
History and Structure of Atlantican Society

History of the War:

The war with Pacifica began several generations ago. No one remembers why Pacifica attacked on that fateful day, but the aftermath is well remembered. Many thousands of Atlanticans have died in the war. While the balance of power has tipped back and forth over the decades, the two kingdoms seem fairly evenly matched. Although Atlantica has appealed to the other major power, India, for aid, India has remained resolutely neutral in the conflict. Relatively recently, Atlantica has won a string of strategic victories. From this position of power, King Triton has generously chosen to extend the olive branch to Pacifica.

King Triton opened negotiation talks with the Pacificans nine years ago. Negotiations have been rocky. In the first eight years, several cease fires were issued and broken, and despite every effort, no meaningful progress was made in that time. However, in the past two years or so, Princess Adriana has joined her father in negotiations and it seems that progress is finally being made. King Triton has invited a delegation of Pacificans to attend this year's Neptune Ball to sign the treaty that has been half a year in the making.

History of the Royal Family:

King Triton is the current ruler of Atlantica. He has ruled for almost 35 years and it is generally accepted that he is a good and benevolent ruler despite the terrible misfortunes that have defined his rule.

His reign began in blood, when his father, King Poseidon, and his entire family except his little brother, Osiris, were killed by Pacifican assassins. It is still a mystery how the strike force got into the palace. Triton took up The Trident, and rallied the kingdom to repel the ensuing invasion.

King Triton took a wife soon after assuming the throne. Queen Athena was beautiful, gracious, and well loved by the people. They had 2 beautiful children. Princess Adriana, the younger daughter, has recently blossomed into a persuasive diplomat. The older Princess was named Ariel; Ariel spent almost all of her time with the Explorer's Guild and often neglected her royal duties.

However, all is not well in Atlantica's royal family. Prince Osiris has become paranoid and delusional as the years have gone by. He publicly and loudly claims all kinds of conspiracies are afoot. Twenty one years ago, Queen Athena was kidnapped and killed by Pacifican assassins. Princess Ariel ran away from her royal duties and married a human prince. The whole affair was hushed up by the royal family, so little is known about how she managed it. But, since Triton dissolved the The Magican's Guild almost immediately after, rumor has it that she used magic to become human. In the years since these tragedies, Triton has become reclusive, erratic, and whispers are surfacing that he may no longer be fit to be King.

Religion:

Most Atlanticans subscribe to the Church of the Tides. The church worships the Moon Goddess for her power to control the tides. The church preaches love, forgiveness, and the salvation of the weak. It is believed that your soul will be reincarnated again and again until you live a life pure enough to earn you a place among the stars. The care of your eternal soul is particularly important, because there are spirits that dwell in the center of the earth, who if given the opportunity, would imprison your soul for eternity.

While the Goddess can be benevolent and grant powerful boons, The Church of the Tides also believes that some individuals are cursed by the moon to be shape shifters (merfolk who can change between merfolk, human, and sharks), forever without a true form or identity. Shape shifters are unable to control their transformations, and when they do transform, are a menace to everyone. The priests of the church have therefore taken it upon themselves to protect the citizens of Atlantica from shape shifters, hunting them down wherever they appear to terrorize an innocent community.

Guilds:

The economy and government of Atlantica center around the guilds. As far back as anyone can remember, Atlantica has had four guilds that provide a division of tasks to help Atlantica run smoothly. They each elect 1 official for a 2 year term that make up a council that advises the King. Members of the royal family may belong to guilds but may not be elected to the council (they are not barred from holding high ranks in the Guilds, and the representative to the council is not necessarily the most powerful Guild Member). The guilds are:

- **Explorer's Guild:** Composed of explorers, cartographers, archaeologists, historians, librarians etc. They handle the acquiring and storing of data (of all kinds) for Atlantica.
- **Merchant's Guild:** Composed of traders, economists etc. They claim that despite the recent lull in the war, Atlantica is still on the brink of economic collapse.
- **Guardian's Guild:** In charge of the military and police force of Atlantica. Their most prestigious role is to guard the royal family.
- **Magician's Guild:** Formally dissolved 14 years ago, but reinstated recently. Their seat on the council has not been reinstated.

Despite the dissolution of the Guild, Sebastian retained his position as the court Magician. Since the reinstatement, Triton has tasked Sebastian with strictly regulating magic in Atlantica, and Sebastian takes his job very seriously. Sebastian has an aggressive program that requires all magicians to register in a national registry, and submit all intended projects for review. As one of the most powerful magicians in Atlantica, even before the dissolution of the Magician's Guild, none wish to incur his wrath. However, there are unconfirmed rumors that a few, very powerful, magicians refused to register. If they exist, they are considered criminals.

A note about tarot readings: Tarot readings, despite their mystical origins, are not considered magic and are therefore not subject to the same regulations. Tarot readings are common in Atlantica, and readers are often highly respected members of society.

The Neptune Ball: The attendee list for the King's private party includes:

- The European representative, Queen Ariel. It has been 14 years since Ariel forsook Atlantis, so there is great speculation as to why she has chosen to attend this year.
- The Pacifican representative, Prince Jared and a small delegation of diplomats.
- The Explorer's Guild representative, Hermes.
- The Merchant's Guild representative, Pandora.
- The Guardian's Guild representative, General Gladius.

History and Structure of European Society

The Neptune Ball presents interesting challenges for human guests, given that it is being held at King King Triton's palace in Atlantica, 20,000 leagues under the sea.

Breathing Under Water:

The humans who are in attendance at this ball have had a special spell cast on them by Sebastian, the King's most trusted advisor. Sebastian is the only magician allowed to practice most magic in Atlantica. The spell allows humans to breathe underwater while within the grounds of the palace (all of game space is within the grounds of the palace). You will be escorted back to the surface in the morning. **(You should consider game space closed - you may not leave.)**

The Royal Family:

The royal family of Europa is small. King Eric rules Europa, with his wife, Queen Ariel at his side. Ariel is from Atlantica. Much of the country was shocked to learn that communication between the nations was even possible, never mind the idea that Atlantica might be friendly, given ongoing altercations with Pacifica. Europa has not yet fully accepted Ariel as their Queen, despite her having lived among them for 14 years. On the other hand, the offspring of the royal couple, Heir Willow, is the pride and joy of the nation, adored by all.

The royal family has not always been so small. Eric's father was lost in a storm, 21 years ago. 7 years later, Eric's sister was killed during an attack from the sea on the palace, leaving even more people suspicious of Queen Ariel.

Religion:

The human kingdom of Europa practices a religion that worships the sun. The Sun God brings life to all things on the land. The summer solstice is the most sacred day of the year, and the midsummer festivals are elaborate and expensive. There is no greater omen than to be married under the noon-day sun on a clear day.

Humans fear the ocean, and it's dark depths, for they conceal the mighty kraken. The kraken is hated by all and expeditions often set out to kill the beast. Only some of them return. It is believed that the storm that killed Eric's father was summoned by the kraken itself. Only a devil storm could have bested that crew and left no survivors.

Everyday life in Europa:

Life in Europa is simple. Europa is at peace with it's neighbors, and so much of its populace is farmers. A few brave souls are fishermen, or mariners, but for the most part, the citizens of Europa prefer to stay on land and give thanks to the Sun God for his bounty.

Magic is extremely rare in Europa. There is very little magic to be found anywhere on land. Magicians are therefore regarded with some suspicion. They are not necessarily outcasts though, and a few, like Merlin, have become prominent advisors to rulers.

Polio used to be a big problem in Europa. It devastated much of the previous generation, and in some ways, Europa is still rebuilding. Through the efforts of many dedicated scientists, and a particularly useful magician, a vaccine was developed. The epidemic has been brought under control and now most of the population has been vaccinated. Polio pops up occasionally in outlying villages, but for the most part, it is a thing of the past.

Relationship with the undersea kingdoms:

- **Atlantica:** Europa has slowly been building a tenuous relationship with Atlantica. Over the past couple of years, informal discussions have begun to occur between the two nations, led by Queen Ariel. Many people are hopeful that Atlantica could become a lucrative, new trading partner.
- **Pacifica:** Europa has a much less amicable relationship with Pacifica. The merfolk of Pacifica attack European ships on sight, and the concept of trade talks is laughable. No one really knows for sure why Pacifica is so aggressive, but it may have something to do with the kraken.