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THE BROTHERHOOD OF RADIATION AND OTHER WASTELAND CULTS

They're mysterious and strange. They claim to seek only peace and unity among mutant kind. They're everywhere, in whistle-stop desert towns, isolated oasis, and the worst dens of depravity. Their purple-clad monks are sometimes glimpsed moving through crowds, and some swear a glance from one of their *Censors* can peel open a man's mind like ripe fruit.

Their followers wander in meandering processions, chanting the names of *radioisotopes* they claim represent "elementals" - powerful radiated spirits - to whom all worship is due. They say many die each year in the rituals that expose potential adherents to harmful radiation, but many more survive and claim the radiation-induced hallucinations made clear their "destinies". That destiny, they say, is to serve the *Brotherhood of Radiation*.

But the Brotherhood is not the only religion of the Twisted Earth, and this book will take a look at all the major faiths and cults of *Darwin's World*.

INTRODUCTION

The book you are looking at (or holding in your hands, if you managed to get a print copy), is the latest in a "series" of character-oriented *Darwin's World* sourcebooks, a line of GM and player reference tools intended to bring out the flavor - and potential - of each of the eleven Backgrounds of the *Darwin's World* playing game.

The first such book of this type was the combined *Foundationists/Metal Gods*, which highlighted the leading *Guardian/Resurrector/Advanced* of the Twisted Earth setting. These two books (later combined into one) introduced new advanced classes, feats, equipment, and even a new playable race, the *android*- all material with a decidedly "high-tech" feel. The next, *The Broken And The Lost* (which detailed the *Brethren*), included a more in-depth look at the *Feral, Primitive, Resentful* options, presenting new rules and options intended to level the playing field for these often-underpowered character types.

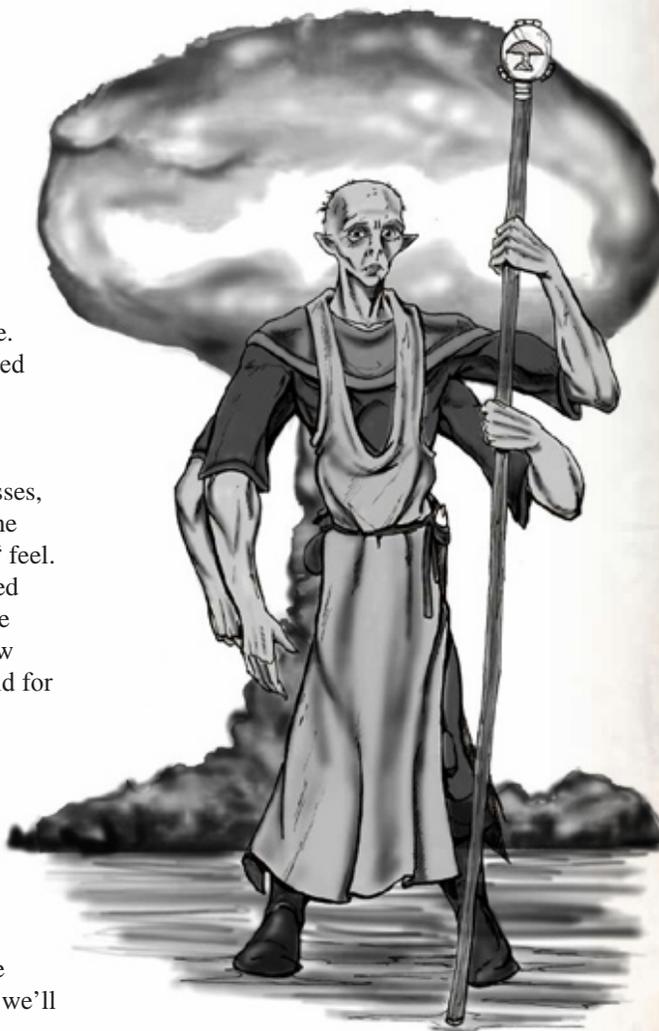
What about the other backgrounds, you ask? Hopefully we will be able to put out a book detailing the Twisted Earth's *Visionary Reinventors*, such as the powerful water clans and other merchant/mercenary groups. Or a supplement dedicated to *Radicals*, an entire sourcebook focusing on the setting's most infamous "raiders", from the smallest gangs to the most menacing raider armies. For now, however, we'll take a look at the Twisted Earth's most prominent

"cult", the Brotherhood of Radiation, and a sideshow of weird, wacky, and sometimes fascinating freaks that are the Twisted Earth's other "religions".

This book, then, is "dedicated" to the *Ritual Preservationists*.

RELIGION IN THE AFTERMATH

In post-apocalyptic fiction, religion after the apocalypse is almost universally portrayed as either skewed, misled, or simply erroneous misinterpretations of common, easily-explainable events. If you need examples, just look at Walter Miller's *Canticle For Leibowitz*, where a post-Fall religion based on the preservation of ancient-era knowledge is rapt with fervor when a follower finds a simple grocery list, which is quickly mistaken for an artifact of great religious value. In the classic PA movie, *Beyond Thunderdome*, a town's system





CHAPTER 1 - RELIGION AND CHARACTERS

Wasteland Cults is intended as a resource for GMs and players alike to incorporate religious characters, or followers of unusual post-apocalyptic cults, into their campaigns.

These rules are meant to be used as a way for players to further flesh out their characters as being members of a specific movement, giving them both a deeper background and possible future tie-ins. They are also meant to be used by GMs to create new threats, and to introduce cults (and cultists) as either villains to challenge the characters, or organizations for them to work for or even join.

The new features introduced in this book are outlined below, and will be covered in greater detail in the following sections:

- Religion Talent Trees
- New Templates
- New Mutations
- New Defects
- New Feats
- New Items
- Radiation (Optional Rules)
- Brotherhood of Radiation
- Other Wasteland Cults

RELIGION TALENT TREES

Religion talents are treated just like normal talents, taking up a “talent” slot when selected. Also like standard talents, some religion talents have specific prerequisites (see individual talent descriptions for details). Religion talents have an additional requirement, however, that being an allegiance to a religious-themed faction, organization, movement, or body.

If you choose to play with religion talents, *religion talent trees* should then be added to the list of talent trees normally available to a character as a part of his or her class. Which *religion talent trees* are available depend on the religion that character follows (see Table 2-1).

Religion talents may be taken by characters belonging to other religious-themed factions not covered here, at the GM’s discretion.

ANCIENT WAYS TALENT TREE

Worship of the “Ancients” is a common religious tradition in the wasteland, where simple mutants and survivors live among the ruins of the Ancients’ former greatness. Left to wonder at the power once wielded by pre-Fall man, one is understandably left with the impression that they were truly “gods”. Those who follow the “Ancient Ways” revere technology and painstakingly devote their lives to its preservation and reconstruction.

TABLE 1-1: RELIGIONS AND TALENT TREES

Major Cults	Available <i>Religion Talent Trees</i>
Axemen	Ancient Ways, Cultist, Stoic Holdout
Boy Scouts	Ancient Ways, Missionary, Stoic Holdout
<i>Brethren*</i>	Luddite, Cultist, Missionary
Brotherhood of Radiation	Ancient Ways, Ecclesiarch, Missionary
Cult of Blood	Cultist, Luddite, Nihilist
Cult of the Provider	Ancient Ways, Luddite, Missionary
Cult of the Self	Ancient Ways, Cultist, Missionary
Devotees of the Iron Idol	Ancient Ways, Cultist, Stoic Holdout
<i>Doomriders*</i>	Cultist, Ecclesiarch, Nihilist
<i>Entropists*</i>	Ancient Ways, Cultist, Nihilist
Movement	Ancient Ways, Cultist, Missionary
NuChurch	Ecclesiarch, Missionary, Nihilist
Paradise Believers	Ancient Ways, Cultist, Missionary
Tekheads	Ancient Ways, Cultist, Nihilist
Wild West Girls	Cultist, Missionary, Stoic Holdout

* These cults are not detailed in this book, but are mentioned in other *Darwin’s World* sources.

Doodads & Whirligigs: Your collection of “relics” always seems to include a few useful parts. The cost of spare parts when repairing an item is reduced by half.

Finder of Relics: Any time a random roll for treasure/swag is called for, you may roll twice and pick the better of the two results.

Knowing of Things: You may make a Knowledge (technology) check to identify any item by its Ancient name, its intended purpose, relative rarity, and value in cp. The DC is equal to the item’s Craft DC.

Lorekeeper: You may make a Knowledge (technology) check (DC equal to the item’s Craft DC) to use any technological item without penalty, even if you don’t have the appropriate proficiency or technology feat. *Prerequisite:* Any other talent from the *Ancient Ways* talent tree.

Sage: You gain a +2 insight bonus to Ancient Lore, Computer Use, Decipher Script, Disable Device, and Knowledge (technology) checks.

Storyteller: Once per day as a full-round action you may make a Perform check before a group of listeners to grant one of the three effects: grant a +1 morale bonus to saving throws for 12 hours, inflict a -1 penalty to saving throws for 12 hours, or cancel the effects of *fatigue*.

CULTIST TALENT TREE

The post-apocalyptic world is a breeding grounds for new religions, eccentric prophets, and quack spiritualists. Those who are not killed outright often find success in the wasteland, recruiting weak-minded or desperate wastrels to their cause. “Cults” is a broad term in the wastes, as these religions, however small, usually have as fervent and radical a base as any true “religion”.

Berserk Zeal: Any time you fail a Mas save, you may make one attack as an immediate action before collapsing.

Persecuted: You’re used to having enemies everywhere. You gain a +1 insight bonus to Initiative.

Pseudo Religion: Pick one talent from the *Ecclesiarch Talent Tree*.

Regimen of Suffering: You gain +1 hit point per level.

Righteous Cause: If you use an Action Point to modify a roll that results in you slaying a direct opponent of your cult, you immediately regain the lost Action Point.

Slave to Faith: Any time an action or compulsion would have you act against your faith/cause, you gain a second saving throw to resist the effect.

ECCLESARCH TALENT TREE

To follow the ecclesiarch talent tree one must belong to one of the wasteland’s major religions, such as the cryptic *Brotherhood of Radiation* or the powerful (and hegemonic) *NuChurch*. Individual members



*The Fall
drove man -
burning and
mutated -
back into
the Dark
Ages*

of these ecclesiarchies may be small cogs in a far greater machine, but they draw strength knowing they live and die for a cause that will outlast their struggles.

Conditioning: Your Mas increases by +1. In addition, you ignore any effect that results

in *bleeding* (that is, a set hit point loss per round from bleeding wounds).

For The Cause: You are immune to fear, intimidation attempts, and morale-based penalties.

Prerequisite: Unswerving.

High Priest: Your Leadership score increases by an amount equal to your Reputation.

Rigorous Indoctrination: You may spend an Action Point to gain immunity to mental control, influence, and domination for 10 minutes.

Shepherd of The Lost: Followers of your faith/cause gain a +1 morale bonus to saves so long as they are within 30 ft. of you.

Unswerving: You may re-roll any failed Will save once per day.

LUDDITE TALENT TREE

Those who follow the “Simple Path” perpetuate the reign of rustic ignorance that began not long after the Fall. Victimized, burned, or otherwise disillusioned to the Ancients and their technological ways, these

BROTHERHOOD OF RADIATION

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TABLE 2-1: BROTHERHOOD ADVANCED CLASSES

Class	Description
Force Master	Elite soldiers and guardians; masters of <i>Telekinesis</i>
Psion	Oracles and seers possessed of prophetic powers; masters of <i>Precognition</i>
Censor	Agents and protectors of the Ecclesiarchy; masters of <i>Telepathy</i>
Illuminated	Beings that gradually transform into entities of pure energy

the monster in its attempt to get away, but once they do, will it be content with being a survivor - or will it, motivated by its own sense of loyalty, try to convince the party to help it return to Nellis and free its own imprisoned comrades?

The existence of this breeding program (as well as the laboratories under Nellis) is a secret that the Brotherhood does not want to get out. That the Brotherhood has been abducting mutants from the wasteland to experiment on is bad enough, but knowledge that the Brotherhood is building a secret army of genetically-modified beasts could very well jeopardize the illusion of “benevolent neutrality” that has allowed the Brotherhood access to many trade towns and settlements throughout the desert.



ALLEGIANCE BENEFITS

Considering its mysterious reputation, and the many rumors whispered about its secret goals and plans, why would one want to join the Brotherhood of Radiation? The simplest answer is to say that, as a religion of, about, and for mutantkind, it appeals primarily to mutants.

From a game standpoint, the Brotherhood of Radiation makes an ideal source of adventures of intrigue and religious zealotry. The fact that their ranks are composed of mutants, a race by its nature infused with unpredictable powers and diversity, makes them an ideal *enemy*. While not prohibited to player characters, their relatively narrow scope (dedicated to a sometimes-obscure vision of mutant dominance) usually means they will serve as villains and challenges for player characters to face, not embrace.

Characters (non-player or otherwise) who join the Brotherhood of Radiation and adhere to its bizarre tenets may achieve rank of considerable power and prestige, as well as entry to four powerful advanced classes, as shown below.

Favored Skills: A character who takes the *Cryptic Ordainment (Brotherhood of Radiation)* feat receive a permanent +1 morale bonus to *Concentration*, *Knowledge [Mutant Lore]*, and *Knowledge [Theology & Philosophy]*.

BROTHERHOOD FORCE MASTER

This advanced class was first introduced in the *Darwin's World Campaign Guide*. The class remains unchanged.

BROTHERHOOD PSION

While *Force Masters* refine and perfect the neural control known as “telekinesis”, and *Censors* are masters of telepathy, those who join the ranks of Brotherhood *Psions* are masters of *precognition*, the ability to see, even if only in glimpses, the *future*. *Psions* comprise a separate branch of the Ecclesiarchy, and are viewed with both suspicion and awe by the



Psions live in a sort of “half-state” that straddles what is and what will be

TABLE 2-2: THE BROTHERHOOD PSION

Level	BAB	Fort	Reflex	Will	Special	Def	Rep
1	+0	+0	+2	+2	Radiation Immunity	+1	+0
2	+1	+0	+3	+3	Neural Feat	+2	+0
3	+1	+1	+3	+3	Prediction I	+2	+0
4	+2	+1	+4	+4	Probability Armor	+3	+1
5	+2	+1	+4	+4	Neural Feat	+4	+1
6	+3	+2	+5	+5	Prophecy	+4	+1
7	+3	+2	+5	+5	Prediction II	+5	+2
8	+4	+2	+6	+6	Neural Feat	+6	+2
9	+4	+3	+6	+6	Future Sight	+6	+2
10	+5	+3	+7	+7	Superior Wisdom	+7	+3

masses of simple-minded followers. Revered as seers and oracles, these prophetic beings live in a sort of “half-state” that straddles what is and what will be. This disjunction is known to have adverse psychological effects, and the segregation Psions impose upon themselves is as much for their benefit as for the benefit of others. A rogue Psion, finally having her mind splintered under the weight of her constant precognitive awareness, can be a deadly, unpredictable foe. Capable of seeing into the future, a Psion knows all outcomes to every action, and will have chosen the one with the greatest chances of success long before she even raises a finger to act.

In the Brotherhood of Radiation, Psions still hold a great deal of mystery, for their particular art is not widely understood. Yet they are an invaluable tool, turned to for advice, portents, and prophecy. In the past Psions have risen to positions of great power in the Ecclesiarchy, and no Krytarch has ever gone without one or two Psions as personal advisors at his side.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Psion, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Race: Mutant.

Mutations: Neural Precognition.

Skills: Concentration 13 ranks.

Feats: Foresight, Precognitive Combat, Precognitive Dodge, Perceive Outcome.

Allegiance: Brotherhood of Radiation.

CLASS INFORMATION

The following information pertains to the Psion advanced class.

Hit Die: 1d6.

Action Points: 7 + one-half of the character’s level, rounded down, every time he or she attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Psion’s class skills are: Concentration, Diplomacy, Disable Device, Gamble,

Intimidate, Knowledge (Theology & Philosophy), Knowledge (Tactics), Listen, Research, Sense Motive, Spot.

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

The following features pertain to the Psion advanced class.

Radiation Immunity: A Psion, once “enlightened”, becomes immune to *Severe* radiation (if not already). However, she loses all body hair as a result of continued exposure and also becomes sterile.

Neural Feats: A Psion receives a bonus neural feat at 2nd, 5th, and 8th level, which may be any neural feat whose prerequisites she meets.

Prediction I: At 3rd level a Psion is able to see moments into the future to see events that affect her, allowing her to react appropriately to avoid harm. This ability is identical to *Evasion*.

Probability Armor: At 4th level the Psion’s sight extends to a thousand possibilities, allowing her to react to virtually every threat before it even occurs. This grants her a dodge bonus to Defense equal to her Wisdom modifier. Unlike *Precognitive Dodge* (which has a duration), this ability is always in effect.

Prophecy: A Psion’s prophetic abilities allow her to glimpse into the future, granting her the ability to see things that have yet to occur. In game terms, by spending an Action Point a Psion may ask the GM a question about whatever encounter or event currently faces her and receive a simple “yes” or “no” answer. Questions may only be asked of events that will take place in the near future (that is, 1 day per point of Wisdom modifier into the future).

Prediction II: At 7th level the Psion’s Prediction ability improves, giving her the equivalent of *Improved Evasion*.

Future Sight: By spending an Action Point, the Psion may automatically hit an opponent with her next attack. This ability can be used a maximum of once per day.