

Prompt: How is Muutenia's worship of Saint Xalef different from the mainland's?

## *A Treatise on Muutenian Worship of the Old Saints*

or

### *Acceptable Heresies of the Verdant Isles*

*It is a fact most baffling that the native populace of Muutenia yet cling to their outdated worship of the Old Saints. The Church's finest scholars lament at the stubbornness of the Muutenians – indeed, the Verdant Isles as a whole – when introduced to the proper rites and observances demanded by the Saints. Were it that the Muutenians were ignorant of the Saints' glory instead, that we might enlighten them! Instead history once again expresses its preference for tragedy with a tale of believers long since gone astray. Such wayward souls have proven far more resistant than anticipated to our attempts at reaching compliance. The faithful shall worry not, however, as Muutenian worship deviates from the norm in only a handful of areas easily rectified. Let us take as an example the major divergences in Muutenian worship of Saint Xalef.*

*Firstly, the Saint-Day of Xalef is observed by the Muutenians not on the summer solstice but on the spring equinox. The shamans and wise-men of the Isles claim that the equinox represents the perfect equilibrium Xalef was so known for in a vain attempt to justify such heresy. This is perhaps one of the most confusing violations of the Muutenian faith, for it is well-known that Xalef's Saint-Day should suffer not the shroud of night for as long as can be permitted. Alas, on occasion practical concerns must take precedence over matters of faith, and it is a simple fact that the Church's effort would be better spent on more pressing matters than correcting Muutenian calendars.*

*Secondly, Muutenian scholars rarely, if ever, maintain shrines to Xalef in their places of study. The prevailing Muutenian philosophy regarding the matter is that advancement of the sciences is the domain of man, not Saint. It then comes as no surprise*

*that the Isles had not yet discovered black powder prior to their discovery, or indeed any weapons more advanced than a simple steel blade. The renunciation of the Saints' aid by Muutenian academics is mercifully easy to remedy, in part thanks to Church outreach and a spirited (though admittedly one-sided) exchange of scientific discoveries.*

*Thirdly, and most concerningly, each year the inhabitants of the Verdant Isles deny Xalef his rightful tribute during the Days of Remembrance. The ritual portraits painted in his likeness, while doubtlessly conveying his likeness with no modicum of skill, are painted with the blood of beasts! Beasts, I say! What use has the War-Poet Xalef for the blood of mere cattle? Misfortune compounds, as misfortune is wont to do, as this seems to be the largest point of contention among Muutenian worshipers. Indeed, many a wise-man among them would claim that a painting in warrior's blood would offend the great Saint, and that it is the Church who has strayed from the path. Yet it remains our duty to endure such insanities with patience and restraint, in the hopes of one day returning the Isles to the path of enlightenment. In summary, I would remind the faithful of the stone-etched words of Saint Timurak: "The only thing separating the heretic from the believer is time."*