

# Being a True and Honest Interpretation of Ulric's Holy Tome: *The Book of the Howling Winter* and A Treatise on The Cult of Ulric: Lord of Battle, Winter and Destruction

by Black Wolf Johann Mulcahy

*Over the centuries, many men, learned and otherwise, have questioned the legitimacy of our Lord Ulric's divine status: Some have even gone so far as to claim that Our Lord's teachings and his followers are little more than primitive superstitions governing bands of deluded thugs. For their soul's sake, I pray that this humble treatise will rectify some of their misguided views before the Ordo Inquisitii takes a closer interest in their heretical beliefs.*

## **Cult ethos**

Perhaps the biggest source of misunderstanding, the ethos of Cult of Ulric is generally viewed by outsiders as simplistic and aggressive. While it is true that the Cult preaches harsh discipline and aggressive doctrine, these are principally limited to times of war. Indeed the mainstay of the Cult's ethos is the principal of the wolf pack.

This begins with discipline. Strict hierarchy within the Cult helps maintain order, discipline and unity. Such rigid command is particularly necessary in a Cult that places such importance on martial prowess. That is not to say that the Cult is not a friendly one. Quite the contrary, within the Cult at least, Ulricans are social people who frequently live together in tight-knit, independent communities. A community's young, for example, are often reared together with practically all pack members taking turns to keep watch over the next generation. Further evidence can be found in the principal of celibacy. All cult members take a single mate for life. Their daily interactions not only contribute to the development of the Cult but also of individuals. As such, many an Ulrican festival is based around communal activities such as hunting, feasting, house-building and physical games.

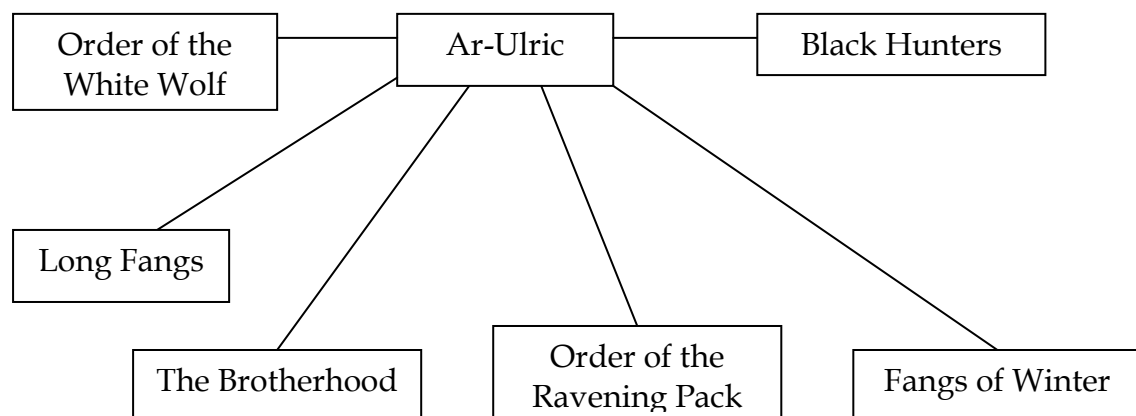
Sadly, it is the latter and most visible past time that is the most misunderstood. To many outsiders, these displays of martial prowess often appear without reason or, worse still, gratitude's. On the contrary, such sparring and winter games help. As a result, conflict within the Cult is rare. However when it does rear its ugly head, it is a cause for great distress among the pack. Punishment is characteristically harsh – anything from long pilgrimages to excommunication and sometimes even trial by combat.

Perhaps the last aspect for which Ulricans have gained an unjust reputation is their approach to battle. Contrary to popular opinion, the Cult warriors are not, by and large, undisciplined barbarians. While it is true that many still

prefer to take to the field clad only in their holy furs and sacred axes, their fearsome reputation as a fighting force is firmly anchored in highly coordinated and rapid attacks. The continued success of such tactics is often only possible thanks to the Cults' unrivalled skill in accurately identifying, pursuing and evaluating their prey. By moving and hunting at night, Ulricans are often able to attack their enemies whilst their are resting or sleeping.

### **Cult Structure**

Contrary to popular opinions the hierarchy within the cult of Ulric is a strict one. Essentially, the Cult is split into five branches as indicated below:



### **The Brotherhood**

By far the most visible aspect of the Cult, The Brotherhood covers the rank and file priesthood. These are the initiates and priests that take care of the day to day running of the cult - regular sermons, leading festivals, celebrating marriages, blessing homesteads and watching over funerals. They are also occasionally called upon to assist other arms of the cult.

With the exception of the initiates, most members of the brotherhood also practice other professions, usually of an outdoor nature. The senior members tend to be retired members from other parts of the organisation.

### **Ar-Ulric**

Unquestioned head of the cult, Ar-Ulric has been, for five centuries at least, based in the mighty fortress temple at Middenheim. The mouthpiece of Lord Ulric, he oversees the organisation of the cult as well as its position in the Empire and beyond in relationships with other cults and in politics. Although tradition has show that most come from the Brotherhood, records indicate that the position of Ar-Ulric can be attained from all ranks of the Cult. Traditionally he wears a silver-grey wolf's pelt.

## **Ver-Ulric**

This title denotes the highest title below that of Ar-Ulric. Effectively they are the archbishops of the Cult. As such they are only ever four such positions in the Old World – Nuln, Talabheim, Kislev and Olricstaad. Priests are elected to the position of Ver-Ulric for life. They are often the only candidates to succeed the title of Ar-Ulric.

## **The Order of the White Wolf**

Claiming to be the first and therefore most ancient order of Knights Templar, the Order of the White Wolf have over the centuries carved themselves a terrible reputation. Few doubt their skill in battle, fewer still their bravery. Countless apparently desperate battles turned with the arrival of lance of White Wolves.

Initially the White Wolves were simply the Cult's warrior best sent out to protect pilgrims and distant communities. However over the years, the Order has evolved; despite the fact that most prefer to continue to fight on foot, practically all members can ride. Armour too has become increasingly accepted. As have weapons other than the traditional axe

While some military leaders may point out that, compared to Knights of the Fiery Heart or the Knights Templar, the White Wolves lack both tactical finesse and strategic repertoire, they remain excellent shock troopers. While this may be true to a certain extent they more than compensate through the incredible ferocity and tenacity. Military history is littered with tales of White Wolves fighting lost causes and positions that other units would run from and wining through.

Numbering in the hundreds, the Knights of the White Wolf are immediately recognisable by their broad, often tall stature topped with the pelt of a white wolf. Their arrival, even in the great cities, inspires fear and awe in all.

## **The Long Fangs**

The least well-known arm, these brothers tend to the Cult's historical records both in terms of the Cult's own history as well as those of others. Members usually consist of lettered brothers and injured campaigners. Compared to other cults, their numbers are small – two to three dozen in Middenheim and Olricstadt with a dozen in Altdorf, Talabheim, Erengard and Kislev.

In the beginning the Cult had no writings. Traditions were handed down generation to generation through song and verse. As a result the Long Fangs spend much of their time, researching, transcribing and cross-referencing local legends. This has also lead to a certain amount of interpretation that in turn has lead to schisms within the Cult. To try and counter this, the Cult issued relatively recently (compared to the other cults) what was supposed to be a definitive text called The Book of the Howling Winter.

Perhaps as a result of the considerable research undertaken this arm of the Cult has founded much stronger ties with the other cults, in particular that of the Cult of Verena. Within the cult itself the Long Fangs are quite well known which is not altogether surprising considering the cult's generally conservative view of society and religion. Sadly few outside of the cult are aware of this erudite arm of the religion.

Finally, it is rumoured that, in certain of the larger temples, the Long Fangs keep collections of proscribed texts. Undoubtedly the fruits of the Black Hunter's labours, these are commonly known as Black Libraries. Though they are far from rivalling those kept by the cult of Verena, they allegedly include certain manuscripts unique in the Old World.

Their grey wolf pelts easily identify these priests. They also generally carry silver wolf pendants and/or broaches.

### **The Black Hunters**

Another little-known arm of the cult, this sub-sect deals with matters of heresy, internally and externally of the Cult. Priests of many years many have also served as Knights of the Order of the White Wolf before joining this branch. Their main concern is maintaining the cult's rigid hierarchy and ensuring that it is free from heresy and the taint of chaos. Their zeal is legendary with stories of entire temples being razed to the ground to purge all possible taint.

One of the Black Hunter's tenants is that the pursuit and execution of heretics or tainted ones can be likened to smashing a stone – while positioning and stance are both vital, the assault is preferably delivered in a single powerful strike rather than a series of swifter, lighter blows. This approach minimises the risk of splinters and ensures the rock crumbles.

As a result, the Black Hunters often work slowly but surely and when they decide to strike they often call on their terrifying ferocity of their fierce brothers, the Knights of the White Wolf.

Black Hunters are immediately recognisable by their Black Wolf pelts and propensity to carry all manner of religious icons and relics.

### **The Order of the Ravening Pack**

Members of the Order of the Ravening Pack are known as Lone Wolves. No one, not even the great keep in Middenheim, can say with any certitude just how many lone wolves exist at any one time. The reason is that the Lone Wolves are the lay preachers of the Cult of Ulric. They travel the countryside vehemently speaking out against the influence of Chaos that they see permeate modern society.

Although technically answerable to the leader of the daises in which they are travelling, many consider themselves mavericks answerable to no one other than Ar-Ulric himself. This possibly explains the cult's latent suspicion of such characters. Another explanation is their alleged tendency to congregate prior to great battles. Many folk believe that to witness three or more in a single group is a certain harbinger of an imminent conflict.

The Ravening Pack can be found throughout the Empire, Kislev, and southern Norsca. At times, they will even accompany a band of the Fangs of Winter. A sizable number of the Ravening Pack still continue to feed the flames of the Sigmarite Heresy.

While many Fangs of Winter aspire to this greater calling, few survive long enough to achieve it. As a result most Lone Wolves come from the Brotherhood arm of the cult.

Once a Lone Wolf begins his crusade however, regardless of his origins, it is rare for him to fully return to the fold, as he considers to be guided by Ulric himself. Indeed a great many of them live in the wilderness shunning cities and towns. As such while they often entertain good relations with followers of Taal and the Old Faith, other members of the close-knit cult of Ulric are understandably wary of these loners.

As the Lone Wolves strive to practice their teachings, their dress reflects the cult's plain principles - simple peasant clothing with the symbol of a white wolf on their right breast. Thereafter apart from a wooden wolf pendant, in keeping with their bohemian existence their other trappings can vary enormously.

For career advance scheme, career exits, and trappings see the Demagogue Advance Career, WFRP, page 96.

### **The Fangs of Winter**

Fangs of Winter are fanatical followers of Ulric whose goal is the eradication of Chaos. These black clad fanatics dress as mercenaries and patrol the forests of the Empire, Kislev, and southern Norsca. The Fangs of Winter actively hunt Chaos Beastmen and warbands, engaging them in combat until one side or the other are annihilated. Somewhat unsurprisingly the life span of the Fangs of Winter tend to be rather short and violent.

While viewed as protectors by most in the areas they patrol, the Fangs of Winter have a reputation of being (not surprisingly) rigid in their view of the world. They are strictly Ulrican in belief and their ranks count a disproportionably high support for the Sigmarite Heresy. Thus, attacks on

Sigmarite shrines are not uncommon as one would think in the northern forests of the Empire.

Those who join the ranks of the Fangs of Winter usually come from a martial career, usually one that was heavily regimented to some degree. Practically every member claims to have been personally selected by Ulric through a dream or vision. While such dreams and visions vary enormously in their manifestation, there is often a common theme - images of the Great White Wolf heroically battling dark and sinister forces.

Always covered in black furs, often bearing macabre necklaces and occasionally wearing light armour such as toughened leather and/or primitive chainmail, bands of Fangs of Winters appear to many as impoverished, would-be Knights of the White Wolf. Perhaps as a means to distinguish themselves from this disciplined and illustrious order, many of the Fangs of White heavily tattoo their bodies with dark tribal markings.

### **Ulrican Cult Nomenclatures**

Follower - *Cub / Hib* (Fangs of Winter)

Initiate - *White Fang*

Level 1 - *Reverend* [White/Grey/Black/Lone] *wolf*

Level 2 - *Venerable* [White/Grey/Black/Lone] *wolf*

Level 3 - *Ver-Ulric* (Great Wolf)

Level 4 - *Ar-Ulric* (Eternal Wolf)

### **True Fangs vs. White Claws**

A secret faction still promotes the Sigmarian Heresy, the belief that Sigmar is not a god, but a great hero whose reign was blessed by Ulric. Clerics of Sigmar are at best dupes or, at worst, active allies of the Daemons who give them their powers. This doctrine was outlawed as heresy by the Concordat of Nuln, 2304 I.C., ratified by the High Priests of Ulric and Sigmar. This fanatic faction of Ulricans, called the True Fangs, some of whom are high-ranking members of the cult, seek to restore the heresy as dogma and resume the persecution of Sigmarites.

Even though the Sigmarite Heresy dogma was outlawed by Ar-Ulric over 200 years ago, this doctrinal split continues to divide all parts of the Cult of Ulric, into two main factions, commonly referred to as the True Fangs and White Claws.

The True Fangs are the puritanical section of the church who believe in following Ulric's teachings to the letter. They believe that their interpretation is the only true one and rarely accept anyone else's. Many believe that recent arrival of so-called civilised way of life is a sure path to temptation and sin. Most advocate a return to simpler values and a more traditional form of

existence. They are predominantly at the forefront of any friction with other cults, particularly the cult of Sigmar.

The White Claws represent a more liberal reading of Ulric's teachings. Their reasoning is that a smart wolf that can adapt to its environment is the one that survives and so it is best to learn as much as they can of others. Furthermore, if you maintain friendly relations with others, should a time of need ever arise, they may be able to offer assistance. The True Fangs see this as a sign of weakness and the White Claws see this as their strength.

Over the years support for the True Fangs within the cult has slowly diminished however certain arms are more sympathetic to their beliefs than others. The Long Fangs, for example are historically the strongest supporters of the White Claws. Conversely the strongest supporters of the True Fangs are the Order of the Ravening pack. Outside of these two extremes, the only other arms of the cult to display any leaning are the Order of the White Wolf and Ar-Ulric. Although their influence is waning, the True Fangs still enjoy good support within the fierce Knights and the secretive Order. This is somewhat counter-balanced by an increasingly liberal cult hierarchy, personified in the current Ar-Ulric, who is by far the most candid ever.

### **Brood of Ulric**

For centuries legends tell that certain followers have been venerated as incarnations of the Lord Ulric. Proof of these individuals' latent supernatural powers was usually evidenced by certain physical traits such as copious amounts of hair all over their bodies, unusually long or thick nails, extra long teeth and/or ears. However appearance alone wasn't the single means of distinguishing these marked ones. Specific forms of behaviour were often a clear indicator, such as nocturnal habits, a solitary temperament and moon gazing.

The name commonly given to these individuals is the Brood of Ulric for it is said that on certain occasions, the Lord manifested inside their bodies and in doing so they left their human form to take on that of a great wolf through a terrifying transmutation, which granted them unnatural strength and bloodthirst.

Although this practice was never officially sanctioned by the cult, certain evidence suggests that those blessed with the gift to shapeshift were considered to be the finest leaders of men. More serious still, certain claim that the first Knights of the White Wolf demanded that all candidates be shapeshifters.

As the centuries passed, records of this strange kind grew scarce. Those accounts that have survived speak of degenerate ceremonies and bloodthirsty rituals. Many explanations have been given but few of them have survived

the scrutiny of the Ordo Inquisitii. Indeed after the Incursions of the Dark Symmetry, the Cult of Ulric officially forbade the worship of such beings as their disposition, far from ever predictable, was reported to have degraded past any reasonable doubt. The Ordo Inquisitii has since relentlessly hunted them down and exterminated these disgraces.

The last known trial of such a broods was almost a century ago, far off in the frozen north, some call Norsca. However rumours continue that in certain remote areas of Norsca and even in Kislev, the brood continue to be worshipped by misguided peasants and darker forces.

### **Mottos**

*"Strength and Honour"* the Brotherhood  
*"Proud and Steadfast"* Knights of the White Wolf  
*"Sound body, sharp mind"* Long Fangs  
*"Certo Dirigo Ictu"* (I aim with a sure blow) Black Hunters  
*"Steadfast and Strong"* Order of the Ravening Pack  
*"Deeds not words"* Fangs of Winter  
*"Strength in Truth"* True Fangs  
*"Trust, Labour and Courage"* White Claws  
*"That which does not kill us makes us stronger"* all Ulricans

### **Proverbs**

[Insert winter proverbs]

*"Wolves always howl more before a storm"* – too much debate and unrest is likely

[Insert battle proverbs]

*"Hunger drives the wolf out of the woods"* – When times are hard an Ulrican is at his best

*"No matter how much you feed a wolf he will always return to the forest"* – born an Ulrican, die an Ulrican

*"A wolf won't eat wolf."* – only by standing united will Ulricans survive

*"A starving man will eat with the wolf"* – beware of opportunistic comrades in arms

*"Cut of a wolf's head and it still has the power to bite"* – a good Ulrican never gives up

*"The wolf is not as big as people make him"* – fear is a powerful ally but must be used with careful measure

*"The wolf is well pleased with the kick of a sheep"* – opportunity knocks softly

*"The wolf loses his teeth, but not his inclination."* – a man can loose everything but Ulrican never loses his faith

*"The wolf preys not in his own field"* – except in religious ceremonies and sanctioned arenas, no Ulrican is to fight his own

*"The wolf will die in his skin"* – an Ulrican never turns his coat, even if it means death



## **Other cult mottos**

*"Veritas et Equitas"* Verena

*"The truth will set you free"* Verenan Inquisitors

*"Justice from Above"* Knights of the Silent Wing

*"Guardians of Truth"* Librarians?

*"Seek, Strike and Smite"* Knight of the Fiery Heart

*"Conserve and Conquer"* Sigmarite?

*"Courage and Valour"* Sigmarite?

*"Unity and Compassion"* Sisters of Sigmar?

*"Win the soul, win the day"* Sigmarite Inquisitor?

*"Fortitude and Compassion"* Shallyaesque?

*"Mercy is inherent in the brave"* Knights Hospitaliar

*"Not for thyself but other"* Shallyaesque?

*"Duty, Honour and Excellence"* Myrmidia?

*"To Conquer is to Live"* Myrmidia?

*"Ave Imperator"* Imperial Guard

*"Lightning from the sky, Thunder from the sea"* Mananan?

*"With Fire, We Redeem"* Solkan?

*"Who dares wins"* Ranald

*"Fortune favours the brave"* Ranald

*"No fear"* Ranald

*"He profits most who serves best"* Handrich

## **Sigmarite insults**

*"The yellow dog is brother to the wolf"*

*"The wolf will hire himself out very cheaply as a shepherd"*

*"The wolf is not always a wolf"*

## **Other cult proverbs**

*"One kind word can warm three winter months"* Shallyan proverb

*"Better a lie that soothes than a truth that hurts"* Ranald proverb