Structure & Rules of the Conclave

In the beginning of the Orders, when High Sorcery was still in its infancy, the secrets of this new magic was entrusted to three representatives of Solinari, Lunitari, and Nuitari. These wizards were instructed to pass on the fundamentals of magic and entrusted to guard the secrets of High Sorcery. To this end, the wizards created a governing body to rule over all spellcasters of arcane magic. A Conclave consisting of twenty-one members, composed of seven wizards from each of the orders was selected to represent and govern the use of arcane magic across Ansalon.

Of the three factions that make up the Conclave of Wizards, one representative is selected to be Master of the Order. These three individuals act in leadership roles, each for his own order, casting tie-breaking votes on decisions and making decisions for the order when all the Conclave members cannot be represented. One of the three is chosen to be the Head of the Conclave who presides over the entire council and makes all the final verdicts on the matters brought before the council. The Head of The Conclave also acts as the Master of the Order for his or her particular faction. The position is held for life, unless there is some important reason for the Master's removal.

When a Master of the Order dies or is removed from the position, a new Conclave member is appointed to complete seven council members. From there, a new Master of the Order is determined. Each Order selects its Master in a different manner.

White Robes believe in the goodness of their brethren and trust that they will make the right choice when all options are presented to them openly and honestly. Therefore potential candidates for the position of a Master of the Order of White Robes are given a chance to demonstrate their abilities and knowledge before the members of the Order. Once the candidates have been thoughtfully considered, an election is held to determine who will lead them.

Red Robe wizards believe that free will and the ability to move between the precepts of Good or Evil is the only way to truly grow. All seven members of the current council draw lots to determine the new Master.

Black Robes believe that magic should be pursued without moral or ethical restraints. Black Robes rule through supremacy and domination. They look for these traits in a Master of the Order. The Master of the Order of the Black Robes is typically its most powerful member. To select a new Master of the Order, the Black Robes hold secret contests, in which ambitious contenders vie for supremacy of the Order. These competitions, which are always held in secret locations beyond the disapproving eyes of the other Orders, have occasionally resulted in spectacular and sometimes lethal wizards' duels.

The Head of the Conclave is elected from the twenty-one delegates by the means of a consensus spell that instantaneously gauges the collective will of the Wizards of High Sorcery. Like a Master of the Order, this position is held for life. Only if the Head of the Conclave makes a decision that defies the will of the collective Conclave can a mandate be called to take another consensus of the Conclave in order to select a new leader. This has rarely been done.

The Conclave routinely convenes at set dates and times in accordance with the cycles of the moons. Regular meetings are held once at month on the first day of High Sanction of the Order to which the Head of the Conclave belongs. They also assemble for a short time during every Night of the Eye to make significant decisions concerning the Orders. Emergency councils are also called in times when the members of the Orders may be threatened. The full Conclave may be convened during a Test if that Test happens to fall on the same day as a regular council meeting. At the very least, one representative from each Order will preside over the Test when possible.

At these meetings, the Conclave discusses a variety of topics, ranging from the current state of the Wizards of High Sorcery to the future of magic in general. New spells that are in development are brought before the council and demonstrated to make them official, after which they are added to the books at the Tower of High Sorcery. Any breaches in Conclave laws are brought to the Conclave's attention and debated. Appointments to new positions — such as ambassadors, teachers, scouts, renegade hunters and others — are deliberated. Any outside threats to the welfare of High Sorcery — such as Istar's declaration outlawing sorcery or the creation of the Thorn Knights during the Chaos War — are discussed and a decision is made on how to best deal with the threat.

Other days during the year, the Conclave relies on a Council of Three to run the day-to-day activities of a Tower. The Council, made up of one delegate from each Order, convenes daily to make minor decisions in the absence of the Full Conclave. It is the duty of at least one Conclave member to be one of the Council of Three when possible. Within a Tower, magic takes care of the basics, such as food, water, and waste removal. The Master of the Tower and the Council of Three deal with the collection of rare herbs and components required for spells. They oversee the restoration and research of artifacts, and meet with any visitors who have come to the Tower. It is also their responsibility to supervise the administration of the Test.

Breaking the Laws of High Sorcery

The Gods of Magic are responsible for setting down the Foundations of wizardry. The three axioms state: All wizards are brothers in the Order and all Orders are brothers in the power. The places of High Wizardry are held in common among all the Orders and no magic is to be used there in anger against fellow wizards. The world beyond the walls of the Towers may bring brother against brother and Order against Order but that is the way of the universe. The Conclave was established to make sure these Foundations are upheld by every wizard of High Sorcery.

In addition to defending the Foundations of Magic, the Conclave has an obligation to the continued existence of arcane magic on Ansalon. To this end, it has enacted laws, regulations, and guidelines that work to ensure that the Art is protected from uses that may be deemed harmful to the existence of magic. The Conclave also seeks to promote the Art of High Sorcery and increase the number of wizards who can cultivate the Art and to help it evolve and grow. The details of these laws should be integrated into the instruction of any new wizard.

Minor guidelines try to ensure that a wizard presents himself and the Orders of High Sorcery in a manner befitting the honor that has been bestowed upon him. Using magic for mere entertainment is frowned upon, because it demeans the Art and makes it appear as nothing more than common trickery. Wizards who interact with the world beyond the walls of the Towers are expected to carry themselves with dignity and decorum. Along these lines, using magic to fabricate coins and wealth has likewise been banned to prevent upsetting the balance of local economies and giving wizards a bad name.

Some of the more serious laws deal with protecting the Orders of High Sorcery and the Art:

1. All wizards must follow the Foundations of Magic.
2. All wizards must follow the bidding of the Conclave and their Order.
3. No outsider must learn of the secrets of the Orders.
4. All wizards must report any renegade activity they discover.
5. Altering the forces of creation and the very fabric of magic is expressly forbidden unless permission is granted by the Conclave to do so.

Breaking these laws or any of the guidelines set down by the Conclave will result in action being taken by the Orders and the Conclave against the perpetrator. The Conclave determines the severity and nature of the punishment.

Penalties

When a wizard is caught breaking the laws of High Sorcery, she must pay a price. If the offense is minor, and the offender has not done any harm, the wizard who witnesses the misdemeanor can report the problem to the Conclave, who will leave the discipline of the wizard in the hands of the offender's Order. The first action taken is usually a simple missive sent to the offender. Most often this will be a written warning that the action must stop and that further incidents will be investigated.

If the offending wizard chooses to ignore the warning and continues her activities, she will be visited by a representative of her Order and given a verbal warning. From that point on, further transgressions will incur the full attention of her Order. The wizard will be secretly monitored. If the offender breaks the law while under this surveillance, the wizard will be dealt with based on the tenets of her Order, though each treat such incidents quite seriously.

Each Order is responsible for dealing with minor infractions in its own way. Multiple infractions by White Robes are rare. If they continue, the perpetrator may be imprisoned for a time. More serious crimes can result in the wizard being forced to change the Order to which she owes allegiance, as well as, of course, the color of her Robe. In elven society, this can be tantamount to a death sentence, as any elven wizard who does not wear robes of white is considered a dark elf.

Red Robes tend to take a more lenient view of minor wrongdoings and do not always agree with the Conclave's views on negligible offenses. But when the Conclave asks for the Order to uphold the law, Red Robes have been known to use imprisonment for a time or they offer the offending wizard the chance to change allegiance to a new Order. If the offender wants to remain in the Order of the Red Robes, he must agree to a series of magical procedures created to ensure that he will no longer perform the actions. Since the loss of even a portion of their free will is abhorrent to Red-robed wizards, this is considered a harsh price.

The Order of the Black Robes usually ignores minor infractions, becoming involved only when specifically commanded by the Conclave to do so. Serious offenses that force the Order to deal with one of their own bring harsh penalties, such as curses and torture, to ensure that a Black Robe will pay dearly for troubling the Order over such a matter.

In all cases, serious repeat offenders or wizards who have committed serious crimes are brought to the attention of the Conclave. Offending wizards can be removed from the Orders of High Sorcery and branded as renegades. In most regards, wizards who pose a threat to the Conclave or to the magic are never seen or heard from again.