

Guildhalls

Trade guilds are a long-standing tradition in Specularum. The Merchants' Guild, the Leathersellers' Guild and the Skinners' Guild were formed at the beginning of the 5th century AC. These first Guilds mostly managed trade between Marilenev and Halavos, Volaga, Lugsid and Vaion, while foreign merchants from Thyatis and the Isles of Dread handled sea-based trade. In subsequent centuries, further Guilds were chartered (Moneychangers, Armourers, Scriveners, Bakers, Apothecaries, Blacksmiths, Carpenters, Brewers, Butchers and Grocers).

Early in the 7th century AC, the dissolution of the Traladaran League caused a major loss of political power to Marilenev. Duke Alexandr was unable to cope with the social changes imposed by this event. The anti-ducal faction within the Merchants' and Scriveners' Guilds took the upper hand. With large financing from the Moneychangers, the Guilds enacted a bloody revolution. The Duke was deposed and beheaded, and the major Guilds declared their Guildmasters (or *Priors*) as the Town Council of Marilenev.

Wars and commercial interests saw changes in the power of some Guilds as well as the formation of others (Bricklayers, Dyers, Tailors and Mariners). The Thyatian conquest of

AC900 removed most political power from the Guilds through the implementation of various decrees designed to reduce the potential danger posed by Guild influence. This also saw the split of some Guilds and the establishment of new Guilds (Goldsmiths, Bowyers, Cutlers, Vintners, Fishmongers and Innholders). However, a last governor's decree in 926 AC extended the authority of the Guilds from the city of Specularum to the entire Province of Traladara.

On his acquisition of the Traladaran lands in 970 AC, Duke Stefan Karameikos confirmed the existing Guilds, but allowed his friend Teldon to form a small Magicians' Guild. This guild is considered a major guild, even though its economic power is minimal. Ten years later, Stefan chartered the Loggers' Guild and the Hunters' Guild to help regulate the exploitation of the forests of Karameikos.

Information on the six current major Guilds follows:

Apothecaries' Guildhall

(Bricktop District, B3)

The Apothecaries' Guildhall stands isolated on a single city block in Bricktop, near its boundary with the Old Quarter. Some say this is due to the multitude of smells, fumes, animals and other pungent paraphernalia associated with many

of the Guild's affiliated professions. The Guildhall is a three storied building (with below ground chambers) that has "grown" over the centuries as new professions have gained association. The building includes a number of laboratories and libraries as well as a meeting hall and the office of the Guildmaster (currently **Dimitri Levinik**).

The Apothecaries' Guild is a composite association that collects not only apothecaries, alchemists and physicians, but also other technical or artistic professions such as painters, glassworkers, cartographers and paper and parchment makers. Barbers are also associated to this guild, as they perform small surgery, dental extractions, and bloodletting. General retailers are also associated to this guild, though as lesser members.

Admission is free for the children of guild members, while others must pay 60 royals if they are born in Specularum, 120 otherwise. Once admitted, the new member starts as an apprentice. Apprenticeship is very long (10 to 15 years) for most members, except general retailers - who cannot reach the rank of master.

Goldsmiths' Guildhall (Hill District, H2)

The Guildhall, a dwarven-designed palace, is found in the Hill Market district, right out of the walls of Duke Stefan's castle. It is rumoured that underground dungeons hold secret

vaults where the gold reserves of the guild are stored.

The Goldsmiths' Guild is formed not only of goldsmiths, but also jewellers and silversmiths. The current Guildmaster is **Thorur Silverbeard the Younger**, son of Thoric of the Syrklist. Dwarves, mostly from the Syrklist, Buhrohur and Stronghollow clans, form one third of the membership. The other members are equally divided between Traladarans and Thyatians, with a few Highforge gnomes, Hins, and Ierendians.

A bitter enemy of the Moneychangers' Guild, the Goldsmiths are allied with the Vorloi, as they see Duke Stefan as too lenient with the Traladaran gangs, whom they consider responsible for most of the crime in Specularum.

Magicians' Guildhall (South End District, SE1)

The formal office of the Magicians' Guild of Specularum is a simply decorated tower with an attached barn-sized building. The tower is the residence of **Teldon**, the Guildmaster. The attached building acts as a school, research library and general laboratory for the Guild. The Guild is more of a quiet gentlemen's club than a dynamic training area. The library is a major source of information on magic and is administered by its acid-tongued receptionist, **Tullia Frinius**. In addition to its magical services, the

guild offers also public access to the non-magical section of its library.

One of the smallest guilds, the Magicians' Guild has only existed since the foundation of the Grand Duchy. Its goal is to regulate the teaching and use of magic in Karameikos. While magic users are not required by law to belong to the guild, guild regulations forbid exchange of magical knowledge with non-members. Specifically, only Masters are allowed to teach spells and spell casting techniques, thus ensuring both the quality levels of the education provided by the guild and the respect of requirements from the students. The Magicians' Guild agrees with the Church of Karameikos in discouraging the traditional Traladaran divinatory practices, which it considers devoid of scientific value.

Apprentices and medium-ranking members (Journeymen and Magicians) make up the larger part of the guild, which has currently only five masters, including Teldon and *Kavorquian Penhaligon*.

Merchants' Guildhall (*Stronghold District, S13*)

The Guildhall is a broad, stout palace in the Stronghold district of Specularum. A statue of Zirchev, patron of the Guild, is located in the courtyard. Armed guards bar the access to the Guildhall.

One of the oldest and more powerful, guilds, the Merchants' Guild controls wholesale trade, both domestic and import/export. While this guild has lost much of its official power with the Thyatian conquest, it still retains control over a large fraction of the Traladaran merchants, and uses it to boycott the Thyatian merchants of the Vorloi faction. The Merchants' Guild also organises caravans and mercantile shippings by pooling the resources of its associates. Thus, it often recruits mercenary guards for its caravans and ships.

The Master of the Guild is *Anton Radu*. The Radu family has been part of the Guild since the foundation, and has provided one third of its Guildmasters over the last five hundred years. Other allied families, like the Kaison and Calihar, hold seats in the Masters' Council, providing the Radu a secure majority in all guild decisions.

Moneychangers' Guildhall (*Hill District, H1*)

The Moneychangers' Guild rallies all moneychangers, moneylenders, bankers and pawnbrokers in Specularum. The guild membership is clearly divided in two levels: the small time pawnbrokers and moneylenders, and the magnates, powerful bankers and investors who vie with the Merchants' Guild for control over the Karameikan economy. This division can also be seen in the ranking

system, which differs from the typical apprentice, journeyman, master of the other guilds: the Moneychangers begin their training as apprentices, then move either directly to the master rank, if they are associated to an existing master's business or have the means to buy into the rank (and therefore also to open a large scale business), or to the agent rank. Agents are independent guild members of lesser status, generally working in the poorer districts of Specularum or in the countryside as moneylenders and pawnbrokers.

The Guild is ruled by a Guildmaster, currently *Ioan Azuros*, the maternal uncle of *Alexander Torenescu*, assisted by a council of six Wardens. Two Wardens are elected by the members from the Hill district, and one each from the Merchant, Bricktop, and Stronghold districts. The last Warden is elected from the Agents. The Wardens' Council meets in the Guildhall, located in the Hill district, within Torenescu territory. The present building dates to the last century before the Thyatian conquest. At that time, the Moneychangers were at the peak of their power, holding the balance of power between the merchants and the landowners. Their hall -- a venerable building dating back to the times before the foundation of the Guild -- was in the Bricktop district.

To show their power and wealth, the Guildmaster of that time, an ancestor of *Emmet Torenescu*, persuaded the

Wardens' Council to build a new, majestic hall, hiring a foreign architect -- a Glantrian expatriate who designed a massive, square building, fully covered in rusticated stone (thought to be showy but elegant in Glantrian architecture), with large windows opening on the two upper stories to give light to the inner rooms. The original plans included four bronze-covered turrets, but the design was considered extravagant by the Wardens and the turrets were removed.

In recent times, the somewhat dwindling fortunes of the Guild - with the creation of a Thyatian-aligned competitor in the Goldsmiths' Guild, the major heist single-handedly accomplished by *Annius Helianthus* and the run-ins with the Veiled Society - have led to decreased maintenance and increased security. About 15 years ago the Wardens' Council voted the purchase of guardian constructs from Glantri, which are said to guard the lower vaults where the Moneychangers' Guild gold reserves are held. A large contingent of private guards is also present to deter thieves and Veiled Society assassins.

The Guildhall also includes an archive, offices for the Wardens, the Guildmaster and other guild officers, and meeting rooms. There is also a renowned ballroom on the first floor, where an annual ball is held to celebrate new magnates of the guild.

The Moneychangers are still trying to recover the stolen money from Helianthus' heist, which is thought to near the mind boggling figure of one million royals -- probably mostly in gems and Thyatian Emperors. A guild officer, **Libor Matejevic** (NM, Lawful) is in charge of screening the curricula of adventurers, looking for candidates to investigate the heist. The Guild has two non-exclusive standing contracts with such adventuring parties to provide access to all the known facts regarding the heist in exchange for a large share of the treasure, should it be recovered.

Scriveners' Guildhall (Bricktop District, B1)

The Scriveners' Guild collects the intelligentsia of Specularum, including the government officials, the public notaries, lawyers and the judges, as well as a less powerful class of scribes, heralds, teachers and clerks.

Like several other Guilds, this one is ruled by a Guildmaster (currently **Simeon Torenescu**) assisted by six Consuls. Since the various professional activities represented by the guild have strictly separated careers and requirements, and are all incompatible with each other (thus a notary cannot serve as judge, and vice versa), the Consuls are selected to represent the more important groups: three Consuls for the public notaries, two for the judges and lawyers, and one for the heralds. Scribes, teachers

and clerks are not full guild members, and thus do not receive representation on the council.

Contrary to most other guilds, the Scriveners' Guild does not have apprentice or master ranks. Once a member is admitted, he is either an associate or a full guildsman. Admission is based on strict requirements: aspirant judges and lawyers must hold a doctoral degree in Law from the Imperial Academy in Thyatis or the University of al-Azrad in Selenica. All other aspirants must pass a series of exams, including a first one that is common to all, and verifies the aspirants' ability to read and write Thyatian and Traladaran. Associate members (scribes, teachers, and clerks) are only required to pass this first exam, while full members must pass two more exams on professional topics. These latter exams are presided by the College of Consuls, and all exams are open to all full guildsmen who care to take part as examiners (a minimum of four examiners is always required). Clerics and Paladins are never accepted as members, since they would not guarantee the professional neutrality required of judges and notaries.

Most ministers in the Karameikan government are chartered notaries of this guild, and Lord Valdo Tizza is one of the current Consuls. Currently, the guild has 300 notary members, 40 judges and lawyers, 30 heralds, and 1200 associate members.

In addition to the professional services of its members, the guild also offers public access to its library, where aspirants can consult the books needed to prepare their exams. Thus, the Scriveners' Guildhall, in Bricktop Road on the edge of the Grand Market, is the major hub of intellectual life in Specularum, as well as the theatre of nightly brawls between opposed factions of youths.

The Great Market, the Guildhall is a four-story building, with a protruding turret on its corner. The ground floor is occupied by two halls -- the entrance, and the meeting hall. The meeting hall opens on a small courtyard, while the entrance hall opens on Bricktop road, and gives access to both the meeting hall, and the upper floors.

The first floor is divided in many small rooms, used by the Consuls and the Guildmaster as offices and council rooms. The second and third floor are occupied by the famed library of the Scriveners' Guild. The library collects tomes on law (mostly on the second floor), with smaller sections on economics and political topics (third floor).

Notable tomes include *The Administration of Empire*, written by Thyatian Emperor Alexandros II Dalessenos, the *Oratory* by Paphocuzitum, and the *Rhetoric* by Strozner. A copy of the classical text on Traladara by Governor-General Elena Hassenberg (the third Thyatian governor of Traladara after Flavian

Osteropulos) can also be found in the library. Texts on the history of Thyatis, Traladara and Darokin (including the Lynnell edition of the *Lay of Almarand*) are collected on the third floor as well.

A "secret" section is located in the third level of the turret (accessed through stairs from the upper level of the library). It is a single bookcase covering half of the curved wall of the turret, and it is protected by a trapped lock. Only the Guildmaster and Consul Igor Wolf (who is in charge of the maintenance of the library) have access to this area.

The secret library contains a number of secret documents related to Guild politics, as well as a few restricted access books (access to the library is otherwise allowed even to non-members), such as the works of Fabritius Luscinia, and a couple of tomes on alchemy and magic, collected by previous Guildmasters, including the magnum opus of one of Karameikos' wizardly luminaries, *Krollan's Artifacts Arcanum*.