



The Brotherhood of Shinsei

History

The Brotherhood of Shinsei took root in the early years following Shinsei's appearance in the lands of Rokugan. A young Shugenja took it upon himself to write down the strange old man's sayings and soon compiled a treatise on his works. The Tao of Shinsei. He followed him across Rokugan, asking questions and listening to his words.

When he felt ready he showed his treatise to other Shugenja, and they, seeing the wisdom in the words, devoted their lives to the pursuit of the meaning to his enigmatic wisdom. These first monks shaved their heads and built an isolated Monastery in which they studied the treatise. Soon others came to study, all men at first, seeking answers. The monks soon built new monasteries across Rokugan, and the Tao of Shinsei was brought to the people.

The Brotherhood of Shinsei was born. The Shugenja of Rokugan soon adopted the philosophies of the Tao of Shinsei into their own control of their spells. Soon people saw the Shugenja as pseudo priests of the Word of Shinsei, but their over-all understanding of the Word of Shinsei was still lacking. Only the Gakusho understood the most.

The priests of the Brotherhood soon suffered from inner turmoil, as members of a more militant way of thinking came forth. These Yamabushi were given their own place within the Brotherhood, thus calming them and building a stronger clergy.

When the first women joined the Brotherhood, none foresaw the possible friction that would occur years into the future. The sisters started to meet on their own, and a number of Monasteries became home to only nuns. Three hundred years after its founding the Brotherhood suffered a split in its membership. The nuns had grown in power and now wanted equal say in the matters

of the Brotherhood. Staunch old scholars argued against it and so the nuns split off from the main sect, forming the Sisterhood of Shinsei as a companion order to that of the Brotherhood.

Over the last several hundred years the Order has grown in both size and strength (spiritual and political). It is common to see a member of Brotherhood acting as an advisor to many prominent daimyo.

The Sisterhood, on the other hand, has become more introverted over the years, tending to the upkeep of the scrolls of the Tao of Shinsei as well as dealing with the research into the recent outbreak of the plague in the western provinces.

Character Creation Addendum

Step One Changes

Choose an Upbringing

Was your Brotherhood of Shinsei character brought up in the monastery or in the Clans.

Choose a Profession

You are either a Gakusho, a Yamabushi or if you were raised by the clans and joined the Brotherhood later, then you are a Sohei or Mystic Monk, depending on whether you were a bushi or shugenja.

Sohei and Mystic Monks do not do Step Two, proceed immediately to the section on Sohei or Mystic Monks below. Write down the Skills your School teaches you as well as your Rank 1 Technique (Yamabushi), Kihos (Mystic Monk) or Abilities (Gakusho).

Upbringings

Monastic

There are two types of monastic orders in the Brotherhood. The Gakusho and the Yamabushi.

The Gakusho is divided among the priests, monks, and nuns.

Benefit: +1 Stamina

Non Monastic

There are also two types of non-monastic orders. The Sohei, comprised of those bushi who have left their clan and family for the monastic life of the Order. And the Mystic Monks, Shugenja who have been accepted into the monastic orders, but only after they have renounced their affiliation with magic and accepted the way of Shinsei.

Benefit: None

The Brotherhoods Views of the Clans

Greater Clans: Plans within plans within plans. They all circle one another in the great game.

Minor Clans: They are the pawns of their greater brothers.

Yamabushi School

The Yamabushi is a warrior monk who trains and follows Shinsei's word with a martial angle to his perceptions. Yamabushi are specially selected from the incoming children who wish to become members of the Brotherhood and train their entire life in the Art of Atemi-waza, the art of feet and hands. Yamabushi also train their 'ki' or 'chi', their inner power, to heightened levels, giving them wondrous abilities as they attain ranks. At each rank the Yamabushi is known as an 'acolyte' or the given rank he is at, e.g., a Rank 4 Yamabushi is known as an Acolyte of Fire, while a Rank 1 is known as an Acolyte of Earth.

Yamabushi frequently travel Rokugan to discover more of the world and to help those less fortunate.

Benefit: +1 Strength

Beginning Honour: 1

Skills

Shintao, Meditation, Atemi-waza, Athletics, Defence, Bo-jitsu, +1 High.

Techniques

Rank 1: Taming the Earth

By studying the solidity of the land and harmonising with its ability to eventually heal any damage done to it, the Yamabushi learns to manipulate his Ki in new ways. Add your Earth

Rank to the amount of damage that you heal each day as long as you meditate instead of resting (the TN for the meditative trance is 10). Also, you may Absorb your Earth Rank in damage on every hit.

Rank 2: Embracing the Air

The Yamabushi learns from the air's speed and its ability to be calm one moment and a hurricane next. Gain two attacks per round.

Rank 3: Move like Water

After contemplating the constant graceful motions of a river stream and the fast sudden movements of river rapids, the Acolyte learns to be as supple and yielding as water when he is attacked. Add Water Rank x2 to all of character's defence rolls/defence TNs.

Rank 4: Breath of Fire

After studying the nature of fire, its ability to harm as well as help, the Acolyte learns to become like a flame (when he needs to be), fast and deadly. Add his Fire Rank in dice to all attack rolls he makes and add his Fire Rank to his initiative totals.

Rank 5: Dim Mak

By studying the very nature of Void, the Yamabushi is able to project his Ki beyond his body. Also known as "Ringing the Bell", the Yamabushi is capable of hitting a target up to his Void x2 meters away.

Gakusho School

The Gakusho is the name applied to the various monks, nuns and priests of the Brotherhood. A Gakusho derives his powers directly from the teachings of Shinsei, almost as if the very power of Shinsei's life force was giving them strength. A Gakusho is a quiet person, often vowed into silence, who enjoys the simple things of life. The Gakusho are the senior members of the Brotherhood proper, with the Abbott of the entire Order of Shinsei the only Rank 5 known. The closest to his standing is Eldest Sister Morita, the eldest nun of the Sisterhood, who is rumoured to be close to attaining the same rank.

Benefit: +1 Void

Beginning Honour: 2

Skills

Shintao, Meditation, Calligraphy, History, +3 High.

Beginning Powers

Those of the Gakusho receive 4 Powers at rank one, and then 2 additional Powers per rank. They choose from the below powers.

The Hands of Shinsei, Removal of Shinsei's Blessing, Shinsei's Mantle, The Arms of Shinsei, Lokking Within, Blessings of Shinsei, Illumination of Shinsei, The Crow's Word, Whispers of the Wind, Banishment of Fu-lengs Touch, Destruction of the Taint, Invoke the Favour of the Elements.

Sohei School

The Sohei is the protector of the brotherhood's property. They were all bushi at one point in their lives and came to the conclusion that serving the Order would lead to greater glory than serving their family and clan. Some are ronin who have tired of the wandering way, while others are criminals and disgraced and dishonoured warriors seeking simple solace. Once a bushi joins he either takes a vow of silence, shaves his head and puts away his swords forever or he becomes a Sohei in service of the Order.

Benefit: None

Beginning Honour: 0

Skills

Shintao +1, Meditation +1.

Techniques

The Sohei do not possess any techniques as they use their own. Sohei do not gain new techniques as they move up Rank, merely relying on those that they entered with. Sohei can learn techniques from other Sohei.

Mystic Monk School

A Mystic Monk is merely a Shugenja that has joined the order. The Shugenja gives up all alliances to his former magic and puts away his scrolls of the Elements in favour of the Kihos of Shinsei. Kihos are spell like effects that the Mystic Monk is granted, some similar to the Gakusho powers. The Mystic Monk is expected to travel the lands of Rokugan, bringing the word of Shinsei to those in need.

Benefit: None

Beginning Honour: 0

Skills

Shintao +1, Meditation +1.

Beginning Kihos

6 Kihos are chosen from the list.

Your Outfit

Yamabushi

(All items are considered to be of Low Quality)
Robes, Bo stick, travelling pack, large hat, prayer beads

Gakusho/Mystic Monk

(All items are considered to be of Low Quality)
Robes, travelling pack, hat, prayer beads

Sohei

(All items are considered to be of Low Quality)
Robes, light armour, katanna, travelling pack, prayer bead.