

# Theater Knights Campaign

## Background Reference Material and Glossary of Bornian Terms

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### Introduction

Welcome to the bonus background and reference document for the epic, six-part Theater Knights Campaign. Each installment in this series may also be played as a stand-alone adventure, if desired.

The events of the Theater Knights Campaign kick off with the Heroic Works scenario, *The Thorwal Drum*. Familiarity with *The Thorwal Drum* is not necessary for enjoying the campaign, but it would introduce your players to some of the campaign's underlying events and characters. The Campaign officially gets under way with *Theater Knights 1: The White Lake* and continues in *Theater Knights 2: The Blue Tome*. Look for new adventures in the series soon!

### What Does My Player Character Know About Bornland?

The heroes may already know some or all of the following information, depending on their backgrounds. When in doubt, roll the dice.

#### Check using *Religions*

QL 1: Nobles in Bornland pray mainly to Rondra (the worship of Praios' has decreased over time due to the terrors of the reign of the Emperor Priests). Common folk pray mainly to Travia, Peraine, and Firun's daughter, Ifirn.

QL 2: Small images of the Twelvegods hang on the walls of many homes, but Bornish religion blends faith in the Twelve with the local belief in spirits and the forces of nature. Bornish people also often pray to local heroes and saints (see chart, below). Norbards worship the bee goddess Mokosha

QL 3: The hero knows the locations of the most important temples in Bornland (see chart, below). Mokosha is the daughter of Ingerimm and Hesinde; Norbards call her Heshinja. Goblins pray to idols of their boar gods Mailam Rek dai and Orvai Kurim.

QL 4: Important Blessed Ones are Gernot of Halsingen (Rondra/Master of the Domain), Nadjesha of Gulnitz (Praios/Guardian of Order), Birta Barvedis (Mokosha/Mother of Queens) and Jesidoro de Sylphur (Efferd/leader of the Temple in Neersand)

#### Bornian Saints

Name (Church)	Aspect(s)
Urnislav of Uspiaunen	Archmage who once defeated Milzenis the Giant
Festo of Aldyra (Rondra)	Dragon slayer; founder of the city of Festum
Rondragabund of Riedemer (Rondra)	Weapons and resistance
Anshag of Goldencourt (Rondra)	Protection from ambushes; last Grand Master of the Order of the Theater Knights
Grimma of Notmarch (Firun)	Those who fall through the ice
Arannja of Rucken:	Led a peasant rebellion against the Emperor Priests
Sancta Masha (Travia)	Those at risk of hypothermia; refugees
Sancta Waliburia (Ingerimm)	Tanners and furriers



### Locations of Important Temples in Bornland

<b>Bjaldorn</b>	Firun
<b>Festum</b>	Praios, Rondra
<b>Neersand</b>	Efferd
<b>Norburg</b>	Rondra, Ifirn
<b>Notmarch</b>	Ingerimm

#### Check using *Geography (Bornland)*

QL 1: Mostly Middenrealms, Norbards, and goblins live between the border rivers Born and Walsach. The Bornian winters are hard and have much snow. People eat elk meat, potatoes and bear ham and drink meskinnes, a pungent oat spirit with honey.

QL 2: The Bornland consists of three regions: central Festenland, which is bordered on the east by the river Walsach; the Marches, which include the Bornwood, in the southwest; and in the north, the bogs and wetlands of Seweria. Trade flourishes in the Free Cities, but the bulk of the rural population is poor, rarely ever sees coinage, and lives mainly by barter.

QL 3: Many Aventurian cultures coexist in Festum, and science and the arts flourish mainly in the city of Festum, a city of many cultures. The Bornian Free Alliance, a trade consortium, imports luxury goods from colonies in the Far South, while trade with the north consists mainly of raw goods, such as wood and ore, and locally produced food.

#### Check using *History (Bornland)*

QL 1: The Theater Knights were a famous military Order dedicated to Rondra; they conquered Bornland, taking it from the goblins. Norbards have always been a wandering people. About 20 years ago, Count Uriel of Notmarch ignited a Bornish civil war that cost many lives.

QL 2: The Emperor Priests defeated the Order of the Theater in battle about 700 years ago. Bornland gained its independence from the Middenrealm about 300 years ago. The Norbards are descendants of the Alhanians, who once ruled Tobrien but migrated to the Bornland around a thousand years ago. During the Borbarad Crisis, forces led by Uriel of Notmarch ravaged many settlements along the Walsach River; Uriel's campaign of terror ended in his defeat at the Battle of the Vallusan Meadow (1021 FB).

QL 3: The hero knows the names of the last several Noble Marshals and the Theater Knights' most important battles (see chart, below). The Order of the Theater was destroyed at the Battle of Dragon Chasm.

QL 4: The Battle of Dragon Chasm took place in 337 FB. Marshal Jadvige of Hummegarben declared the ownership of land by Norbards illegal in the year 264 FB. Before the Theater Knights arrived, goblins and Alhanians coexisted in relative peace.

### The Most Important Battles of the Theater Knights

Year	Event
191 FB	Sword Miracle of Lionsford (today: Firunen) at the Battle of Kungutzka
~220 FB	Kor's manifestation at Korswandt during the Battle of Blood Cliff
243 FB	Annihilation of the Goblin Empire at the Battle of Wjassuula
337 FB	Final Defeat of the Theater Knights at the Battle of Dragon Chasm

### Recent Noble Marshals of Bornland

Name	Time In Office	Notes
Jucho of Dallenthin-Persanzig	993-1013 FB	Exiled for decades; recently returned to Festum).
Tjeika of Notmarch-Jatleskenau	1013-1020 FB	Ousted during the civil war.
Thesia of Ilmstone	1021-1030 FB	Killed during the campaign against the Ice Witch, Glorana.
Ugo of Ashford	1020-1021 FB and 1030-1035 FB	Died in office.
Nadjesha of Lionsford	Current holder of the position.	



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Check using *Law (Bornland)*

QL 1: Serfs have no rights. The burghers of the cities are free. The head of the Bornish State is selected by Bornland's nobles and gains the title "Noble Marshal."

QL 2: All Bornish Nobles trace their lineage back to the Theater Knights. They proudly call themselves bronnjars, have the right to vote in the Gathering of Nobles, and may do as they please on their own land. The current Noble Marshal is Nadjesha of Lionsford, but today this office grants little authority. The Norbards, a wandering people, are not permitted to own land.

QL 3: Many so-called *bridge* or *shallow* nobles own nothing but their name and their vote. In the cities, the civil trade houses wield more power than the nobles. The goblins who live in Festum enjoy burgher's rights and perform useful work for the city.

QL 4+: Nobles with crushing debts sometimes become dependent on influential Norbard families. Norbards exert some influence on the Northland Bank and even the Free Alliance.

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Check using *Myth & Legends (Bornland)*

QL 1: Bornland is wild and primal, and in many legends, the Bornwood, the Red Sickle Mountains, the Weal Mountains, the Moors of the Dead, and the kingdom's larger rivers are often portrayed as legendary creatures in their own right.

QL 2: Bornlanders are very fond of their culture's often-sorrowful fairy tales, which they recount during long winter nights, in song and in verse. Favorites include those about unrequited love, cruel bronnjars, and the land itself. In these tales, the angry giant Milzenis rages through the Bornwood, seductive witches perform lascivious rites with the ram idol of Levthan in the Weal Mountains, the Red Sickle Mountains are all that remains of a blade that was once wielded by Rondra herself, and people who live in the swamps too long may turn into swamprecks. Many stories are quite funny, such as the one about the heroic knight Rondramir of Jekdisit, or the one about the witty peasant Pierow of Kunzk.

QL 3: Legendary items, such as the armor of the Silver Horde, the Swords of the North, the Winged Armor, and

other legacies of the Theater Order are still eagerly sought by treasure hunters today. Their desire to find these objects is not tempered by rumors that many Theater Knights succumbed to decadence and worshiped dark powers before they fell.

QL 4+: The ghost of Marshal Gerbald of Pilcrest is said to haunt the Great Mosse (a forbidding marsh in Festenland). Some believe that a few Theater Knights survived the destruction of the Order and escaped to the Giants' Shore, while other Theater Knights were turned into beastingers—talking animals that live near the Walsach River. The goblins are thought to await the return of an immortal queen, the legendary Kunga Suula.

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Check using *Magical Lore*

QL 1: Guild mages and witches are dominant, but Bornland also has its share of Norbard zibiljas and goblin nature sorceresses. Elemental power is strong in many places in Bornland.

QL 2: Guild magic is taught in the Mercury Hall in Festum (gray, object magic), the School of Domination in Neersand (gray, control magic), and the Hall of Life in Norburg (white, healing magic). All are quite liberal in their studies. It is thought that Sinistre Zelda of Ilmenstone has been the highest ranking witch in Bornland for decades. Each Norbard meshpocha (extended household) has a zibilja, who also records the family's history and traditions. Goblin magic is elemental in nature and mostly unknown to guild mages. Druids and elves are rare in Bornland.

QL 3: In recent years, spontaneous magical events have become increasingly common in Bornland, probably due to the actions of fairies, elemental creatures, or spirits. Nobody knows why.

QL 4+: Important living spellcasters are Bisminka of Jassuula (Norbard witch who teaches in Norburg), Count Thezmar Alatzer of Hinterbruch (analysis mage, researches goblins and their history), Imjashala Mandragieff (zibilja, dream seer, researches the Alhanians), Alwin K. Nodwinger (retired object mage from Festum), and the deans of the three academies: Jaunava Dagoneff (Festum), Gritten Raudups (Neersand), and Mashdawa Patriloff (Norburg).

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# Glossary of Selected Bornian Terms

This glossary collects a few important regional terms.

**Alhani:** Ancestors of the Norbards. Today the term is mainly a synonym for Norbards.

**Alveranian:** A messenger/herald of an Aventurian god.

**Aunt:** Leader of an extended Norbard family household. Usually advised by a zibilja.

**Beastinger:** Fairy creature from the region of the Weal Mountains and the Walsach River. They have mundane animal shapes and can speak the tongues of Aventuria, giving rise to fanciful tales about talking animals.

**Borntzsh:** Strong, Bornian cabbage soup.

**Boron Wheel:** Half of a wooden wheel, used to mark the graves of those who believe in the Twelvegods. Also, the symbol of the god Boron.

**Bronnjar:** Bornian noble.

**Codex Albyricus:** Laws governing the use of magic, the definition and punishment of magical crimes, and the privileges and duties of guild mages.

**Close Council:** special, 12-member Council in Festum. Represents the city's Grand Council (c.f.) to the outside world.

**Emperor Priest:** Emperors of the Middenrealm who ruled between 335 and 465 FB. All were leaders of the Church of Praios. Today the term is commonly used as a synonym for their soldiers.

**Famerlor:** One of the ancient dragons; Rondra's husband.

**Gathering of Nobles:** Assembly of Bornian nobles, which makes political decisions for the kingdom.

**Good Fight, Good Gold:** Principles of the Church of Kor, to which believers are expected to adhere. The interpretation of this phrase is disputed.

**Grand Council:** City Council of Festum; comprised of 300 elected council members.

**Heptarch:** The wearer of a shard of the Demon Crown. Ruler of a region in the Shadowlands.

**Hulk:** A wide Bornian cargo ship with three masts and a large cargo hold.

**Imithridia:** In the goblin faith, a daughter of Mailam Redkai and Orvai Kurim

**Kaleshka:** A Bornian carriage. The wheels can be replaced by runners in wintertime.

**Kor:** Demigod of war; son of Rondra and Famerlor; worshiped mainly by mercenaries.

**Kor's Codex:** Primary text of the Church of Kor; used almost verbatim as the rules for mercenaries and their contracts.

**Kunga Suula:** Legendary queen and high shaman of the goblins; thought to be immortal.

**Land Steward:** Administers the (few) parcels of land controlled by the Bornian state.

**Mailam Redkai:** Mother Sow; creator goddess of the goblins.

**Meshpochia:** Alaani term for an extended Norbard family line.

**Meskinnesdotz:** Sweet, Bornian pastry.

**Mithrida:** Fallen giantess from myth; the Red Sickle mountains are thought to be her body.

**Mochorka:** Popular Norbard plant used in place of tobacco.

**Molokdeshnaja:** A Norbard ax.

**Mythrael:** Rondra's Alveranian (c.f.); decides who stands by her side in Paradise.



**Noble Marshal:** Head of the Bornian Gathering of Nobles; currently Nadjesha of Lionsford.

**Order of the Hunt:** Honorable knightly Order, based in Norburg; founded by Wahnfried of Ask.

**Order of the Ram:** Knightly Order that maintains castles along the Walsach; tasked with fighting river pirates and protecting Bornland from evil crossing over the Weal Mountains; founded by Jucho of Dallenthin-Persanzig.

**Orvai Kurim:** Goblin god of the hunt.

**Parness:** Alaani term for mayor/bronnjar/provincial lord; often used mockingly.

**Pilgrimage:** A pilgrimage through the Bornland to visit various places of historical and religious meaning.

**Pojechali:** A drinking toast in Alaani, equivalent to “Down the hatch!”

**Scuttlewarrior:** Troll term for humans.

**Seffer Manich:** Written family history of Norbard meshpochas (c.f.); the zibiljas’ most important artifacts.

**Seneschal:** Among the Theater Knights, the term for the Marshal’s adjutant.

**Shetz:** Term for a knight; most common in the March.

**Shpodek:** Traditional headgear made and worn by Norbards.

**Silver Horde:** Legendary group of warriors who served in the Order of the Theater; they possessed great magical secrets and wore bright silver armor into battle.

**Sun Legion:** Order of elite warriors serving the Church of Praios.

**Suulak:** Goblins’ term for themselves.

**Uh’Jun:** Alaani term meaning “Great Moon.” Measurement of time: 2,800 days (about seven and a half years).

**Uriel’s Campaign:** Military expedition of Uriel of Notmarch, who ravaged many settlements along the Walsach River during the Borborad crisis in 1020 FB.

**Zibilja:** Term for female spellcasters in Norbard families.



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