lacking especially sufficient troop transport capacity. The heavy Battle Cathedrals are old fashioned and slow compared to what Human Confederacy can field, and relatively few in number. The lack of interest in developing military ground vehicles is likely due to the fact that most wars fought on New Avignon have been of a nature where conquering and holding territory have been of crucial importance: a task best suited for infantry rather than tanks.

Brotherhood has always lacked interest in the coherent and planned conquest of space and thus their aerospace forces, apart from orbital defenses around New Avignon, can be considered a token effort at most. Although some development of space fighters and ground-to-orbit craft has occurred over the years since the Brotherhood-Mishima war (as demonstrated by the Icarus class fighters), the rebuilding of the space fleet which was decimated by the superior Mishima task forces has fallen behind schedule. It is likely that Brotherhood must rely on the support of their erstwhile enemies and the Human Confederacy for large scale space transport and combat for the foreseeable future.