

Indoril Society (Proposal)
Tamriel Rebuilt – 4 June 2014

A General Schematic of Indoril Society

The Gardens Resdaynia is[-and-is-becoming] the perfect order, ordained by the Three in Their infinite and graceful wisdom. See its landscapes – the ash, the salt, the [earthen soil]; see its plantings – the sadrith, the parasol, the tree; see its follies – the ancient ruins of our vanquished foes, the profane shrines to our devils, the abandoned fortresses of our life before the Light; see its waters – the respite of mother Thirr, the harshness of the [Inner Sea], the wilderness of the sea beyond; see its heights – the walls of Veloth to the west, the secrets of Mephala's maze to the east, the Tower of the Sharmat, encircled at its heart. The Gardens Resdaynia is[-and-is-becoming] the perfect order.

At the center of the Gardens Resdaynia is the House of Mourning, which is the Mother's House. We are kin to the Three and to the Hortator. We are the caretakers of the House of Mourning and the executors of the Law throughout the Gardens. We concede the outward houses of our gardens to others more suited to the task – to Hlaalu the Gate; to Redoran the Wall; to Dres the House of Remembrance; to Telvanni the House of [Denial]. They order the peripheries of the Gardens as they will.

But in the House of Mourning and the Garden of the Heart, we keep a firm order. The outward houses would alloy ebony with chitin – they keep their ancestors in improper registry, if they keep them at all. Our house is not myriad – its rule is universal but its numbers are few. Ours is the House of the Three, it administers Their law, establishes Their order, and ensures Their peace. Our mission is too sacred for our doors to open inward.

–Indoril Envyn Sothil, Majordomo of the Chapel's Entryway, Bisandryon (tr.)

Many of the houses of Morrowind are organized in a manner which is not egalitarian but is at least a certain kind of corporatism. The House is the society, it has all of its organs, from the farmers and laborers to the house-guards, the councilors, the wealthy merchants, the vast landowner. For the Indoril, this is not so. Indeed, their order is universal – in their minds it does not only extend over the people of the lands they directly control, but over every other house as well. But that does not make those who labor in their fields or craft their materials their kin even in the most distant sense that some of the other houses will abide. The Indoril are a class above all others, they have been given the sole task of governing.

The Indoril do not live among the people they rule. They live in their castle-estates, dispersed throughout the wilderness of their lands or in the great city of the Mourning Hold. The towns that dot their lands have no Indoril save the House Guards who ensure order; these towns are for the peasants and other commoners who do not have kinship to the Tribunal. Thus, there are essentially three classes of settlement in the Indoril territories: towns filled with non-House-affiliated Dunmer; castle-estates which belong to Indoril lords; and Almalexia, their great metropolitan capital and holy city.

Commoners

Most Dunmer in Indoril lands are commoners who rarely interact with the lords of Indoril. They live in various small townships and mostly are farmers, with some slightly wealthier craftsmen and artisans among them. Their lives are simple and local: they rarely travel far from where they are born. They keep only a portion of what they produce, the remainder being given over to the house of the lord on whose lands they are tenants. Each township elects a hetman from among their elders to represent it to lord which rules it. Some of the commoners do not live in the township proper, but on the backwoods or near the fields that they till. Some townships are poorer than others, being made of wooden shacks, while others have built adobe buildings.

Common Dunmer east of the Thirr are just as unfriendly as their lords. There are only a handful of outlanders in their part of the country and they are untrustworthy of travellers in general. The Dunmer are not hospitable and have no concept of guest-right. They are very religious, not in the sense that they are zealous or evangelistic, but in the sense that the Tribunal Temple is all they have ever known. They will generally dislike the player.

They trade with one another on a personal level, but they do not have merchants servicing even a regional trade network: the only major trade infrastructure is in the service of the House to move its portion. Recently, in some of the larger and more wealthy townships, shopkeepers peddling imported items and magics have set up (mostly outlanders). The influx of outlanders of the past century has reached even as far as these towns, but to a much lesser degree than in western Morrowind, and these townships represent a more “traditional” way of life.

Some commoners also live as servants in the Indoril castle-estates, and many live in Almalexia. Those in Almalexia may work in the service of the House, or in trades which serve the other commoners, or they may live off of charity. Some are associated with one or another Tong which provides a service to nobles and provides for them. They tend to be more cosmopolitan than their rural compatriots, but that is not saying much.

Indoril

Much has already been written about the Indoril. They are Morrowind's equivalent of nobility and lawyers combined. Their lives are highly ritualized and all built around a sense of their personal superiority as the family of the divine. They feel both a strong sense of *noblesse oblige*, which drives them to commit certain acts of charity, and a strong sense of entitlement, which causes them to walk all over the enormous class of peasants which support their lifestyle.

They live in large castle-estates, or in the most important parts of Almalexia, and wear a unique set of clothing. Their names are given in full in the old style: House, Personal, Family; since all of them are of House Indoril, that means that all of their names are prefixed “Indoril,” almost as if it is some sort of title. Here are quotes about Indoril from other people that may give an impression of them (I feel that the Indoril elite are well enough understood already & I do not need to elaborate further).

The Indoril see themselves as divinely appointed rulers of Morrowind, in accordance with natural law laid down by the blessed Tribunal. Why then should they fully recognise the rights of other houses to hold sovereignty over their regions or should they fully recognise their authority as lawful?

– Ludovic

Whatever they think is right is right, even if they change their mind about something. They were right then, and they're still right now. The Tribunal and Temple make the laws, but Indoril nobles are the ones who interpret and apply them. If the laws change, they do not discount the earlier interpretation, which was still correct then.

– Gnomey

Even though they do not have an obvious visual presence outside of Almalexia, their influence is widespread in the Heartland and beyond. While the highest echelons of the House are nobles, lawyers and priests in Almalexia, the Indoril also have a whole contingent of itinerant clerks, judges, moral advisors and spokesmen that pervade most corners of the country. (General name for these people is needed.) It is considered salutary for a young Indoril to travel to some far-flung area and engage in this kind of work for some time in order to connect with the true Dunmer spirit. They try to blend in, but always stick out anyway.

Of course, like all their other Houses, their greatest virtue can also turn to hubris. Like their ideology, the Indoril are an influential, but ultimately naive romantic concept that does not hold up against context. Their years of resolute belief in the Dunmer at large has also left them with a slightly patronizing attitude. In recent years, as the dream of Resdayn finally begins to crumble, it has made them increasingly bitter about the gap between the course of history and their view of how things were meant to be: "We, who have always believed in you", like a parent whose child doesn't want to play the violin anymore.

– Adanorcil

Implementation (Worldspace)

There are three kinds of Indoril settlements: townships, castle-estates, and Almalexia.

Townships are built in the Velothi or Shack style, depending on how major and how wealthy the township is. They have little direct Indoril presence other than the Indoril guards who patrol them. They have an elected hetman and they are in the service of some particular Indoril lord, who lives elsewhere. They have various traders depending on the size of the settlement; basically, they're normal towns. These are the most common settlements in Indoril territories.

The castle-estates of the Indoril are in the Mournhold style. They are not as numerous as the townships, but because of their vertical orientation and majestic form, they are more visually prominent in the distance. They will not have services for the player unless the player is a member of House Indoril. Each that exists needs to be thought out and they should not be especially numerous (on the order of a half dozen to ten).

Almalexia is in the Mournhold style as well. It has many important characters, is the largest city, and is deserving of its own documents to describe it in full. It is inimitable. A clear proposal for what to do with some major existing Indoril settlements, including Almalexia is forthcoming.

Implementation (Quests)

To implement this, the player cannot simply work their way into House Indoril: they must marry into the house through an arranged marriage with a family member of their sponsor. This is described elsewhere in Why's notes.