

## Appearance

The Gaesin appear as typical Humans, and their clothing differs as much as the subtle differences between individuals. Some choose to pay homage to their homeland's flag, by incorporating red and white in their garb's color scheme.

## Behavior

In general, the Gaesin are reserved, and often let their superiors make decisions for them. Most coexist with members of other races, and lead quiet lives, which some credit to an attempt to avoid further disdain from the other races, following the end of the Great War.

However, some Gaesin feel as though non-Human races are below them, and may even refuse to associate with such peoples.

## History

Nearly 120 years ago, the Gaesin Empire finished expanding its territory to include most of the civilized world. Early on, the rulers of the absorbed nations managed to maintain a measure of power by participating in the High Council, which was formed to rule the conglomerate empire. This new government oversaw an era of general harmony that lasted until Emperor Galius Linuso died of a mysterious disease.

Nine years would pass before Galius' son, Mercius would be crowned the new Emperor at the age of 13. Mercius almost immediately attempted to pass seemingly radical laws, which were easily rejected by the High Council. Mercius became irritated after several failed attempts to legally expulse Orcs from the Empire. Between the years from 965 to 970, all members of the High Council would be assassinated—all by means of arsenic poisoning.

The assassinations caused unrest among the citizens of the Empire, and several festivals were held in an attempt to calm the people before the potential for an uprising came about.

In 974, Emperor Mercius announced that an Orc named Olfrar was responsible for the



assassinations, and that his kind was a threat to the wellbeing of the Empire. With this, Orcs were exiled to the Wastelands.

During the spring of 975, Emperor Mercius issued a decree banning all intoxicating substances and prohibiting the use of magic outside of established guilds, which his father originally organized several decades before. Mercius' decree prompted an uproar from a mass of citizens of all races—riots became commonplace and eventually evolved into the early skirmishes of a steadily growing rebellion. To combat the better-trained and equipped army of the Empire, the rebels employed the assistance of a Halfling tinker known as Isiphous, who created automaton warriors called Obern. The Empire responded by employing a mage named Agos who, through a mix of selective breeding of enslaved Orcs and strange magic, created Ogres.

After 25 years of conflict, the Great War ended when Mercius and his relatives were captured and executed in the early days of 1002.

While several groups migrated to new lands to build new kingdoms, many Gaesin stayed in the remnants of the Old Empire, crowning Llivak their new Emperor. Emperor Llivak would see to a peaceful reconstruction of his realm and a stabilization of its once-thriving economy. However, a faction still loyal to the ideals Mercius strived for would see to his public execution in the spring of 1014.



## **Society**

Gaesin society is ruled by several tiers of officials, each appointed by those of the rank above them. The Emperor, being the heir—the oldest son—of the previous emperor, holds the utmost power.

Society functions as a collectivist commune—the actions of a given individual, reflects upon their family and peers, and the government ensures the needs of the people are met.

### *Coming of Age*

At the age of 13, boys shave what beard they have, and soon begin their military service. They are expected to complete a minimum of four years of service. Girls however, do not undergo a particular ritual to transition into adulthood.

## *Religion*

The Gaesin generally worship the Divine Trinity—Endo, the God of the underworld, Prana, the goddess of life and healing, and Gaia, the goddess of nature. While worship of the greater celestial pantheon is practiced, nearly all Gaesin pay the greatest respect to the Trinity.

In this now-standardized religion, it is believed that Prana serves as the creator and giver of life, and she is often looked to for healing, protection, fertility, and most basic needs of the common man. Gaia meanwhile, is viewed more as the general power of nature and the world at large, but her personification is worshiped and prayed to for good harvests and favorable weather. Endo is more feared than worshiped by the masses however, as his function as the lord of the Abyss and the keeper of lost souls has led many to associate him with death, decay and virtually all woes they may face.

## *Superstitions*

Though superstitious views vary with each particular region, one notable belief stands out among the Gaesin, though it is seldom truly believed. It is said that a child born during an eclipse—either lunar or solar—heralds ill omens; the extent of which may vary in their scope from alluding toward poor health in the child's future, to the ruin of nations. Some extreme religious views even hold that the child is truly the physical incarnation of a demonic being. Those who subscribe to these beliefs have been known to disown the child between the age of eight and 10 years old, believing their otherwise normal rebellious phase to be a sign of the manifestation of their sinister nature. More extreme examples, particularly those involving the religious perspective, have resulted in the child's termination before their first full day of life beyond the womb.

## *Courtship*

As marriages are arranged by the fathers of the couple, and an agreement is usually struck once the youngest of the children reaches five years of age. The children spend a great deal of time together as they grow, and once the youngest turns 18, preparations begin for a wedding.

## *Marriage*

Marriages are contracts, both in literal and figurative terms. On the day of the wedding, the couple—accompanied by 10 witnesses—makes their way to their local temple. In days of old, a sacrifice to Prana would be made, usually that of a goat or bull. In more modern times however, the sacrifice consists of a bundle of herbs, which are tossed into a dish that contains a small flame.

Following the sacrifice, the couple signs a contract, swearing undying love and loyalty to one another.

Once they have both signed, the bride places her left hand in the right hand of the groom's, and a strip of red silk binds their hands. They will remain bound until they join each other in bed that night. Until then, the couple and those who attended their wedding enjoy feasting and dancing to celebrate the union.

### *Funerals*

When a person dies, their body is washed in perfumed oils, and dressed in their finest clothes.

The body is placed on a funeral pyre, and a single gold coin is placed on each eye—it is believed that the dead use the coins to pay Jiti for escorting them to the afterlife.

As family and friends of the deceased gather to mourn their loss, a priest blesses the body and recites prayers, praising the life of the dead individual, and bidding them happiness and peace in the afterlife. The dead's family will often speak kind words over the body, before the pyre is lit.

The remains are gathered into an urn, and given to the oldest male relative of the dead individual. If no relative is available, the ashes are scattered to the wind.

### *Festivals*

A great number of festivals are celebrated by the Gaesin, and often, by other races. However, Crown Day—the day which celebrates the crowning of the new emperor following the end of the Great War—is primarily celebrated by the Gaesin.

Other holidays and festivals, such as Healers' Day or the Hallowed Harvest recognize the importance of certain members of society, or mark the onset of certain seasons.

### *Games*

Dice and card games are popular among the Gaesin as regular pastimes, as are footraces and various tournaments of skill.

Fighting contests—usually between slaves or criminals—are common spectator events in larger cities. Professional fighters are also known to take part in bouts, and are trained in the art of combat for several years before beginning their career.

### *Gender and Family Roles*

Men are expected to serve a number of years in the military when they are young—usually being taken at the age of 13, training for two years, and ending their service no sooner than the age of 19. While many choose to remain in the military,

others take on apprenticeships under artisans and laborers, and build a career from the experience they gain.

Women are expected to maintain the home, rear children, and when the men are away, tend to the farmlands. Some take up careers as weavers, potters, or tailors, but in some regions that still practice laws of times long past, they are prohibited from doing so.

### *Traditional Occupations*

Nearly all men have experience in the military, but also make their livings as farmers, artisans, and merchants. Women take up caretaking roles, as well as those of bakers, cooks, farmers, and artists.

### *Economics*

The traditional Gaesin economy is heavily rooted in trade, particularly in textiles, finished goods, and spices.

However, natural resources are in no short supply—Wheat and other food crops are common, as are cattle, horses, sheep, pigs, and other various forms of livestock. Moreover, the hilly and mountainous regions of the Empire are rich with gems and ore deposits, offering steady work for miners and various levels of craftsmen alike.

### **Aging and Life Expectancy**

As with all Humans, Gaesin usually can expect to see roughly 70 years of life.

