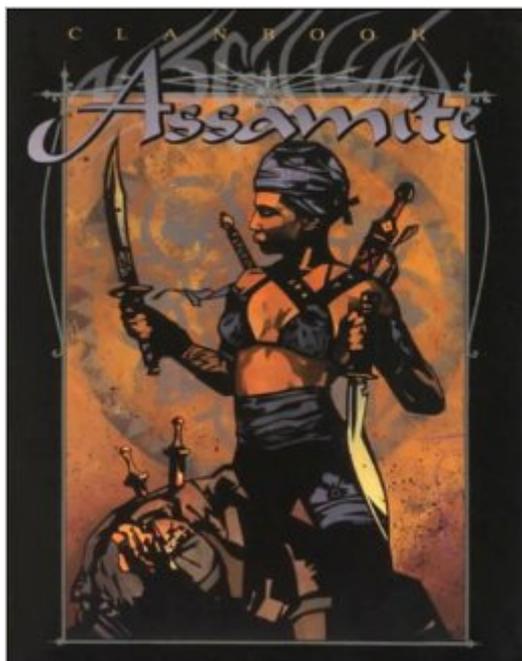


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*OP Clanbook Assamite Revised Ed (Vampire: The Masquerade Clanbooks)



Synopsis

White Wolf Clanbook Assamite (Revised Ed) Vampire Masquerade

Book Information

Series: Vampire: The Masquerade Clanbooks

Paperback: 104 pages

Publisher: White Wolf Publishing; 2nd edition (December 11, 2000)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1565042565

ISBN-13: 978-1565042568

Product Dimensions: 8.4 x 0.3 x 10.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.8 ounces

Average Customer Review: 3.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (18 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,097,938 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #62 in [Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Gaming > World of Darkness > Vampire](#) #167 in [Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Gaming > World of Darkness > General](#) #50163 in [Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Fantasy](#)

Customer Reviews

The Assamites, a clan of assassins hailing from Persia and Arabia, have long been characterized by negative stereotypes in the World of Darkness gamelines. The first edition clan book was filled with offensive remarks and stereotypes about Islamic culture and the Middle East. Clayton Oliver's revision of the clan was a very welcome change from all of that. The Assamites are detailed as being more or less like any other clan. The first chapter opens with telling us everything that we have been told about the clan is a lie, created in part by the western clans, and in part by the Assamites need to remain secret. We are given an extensive history of the Assamite's role in Middle Eastern history, from ancient Mesopotamia, Persia, Babylon, Carthage, Greece and Assyria to Byzantine era. Great detail is given to the Crusades, the back story being that the Crusades shattered the Assamite's relation to the west. From then on, we get some brief views of Assamite activities during the Ottoman Empire, the British invasion of India, the formation of the Arab States, and finally the modern era. The next chapter goes into detail concerning the Assamite's social structure. The main body of the clan, following an ancient Mesopotamian God-King Ur-Shulgi, is given great detail. With social ranks going from the Du'at (three leaders of the clan) to the Silsila (elder priest types) to the Fida'i (initiates to the clan). We also learn that there are three Assamite castes. The main caste, the

warriors, are not the assassins that are always presented as Assamites. Indeed, the warriors were once judges and law enforcers, but slowly changed to warriors over time. And not all, or even most, are assassins.

The new CLANBOOK ASSAMITE offers a wealth of information about this often misunderstood clan, challenging many long standing assumptions. It backs off things (like the duty to destroy other vampires) that made Assamites difficult to play with non-Assamite characters. Changes from the original CLANBOOK ASSAMITE include expanded roles for female and non-Middle Eastern Assamites. The Assamite belief that they may judge (and punish) other vampires receives a noble explanation here along with the Laws of Haqim which codify such duties. The ranks and factions of Assamite society are examined (antitribu included). The three basic Assamite castes (warrior, scholar and sorcerer) receive full treatment as sub-classes with their own discipline specialties etc. The book describes the ramifications of the Schism between Ur-Shulgi's followers and those of Al-Ashrad. The features are great: MET statistics, notable Assamites, character templates, discussion of clan disciplines, new discipline variations including an Assamite Sorcery path. Now the bad news: IMO this is the hardest book in the new CLANBOOK series so far. It constantly assumes prior knowledge. For example, a summary of the Schism and explanations of terms like "Web of Knives" and "dispossessed" are only provided toward the end although they are mentioned throughout the book as if they're already familiar. Unexplained, specialized terms ("kalif") sometimes appear. (The original CLANBOOK ASSAMITE had a glossary at the beginning- an unfortunate omission here.) Ur-Shulgi and Al-Ashrad, meanwhile, are omitted from the notable Assamite section- despite mention throughout the book and despite the fact that an update of the character profiles in CHILDREN OF THE NIGHT was needed in light of the Schism.

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