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Magic comes in many forms and derives from numerous sources, but all forms of magic have one thing in common: the ability for the user to overcome or manipulate the natural order of the world to achieve specific, supernatural effects. The theist's magic derives from the relationship with his god; the sorcerer's magic derives from the rituals and formulae he has mastered; the animist's magic comes from his relationship with the spirits; and the mystic's magic comes from within himself. Despite their sources and the relationships that drive them, all these magicians are able to perform remarkable feats that are beyond the capabilities of non-practitioners.

TAILORING MAGIC

Magic is one of the most variable aspects of any roleplaying game. Whilst elements such as how character generation or combat works are ubiquitous no matter what the setting, almost every historical and fantasy genre has its own idiosyncratic style of magic – how it is prepared, cast, and the scale of effect it can produce.

To ensure flexible adaptability, magic in MYTHRAS has been given a range of options so that it can support a wide array of settings and styles. The following sections describe different alternatives with which magic can be tweaked. These suggestions are intended to inspire Games Masters to create unique magical ecologies, helping to overcome issues where a default system may appear at odds with the setting concept the Games Master wishes to model.

Although at first glance the range of options may seem somewhat overwhelming, there are in fact only a few core considerations required:

- « What magical disciplines are available?
- « What magical traditions control magic?
- « How many magical abilities do traditions provide?
- « How long does magic take to cast?
- « How is magical energy generated and recovered?
- « Can characters start with magic?

MAGICAL DISCIPLINES

MYTHRAS provides rules for five distinct magical types, which for ease of reference are called disciplines. Others exist, and will no doubt be explored in future supplements. Each of the following magical disciplines receives its own chapter describing in detail how that magic works, how characters come by it, and what spells, spirits or other abilities are available.

Although each discipline provides a unique and interesting style of magic, a MYTHRAS campaign does not have to include all five. Games Masters should consider whether each discipline is suitable for his game setting. A campaign based on an archipelago of tropical islands might only include Animism; whereas a more inclusive game world might be based upon opposing cultures, one dominated by sorcerers, and the other theist priests, but both of which also practice mysticism in addition.

Note that every discipline of magic has its own strengths and weaknesses and are not necessarily balanced with one another. The five core disciplines are:

FOLK MAGIC

Folk Magic is the most basic form of magic available, and is usually associated with hedge wizards, witches, wise women, and so forth. These are simple spells and cantrips that offer limited magical effects and can, where permissible, be used by anyone. Folk Magic is frequently taught by communities from an early age with the types of spells reflecting community necessities. This means that the Folk Magic taught by a Barbarian culture will differ to that taught by a Civilised one. Folk Magic is also taught by some professions or cults to aid their members in their jobs and duties. Folk Magic can therefore be accessible and available to all – in theory. In practice, Folk Magic might be heavily restricted depending on the campaign setting.

ANIMISM

A higher magical discipline, Animism is the practice of dealing with the spirit world and spirits that are bound to the mortal realm

in some form. Animists are shamans and totemists who deliberately develop relationships with spirits to work magical effects, usually on behalf of a community but also for obtaining personal power. Animists believe that all things, be they animate or inanimate, organic or non-organic, are possessed of a spirit or soul. A relationship with that spirit allows its power to be drawn upon and used by the animist. Animism usually teaches a profound respect for the natural and spirit worlds, inculcating in its practitioners a need for restraint and reciprocation. This does not mean, though, that there are no rogue shamans; even animism has its share of selfish individuals prepared to ignore this respect in favour of gaining greater personal power at the expense of the spirit world.

MYSTICISM

Mysticism achieves its effects through a combination of deep inner understanding of the fabric of reality, and channelling energy to produce a resulting action. The mystic attains this state of understanding through constant contemplation of the world around him, discerning its truths and meditating on the very nature of existence. This process is quite often linked with the asking of philosophically challenging questions, but it is more common for the mystic simply to understand both his place in the universe, and how the universe itself is placed. This comprehension forms a path to unlock the mystic's inner potential. Mystics, ultimately, seek to transcend the fetters of the natural world, and achieve a higher state of consciousness that places them directly at one with the forces of the cosmos. The reality though is far more complex, because every accomplished mystic knows that an even higher state of existence can be attained, one that transcends even the powers of the gods.

SORCERY

Sorcery is the manipulation of underlying laws that directly control the very fabric of creation. These formulae are complex equations: a mixture of mathematical, psychological, existential, and supernatural principals that allow the sorcerer to grasp a portion of reality and bend it to his will. Sorcerers do not need to rely on gods for their powers; nor do they need to engage with spirits to achieve their effects. Their manipulation of these metaphysical equations makes sorcery very powerful and very flexible. However, it also means sorcerers are viewed with suspicion, and even fear and hatred by those who come by their magic through less direct means. And, because sorcerers have little need for gods or spirits, it is not uncommon for them to develop a certain degree of arrogance and disdain for those who choose to venerate such entities. Although some sorcerers maintain a healthy respect for the gods, and may even practice worship themselves, this does not lessen the fact that the sorcerer is, through his magic, attempting to perform acts that others may consider as the province of greater beings.

THEISM

Theists draw their magic from their gods. Through worship and devotion, those that dedicate themselves to a deity channel these powers in the form of miracles, and thus gain the ability to work similar effects in the mundane world – albeit in a much diluted form. A worshipper of the Storm God might be able to summon lightning; a worshipper of the sun god might be able to create brilliant daylight even in the midst of the blackest night. The magic theists can call



upon is always based on the nature of the god or pantheon being worshipped. The strength of devotion to a god has a direct impact on the power of the magic worked; assuming that the deity retains some awareness of his worshippers, maintaining a cordial relationship with the god is necessary to receive its power.

MAGICAL TRADITIONS

Although people may be born with the capacity to work magic to greater or lesser degrees, the actual skill of using it is normally taught and cultivated via some kind of social organisation; such as a cult, order or a mentor. These are known collectively as traditions. For example, the Cult of Myceras and the Cult of the Seven Badoshi Devils are both traditions based upon religious organisations, but worship different gods and teach their priesthoods different miracles.

Some traditions are not limited to providing a single discipline of magic, but can combine two or more. A sorcery order could offer both Folk Magic and Sorcery to its members; the former providing petty cantrips to lower ranking apprentices, whilst adepts and above are taught more potent spells of the higher art.

It should also be noted that membership of a tradition need not necessarily grant access to magic. One could be a faithful worshipper of Myceras, and hold the rank of lay member in his cult, yet still have no ability to cast theistic magic.

As part of setting up the magical traditions in a campaign Games Masters should give some thought to what type of organisation or social groups will provide it. Some examples follow.

CULTS

Organised sects who venerate a religion, a philosophy or an individual, cults receive a great deal more attention in their own chapter. By and large cults only teach magic to their members, and are likely to restrict certain types or magic and spells to those who attain higher ranks within the cult. Cults can teach any kind of magic, depending on their nature. Some may mix magical styles (theism and animism, say) whilst others may have only one, and so on.

GUILDS

Guilds are professional bodies that represent and guard members of that occupation. Because they are focused on protecting their market, and because they are concerned with more mundane skills, guilds are unlikely to offer higher magic, focusing instead on Folk Magic – and only those spells of direct use and relevance to the profession.

ROYALTY AND NOBLE HOUSES

Kings, queens and emperors might attain royal power through their command of magic, or through the support of those who wield it. In some settings a monarch might be truly a divine appointment, the living representative of a deity in the world. Conversely the power to work magic might be dependent on inheriting the correct noble bloodline. Magic can be of any type, although in most works of fantasy, magic-wielding monarchs tend to be either theists or sorcerers. Outside the royal sphere magic use may be outlawed: it could be a threat to the monarchy, and thus needs to be suppressed. More benevolent monarchs might use magic for the greater good, but where magic keeps the monarchy in power, it is usual for all sources of power to be jealously guarded.

INDIVIDUAL TEACHERS

The wandering hedge magician, hermit-mage, old and wise counsellor... fantasy is awash with examples of learned individuals who find and mentor an apprentice in the magical arts. Such practitioners are usually specialists in one form of magic, and may even be an established part of a community, training the young adults in those magical powers they will need to continue contributing to society, or making their way in the world. Primitive and nomadic cultures often rely on this form of patronage, lacking the population numbers and organisation to support more formalised magical tutoring.

SOCIAL CASTES

Similar to magic restricted to nobility, social castes can denote what type of magic is available or taught to a person depending on the birth caste they belong to. Settings with magic limited by social caste should probably offer a range of different types according to birth rank, hereditary lineage or something similar. Someone of the priestly caste might automatically join the predominant religion and be indoctrinated into Theism for example; whereas a lower born

member of the warrior caste may be restricted to only learning mysticism.

SPECIES SPECIFIC

Some races or species are naturally predisposed to magical knowledge. Elves or satyrs, for instance, are associated with considerable magical powers. Within the species magical skills are natural capabilities that only need training and refinement. Depending on what type of magic they were inherently gifted with, the relevant magical skills could be considered Standard for that species. Typically species specific magic tends to be of one type: Folk, Animism or Theism the most common. Magic such as sorcery and mysticism may be learned but is generally not a natural accoutrement.

TOTEMS

Many cultures adopt totems or other symbols that become a focus and provider of magical power. The most prevalent examples are those practicing animism, but there is no reason why totems should be confined solely to spirit magic. Sorcery orders may gain their knowledge through totemic practices; and idolatry in theistic worship is very similar. Rather than an organised cult of teachers, it is the totem itself which is the channel for magical knowledge and skill, granting magical lore to those that establish suitable bonds with it or are born into the correct family, tribe or race to understand its lore.

HOW MANY ABILITIES?

Abilities are the spells, talents, miracles or spirits provided by magical traditions. The number of abilities a tradition offers is completely setting-specific. A world in which cult theocracies rule entire nations may offer more miracles to its priesthood than a setting where grimoires of sorcery are exceptionally rare, each containing but a single spell. Several elements can adjust the amount and proclivity of abilities available to a tradition.

Firstly, traditions normally structure the learning path of the magical abilities they provide. Members only gain access to more potent magics at higher levels of achievement and rank. For example; if a sorcery order knows the particularly deadly spell Wrack, it is highly unlikely that it will be taught to students until they have attained a certain degree of knowledge, maturity and seniority to be entrusted with its power and secrets.

Secondly, traditions may teach more than one type of magic. A cult might combine Folk Magic with Theism for instance, granting a broader range of abilities. In this case the Games Master can grant a similar number of abilities per discipline, or limit the number given to the more powerful one.

SPELLS BY ORGANISATION

	<i>Low Magic</i>	<i>Medium Magic</i>	<i>Magic Rich</i>
Number of spells, spirits, miracles, talents etc an organisation possesses:	1d3	1d3+3	1d3+6

A Games Master should consider how versatile he wishes magic to be in his setting and adjust the number and availability of abilities to suit. But, as a rule of thumb, use the Spells by Organisation table as a guide:

In selecting what magical abilities are available, balance is key. Just because a spell, miracle, talent or spirit is listed in MYTHRAS does not mean that everyone should have access to it. Create spell lists; choose wisely. Don't feel compelled to use every ability found in these rules. Indeed, some of the magics found in MYTHRAS can be exceptionally powerful. If Games Masters feel these would destabilise his game then they should be either be omitted completely, withheld or reserved for potent non-player characters.

Thus it is probably unwise to allow players to devise their own traditions and spell lists – at least not without Games Master guidance and approval.

RITUALISTIC CASTING TIMES

By default each type of magic in MYTHRAS has a casting time of mere seconds. Whilst this permits magicians to utilise their powers more freely, especially in combat situations, it can pose some problems when trying to replicate the feeling of extreme effort it often takes for magic to be cast in some genres.

There are several methods of handling this issue:

- ❖ Grant casters the ability to roll an Easy skill check if spending one minute in preparation, or Very Easy if spending an hour, but only for the purposes of casting the spell (and any subsequent resistance checks)
- ❖ Increase the default base casting time from Turns to Rounds, Minutes, Hours or even Days instead
- ❖ As above, but in duress allow a magician to speed up casting at a skill penalty of one difficulty grade per time frame advanced

Of course ritualistic casting times need not be universally applied to all magical disciplines, which can grant one type of magic a significant speed advantage over others. For example Sorcery and Animism could have their base casting time increased to minutes, whilst Mysticism remains unmodified. This will have a significant on a campaign setting, but can create some rather unusual, yet entertaining, twists in how magic is utilised.

In general, increasing the length of casting times will turn magic into a more thoughtfully applied tool – rather than a method of applying greater firepower – and encourages careful planning. It can generate a huge amount of atmosphere, especially if the magician must augment this preparation time with the inscription of magical sigils, tossing of powders, use of ritualised objects or even singing and dancing.

Games Masters should take care when applying ritualistic casting times. Although it can add ambience to a setting, players with magic-using characters may feel hampered by increased preparation times, and some magical abilities may lose a degree of applicability if they cannot be cast near instantaneously.

THE GAMES MASTER'S SAGA

Steve designs his campaign to make use of all the available magical disciplines, assigning them on the basis of culture and species:

- ❖ Folk Magic is known to all cultures and sapient species
- ❖ Animism is practiced by the wild tribes of bestial centaurs, satyrs and minotaurs
- ❖ Mysticism is studied by the remote nomad clans of the high plateau desert
- ❖ Sorcery is ostensibly forbidden in all cultures and is rare beyond isolated individuals
- ❖ Theism is favoured by both the civilised city states (of which Meeros is central), and the barbarian hordes of the Badoshi Warlords.

MAGICAL ENERGY

Although knowledge of magical powers may be prevalent in a setting, it does not automatically follow that the magical energy required to invoke them is as widespread, or even available. Having the skill to transform a man into a leopard is useless if you don't have the energy to cast the spell or request the miracle from the gods.

Whilst every character has an attribute known as Magic Points, derived from their characteristic POW, this merely represents the capacity to hold or store magical energy, not necessarily the ability to generate their own.

Of all the considerations required to tailor MYTHRAS magic to a campaign setting, where magical energy comes from (and how to recover it) is perhaps the most important.

WHERE DO MAGIC POINTS COME FROM?

Magical energy should come from a particular source as defined by the campaign setting. The following options need not be generic; for example some types of magic might require particular sources different from each other. Also the setting might permit a few sources to be used in combination, so that there are several methods of gathering Magic Points.

- ❖ Self: the simplest and most convenient source of Magic Points, characters generate their own magical energy
- ❖ Sacrifice: magical energy is 'harvested' from the sacrifice of living creatures
- ❖ Magical Locations: magic is naturally produced at foci such as ley-lines, temples, and the like
- ❖ Destruction of an inanimate object: magic may come from a ethereal or mineral substance of limited supply, gems for example
- ❖ Consumption of a substance: the consumption of particular herbs, narcotics or animal products may provide magical energy
- ❖ Veneration: in a similar manner to the worship of gods, magic points might be provided to individuals who tap into, or become the focus of, organised worship

Characters must have access to the source of their magical energy to be able to regain expended Magic Points. If they do not, then points used in the process of casting spells or using magical abilities cannot be regained until the source is obtained.

SELF

Here, the character attracts and stores magical energy from the world around him. Recovering Magic Points is simply a matter of resting, and letting his body absorb the natural magical emanations of the world until his points are restored. He need do nothing else. This has been considered the default source of Magic Points in other games, but Games Masters should not feel limited by it.

SACRIFICE

Sacrifice is a common trope of both the Sword & Sorcery genre and historical religious practices. It requires the ritualised death of a ‘victim’ to produce a number of Magic Points, which can then be sent to an otherworld entity such as a god, spirit or demon in order to propitiate them; or the magical energy can be absorbed by the person performing the sacrifice.

The amount of magical energy produced by such an act is an important consideration. Traditionally the most minimal sacrifices are livestock animals, whilst the most potent are sapient beings. With that in mind, MYTHRAS assumes as a default that the amount of Magic Points harvested by a being’s death is equal to their POW. This can be raised or lowered as deemed fitting for the setting.

Although at face value this may appear to provide a boundless source of Magic Points, there are several important limitations to keep in mind. Firstly very few cultures or societies have ‘excess’ livestock available for the purposes of ritual offerings. This is why it is called a sacrifice; because it may cost the community dearly to provide an animal from their subsistence level herds or flocks. In places where animals are freely available for purchase, then the requirement becomes a question of finances, as a horse or cow is not a cheap commodity.

Secondly each cult is likely to have a specific type of creature it requires as the preferred sacrificial victim, meaning that killing the wrong beast may net the character no Magic Points at all. Even if the correct species of creature is located, it may be required to be in perfect health, possess an unblemished skin, be of a particular colour, and so on. Once these factors are taken into consideration, it is doubtful that adventuring priests, sorcerers or shamans would

THE GAMES MASTER’S SAGA

Further detailing his campaign world, Steve develops the traditions which will teach and control magic. He constrains the practice of each discipline thusly:

Folk Magic is taught as both an adjunct to religious cults and via individual teachers, such as hedge wizards or witches.

Animism can only be learned by those beast races which still possess an animal affinity to a particular totem spirit. Thus centaurs venerate Great Horse, their species totem, with whom only they can form a bond. Knowledge is tightly held by clan shamans.

Mysticism is only taught to magically eligible nomads of the correct birth caste; their path of mysticism dependent on which astrological conjunction is at the apex of the sky as the child emerges from its mother.

Sorcery, forbidden due to its diabolic overtones, is secretly studied by lone practitioners who stumble upon the art, or under the tutelage of reclusive sorcerers living in remote places.

Theism is jealously guarded by the innumerable cults which propitiate the gods. Each of the city states has its own unique patron deity, the temple to which acts as the cult centre for that god. The Badoshi on the other hand have a pantheon of seven demons which is universally worshipped by all the tribes.

travel about with a string of such animals in tow, which will require care, feeding, guarding, and so on.

Note that those magicians seeking sapient victims for sacrifice had better belong to a culture which supports such activities. Needless killing of prisoners or slaves for the purposes of invoking magic has dark connotations, especially when that magic is used for personal gain rather than being intended for the care and protection of the community.

MAGICAL LOCATIONS

Here, a geographical place or physical structure acts as a conduit for natural magical energy which individuals can then absorb, replenishing diminished resources. The individual must spend a given period of time at this location, resting, praying, meditating, and so on, for Magic Points to accrue. How much magic depends on the strength of the place, and its environment. Some locations may only provide Magic Points to particular types of magical disciplines – e.g. druid groves might only produce Magic Points for Animists.

Give a location a Magical Strength of either 25%, 50%, 75% or 100%, depending on its size and importance. The Magical Strength is the percentage of a character’s Magic Points that can be regained. For example, a character with a normal stock of 16 Magic Points spending time at a shrine with Magical Strength of 25% would only be able to recover back to a level of four Magic Points; whereas attending a major temple with Magical Strength 100% would allow him to restore his full 16 Magic Points.

The amount of time taken to replenish Magic Points should depend on the overall strength of magic in the campaign. See Recovering Magic Points below for guidance.

DESTRUCTION AND CONSUMPTION

These work in similar ways to Magical Locations. The thing destroyed or consumed should be given a Magical Strength of 25%, 50%, 75% or 100%, depending on its quality, purity and other crucial factors. When destroyed or imbibed, Magic Points are recharged back up to the level indicated by the percentage, at the rates suggested in the Recovering Magic Points section..

VENERATION

Characters who orchestrate the ceremonial worship of supernatural beings are able to tap into magical energy produced by the worshippers. Others, who attain the status of heroes and demigods, may even use the veneration of themselves as a source of Magic Points. The amount of Magical Strength provided by each ritualised ceremony is dependent on the number of people who offer veneration, as follows:

Less than 100:	25%
100-999:	50%
1000-9,999:	75%
10,000 or more:	100%

RECOVERING MAGIC POINTS

How quickly Magic Points return is vital to the feel of a campaign. Rapid return allows potent powers to be thrown about with impunity, whereas slow recovery makes each act of magic an important decision and rare occurrence.

HOW MANY MAGIC POINTS FOR SACRIFICING A...

Sacrificial Magic Points are a perfect way to represent the transference or generation of magical power in many historical or gritty Sword & Sorcery settings. Using this method however, will prompt the frequently asked question of 'How much magic is this creature worth?'

As a general rule of thumb, Games Masters should treat tiny animals, especially those which can be raised en-mass (such as doves) as capable of only producing a single Magic Point. Small animals (snakes, cats etc) as only generate 1d3 Magic Points, medium sized creatures (goats, pigs, and so on) produce 1d6 Magic Points, and large animals (cows, bulls, horses) 2d6 Magic Points. Only truly huge, magical or sapient creatures should provide 3d6 MPs or more.

Only some sources of Magic Points permit natural recovery: Self, Locations and Veneration. These assume complete rest, comfort, and freedom from threat or stress. Camping in an occupied dungeon or resting in the wilderness during the depths of winter would prevent recovery; whereas returning to somewhere safe and sheltered like an inn would permit it.

- ❖ 1 Magic Point per hour – Good for Magic Rich campaigns
- ❖ 1 Magic Point per day – Good for Medium Magic campaigns
- ❖ 1 Magic Point per week – Good for Low Magic campaigns
- ❖ Magic Points return at particular conjunctions – This option is perfect for settings with strong celestial or religious overtones, the Magic Points of a source only being available at specific times, such as those tapped from Veneration occurring on holy days sacred to that god, or magic from a megalithic stone circle flowing when the moon is full.

Whilst Medium or Low Magic recovery rates appear to be crippling for player character magicians, they do emphasise the rarity of magic in some genres. On the other hand they offer a balanced game when characters have access to some of the most potent spells.

In fact the slow Magic Point recovery of a Low Magic campaign is perfect for campaigns involving antagonists armed with deadly magic, allowing characters to survive the wrathful persecution of say, a sorcerer, if after casting a couple of powerful spells he has to recover for several months before trying his diabolical magic again.

Magic Points from other sources can be recovered by performing a ritual sacrifice, formal destruction of certain objects or the relaxed imbibing of other substances. Those acts in themselves should require at least an hour of effort, unless the magician wishes to hasten the experience and risk the loss of the magical energy generated.

THE RULE OF RECOVERY

As a general guideline, it is suggested that characters cannot recover more Magic Points than what is naturally produced by the local environment or their last 'recharge'. Thus a character who rests in a magical location which can produce 50% of his magical strength, cannot visit several of these places in succession in order to completely regenerate his Magic Points. Neither can a magician sacrifice several goats in sequence and add each offering together to fully top up.

The same principle applies to settings where several different forms of magical power generation exist in parallel. A character who recuperates at a dolman, performs a sacrifice, and is venerated by his army of worshippers may only recover as many Magic Points as provided by the most productive of those three sources.

Of course, games in which magicians recover Magic Points naturally should ignore this rule, at least where it applies to the number of Magic Points generated from self.

RUNNING OUT OF MAGIC POINTS

The consequences of running out of Magic Points are, again, a campaign decision, and should be dependent on the setting. MYTHRAS's default position is that, when Magic Points reach zero, no more spells or magical abilities can be used, but there are no further consequences for the character.

Additional options are offered below:

FATIGUE ACCRUAL

Characters can continue to cast magic or use magical abilities, but gain one level of Fatigue for each Magic Point expended in the spell or ability attempted. Note that in certain circumstances this could kill the caster if a fumble is rolled.

HIT POINT ATTRITION

As for Fatigue Accrual but, instead, the caster suffers 1 Hit Point of physical damage to all Hit Locations for each spell or ability attempted, no matter what its potency, magnitude or intensity. The magician can keep on casting spells until he has incurred the equivalent of a Major Wound, but at this point he is risking imminent death. Natural healing processes are needed to restore expended Hit Points; they do not regenerate with Magic Points.

UNCONSCIOUSNESS

On reaching zero Magic Points the character automatically falls comatose and remains that way until at least 1 Magic Point has been regained. Depending on the source of Magic Points, this might mean extended periods in a coma, or even eventual death if not cared for in the interim.

WILLPOWER

On reaching zero Magic Points the magician must make a successful Willpower roll to remain conscious. He is not prevented from trying to cast a new spell, but each subsequent attempt requires a new Willpower roll, at an additional difficulty penalty. Thus the second check is Hard, the third Formidable, and so on. If the magician fails they collapse into unconsciousness for a random number of days up to the number of Willpower checks taken (so failing the third check would be 1d3 days of unconsciousness).

ENDURANCE OR DIE

Reaching zero Magic Points represents the exhaustion of life-force. The magician must make a successful Endurance roll or die, his psychic reserves having been spent completely. If the magician rolls a critical success he regains 1 Magic Point immediately.

These options can, of course, be mixed and matched if Games Masters desire, creating any number of custom variants that lend a unique feel and character to how magic manifests itself in the campaign.

CHARACTERS & MAGIC

MYTHRAS does not automatically assume that everyone can use magic or, even if they can, have access to it. Magic is not a right and nor should it be. Achieving any skill in magic usually requires following a career that teaches it as a specific discipline. This is certainly very true of the higher magical paths such as Animism and Sorcery. It may be possible for characters to have a smattering of Folk Magic spells if this fits with the setting and level of magic within it. Generally magic should be something to be marvelled at, respected and feared.

BECOMING A MAGICIAN

Unless magic is ubiquitous within a campaign, not all characters begin with the knowledge or capability to perform magic. As can be seen in the Careers and Development chapter, the specific skills required to learn magic are by default restricted to certain professions. Of course that need not be the case in all settings, but it works as a general guideline.

There are a number of deliberations a Game Master must work out prior to allowing magic using characters to be created.

Is the ability to use magic restricted to a particular inborn gift? If so:

- ❖ Does the gift need to be nurtured during childhood to bring it to fruition, or can it be trained at any time of life?
- ❖ How extraordinary is the gift, is it commonplace or ultra rare?
- ❖ Does possession of the gift grant instant access to particular cults or brotherhoods?
- ❖ Are those that bear the gift persecuted if they do not engage in formal training?
- ❖ If formal training is unavailable, can magicians teach themselves?

If magic is available to anyone provided they have the knowledge then:

- ❖ Do cults, brotherhoods, and so on restrict access to it to preserve their own power base?
- ❖ Is membership of such an organisation restricted to a certain social class, career, culture, and so on?
- ❖ How far is magic taught by the culture the character belongs to?

STARTING MAGIC

Characters permitted to learn magic start with knowing a number of abilities (spells, miracles, spirits or talents) based upon the value of the appropriate magical skill in that tradition (Binding, Devotion, Folk Magic, Invocation or Mysticism). Once the game begins they are restricted in what additional abilities they can learn, and when they can learn them.

At character generation, a magician character knows one relevant spell or ability for each 20% (or part thereof) he has in his magical skill.

LEARNING NEW ABILITIES

Once a character enters the game, learning further abilities must be paid for by the investment of Experience Rolls, and a commensurate amount of study time. As previously mentioned, Games

Masters may wish to limit the availability of certain abilities according to cult rank, ensuring that characters learn the secrets of their path in a particular order, and withholding the most potent abilities until the cult deems them responsible enough to be trusted with such knowledge.

The values provided in the table are merely suggestions. These can be changed if necessary, dependent on the flow of Experience Rolls permitted. Since they are important advancements both to personal power and progression within a tradition, their costs should be a significant investment. However, a character can break down the total investment of time and Experience Rolls into instalments over several sessions of play.

At some point magician characters are likely to have learned all the abilities provided by their cult, school or path. Depending upon the game world, this need not be the end of their magical development. A character might be able to join a new cult, find another cache of sequestered knowledge or even seek tuition by a more renowned master. Such efforts require the starting of another skill specific to the philosophy of the new tradition.

EXPERIENCE ROLL AND TIME COSTS

Magic Type	Type	Experience Rolls	Time
Folk Magic	Cantrip/Charm	3	1 Week
Animism	Spirit	5	1 Month
Mysticism	Talent	5	1 Month
Sorcery	Spell	5	1 Month
Theism	Miracle	5	1 Month

LEARNING NEW TRADITIONS

Nothing prevents a character from joining a new tradition, provided that:

- ❖ The new tradition uses the same magical discipline, for example a theist cult can only join other theistic traditions
- ❖ There is no antipathy between the new tradition and any others the character may already be a member of
- ❖ The Games Master is willing to permit the character to join a new tradition

This assumes that magic cannot simply be learned by anyone who decides to start studying it. In this case there may be no restriction to joining traditions which teach new styles of magic, save for the usual conflicts of interest. Games Masters should beware of characters learning multiple magical disciplines if this does not suit their campaign setting.

In general it takes six months of dedicated study and the permission of its highest ranking masters, to gain the new tradition at its base percentage, and whatever initial spells or talents the student is capable of learning. This costs the same amount of Experience Rolls as would normally be required to learn whatever new Professional skills are necessary for that tradition, plus the cost of each spell learned.

CREATING NEW TRADITIONS

Some characters may wish to create their own religious or totemic cults, sorcery schools, mystical paths or any other type of tradition

they conceive of. Existing traditions are complete philosophies and cannot be added to without tremendous research and effort, which would probably be resisted by the status quo of their masters. However, new traditions can be created with fewer problems, although progressing in this manner is inherently more expensive in time and effort than following an existing one.

Thus it can sometimes take years, if not a lifetime, of dedicated practice to formulate a new tradition in comparison to learning an established one. However, the practitioner who successfully creates a new tradition would be its grandmaster and founder, ever remembered for his efforts.

CREATING NEW TRADITIONS

<i>Ability Added</i>	<i>Months Required</i>	<i>Experience Rolls Required</i>
1st	3	7
2nd	6	13
3rd	10	19
4th	15	25
5th	21	31
6th	28	37
7th	36	43
Each +1	+ (Ability Number+1)	+6

USING MAGIC

MYTHRAS uses a number of default assumptions concerning the casting of magic. Since the same fundamental concepts are utilised by each discipline, they have been collated here for easy reference and avoid unnecessary duplication.

The following rules are intended to be globally applied to all of the magical disciplines – namely Folk Magic, Animism, Mysticism, Sorcery and Theism. However, as with all of the guidelines offered in this chapter, the Games Master is free to tinker with these as desired so that they fit with his play style and campaign setting.

CASTING REQUIREMENTS

Whether the passionate entreaties of a theist calling upon his god or the esoteric hand movements of a mystic, all magical disciplines are assumed to use ritual words and gestures to aid in the focussing of concentration required for their proper incantation.

By default the following freedoms are required:

- « Clear thought, unclouded by detrimental magic, narcotics or emotional stress
- « The ability to gesture or symbolise with at least one free hand
- « The ability to make appropriate vocal sounds to invoke the formulae or request
- « The ability to accurately perceive or sense a potential target, if the spell has to be targeted

Where one or more of these are denied to a magician, each missing element increases the difficulty grade of the appropriate magic skill. A hedge wizard who is bound and blindfolded could attempt to cast Folk Magic, but does so at a Formidable grade. With enough penalties it may become impossible to perform any form of magic.

THE GAMES MASTER'S SAGA

After choosing what sort of traditions to use, Steve must come to a decision on how many abilities each magical tradition should provide. Steve decides that he'd like his setting's cults, schools and paths to grant a wide range of powers. Selecting the Magic Rich category allows each to provide between 7-9 spells, spirits, and so on; tweaking the actual number dependent on the importance and central role of the tradition.

Since Theism is the dominant form of magic in the campaign world, Steve also grants each divine cult an additional 7-9 Folk Magic charms in addition to their full range of 7-9 miracles. This substantially augments the potency of theistic cults in comparison to traditions based on other types of magic, but Steve thinks it will give his setting a uniquely distinct flavour.

Although Steve likes the idea of making all magic long and difficult to cast, he finally chooses to go with the default casting times but keeping the option to boost the casting chance if spending additional time in preparation; since he wants magic to be an active part of the to-and-fro of combat.

RESTRICTED ACTIONS DURING CASTING

Whilst performing magic, no matter what discipline, characters are only able to:

- « Move at a maximum of walking pace
- « Perform Free or Reactive Actions

Therefore characters cannot attack any foes whilst preparing a spell, or make any attempt to run or indeed perform any other skill. This reflects the deliberation needed to focus on the spell and channel the energy for it to have its desired effect.

At the Games Master's discretion, some reactive actions such as parrying or evading may make completing a spell more difficult due to disruptions incurred to the normally required somatic gestures or mental focus.

INTERRUPTING CASTING

All types of magic have casting times measured in Turns. This means a magician performing more complex invocations can be slowed down in their casting by reacting to threats which eat up their available Action Points. However, unless the caster suffers some dramatic shock, all this does is delay the final completion of the magic.

To totally disrupt casting normally requires that the magician be injured or mentally suborned. The chance of this depends on the precise circumstances:

- « Minor Wounds force the caster to make a Willpower check, failure makes the casting one difficulty grade harder
- « Serious Wounds force the caster to make a Willpower check, passing makes the casting one grade harder, whilst failing makes it two grades harder
- « Major Wounds automatically causes the casting roll to fail
- « Succumbing to mental domination automatically causes the casting roll to fail

DISMISSING ONE'S OWN MAGIC

Characters can dismiss any magic they have personally cast as a Free Action. No roll is needed for dismissing a spell; simply the decision needed to cease its effects.

STACKING MAGIC

In all circumstances, magic of different disciplines cannot be stacked together to produce greater effects. Thus a Folk Magic spell cannot add its effect to that produced by a theist Miracle for example. In addition, magic of the same discipline which has a similar purpose cannot be stacked. So two weapon enhancement magics such as Fireblade and Bladsharp cannot work together.

In situations where two incompatible spells are in simultaneous existence, the magic with the greater Intensity take precedence, supressing or subsuming the lesser magic. Where both magics are of equal Intensity, the newer magic replaces the previous one.

MAGNITUDE AND INTENSITY

These two terms are methods of describing the potency of magic. Magnitude is used to see how difficult it is to dispel the magic whereas Intensity reflects its level of effect. More detail concerning these terms is described for each discipline.

Although Intensity (and sometimes Magnitude) are based upon the value of a magical skill, they are not modified by any difficulty grades applied to the casting roll. For example, the Intensity of a sorcery spell is one tenth of the sorcerer's Invocation skill, no matter whether the casting roll is Easy, Hard or even Herculean..

ENDURING MAGIC COSTS

As a general rule, the Magic Points attribute (or pool) of a magician is temporarily reduced by the cost of all his ongoing active magic. He is unable to start recovering Magic Points used to cast a spell (or similar ability) until that magic is dismissed or expires.

THE GAMES MASTER'S SAGA

Continuing his theme of Sword and Sorcery, Steve decides that magicians are rare and exalted, requiring specialised training from childhood. Access to higher magical powers is restricted to characters that pursue a specific magical profession, specifically those who take the mystic, priest, sorcerer or shaman career. However, he likes the idea of Folk Magic being somewhat more commonplace, but restricted to those who devote themselves to a specific cult or possess a mentor willing to teach them.

In his game the three main player characters are Anathaym, Kara and Mju. As part of her back-story during character generation, Kara began her adolescent life as a sacred dancer in the temple of Myceras where her natural affinity with the god was recognised. So she was trained to enter the priesthood permitting her access to Theism.

Mju was born a mountain nomad under the constellation of the Jackal, nominally a lowly caste of hunter-scavengers, but blessed by a lunar eclipse and the falling of seven stars. This auspicious astrological sign destined him to be educated as a mystic of the Path of Shadows.

Of the three only Anathaym starts with no magical skills, having trained since childhood to be as great a warrior as her father. Since she did not begin the campaign as a professional magician she can never adopt any of the higher magical arts, but could still learn some minor Folk Magic charms if she finds the right cult to join.

MJU'S SAGA

Mju starts the game as a student of the art of mysticism. He has a score in Meditation of 52%, and Mysticism (Path of Shadows) 57%. Thus he knows three mystical talents (one for each 20% of his Mysticism skill).

After several sessions and the completion of a major adventure, Mju finds himself with 5 Experience Rolls with which he wishes to learn another of the talents taught by the Path of Shadows. The Games Master however says that Mju has already learned all of the talents available to one of his lowly standing. If he wishes to progress further, he must prove himself worthy to his guru and be formally promoted to the rank of disciple.

Mju sighs patiently, and instead uses the Experience Rolls to improve his other skills, hoping to impress his master by diligently practicing in those areas the old guru is always complaining are lacking.

Later...

Mju is a faithful disciple of the Path of Shadows, but finds it does not teach all of the physical feats he wishes to learn. Encouraged by his master, he decides to go into retreat and meditate upon a new path of mysticism.

Studying on his own, in the remote depths of the desert plateau, Mju notices the plucky little mice that scamper and hop amongst the rocks. Experiencing an epiphany he uses the rodents as the source of his new path, attempting to mimic their abilities. It takes him 3 months of contemplation and practice, and 7 Experience Rolls, to emerge with his newly developed branch of mysticism, which he names the Path of the Jerboa. This starts at the base Mysticism percentage of POW+CON, and he gains (chooses) the first talent.

Seeking to further his path, Mju remains in isolation, spending another 6 months and 13 Experience Rolls to add a second talent. At this point he feels he has done enough and must now see how his new path will serve him in the world.

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FOLK MAGIC

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Folk Magic is the lowest level of magic available to MYTHRAS characters. Depending on the setting Folk Magic represents:

- ❖ Simple cantrips and spells taught within a community to aid daily chores and tasks
- ❖ The magic of hedge wizards and witches who have not exposed themselves to the higher forms of magic
- ❖ A magical tradition with wide accessibility but a relatively low level of power

Although Folk Magic might appear to be weak in comparison with magical approaches such as animism, theism and sorcery it can, if used wisely, be a very powerful tool. The balance comes in its relative ubiquity: Folk Magic may be more commonplace and easier to learn which leads to a wider range of use whilst not necessarily being confined to specialists.

THE NATURE OF FOLK MAGIC

Folk Magic is an unseen force that permeates the world and is not derived from the gods but is an echo of the very earliest stages of creation. Maybe it comes from life force, geomancy or perhaps the cosmic radiance of constellations, but, whatever its source, its power is ubiquitous to those who know how to tap it.

Folk Magicians have attuned their senses to this faint resonance, tapping into the background energy to work magic on mundane things around them. In worlds where magic is limited, these magicians are valued for the small charms and blessings they can provide to their community. In settings where it is more commonplace, people use petty magics to ease their lives, aiding them in daily chores.

Since the focus of Folk Magic is to reduce effort or augment comfort, few of its spells are overtly specialised in the ways of death and combat. Those arts are left to practitioners of higher magics.

ACCESS TO FOLK MAGIC

Given its nature Folk Magic can be accessed in a number of different ways:

- ❖ Through a culture reflecting secrets known by a social group.
- ❖ Through a career representing knowledge used by a vocation.
- ❖ Through a cult or brotherhood that has, over time, mastered these magical forces.
- ❖ Through an individual practitioner who may be willing to share their knowledge.
- ❖ Through self-realisation from study or inner connection with the world about them.

Games Masters need to decide how Folk Magic is made available. It might be very common, with every cultural group having access to certain spells that aid and support daily life. Or it might be restricted to specific groups or individuals, with the uninitiated aware of its existence but unable to use it. Depending on the campaign setting, not every character can or should have access to magic.

STARTING FOLK MAGIC

As an exception to the general rule of thumb, characters from careers which specialise in Folk Magic may start with a number of spells equal to one tenth of their Folk Magic skill.

In campaigns where everyday people are permitted to pick up the skill as a hobby or as part of their cult or culture, non-magical career characters only start with the default number of spells as described in the previous chapter (see Starting Magic on page 118).

These default values may be changed as the Games Master desires.

LEARNING FOLK MAGIC

Folk Magic is usually taught by someone skilled in its use. If available culturally or professionally then such teachers are likely to have taught Folk Magic during a character's formative years. If being learned during the course of a campaign, it costs three Experience Rolls, and takes one week to learn a new Folk Magic spell.

Learning spells may also come with a monetary cost – depending on the teacher and perhaps the spell. Precise costs will be dependent on circumstances, but as a general rule it costs 100 Silver of goods or services per spell. Games Masters should adjust the base cost according to how common Folk Magic is generally, who is teaching it, and whether or not the student has the benefit of cult or brotherhood membership, special friendships, and so on. Tuition in Folk Magic may also be free in certain circumstances: attaining a particular rank in a cult, say, or in recognition of services rendered.

For example a Healing cult might offer tuition in the Heal spell at a rate of 50 Silvers to its members; whereas a local witch might offer to teach the spell at a base rate of 150 Silvers to the same student. A mother might even offer to teach her child the spell for free when he or she leaves home for the wide world.

If a Games Master wishes, professional folk magicians may develop new spells for a suitable cost in Experience Rolls and time. As a rough guideline, use the incrementing costs as presented on the Creating New Traditions table on page [119](#).

UBIQUITOUS FOLK MAGIC

The table below is included for those campaigns where Folk Magic is available to common folk, rather than being restricted to specialist hedge wizards and witches. Each of the standard careers has been presented with a list of generic spells useful to that particular profession.

Some spells are more prevalent than others, and Games Masters are encouraged to tweak the lists to fit their campaign. For example, ostensibly similar careers may differ by one or two spells depending on the background culture and environment. Some of the rarer spells may be available to members of particular cults or brotherhoods.

CAREER-SPECIFIC FOLK MAGIC SPELLS

Career	Suggested Folk Magic
Agent	Alarm, Befuddle, Bladsharp, Bypass, Find, Incognito, Knock, Mimic, Ventriloquism
Alchemist	Any
Beast Handler	Beastcall, Find, Might, Mobility, Pathway, Pet, Slow, Speedart, Vigour
Courtesan	Alarm, Appraise, Befuddle, Calm, Cleanse, Find, Glamour, Sleep, Tune
Courtier	Babel, Calculate, Calm, Fanaticism, Find, Glamour, Mindspeech, Translate, Voice
Crafter	Appraise, Bladsharp, Calculate, Coordination, Find, Ironhand, Pierce, Polish, Repair
Entertainer	Babel, Calm, Find, Glamour, Light, Mimic, Tune, Ventriloquism, Voice
Farmer	Beastcall, Bladsharp, Calculate, Find, Might, Preserve, Repair, Vigour, Warmth
Fisherman	Beastcall, Deflect, Dry, Find, Pierce, Preserve, Repair, Vigour, Warmth
Herder	Alarm, Beastcall, Find, Heat, Pathway, Pet, Slow, Speedart, Warmth

Career	Suggested Folk Magic
Hunter	Bladsharp, Find, Mobility, Pathway, Preserve, Slow, Speedart, Vigour, Warmth
Merchant	Alarm, Appraise, Calculate, Cleanse, Find, Glamour, Lock, Translate, Voice
Miner	Bludgeon, Breath, Find, Ignite, Light, Might, Pierce, Repair, Vigour
Mystic	Avert, Befuddle, Demoralise, Find, Heal, Mindspeech, Spiritshield, Vigour, Witchsight
Official	Alarm, Calculate, Find, Glamour, Lock, Mindspeech, Translate, Ventriloquism, Voice
Physician	Breath, Calm, Cleanse, Cool, Find, Heal, Preserve, Sleep, Warmth
Priest	Any
Sailor	Bladsharp, Deflect, Dry, Extinguish, Find, Pierce, Repair, Vigour, Warmth
Scholar	Appraise, Calculate, Calm, Extinguish, Find, Mindspeech, Tidy, Translate, Voice
Scout	Bladsharp, Bypass, Find, Incognito, Mobility, Pathway, Speedart, Vigour, Warmth
Shaman	Any
Sorcerer	Any
Thief	Bypass, Coordination, Darkness, Demoralise, Find, Glue, Knock, Mobility, Ventriloquism
Warrior	Bladsharp, Bludgeon, Coordination, Fanaticism, Firearrow, Fireblade, Find, Protection, Vigour

Note: In regions predisposed to great heat rather than winter cold, any career offering Warmth as a spell can substitute it for Cool instead (and vice-versa).

USING FOLK MAGIC

Folk Magic takes only a single Turn to cast. Each spell costs one Magic Point which is deducted from the Magic Point total whenever it is successfully cast. Casting any spell successfully requires a Folk Magic roll. The Folk Magic skill covers every spell a character knows. Thus, a character with Folk Magic 70% would cast all their Folk Magic spells at this level: Folk Magic spells do not have discrete skill ratings.

If the Folk Magic roll is a...

- ﴿ Critical Success: the spell's Magic Point cost is zero.
- ﴿ Success: the caster loses 1 Magic Point and the spell works successfully.
- ﴿ Failure: the caster loses 1 Magic Point, but the spell does not work.
- ﴿ Fumble: the caster loses 1d3 Magic Points for the spell and the spell fails to work.

Due to their minor or petty nature, all Folk Magic spells have a default Intensity and Magnitude of 1.

LIMITS TO FOLK MAGIC CAPACITY

Characters have no actual limit to the number of Folk Magic spells they can learn, provided that the Games Master permits them to have access to new ones. Such knowledge might be restricted or unavailable in the game world.

FOLK MAGIC SPELLS

Folk Magic spells are defined by various traits defining the effects of the spell, and any particular limitations. Every spell is different with some having fewer traits than others.

DURATION OF FOLK MAGIC SPELLS

Unless a spell has either the Concentration or Instant traits it has a natural duration which lasts the entire scene or action for which the spell was used. A few spells have custom durations noted in the spell's definition. For example, using Pathway to traverse a section of thorny and overgrown woodland would last until the terrain clears, and the spell is no longer necessary.

TRAITS

Folk Magic Traits are as follows:

CONCENTRATION

The spell's effects remain in place as long as the caster continues to concentrate on maintaining it. Concentration requires the caster to be free of all physical and mental distractions: any such disturbance interrupts the concentration, resulting in the spell's immediate dismissal.

INSTANT

The spell's effects happen immediately. It has no duration.

RANGED

Spells with the Ranged trait can be cast at a distance of up to the character's Folk Magic score in metres. The caster must know the location of the target, such as 'hiding behind the door': if they are unable to directly see or sense the target of the spell, then the Folk Magic roll becomes one grade harder.

RESIST (ENDURANCE, EVADE, WILLPOWER)

Any spell that is not readily accepted by a target can be actively resisted using either Endurance, Evade or Willpower, as determined by this trait. To successfully resist a spell, the target must win an opposed roll of the relevant skill against the caster's Folk Magic casting result. If the target fails in the opposed roll then the spell takes effect as normal. Note that resisting is usually a passive action if Endurance or Willpower are the being used. If a spell requires the target to Evade then it costs an Action Point to make the Evade attempt. Targets without Action Points to spend in evading will therefore be powerless against the spell's effect.

TOUCH

The caster must be in physical contact with the target whilst the spell is cast. If a target is intent on resisting physical contact then the caster will most likely fail to complete his spell unless some specific circumstance prevents the target's withdrawal, such as surprise or the Grip special effect. A touch spell merely needs to contact the target or its carried accoutrements in order to work.

ANATHAYM'S SAGA

Anathaym has never learned any Folk Magic as its teaching has traditionally been restricted to Meeros's cults, and the priesthood. However Anathaym's sister, Kara, is an acolyte of Myceras, and has been learning Folk Magic as part of her own training.

While Anathaym recovers from the injuries to her right hand, Kara uses the time to teach her the Bladsharp spell - a useful warrior's cantrip, and one generally learned by Meeros's soldiers.

TRIGGER

Trigger spells can be cast successfully but have their effects delayed by the caster. If the spell is not triggered during the scene it dissipates naturally.

SPELLS

ALARM

Special Duration

Casting Alarm on a location such as a room or small clearing creates a temporary psychic bond between the area and the caster. If the area is accessed by a living creature with a SIZ greater than 1, the caster is automatically made aware that something has transgressed no matter how great the distance. The Alarm is usually a distinct tingling sensation or mental twinge which will awaken the caster. Alarm can also be used on an individual object, triggering when touched or moved.

The spell does not determine who or what has crossed the alarmed threshold, and neither does it prevent ingress. It lasts until triggered, but the Magic Point used to cast it does not recover until the spell is dismissed or concludes naturally. Once activated Alarm must be cast again.

APPRAISE

Instant, Touch

Appraise allows the immediate assessment of the quality of physical goods of combined ENC or SIZ equal to the caster's POW. The spell determines whether or not identical looking items are of the same or similar quality, or if one or more is either flawed or of a higher quality. The spell does not work on organic things, only on inanimate objects. Neither does it determine what flaws or enhancements are present; merely that they exist.

AVERT

Instant, Ranged

Avert is used to dismiss another Folk Magic spell within range. Avert can be cast reactively to neutralise offensive spells, by using the Counter Magic Reactive Action.

BABBLE

Resist (Willpower), Touch

Babble mangles anything spoken by its target. It does not affect what the target is thinking, only what is verbally issued. Thus Babble can seriously disrupt orders being issued by a commanding officer to his troops, but it cannot influence what the commander is thinking.

or his intentions. Depending on the necessity for verbal components, Babble may be able to adversely influence spell casting.

BEASTCALL (X)

Instant, Ranged, Resist (Willpower)

Beastcall is used to attract a single, specific animal, the type being specified in the spell, within range. The animal summoned cannot be sapient, and it may also resist the spell using its Willpower. If it fails to resist, it is naturally drawn, in a passive fashion, to the caster, whereupon the spell dissipates, and the creature acts as it normally would, finding itself in proximity to the caster. Physical obstacles or adverse actions (such as a wall, river or line of spears, or a harsh yank on a set of reins or leash) also cause the spell to fail.

BEFUDGLE

Ranged, Resist (Willpower)

Befuddle causes confusion within the mind of a corporeal target. The subject of the spell has difficulty thinking straight, forgetting where it is, what it is doing, and why – often lapsing into disassociated lines of thought. Befuddled targets can still act in self defence, but cannot initiate any constructive activity until the spell ends. Any sort of attack or threatening action instantly breaks the spell, whether or not it was directed specifically at the befuddled target.

BLADESHARP

Touch

Bladesharp is cast on edged and piercing melee weapons. It increases the damage of a weapon by one dice step, and incidentally leaves the edge honed after the spell concludes. This spell is often used on tools such as logging axes, ploughs and razors. Thus casting this spell on a dagger increases it to 1d6+1 damage, whereas the same spell on a great axe would increase it to 2d8+2 damage.
(1d4>1d6>1d8>1d10>2d6>2d8>2d10)



BLUDGEON

Touch

Bludgeon is similar to Bladesharp but used on weapons and tools that deal blunt-force trauma rather than cutting or piercing damage. It is normally used to aid with threshing grain, fulling wool, or similar heavy duty work.

BREATH

Touch

Breath permits the recipient to hold their breath for an extended period, so that they can temporarily venture into harmful environments, such as underwater; or atmospheres tainted by rock dust, gases, smoke or poisons. The spell lasts for a maximum of half the caster's POW in minutes, during which time the recipient cannot speak or the breath is lost, and they immediately begin to asphyxiate (or become poisoned).

BYPASS

Touch, Trigger

Bypass is used to cross the threshold of an area under the effect of an Alarm spell without triggering the Alarm. When cast the spell is held in preparation, triggering on contact with an Alarm spell. Of course the caster must suspect that an Alarm spell exists in the first place. Bypass does not negate the Alarm, and it must be cast for each crossing of the Alarm spell's threshold.

CALCULATE

Instant, Ranged

Calculate allows the immediate calculation of numbers, weight or size of a thing, be it soldiers amassed in battle formation, the length of a rope or weight of a sack of rice. The spell always yields a precise quantity, but not value or quality. Only items which are directly observable (seen, lifted, smelled, and so on), and within range can be calculated. The spell will work when cast on a container – assuming, of course, that the container is not empty.

CALM

Ranged, Resist (Willpower)

Calm attempts to dampen down the passions of the target, perhaps ensuring that a lovesick paramour doesn't press his suit, a frightened rival doesn't scream for help or that weapons are not drawn in anger. A calmed person is not otherwise mentally affected, thus any sort of assault or threatening action still permits the target to defend themselves, and even attack, albeit they will do so in a calm and level headed manner.

CHILL

Instant, Touch

Chill dramatically reduces the temperature of small objects (with an ENC no larger than a third of the caster's POW) down to the temperature of ice water. Useful for rapidly cooling hot items, chilling drinks, and so forth. The spell does not freeze an object, and neither does it cause any damage to its structure: it merely renders it very cold.

CLEANSE

Instant, Touch

Cleanse is used to rid an object, person or small area of dirt, grease, grime, bad smells, and so on. It does not organise or tidy the target or area; merely cleans them to a spick-and-span state. This spell is often used to launder clothes. The caster can cleanse an area equal to POW in square metres.

COOL

Concentration, Touch

Cool protects the recipient from the effects of muggy atmospheres and heat prostration, guarding them from any Fatigue caused by the natural environment. The spell does not stop the effects of heat related magic, but will make any resistance roll one difficulty grade easier. Someone under the effects of this spell wearing full hoplite armour could march through a tropical rain forest during the height of summer without harm. Cool affects a target of SIZ up to the caster's POW x2.

COORDINATION

Touch, Trigger

Coordination enhances manual dexterity and agility when performing a single task. When cast in preparation it permits the recipient a chance to re-roll a single skill check where coordination is required, such as Acrobatics, Lockpicking and so on. The recipient may choose the better of the two rolls, but the spell is expended in the process.

CURSE

Special Duration

Curse must be cast in combination with a second spell of a harmful nature. Its one and only effect is to increase the duration of the accompanying spell so that it is continuous. This comes at a cost however, since the Magic Point used to cast the curse does not return until the caster drops the curse willingly, the curse is dispelled, or the spell to which it is bound breaks naturally. Curse is commonly combined with spells such as Befuddle, Demoralise, Dullblade, Repugnance, and so on.

DARKNESS

Concentration, Ranged

Darkness creates an area of shadow, equal to POW in square metres, which suppresses all light within it. This is enough volume to fill a modest room, a length of corridor or form a small cloud if cast outside. All non-magical light, including sunlight, passing into or present within the boundary is reduced to the equivalent of a dim glow.

DEFLECT

Touch

Deflect wards the recipient against tiny impacts of foreign material, such as rain drops, a cloud of midges or even flying grains of sand. The protection is limited to individual objects smaller than a child's fingernail, and thus cannot prevent normal missile weapons from striking a character.

DEMORALISE

Ranged, Resist (Willpower)

Demoralise temporarily fills the target with a sense of despondency towards a particular person, species, situation or object. When confronted with the subject of this despondency, any proactive skill attempts made by the afflicted character related to the source are one grade harder. However a direct assault from the subject instantly breaks the spell.

Thus a character could be given a demoralising dread of heights, ensuring that any Athletic skill used for climbing or Acrobatics skill for balancing would be one difficulty grade harder.

DISHEVEL

Instant, Touch

Dishevel is the reverse of the Cleanse spell. Objects affected are immediately covered in grime, dust, cobwebs, and so forth. The spell can be used to make brand new objects look old and weathered or help prevent normally well turned out people from being recognised. The caster can dishevel an area equal to POW in square metres.

DISRUPTION

Instant, Ranged, Resist (Endurance)

Disruption is used for damaging or dissembling physical objects without the need for tools. It is commonly employed to drive off or kill living creatures, such as birds or vermin. When successfully cast, Disruption inflicts 1d3 damage to a single random Hit Location or the overall Hit Points of an object. In both cases the damage ignores any armour or natural protection.

DRY

Instant, Touch

Dry removes all extraneous moisture from an object or person, either slicking off to form a puddle or evaporating in a cloud of vapour. It is normally used to dry off after heavy rain or help protect equipment from rotting, but has a number of other versatile uses. The caster can dry an object up to POW x2 in SIZ.

DULLBLADE

Ranged

Dullblade is the reverse of Bladsharp reducing the keenness of weapons and tools. It reduces the damage inflicted by the weapon by one step, and can never keep a sharp edge.

EXTINGUISH

Instant, Ranged

Extinguish immediately quenches flames and small fires of modest size and heat. It is useful for dousing candles, lanterns, torches or small cook fires, but it will not work on magical or larger, more ferocious conflagrations such as pyres, burning houses or dragon flames.

FANATICISM

Ranged, Resist (Willpower)

Fanaticism is the reverse of Demoralise. It grants the target a wildly excessive or irrational devotion, dedication, or enthusiasm for a particular person, species, situation or object. Its effect is to grant the recipient a temporary Passion equal to the Folk Magic skill of the caster. Fanaticism can be used to counter Demoralise, and vice versa.

FIND (X)

Concentration, Ranged, Resist (Special)

Find has many variations, always specific, and learned as separate spells. Some common examples are given below. It works by attuning to the natural emanations of a creature or thing, alerting the caster to its presence within the spell's range. Find can be blocked by dense or thick materials such as metal, or earth and stone at least one metre thick. The spell cannot discern emotions or thoughts.

Find Arrows: Locates ammunition shot by hunters, which miss their target.

Find Flaw: Identifies any flaws in an object, such as hidden imperfections or physical damage.

Find Livestock: Locates a particular type of animal. Can be resisted with Willpower.

Find Loot: Locates precious metals and gems.

Find Object: Locates a lost personal possession.

Find Sickness: Identifies the existence of disease and illness, whether magical or mundane.

FIREARROW

Touch

Firearrow causes all missiles thrown or fired by the recipient to burst into flame when released. Ostensibly created to act as a signal flare, it has since evolved into a combat magic. Missiles under its effect add an additional 1d3 damage, but are extinguished if they impale flesh. Those that strike flammable material have a chance equal to the caster's Folk Magic skill of setting alight whatever they lodge in, such as wooden shields, thatched roofs, and so on. Wooden ammunition is consumed as part of the spell.

FIREBLADE

Touch

Fireblade is similar to Firearrow but is instead cast on hand tools and melee weapons. The original purpose of the spell is to sterilise surgical equipment, aid in slash and burn agriculture or provide illumination during darkness without the need to carry an additional light source. If cast on a weapon it inflicts an additional 1d3 damage, and has the chance of setting

flammable materials alight if held to them for several rounds (see Fire on page 79). Wooden hafted weapons under the effects of Fireblade will be consumed as part of the spell.

FROSTBITE

Ranged, Resist (Endurance)

Frostbite works directly on living, organic tissue, inflicting numbness and pain in one of the recipient's extremities, for example fingers, toes, buttocks, nose & ears, and so on. The caster must either touch a specific extremity or roll randomly if cast at range. If the spell is not resisted the area affected suffers sensory numbness followed by lingering pain for the duration, making skill tests utilising that location one difficulty grade harder. Frostbite does not deal direct damage but makes the affected area of limited use for a while. For instance, a victim suffering frostbite to the buttocks cannot sit without extreme discomfort.

GLAMOUR

Concentration, Ranged, Resist (Willpower)

Glamour makes the target alluring so that people are naturally attracted to them. The particular nature of the glamour must be chosen when cast, and can be anything from increased natural beauty, a softer more sultry voice or even a seductively perfumed body scent. Whilst the spell grants no mechanical benefits, it does ensure that the recipient will gain a chance to gather themselves an audience, engage the attention of someone they wish to make contact with, or provide a distraction enabling accomplices an opportunity to perform nefarious deeds.

GLUE

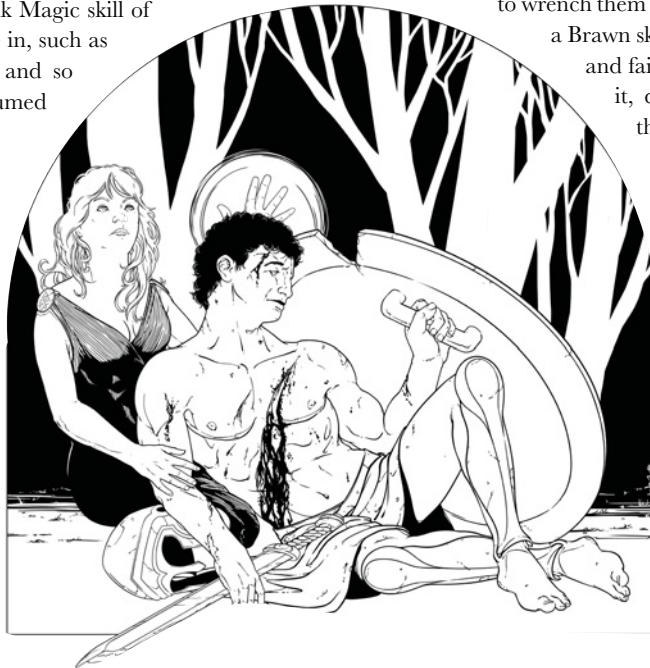
Touch

Glue cements together two solid, inanimate objects for the duration of the spell, for example a cart wheel to its axle or a door to its frame. Whilst under the effects of the spell the items, no matter how disparate, cannot be parted unless something actively tries to wrench them apart. In this circumstance the spell has a Brawn skill equal to five times the caster's POW, and fails when a superior Brawn is set against it, defeating it in an opposed roll. Once the spell concludes or fails the items part completely unharmed.

HEAL

Instant, Touch

Heal has several different effects depending on the nature of the ailment it is being used on. If the subject is suffering from a minor complaint such as a headache, back pain, hangover, cold, warts, and so on, then the symptoms are immediately lifted. Cast on a location suffering a Minor Wound it restores all lost Hit Points instantly. Against Serious or Major Wounds no Hit Points are recovered. However the spell will



stabilise locations, stop all bleeding, and prevent imminent death from inattention.

HEAT

Instant, Touch

Heat dramatically increases the temperature of small objects (with an ENC no larger than a third of the caster's POW) up to the temperature of boiling water. This versatile spell is useful for mulling wine, cooking food without a fire, or warming a bed prior to sleep. It does not affect living tissue although it can affect clothing and armour, heating it to uncomfortable levels.

IGNITE

Instant, Ranged

Ignite only works on flammable inorganic matter, causing a small object or hand-sized area to burst into flame. Depending on what was set alight, once burning, the flames may then spread unless quenched or countered in some way. This spell is normally used to light candles, torches or lanterns from afar. It can also be used to start a camp or cooking fire in adverse conditions, such as using damp kindling or in strong winds.

INCOGNITO

Resist (Endurance), Touch, Trigger

Incognito alters the facial features of the recipient to a bland, unmemorable countenance. It does not affect the voice, mannerisms or physical size/presence of the recipient, but ensures that visually they do not stand out from the crowd. Anyone under the effects of Incognito is actively ignored by those who might otherwise be searching for him; he is simply overlooked and discounted.

IRONHAND

Touch

Ironhand allows the recipient to hold anything that would otherwise cause damage (such as extremely hot or cold items, or those dripping acid) without causing themselves injury. Thus a user could grasp a brand from a fire, lift a bubbling cauldron from a spit or even reach through a steam vent to grab an object on the other side. It does not grant total immunity from damage, merely stops it from conducting through the skin of the recipient's hands. The spell does not protect anything worn on the hand, so rings, gloves, and such like will suffer the effects of the source.

KNOCK

Instant, Touch

Knock magically unfastens any device that is currently secured with a mechanical bar or lock. It does not work on magically locked objects, only mundane ones. The spell only affects a single fastening, so if there are several locks and bars securing the object, the spell will need to be recast for each one.

LIGHT

Concentration, Ranged

Light must be cast on an inanimate object (this could be a branch, sword blade, spear point, torch, and so on). It produces enough light to illuminate an area as though with a lantern. It can also be cast

directly against a Darkness spell to counter it. In this case both spells are consumed, leaving the ambient light to illuminate the area.

LOCK

Special Duration, Touch

Lock magically secures any device that already has a mechanical bar or lock present. A Locked device can be opened only by the caster, and cannot be picked by mundane means (such as by a thief using lock-picks) since the magic renders the mechanism immobile; however it could still be forced open by breaking the object the lock is set into. The magic remains in place until opened by the caster, after which the device must be subject to a further casting of Lock to restore the enchantment. The Magic Point used to cast Lock does not recover until the spell is dismissed or concludes naturally.

MAGNIFY

Concentration

Magnify allows the caster to see something twice as close as it really is. Useful for close work as well as out in the field.

MIGHT

Touch

Might permits the recipient to engage in impressive acts of physical brawn. It adds the caster's POW to the recipient's STR, but only for the purposes of lifting, breaking, and contests of strength as defined under the Brawn skill. It does not increase the character's Damage Modifier when inflicting combat damage.

MIMIC

Touch, Trigger

Mimic allows the recipient to perfectly mimic the voice and mannerisms of someone the caster has seen and heard personally. It does not affect their physical appearance.

MINDSPEECH

Concentration, Ranged, Resist (Willpower)

Mindspeech allows telepathy between the caster and a target, enabling verbal intercourse without needing to speak aloud. The caster and target must share the same language, or else the spell will merely transmit unintelligible gobbledegook. Attempting to cast Mindspeech on somebody beyond range automatically fails.

MOBILITY

Touch

Mobility increases the Movement rate of the recipient by 1d3 metres for the spell's duration. It is often used by hunters, herders, and those seeking to escape pursuit.

PATHWAY

Touch

Pathway enables the recipient to more easily travel through heavy vegetation, safe from being scratched, snagged or otherwise hindered. Under its enchantment Movement rates are not reduced in woods, jungles, swamps, and similar overgrown terrain.

PERFUME

Concentration, Ranged, Resist (Willpower)

Perfume either negates a noxious odour or imbues an odourless substance with a pleasing fragrance. The spell does not affect the properties of the source of a stench (so a rotting carcass is still rotten) - it merely makes its presence tolerable.

PET

Concentration, Resist (Willpower), Touch

Pet allows the caster to take mental control of a small creature, sending it off to scout, fetch or perform some other complex task. It can be cast on any creature neither of whose SIZ and INT characteristics may exceed half the caster's CHA. If the targeted creature is the already the loyal pet of the caster it does not need to resist the spell.

PHANTASM

Concentration, Ranged

Phantasm allows the caster to weave together insubstantial or near weightless objects so that they take a shape or ghostly form. Thus a spectral figure could be woven from a naturally occurring mist, or a face formed in a pile of dead leaves. Beyond this the spell has little effect, save to frighten, intrigue or disconcert those that view it.

PIERCE

Touch

Pierce can be cast on any item with a point, helping it to penetrate thick surfaces. It is normally used to help sew leather, punch holes in metal or hammer pitons into stone. Any weapon or tool enhanced with this spell ignores the first two Armour Points of the person, creature or object struck.

POLISH

Instant, Touch

Polish instantly buffs an object of ENC or SIZ of up to the caster's POW to a high sheen making it glossy, shiny, and highly desirable even if the quality of the article is sub-par.

PRESERVE

Instant, Touch

Preserve prevents organic matter, both vegetable and animal, from bacterial decay and putrefaction for 1d3 months, by sterilising it. If the material is later smoked, pickled or salted it is preserved indefinitely. The spell can halt decay that has begun, but not reverse it. The caster can affect an amount of organic matter with SIZ or ENC equal to their POW.

PROTECTION

Touch

Protection is useful in a wide range of tasks where there is a risk of accidental injury such as working in a foundry or mine. The first time the character would normally take damage that penetrates protective clothing or armour, the Protection spell will trigger, and reduce the damage taken by 1d3 points. The spell then dissipates.

The spell only protects against physical damage so won't help against events such as fire, choking, and so on.

REPAIR

Instant, Touch

Repair fixes physical damage to an inanimate object. Each separate successful casting repairs 1d3 Hit Points of damage.

REPUGNANCE

Concentration, Ranged, Resist (Willpower)

Repugnance twists the appearance of the target so that they cause distaste in all those that see, hear or smell them. The particular effect must be chosen when cast, and can be anything from a great wart on the end of a nose, a high pitched nasal voice or even pungent body odour. Whatever is chosen, it will cause people to turn away from the victim or make excuses so as to leave their presence as quickly as possible.

SHOCK

Instant, Ranged, Resist (Evade)

Shock produces a mild electrical discharge which may be directed at living things. The caster must either touch a specific extremity or roll randomly if cast at range. If the spell is not resisted, the shocked location is stunned for 1d3 Turns; armour does not protect. The spell makes a loud crack when cast.

SHOVE

Instant, Ranged, Resist (Special)

Shove allows the caster to telekinetically move an object by giving it a single crude push. The item is not moved with enough force to inflict damage, and is still subject to gravity. The spell affects an amount of ENC or SIZ equal to the caster's POW. Living targets can resist with either Endurance or Evade.

SLEEP

Resist (Endurance), Touch

Sleep sends its recipient into a deep, peaceful sleep. It has no effect on creatures with a SIZ greater than the caster's POW. Unless the target resists, it slumbers for a number of hours equal to the half the caster's POW. However the spell takes 1d3 Rounds to take effect before the target falls unconscious. Any attempt to cast this spell in a combat situation automatically fails.

SLOW

Ranged, Resist (Endurance)

Slow is the direct opposite of Mobility, slowing Movement Rate by 1d3+3 metres, if the target fails to resist.

SPEEDART

Instant, Touch, Trigger

Speedart boosts the velocity of thrown or fired missiles so that they travel farther before losing efficacy. The spell increases the effective range by 1.5 times the weapon's normal distance.

SPIRITSHIELD

Concentration, Resist (Willpower), Touch

This spell creates a shield around the recipient which deters spirits from entering. Any spirit wishing to attack or possess the recipient must overcome the spell by winning an opposed test of their Willpower against the caster's Folk Magic skill.

TIDY

Instant, Ranged

Tidy immediately restores a number of items (up to the caster's POW) within the spell's range to a neat, tidy, and orderly fashion. Items larger than 3 ENC are shifted to a more orderly position but will require manual intervention to tidy properly.

TIRE

Ranged, Resist (Endurance)

Tire inflicts one level of Fatigue on the subject unless resisted.

TRANSLATE

Concentration, Resist (Willpower), Touch

Translate permits the caster to understand any language spoken to him, by setting up a psychic link with the target. The translation provided is often imperfect, as complex terms or concepts cannot be comprehended, but it does allow simple communication. The spell works between sapient creatures with a definite, constructed language, and still relies on being able to see, hear or otherwise perceive the target as in normal conversation. If cast upon a creature of animal awareness, communication is restricted to the simple reception of emotional state.

TUNE

Instant, Touch

Tune ensures that the musical instrument touched is in perfect pitch no matter the dampness, temperature or its general condition, ensuring that the following performance is unaffected.

VENTRiloquism

Concentration, Ranged, Resist (Willpower)

Ventriloquism allows the caster to project their voice anywhere within range. The caster needs only to think the projected words, not actually to speak them physically, which can disconcert those unaware of what is going on. If cast upon a living creature, the caster can take control of their vocal cords, and speak through them instead.

VIGOUR

Touch

Vigour makes the recipient feel alive and energetic, being used to offset the effects of strenuous physical labour. For the spell's duration, all Fatigue effects gained from laborious activity are ignored (but return on the spell's dismissal). It negates the effects of a Tire spell.

CREATING NEW FOLK MAGIC SPELLS

There are doubtless many spells Games Masters may want to introduce that are not covered by those provided in this chapter. If inventing new cantrips, some points to bear in mind to keep Folk Magic reasonably balanced are:

- ❖ As noted, Folk Magic spells are limited in their effects. Avoid introducing spells that have multiple or far-reaching effects.
- ❖ Spells are utility-based; that is, to aid a mundane task in some way. Try to create spells that remain focused on aiding daily life rather than being wholesale forces for destruction.
- ❖ Note that Folk Magic spells do not, by and large, provide skill bonuses or penalties. Those that affect living things do so in subtle or limited ways.
- ❖ One does not need to create spells that have a measurable game mechanics effect. Folk Magic spells can provide background colour, flavour, and atmosphere. Clever magicians will find creative uses for them.

VOICE

Concentration, Ranged, Resist (Willpower)

Voice amplifies the recipient's intonation and delivery so that it becomes compelling when issuing verbal commands. All who can hear the speaker are forced to listen. Their vocalisation also carries across and through even the loudest background noise (howling gales, the roar of a waterfall, the clash of arms on a battlefield) up to a range of ten times the recipient's CHA in metres.

WARMTH

Concentration, Touch

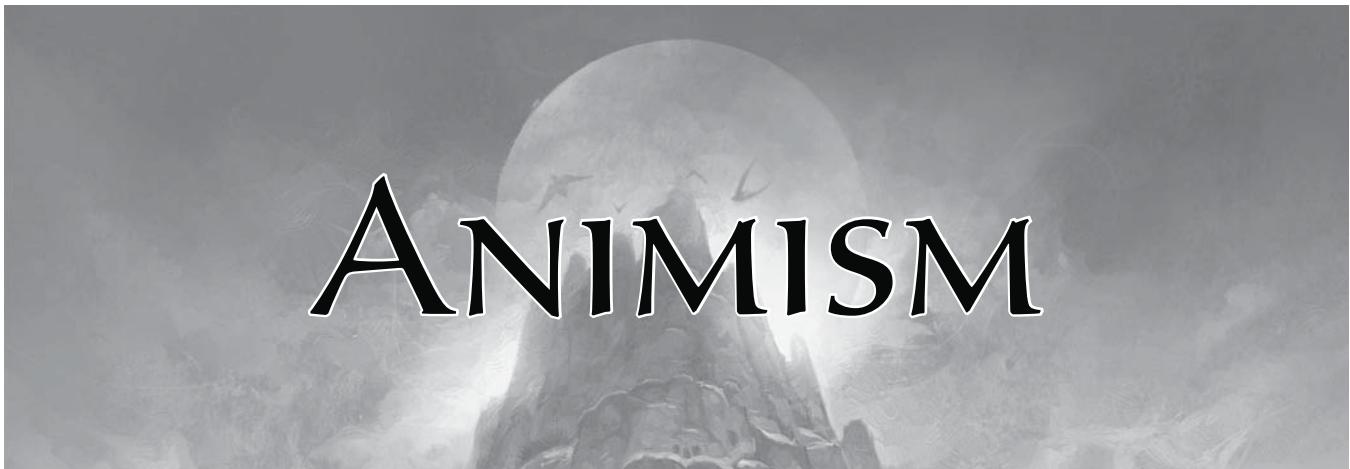
Warmth protects the recipient from the effects of freezing atmospheres and exposure, and from Fatigue caused by the natural environment. The spell does not stop the effects of cold-related magic cast at them, but will make any resistance roll one difficulty grade easier. Thus a person under the effects of this spell could walk about on a glacier during midwinter in their underclothes without harm. Warmth affects an object of SIZ up to the caster's POW x2.

WITCHSIGHT

Ranged, Resist (Willpower)

Witchsight allows the caster to see active magic, enchanted items, and invisible entities (although such things are simply shadowy representations) that lie within range and line of sight. It can also penetrate illusions or discern the true guise of shapeshifted creatures. Beings which wish to remain hidden or disguised must win an opposed test of their Willpower versus the casting roll.

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Animism is magic worked through communion with spirits and the spirit world. It is the magic of shamans and spirit walkers. Such practitioners do not treat with gods or learn their abilities from books or tomes; instead their powers come from the myriad spirits that inhabit the spirit realms, and interact occasionally with the mundane world. Shamans are sensitive to their presence, whether these entities are nature spirits, representatives of particular natural objects, the souls of revered ancestors, or malign things such as disease and curse spirits.

Animism relies on forming multiple relationships with many spirits, that themselves embody magical effects which are made available to the shaman. Gathering spirits requires negotiation, sometimes combat, and frequent expeditions into the Spirit World.

WHAT ARE SPIRITS?

Spirits are a metaphysical manifestation of a particular aspect of the cosmos. Most are intrinsically linked with something existing in the material world that reflects and represents the spirit's nature and influence. A spring in a glade, for instance, may well have a spirit representing its beauty and serenity; a species of animal has a guardian spirit watching over it, an archetype of all that the species is and does; ghosts, and certain restless spirits of the dead, are tied to the place where they died; ancestor spirits are linked to the communities they once inhabited. Spirits are non-corporeal, possess motivations, perceptions and outlooks very different to those of the material world, and have, through their connections with the Spirit World, developed great powers and abilities.

WHAT IS THE SPIRIT WORLD?

The Spirit World mirrors the mundane world, and resides close to it, intersecting with it in some places, but is otherwise invisible and quite separate. The Spirit World is unfettered by the laws of physics, meaning that conditions there can be very different to those of the mundane world: time may pass differently or have no meaning; colours may seem more vivid and pronounced. All physical effects in the Spirit World are the results of the spirits themselves. As a plane of existence it is infinite. It has no shape, yet reflects all aspects of

the material world so that it seems at once familiar and alien. Spirits fill the Spirit World and whirl constantly through it. Also found here are the faint souls of mortal beings whose spirits are still bound to a material body. These appear as pale shadows, and can sometimes be hard to perceive. Many spirits collect in habitats that mirror mundane world communities and settlements; others congregate in clearly defined regions that are alien or hellish to human perception. Nothing physical can exist there, only the non-corporeal.

STATES OF BEING

A soul or spirit that inhabits a physical thing, be it a living body or an inanimate object, is defined as being *corporeal*. A corporeal spirit cannot enter the Spirit World until drawn forth from its material residence.

Conversely a soul pulled from its physical body into the Spirit World is considered *disincarnate*. Whilst disincarnate, souls are separated from the senses and sensations of their body.

The last state of being applies to spirits that naturally reside in the Spirit World, and lack any tie to a physical body or object. These are defined as *manifested* when they emerge into the mundane world.

TRANCE AND BINDING

Animists learn two magical skills, Trance and Binding. Trance enables the animist to perceive spirits and enter the Spirit World. Binding allows animists to summon, dominate, and bind spirits in spirit combat. Every animist learns Trance and Binding as part of his training, which is always conducted by a shaman or high shaman. Would-be animists learn which natural features are linked with a spirit or the Spirit World, and become sensitive to the shifts, and whorls of the Spirit World as it intersects with the mundane world.

TRANCE (CON+POW)

Trance represents the animist's awareness of the Spirit World, and his ability to move between it and the material world. Anyone with Trance can, on a successful roll, detect, but not observe, the

TRANCE PREPARATION TIME

Cult Rank	Observe Spirits	Converse With Spirits	Project Self or Draw Spirit	Drag Souls
Follower	1 Hour	-	-	-
Spirit Worshipper	1 Minute	1 Hour	-	-
Shaman	1 Round	1 Minute	1 Hour	-
High Shaman	1 Action	1 Round	1 Minute	1 Hour

presence of spirits within a range equal to their POW in metres. The skill is capable of far more - but such secrets are jealously guarded by tribal shamans, and only revealed to those who progress higher in a spirit cult's hierarchy (see page 196). Each further level of knowledge allows the skill to be used in new ways, permitting observation, communication, and eventually freedom to travel the Spirit Plane.

Interacting directly with the Spirit Plane takes time, normally requiring that a ritual be performed to enter a trance-like state. The amount of time required depends on the ability being used (see Trance Preparation Timetable), and costs a single Magic Point.

If the skill check is successful then the animist can perform the following, dependent on his cult rank:

- ❖ Follower - Can observe and identify spirits within range, using their natural senses.
- ❖ Spirit Worshipper - Can converse with spirits within range, via empathic communication.
- ❖ Shaman - Can project their own soul onto the Spirit Plane. They can also draw a spirit into the material world (or expel a spirit possessing a mortal) for a time equal to their POW in minutes. Spirits unwilling to manifest (or depart) may resist using their Willpower in an opposed roll against the Trance skill of the Shaman¹.
- ❖ High Shaman - Can drag the souls of others onto the Spirit Plane with them, at a cost of 1 extra Magic Point per additional person. Unwilling participants can resist using their Willpower in an Opposed roll against the Trance skill of the High Shaman¹.

Shamans and High Shamans may travel the Spirit Plane to observe and locate other spirits. The skill provides an understanding of the abstract geography and nature of the region, and the shaman can travel up to his skill's value in kilometres away from his body. From the Spirit Plane a shaman who succeeds in a Perception test can also distinguish the souls of corporeal creatures in the material world, and thus hunt for particular species or even seek out specific people.

If the roll is a critical success then entering the trance is achieved one step more quickly (with a minimum of one Action). If the roll is fumbled, the shaman is barred from entering the Spirit Plane for a full day.

BINDING (POW+CHA)

Binding is the skill used by animists to induce or force a spirit to perform to his will. It has a range of applications:

- ❖ It can bind spirits into fetishes, places or creatures, and control their actions once bound.
- ❖ It can be used to persuade a spirit to perform a single deed for a mutually acceptable service.
- ❖ It can be used to summon a known spirit from across the Spirit Plane, provided its corresponding physical location is within the skill's value in kilometres away.
- ❖ It can be used to engage in Spirit Combat.

The POW of the largest spirit which can be coerced, bound or controlled cannot exceed three times the critical range of this skill. Thus a character with a Binding skill of 45% could control spirits of up to 15 POW.

When used to engage in Spirit Combat, the value of the Binding skill is used to calculate the amount of damage inflicted by the animist - see the Spirit Damage Table. The same table is used by spirits for their Spectral Combat skill.

SPIRIT DAMAGE

Skill Value	Damage Inflicted	Average Roll
01-20	1d2	2
21-40	1d4	3
41-60	1d6	4
61-80	1d8	5
81-100	1d10	6
101-120	2d6	7
121-140	1d8+1d6	8
141-160	2d8	9
161-180	1d10+1d8	10
181-200	2d10	11
201-220	2d10+1d2	13
221-240	2d10+1d4	14
241-260	2d10+1d6	15
261-280	2d10+1d8	16
281-300	3d10	17
Each +20%		Follow above progression

SPIRIT SOCIETIES,
CULTS & TRADITIONS

In cultures where animism is the main form of religion, spirits and fetishes are ever present, and a shaman fulfils the same role as a priest. In settings where animism is a core part of belief, spirits are fundamental parts of society, and treated with reverence, respect, and fear – not as magical batteries or buffs. Most people will have a shrine to revered ancestors or several fetishes holding totem spirits, and will take part in ceremonies of remembrance and revitalisation.

Animists who walk the otherworld binding spirits against their will, treating them as accoutrements, will soon gain a poor reputation – not only amongst their peers but also amongst spirits friendly to that culture – and gradually be alienated as a result.

¹ If the unwilling target succeeds in resisting, they cannot be affected by the same Shaman or High Shaman again, until a full day has passed. The range of these abilities is the Shaman's POW in metres.



Most animists possess enough skill in Trance to see the spirits around them when they meditate. It is highly unlikely that they will ever engage in a life and death battle in the Spirit World, since that is the shaman role. Thus most lay animists are content to master enough skill in Binding to learn the proper means of address and state of mind needed to safely invoke the power of their bound spirits.

The shaman is the bridge between the mortal world and the Spirit World. He lives a life in two realms, and with his help members of the community can pass through to the Spirit World to converse with those who have gone before.

Powerful shamans tend to attract attention in the Spirit World. When viewed there the shaman's soul echo is often the subject of many spirits seeking attention. This can be highly distracting for the shaman, and may attract the attention of predators; but a powerful shaman should have a strong enough web of allies that most hunters would rather stalk less powerful prey. However, player character shamans should expect occasional very unpleasant surprises.

Although most spirit worshippers will be a member of a cult or tradition, the organisation is unlikely to be anywhere near as formal as a theistic cult or mysticism order. Spirit cults tend to be loose affiliations of animists or may simply consist of members of single family, clan or race who venerate particular spirits. These traditions

share one simple insight: the world is alive. Each rock, plant, animal, and each cloud, pool and storm has its own spirit.

These spirits, especially the spirits of ancestors, might also be members of a tradition or be friendly towards it. Others simply have no interest in the mundane world. Some may even be actively hostile to members of a particular tradition. Because there are so many ways to approach spirit worship, cults tend to be diverse, but as a rule of thumb each spirit tradition tends to have:

- « Direct access to 1d3+3 specific types of spirit which are friendly to the tradition.
- « Knowledge of how to locate a further 1d3 types of spirit that are neutral with regards to the tradition.
- « At least one enemy or competing cult, its own allied spirits being treated as actively hostile towards the tradition.

Depending on the setting, most will have access to allied medicine, nature and ancestor spirits. These are the core spirits upon which a cult can be based, but it is not necessary for a cult to possess knowledge of all of them. The types of allied spirit can vary with the focus of the tradition.

In settings where animism co-exists with theism or sorcery, Guardian spirits become necessary allies or neutral spirits to have access to, whereas they are not really needed in animism-only settings.

Elemental spirits of differing Intensities will be available to cults having particular affiliations to large scale natural phenomena, such as earthquakes or floods. Usually (save for some high fantasy or Sword & Sorcery settings) curse, death and bane spirits are not an active part of any particular tradition, and any shaman attempting to bind them into service is taking a serious risk. The remaining types of spirit are not commonly worshipped, and tend to be propitiated rather than made into allies, unless the campaign requires diabolical spirit cults to act as antagonists for the characters.

DEFINING SPIRITS

From omnipresent spirits of nature to the restless spirits of the undead, the inhabitants of the Spirit Plane are varied and diverse: but what exactly is a spirit?

Typically a spirit is an intangible entity lacking any physical substance. At their simplest they are magical fragments of life-force cycling between the material world, and the mythic or metaphysical sources of the universe.

Spirits are generally aware of their surroundings and capable of reacting to circumstances. Those with plant and animal sentience use their base empathic drives, such as love, hunger or fear, to communicate. Sapient spirits are fully intelligent, capable of far more subtle communication approaching that of true language.

Souls are spirits that remain tied to a living, physical body in the material world. This isolates them from the Spirit World, denying

them the primordial state that they should occupy. The only ways for a soul to transcend to the Spirit World are:

- « Through death, sundering the physical and spiritual, liberating the soul to attain its next stage of existence.
- « Being made disorporate through the actions of another spirit.
- « Using the Trance skill to temporarily free the soul.

The nature of a spirit depends on its source and purpose. An animal spirit roams the Spirit Plane in similar places to its physical counterparts. They are attracted by their kin, and drawn to conceived young within which they incarnate as souls, moving to the material world through the miracle of physical birth. When they eventually die they return to the Spirit World, only to be recycled once again.

Other types of spirit serve different purposes, and their powers have a resonance affecting the mundane world. For example elemental spirits drive the natural phenomenon of the material world via their actions on the Spirit World, having a cosmic emanation that transcends the metaphysical barriers. An angered hurricane spirit tears through the Spirit World, and its anger is felt as monstrous winds on the material world. A restless earth spirit causes the ground to shake through earthquakes and rock slides.

Certain malevolent spirits bring sickness or death. A plague spirit's contagion spreads to the physical world where disease affects many. A curse spirit's malignance lingers across the mundane world, bringing misfortune to those touched by it.

Ancestor spirits are the souls of particularly powerful and revered individuals that retain their identity after death to guard their communities and faithful. Communing with the ancestors can yield advice, guidance, and secrets that provide aid in the mundane world.

Then there are the restless dead: spirits that remain tied to the physical world, unable or unwilling to pass fully into the spirit realm to be reincarnated in the great circle of being. Natural, peaceful death results in the soul passing between the worlds easily, and with grace. Violent, unwarranted death can inhibit the transition, causing the soul to linger in a limbo state between the corporeal and disorporate. Ghosts and other restless spirits yearn for the transition to the Spirit World but have been denied it: in this state they become obsessive, aggressive, selfish entities that can bring pain and torment to the living – even though all they seek is the peace that the natural order of the cosmos dictates should be theirs.

SPIRIT INTENSITY

All spirits have an Intensity. Intensity is based on a spirit's POW, and measures three things:

- « The benefit it can give to the spirit's controller.
- « How difficult the spirit is to bind and control.
- « The spirit's ability to influence the material world.

The greater a spirit's POW, the greater its Intensity. The Spirit Intensity table can be used in a number of ways to determine this relationship.

To determine the Intensity of, say, a recently deceased creature, cross reference its POW range from life with its Intensity; most player characters, when they die, will produce Intensity 1 or 2 spirits, for example.

To create a spirit that originates in the Spirit World, decide on its Intensity then roll POW as defined by the Spirit Intensity table (1d6+18, for instance, for an Intensity 3 spirit).

The lowest Intensity spirits are by far the most prevalent, but offer the least amount of benefit. A spirit with an Intensity of zero cannot affect the material world in any noticeable manner. Intensity 6 (and greater) spirits are stretching beyond the control of a lone animist, but may still be summoned, bargained with or even bound by several practitioners working together.

SPIRIT INTENSITY

Intensity	POW	POW Range
0	1d6	1-6
1	1d6+6	7-12
2	1d6+12	13-18
3	1d6+18	19-24
4	1d6+24	25-30
5	1d6+30	31-36
+1	+6	+6

CHARACTERISTICS

Spirits also possess two other characteristics: either INT or INS (Instinct – see the Creatures chapter), and CHA.

INT/INS This reflects their level of intellect when alive or the corresponding physical creature if one exists.

CHA reflects the force of the spirit's personality in very much the same way as for player characters. CHA varies widely according to the nature and type of the spirit; more detail is provided in the descriptions of specific spirits starting on page [145](#).

ATTRIBUTES

Lacking a physical body, the attributes of a spirit or disorporate soul are calculated using different Characteristics to corporeal creatures. Spirit Attributes are reckoned in the following way:

ACTION POINTS

Calculate using the sum of INT and POW (see Action Points table page [8](#)).

INITIATIVE BONUS

Figure using the average of INT and CHA.

MAGIC POINTS

Calculated as normal, but are used by spirits and souls as their Hit Points. A spirit's Magic Points do not recover whilst bound to a fetish or location, nor when summoned to the physical world; they only begin to heal on return to the Spirit Plane. (Also see the alternative concept of Tenacity on page [139](#))

SPIRIT DAMAGE

Based upon the value of a spirit's Spectral Combat skill or a soul's Binding skill: see the Spirit Damage Table on page [131](#). If a disorporate character lacks Binding, they use half the value of their Willpower on the table instead.

ATTITUDE

Each spirit has an attitude towards animists who approach it: friendly, neutral or hostile. A spirit's attitude affects how it will react to being contacted, to being bound, and what it might do if it ever escapes a binding.

Spirits that belong to the animist's tradition will most likely be friendly to the practitioner, and willing to ally with them. A bear spirit, for example, if being bound by a shaman of the Great Bear Clan, would be friendly towards an approaching shaman; neutral at worst.

Neutral spirits consist of both those that belong to traditions which are not hostile towards the shaman, and those not considered part of any tradition.

Hostile spirits belong to enemy traditions or are inherently antagonistic due to their nature. For example a tradition with wolf spirits will find that most prey animal spirits are distinctly hostile to it. Whilst water spirits and fire spirits are immediately hostile towards each other.

LOCATING AND GAINING SPIRITS

In the Spirit World spirits can be found inhabiting objects or locations relevant to their originating power; subterranean caves for darkness spirits, forests for plant spirits, and so on. Remote places are generally favoured because there is diminished interference from other, more disturbing sources of magic. In the case of more transient spirits the locale can shift. Lesser herd beast spirits are found following the great migrations for example, with more powerful ones found instead at mythic Death Grounds where the greatest beasts go to die. Frequently the location is a place of striking or beautiful appearance.

Ancestor spirits typically live in communities mirroring their corporeal homes, or may have made for themselves a new home, such as a Feasting Hall, Medicine Lodge or Spirit Manse. Indeed all ancestor spirits may be found in one location but with clear delineations between old culture and origins.

As the mundane and Spirit worlds intersect, animists who want swiftly to access the Spirit World location for a particular kind of spirit, travel to the real-world equivalents of the spirit abode. A shaman wanting to contact the Great Bear spirit would travel deep into the woods and find the hunting trails and territories of mundane bears. A High Shaman seeking to locate and bind a death spirit

SPIRIT RELATIONSHIPS

Over the course of a campaign, some spirit allies may be willing to undertake tasks for the animist or even fight for him by attacking an enemy in spirit combat. This kind of independent behaviour should be the result of mutual respect or perhaps a debt of gratitude, but must be something that unfolds over time in play. The possibility exists that a friendship may grow between a animist, and an allied spirit, in which case the Games Master should feel free to use the spirit as the animist's future fetch (if suitable for the setting) or as a fully fledged non-player character to continue the relationship.

would travel to a burial or execution ground, knowing that here the links to the Spirit World where such spirits lurk are strongest.

Of course not all animists need to travel blindly through remote wilderness locations to find a specific type of spirit. A guardian of a necropolis might, for example, have immediate access to many ancestor spirits whilst the Spirit Tradition of a nomadic clan may maintain cult knowledge of a dozen secret locations where certain spirits gather (See Spirit Cults page [193](#)).

Locating a spirit normally requires an animist to either:

- ❖ Scour the mundane world, using Trance to view the Spirit Plane, on the off chance of noticing a suitable specimen.
- ❖ Shift fully into the Spirit World to search for a specific spirit.
- ❖ Journey to a location known to his tradition, where particular spirits are reputed to reside.
- ❖ Have someone of greater skill, rank or knowledge summon a known spirit for the animist.

Spirits might be relatively easy to locate: knowing how to control one is an entirely different matter. Each spirit has its own idiosyncrasies regarding how it can be found, propitiated or bound. Shamanic cults and spirit traditions possess fragments of this lore, which can influence their skill regarding particular spirit types. For example, the shamans of the Great Bear Clan know that the spirit of the Great Bear should never be approached during the winter when all bear spirits hibernate. They also know that the best place to encounter Grandfather Bear, when he is at his least aggressive, is after making a sacrifice of favoured prey – such as a large salmon caught fresh from the water.

Once located, animists may approach spirits in two ways:

- ❖ Negotiation: looking to strike a bargain, in return for a singular service.
- ❖ Binding: seeking to bind the spirit into continued service.

SPIRIT NEGOTIATION

Animists will make contact with many spirits over time, some of their own tradition, others not. Rather than binding them all to service as fetishes, most animists attempt to strike bargains – providing something the spirit wants in return for a singular service for the animist.

In negotiation, the spirit must be willing to bargain, and be either friendly or neutral towards the animist. If remaining in the material world this requires the animist to successfully enter a detached reverie using his Trance skill, and possess the ability to communicate with the spirit, in line with a cult rank of Spirit Worshipper or higher. Alternatively the animist can ask a shaman or High Shaman to manifest the spirit in question.

Once communication has been established, the animist may then request the spirit's aid to perform a single task in return for performing a like service for the spirit. Some spirits are willing to enter into a more formal arrangement by providing the animist with their name, becoming an ally. In response the animist agrees to undertake some sort of repeating task or accept some form of geas or compulsion in line with the spirit's nature. On the most abstract level it can be assumed that the task will cost the animist a number of Experience Rolls equal to the spirit's Intensity per year to complete the service or suffer the inconvenience.

Such bargains can be settled by decision of the Games Master, or resolved with an Opposed Test of suitable skills, such as the supplicant's Influence skill versus the spirit's Willpower. Failure to reach an accord has no further effect. Fumbling the roll however, may cause the spirit to react with anger.

SPIRIT BINDING

Binding a spirit always requires the animist to engage the spirit directly in Spirit Combat. If he is able to compel a bargain (see page 138) or lower the spirit to zero Magic Points, and its POW does not exceed the limit set by his Binding skill, the animist may then bind it into a fetish, a location, or a creature; each type of binding necessitating its own requirements in terms of use and vulnerability, often in the form of taboos.

FETISH BINDINGS

A fetish is a ceremonial object that embodies magical power. Any item can become a fetish for a spirit, but amongst primitive cultures, fetishes tend to be items made from an item associated with that spirit (a bear's claw or tooth, for example, or its hide).

Whilst confined within its fetish a spirit cannot be harmed by hostile magic or other spirits; it remains in stasis, unaware of its surroundings. For an animist to use its magical ability a bound spirit must first be called from the fetish, to serve the holder. The binding still exists, but the spirit is now able to exert its power and travel up to its POW in metres away from the fetish.

Over time any animist possessing a fetish takes on some of the spirit's essence. So the owner of a bear tooth holding a bear spirit may feel dozy in winter or take on bearish odour. Fetishes holding curse or sickness spirits may emit a miasma that induces minor symptoms in the holder, making the fetish extremely unpleasant. Conversely a stone holding a Fire spirit would be warm to the touch - which may occasionally be useful.

Since the spirit of a fetish only submits to the control of whoever is holding the object, animists closely, and jealously guard their fetishes. It is usually taboo to touch an animist's fetish without his permission, and those who try risk the animist's ire.

In certain circumstances two or more animists might end up struggling for physical control over a fetish, and by inference the spirit bound to it. In these cases both should roll their Binding skill as an Opposed test, the winner gaining command over the spirit until challenged again.

LOCATION BINDINGS

A spirit can also be bound to a specific location. This is usually done to protect an area. Unlike a fetish the spirit is able to roam the area specified by the animist when it was bound, but no further than ten times the spirit's POW in metres from the exact spot the binding occurred.

Within this region the spirit is both visible and vulnerable to direct magical assault, unless it has the Manifestation ability to travel back and forth from the Spirit Plane (although it will still be trapped in the binding area). In return the spirit may use its powers, and freely interact with anyone within the location.

Often hostile spirits are bound to locations instead of fetishes, imprisoning them so they cannot cause harm. In such cases the binding taboo is usually linked to oaths of not trespassing into the area,

SETTINGS WITHOUT SPIRITS

In some fantasy settings magicians are able to travel the ethereal planes in spirit form, yet encounter no ecology of spirits other than the souls of other Animism practitioners. This need not be a hindrance, since spirits are not strictly necessary for an accomplished spiritualist who has mastered the necessary skills.

For example, a practitioner can still use the Trance skill to pass messages over great distances, provide warnings to dreaming mortals, and act as a very effective spy or scout. Similarly the Binding skill can be used to combat opposing psychics, possess the physical bodies of others, and perhaps even kill from afar.

Thus a magician or psychic should never be underestimated just because they lack a comprehensive collection of bound spirits. The utility of their skills is limited only by the imagination of the player.

non-aggravation from otherwise harmless activities like dancing, or the establishment of regular propitiatory sacrifice to placate it.

Only the binder, or the cult he belongs to may exert command a location-bound spirit. If two or more animists of that cult vie for control over the spirit, it is resolved similarly to struggles over a fetish.

CREATURE BINDINGS

Spirits can also be bound into the body of a living creature. In principle the creature is loyal to whoever bound it, or the person they have assigned it to.

Advantages are that the spirit may recover Magic Points naturally, can move freely as allowed by its body and gains immunity from direct magical assault (as per a fetish).

Drawbacks are that it is now vulnerable to physical damage; the spirit's abilities only affect the body it is bound to; the creature must be tattooed or branded with the spirit's binding; and most dubious of all – unlike Possession – the creature's original soul must be permanently sundered from its body, in effect killing it to make space for the new spirit.

Totemists are avid practitioners of creating such living fetishes, placing spirits into the bodies of their totem animals who then act as animal companions.

Some spirits with the Animate ability can be bound into corpses. In such cases the bound spirit cannot regain Magic Points.

FETISH PROLIFERATION

In most cultures a Shaman is a combination of priest, doctor, teacher, lawyer, undertaker, and spiritual border guard for their community. Most of their efforts are taken up with mundane affairs, and they have very little time for the exertion required for creating extraneous fetishes. Community members might gain a fetish as an adulthood ritual, and maybe others after significant rites-of-passage.

The number of fetishes prevalent in a community depends on many factors such as whether lower ranked members of the cult are permitted to own fetishes, if fetishes are reserved for those of a particular sex or profession, and whether the tradition has existed so long that previously created fetishes are handed down as heirlooms within families. In general, shamans have more important things to do than provide magic items for wandering characters.

CREATING A BINDING

The creation of a binding costs one Experience Roll per point of Intensity of the spirit. This represents the time and development needed to prepare the item, location or creature in which the spirit will be held. The ritual usually takes one week, at the end of which the animist should roll the spirit's Characteristics randomly, based on its Intensity. It is always possible that the spirit gained may be too powerful for the animist to control.

An animist can attempt to improve the binding's potency to contain a more powerful spirit of the same type by paying the difference in Experience Rolls. Thus an animist with a fetish capable of containing an Intensity 2 Animal Spirit could upgrade it to hold an Intensity 3 Animal Spirit by paying one Experience Roll. The animist can also replace the spirit of a fetish with one of the same type of the same Intensity, at no additional cost in Experience Rolls, provided the spirit can be found or a shaman persuaded to do the finding.

The recipient of a fetish or creature binding does not need to have bound the spirit himself. Lower ranking worshippers of a spirit cult often gain spirits through undertaking a ritual in collaboration with a shaman who binds it for them. While the shaman searches, the supplicant fasts and meditates, or sings and dances, purifying himself in preparation for the gift of the spirit. The bound spirit counts against the supplicant's limit, not the shaman's.

Animists of less than Shaman rank are not prevented from undertaking the search and binding a spirit personally, save that such tasks are sometimes dangerous, and would be frowned on by peers of the community if, for instance, the attempt ended with a malicious spirit possessing the would-be fetish maker.

Shamans usually only provide spirits to members of the same tradition or in recompense for great favours. Even then shamans will usually only bind friendly spirits associated with their cult in this manner. Seeking out spirits of a disparate or contrary nature is dangerous for both the shaman and the supplicant.

Physically destroying a binding, by killing the host creature or shattering its fetish for instance, immediately unbinds the spirit it contains. Upon gaining its freedom a spirit can either return to the Spirit World or, if hostile, possibly attempt to attack the animist who imprisoned it. Malicious shamans sometimes booby-trap places with easily broken fetishes containing dangerous spirits.

A spirit can be voluntarily unbound from its binding by its owner. Many reasons exist to do this, such as wishing to replace the spirit with a less damaged version. Owners can only manumit a spirit from its bondage if their Binding skill is capable of handling the POW of the shackled spirit.

LIMITS TO BOUND SPIRITS

The maximum number of spirits an animist can hold in bondage depends on cult rank:

- ❖ Follower: $\frac{1}{4}$ of CHA
- ❖ Spirit Worshipper: half of CHA
- ❖ Shaman: $\frac{3}{4}$ of CHA
- ❖ High Shaman: All CHA

If this number is ever exceeded, then the strongest spirit or spirits break free, possibly extracting revenge if they were hostile to the binding. Neutral spirits may be simply mischievous.

USING SPIRITS

A spirit's magical effects are persistent, lasting until it is sent away, countermanded or recalled to a fetish. This can make animists formidable foes. However, manifested spirits are vulnerable to magic that specifically targets spiritual entities. If so dismissed or destroyed, the spirit is gone for good until a replacement can be summoned.

Animists generally use their spirits in one of two ways: call upon a materially bound spirit, or summon a spirit from afar to perform an agreed task. These two different uses have different methods of resolution.

CALLING UPON A BINDING

Depending on its attitude a bound spirit will see its binding as either a prison or a positive relationship with its owner. Hostile spirits are always seeking to hinder or undermine whoever dared to command it; friendly spirits are sanguine and obeisant. Neutral spirits have little care either way. How the spirit behaves when called upon is thus dependent on its attitude.

Commanding a bound spirit takes an Action, costs 1 Magic Point, and requires a Binding skill roll. Depending on the result of the roll the following occurs:

- ❖ Critical Success: The command is not only successful, but costs the animist no Magic Points.
- ❖ Success: The spirit is commanded successfully, and performs the deed requested of it.
- ❖ Failure: The spirit ignores the command. The animist must wait until his next Turn to try again.
- ❖ Fumble: The command is so badly botched the binding is broken, allowing the spirit to return to the Spirit Plane or to turn on the animist if hostile.

A spirit that escapes the authority of the animist, can act freely until it is compelled to obey.

While under control a spirit performs its instruction to the best of its abilities, yet if the animist wishes it to perform a different task, he must issue a new command with the requisite Magic Point cost and Binding skill roll. There is always the possibility of losing control of a spirit and, the more powerful a spirit is, the more dangerous it is likely to be.

If the spirit's POW is greater than the limit set by the user's Binding skill, any attempt to command it fails.

In the specific case of a fetish, the bound spirit emerges from its binding-object as a Free Action to perform the first command given it. Returning the spirit to the fetish costs the animist an Action Point on their Turn, but no further Magic Points. Only if the spirit is neutral or hostile to the animist is a Binding skill check required to succeed.

SUMMONING A SPIRIT

Animists can summon spirits they have successfully negotiated with previously or know the true name of - the latter something which is normally held secret by members of the animist's cult or tradition.

To conjure the spirit the animist uses his Trance skill to make contact with the Spirit World (though he need not enter it). Assuming the spirit is within range, the animist may then issue a summons.

ATTITUDE OF A SUMMONED SPIRIT

<i>Binding</i>		<i>Allied Spirit</i>	<i>Neutral Spirit</i>	<i>Hostile Spirit</i>
<i>Test</i>				
Animist wins	Spirit repeatedly serves the animist for the remainder of the scenario	Spirit serves once	Spirit serves grudgingly, and attempts to pervert the command	
Spirit wins	Spirit serves once then departs in friendship	Spirit departs	Spirit turns on the animist	

The summoning attempt costs the animist a number of Magic Points equal to the spirit's Intensity, and requires a Binding test:

- ❖ Critical Success: The spirit anticipates its summons, arriving in 1d3 rounds.
- ❖ Success: The spirit hears the summons, and arrives in 1d6 minutes.
- ❖ Failure: The spirit fails to notice the call. The animist may try again the following day.
- ❖ Fumble: The spirit is mortally offended by the manner of the summons. The bond between the summoner, and the spirit is suspended until the animist can offer amends for his affront.

What happens then depends on the spirit's attitude towards its summoner, and whether it owes the animist a service. To determine how helpful or malicious it is, the spirit makes an opposed test of its Willpower against the animist's summoning roll. Refer the result on the Attitude of a Summoned Spirit table.

Note that if the POW of the spirit is beyond the capability of the animist to control, it may act independently or place its own interpretation on a service demanded of it.

OBSERVING MANIFESTED SPIRITS

In the Spirit World spirits are imperceptible to any corporeal creature, save for those with the Trance skill or some other such ability such as a mystic's Spirit Sense trait. However, spirits brought into the material world are manifested, potentially allowing them to become detectable by natural means.

Spirits can manifest in a number of ways. Normally spirits which augment the animist form a ghostly shape, whirling intangibly as an aura about the summoner. Embodied spirits infest, and actually modify the animist's physique, whereas a possessing spirit lurks ethereally within the mortal shell of the animist. How perceivable the spirit is depends greatly upon the setting.

SPIRIT COMBAT

Since most spirits are intangible, conflict must be resolved by other means than the clash of weapons.

Spirit Combat in the mortal realm usually takes the appearance of ghostly shapes swarming the body of their transfixed victim. Nothing stops the mortal from physically responding if they desire, save for futility if they lack magic to affect the spirit assaulting them.

Within the Spirit World however, such combats can be completely abstract in both the challenge presented, and in the appearance of the participants and their surroundings: it does not need to resemble a conventional fight. Instead an attack could be the

replaying of a painful memory from the opponent's past life, or forcing them to confront and overcome a hidden phobia. A combat might even be a light-hearted contest: riddling perhaps, or boastful attempts at one-upmanship and humiliation. The outcome though, is usually serious.

Generally only spirits and animists initiate Spirit Combat, as characters without the Binding skill lack knowledge of how to fight in this way.

ENGAGING IN SPIRIT COMBAT

Spirit Combat works almost identically to normal combat save that mortal combatants (if present in the Spirit World) use their Spirit Attributes, rather than physical attributes, as described earlier in this chapter.

Rather than wielding weapons, spirits have a Spectral Combat skill to make psychic attacks and parries. Animists use their Binding skill, whereas those uninitiated in Animism must rely on their Willpower skill instead.

As with physical combat, each attack and parry exchange in Spirit Combat is treated as a Differential Roll. If one or more levels of success are achieved then Spirit Combat Special Effects may be selected (see table).

In addition, a successful attack which is not parried, inflicts an amount of damage equal to the attacker's Spirit Damage roll to the defender's Magic Points. (For settings with no natural Magic Points see Tenacity, page 139)

If the defender runs out of Action Points with which to defend themselves, then they are left wide open, and the attacker may attempt to make an unopposed attack roll. Corporal characters engaged in Spirit Combat in the physical world may forgo their attack in order to cast magic or perform a physical act instead.

Fleeing Spirit Combat is not always possible. If the fight occurs in the material world, characters obviously cannot escape unless they physically depart the area the spirit occupies. On the Spirit Plane however, a disincorporated animist can, instead of trying to damage their opponent, declare that they are using a Combat Action to try and escape back to their body. An Opposed test of the animist's Trace skill against the spirit's Spectral Combat is required. If the animist wins they break free, and the combat ends, but if the spirit wins then the animist fails to get away. It is impossible for souls who do not have the Trance skill to consciously escape from the Spirit World as they have no knowledge or understanding of how to move within it. Only if they defeat or drive off their attacker will they be freed from its disincorporation. Otherwise they must be rescued by an animist.

Combat continues until the fight is concluded by use of a Special Effect, or one of the combatants is reduced to zero Magic Points, at which point they are defeated.

SPIRIT COMBAT SPECIAL EFFECTS

Special Effect	Offensive	Defensive	Specific Roll	Description
Bleed Essence	X	X	Critical Only	Inflict a psychic wound which leaks 1 Magic Point per cycle, until Spirit Combat ends
Compel Bargain	X			Attacker makes an opposed roll of their Influence against the Defender's Willpower. If successful combat ends, and they force the defender to perform a deed
Drive Off	X		Mortals Only	Spirit must resist attack roll with Willpower or depart the combat
Leech Strength	X		Critical Only	Attacker absorbs the Magic Points inflicted by the attack
Obscure		X	Critical Only	Attacker can no longer perceive the defender, unless attacked again
Possess	X		Spirits Only	Assuming spirit is capable of possession, the defender must resist its attack roll with their Willpower or become possessed
Psychic Stun	X	X		Opponent loses next Turn
Restrain	X	X	Mortals Only	Prevents the spirit from fleeing or engaging others in Spirit Combat
Spirit Lance	X			Roll Spirit Damage twice, and take the best result
Sunder Binding	X	X	Spirit Fumbles	Breaks the fetish or binding the spirit came from
Suppress Ability	X	X	Mortals Only	Shuts down one of the spirit's abilities currently in use
Turn Back		X		Attacker suffers its own Spirit Damage roll instead of the defender
Withdraw		X		The defender may automatically disengage from Spirit Combat, returning to their body (if mortal), fetish or the Spirit Plane (if a summoned spirit)

CONSEQUENCES OF DEFEAT

If a participant in Spirit Combat reaches zero Magic Points they are reduced to a helpless state. Several things may then happen:

- ❖ Possessed: Certain spirits may possess the loser's body, to inflict their malignance. (see Possession and Exorcism page 140).
- ❖ Bound: If the loser is a spirit it may be bound into a fetish, location or creature binding.
- ❖ Exorcised: If the loser is a spirit currently possessing a mortal, then it can be exorcised from the body of the victim, and forced to return to the Spirit World.
- ❖ Dissipated: Spirits with the Deadly ability (page 143) may destroy the loser by tearing their essence apart. If the dissipated spirit was a disincorporated mortal, then the physical body dies with the destruction of its soul. Some spirits can recover from being dissipated if they have the Recurring trait.
- ❖ Obligation: In exchange for its freedom, the loser must grant one service to the victor. This is one of the more common outcomes of a combat, and forms the basis for animists compelling spirits to do their bidding.
- ❖ Expelled: If the loser is a disincorporated soul, he may be ejected from the Spirit World.
- ❖ Ignored: If the loser poses no threat or interest to the victor, he may simply be ignored. Quite often a victorious spirit has no ability to do anything else to a defeated opponent.
- ❖ Sundered: Limited to spirits with the Deadly ability (page 143) such as death spirits. If the loser is a disincorporated soul, he may be torn completely free of his material form, normally causing the death of the body but transfiguring the soul into a spirit. What then happens to the sundered soul depends on the victorious spirit, and it may become one of its thralls – perhaps exiled to the mundane world to bring fear to other mortals, or retained as a slave in the Spirit World.

Note that some of the above consequences can only be chosen by spirits capable of that action. Animists, however, are taught the necessary skills to be able to freely choose any of the consequences known to their cult.

Defeat does not inevitably need to result in something bad. Many Spirit Combats are not antagonistic at all, but rather a test of an animist's strength or the abstract representation of a negotiation where the spirit and animist are debating with empathetic images and memory. Winning such a challenge sways the loser to regard the victor with respect, perhaps even capitulating a passionately debated issue.

Even if the Spirit Combat was violent the winner may not want to inflict any additional revenge: much depends on the type of spirit to begin with. A peaceful mountain spirit may simply cast a foolish animist back to the material world; a predator spirit may inflict a ritual scar that manifests on the loser's material body, showing that

THE RECURRING TRAIT

Normally spirits dissipated as a consequence of losing Spirit Combat are forever destroyed, their essence recycling into the fabric of the Spirit Plane. Spirits possessing the Recurring trait are not eradicated. Although ripped asunder their individual elements gradually reform, eventually restoring the original spirit no matter what is done to it.

Such an involved process takes time. A dissipated spirit requires a number of days equal to its Intensity to reform, plus whatever time is required to recuperate its Magic Points. although in some settings the period can often be longer.

Restored spirits retain their former knowledge, skills, and memory. This often leads to them seeking revenge for their previous destruction – a dangerous situation for any animist. The only ways to deal with such a spirit are to either imprison it in a fetish where it can no longer cause harm, or discover why it keeps recurring. This is normally due to some enchantment or an unfinished task that must be completed before the spirit will rest.

he was bested; a curse spirit will likely be driven to possessing those it defeats; and a disease spirit is likely to infect the victim. Games Masters must adjudicate the circumstances and repercussions according to the spirit's inherent nature.

MULTIPLE OPPONENTS VERSUS A SINGLE SPIRIT

In certain circumstances a Spirit Combat might ensue where one side has a numerical advantage over the other. This may be a group of disorporated mortals facing a single spirit of high Intensity. Conversely it could be an animist ambushed by multiple spirits of minor power.

Whilst single combats between disproportionate foes may pose little threat to the more skilful practitioner, the situation can change if several lesser opponents gang up on a more powerful individual. The normal result of such a one-sided engagement is that the more numerous side is able to launch a number of unopposed attacks, which will begin to whittle down the overwhelmed defender.

Attempting to flee multiple opponents requires that an animist's Opposed disengagement roll beats all of his foes, otherwise he remains trapped by their numbers. Conversely, if a member of the attacking pack decides to flee, then they get away automatically, provided at least one associate remains behind to cover their retreat.

SPIRIT COMBAT OPTIONS

Using Magic Points as spiritual Hit Points is the default method of measuring damage during Spirit Combat: it poses considerable problems if attacked victims have no magical reserves to prevent Spirit Combat, lessen its effects, or preserve/recover Magic Points quickly. In such situations any spirit or shaman could become unstoppable.

To overcome these circumstances, two alternate methods of running Spirit Combat are provided below.

TENACITY

As well as storing or producing Magic Points, which are used in the mundane world to fuel magic, POW also creates Tenacity Points, which measure a character's resilience when in the Spirit World. Tenacity Points are the focus of Spirit Damage, preserving Magic Points solely for the use of magic, and ensuring that magicians defeated in Spirit Combat are still capable of maintaining their earthly magical powers afterwards.

Tenacity Points cannot be used to cast magic. They are only tracked to judge the psychological endurance of those engaging in Spirit Combat. When reduced to zero the will to resist is broken, leaving the loser unable to avoid the consequences of the defeat.

Adding Tenacity Points has the advantage that all magicians, be they theists, mystics or sorcerers, do not become spiritually weakened

MENTAL RESILIENCE

Tenacity has the additional benefit of becoming a flexible measure of other mental states. If the campaign is of a kind where supernatural, and alien horrors are capable of shredding the frail sanity of humanity, Tenacity can be used to track deteriorating mental states, with zero Tenacity points reflecting serious psychological damage, and the decline into insanity.

Similarly Tenacity could be used for resisting corruption, experiencing battle fatigue, suffering addictions, facing supernatural forces in historical settings, and so forth.



by casting magic. Tenacity is independent of magical effort, providing them with a level playing field when placed beside iron willed warrior types.

Modifying Spirit Combat to use Tenacity is a simple case of adding this as a new attribute to complement Magic Points. Tenacity Points lost in Spirit Combat recover every 24 hours, provided the character is sufficiently well rested on their native plane of existence.

PHYSICAL DAMAGE

Appropriate for nearly all Sword & Sorcery genres, this option is the perfect replacement for personal Magic Points in worlds where magic and violent sacrifice is rife. Nonetheless, it is best suited for campaigns where Spirit Combat is only used to harm and destroy, rather than for abstract challenges.

To avoid the difficulties that corporeal beings face in settings where they have no normal access to Magic Points, any damage they take in Spirit Combat is applied to their physical Hit Points instead of their soul. This approach has several distinctions.

- ❖ Spirits can keep Magic Points as Hit Points since they lack a corporeal form.
- ❖ All corporeal beings can take about the same amount of damage, regardless whether they are magic users or not.
- ❖ Injuries suffered during Spirit Combat become more visceral since damage is applied to locations. Although animists gain an increase in effective 'spiritual' Hit Points, in fact characters become increasingly vulnerable to spiritual beings with large Spirit Damage.
- ❖ To offset location vulnerability, Animists and sapient spirits possessing knowledge of armour can manifest psychic

protection with a value of one Armour Point per 20% of the Trance skill.

Since spirit damage is applied directly to locational Hit Points, Serious and Major Wounds have duplicate physiological effects on an animist. On the Spirit Plane however, a serious wound prevents the victim from attacking for his next 1d3 Turns, whilst a major wound incapacitates, so that he immediately loses the Spirit Combat.

Note that an animist can physically be killed by this type of combat even though something else might be happening to his soul.

POSSESSION AND EXORCISM

Possession occurs when a spirit dominates the soul of a corporeal being, usually through a Spirit Combat defeat or the Possess Special Effect. The possessing entity inhabits the loser's body, perhaps seizing control of it. Possession comes in three forms: Dominant, Passive and Covert.

A possessing spirit weaves itself into the victim, so that even if it is drawn forth to engage in spirit combat, part of it remains anchored to the host. No creature can ever purge itself of a possessing entity. Others must first defeat it in Spirit Combat, and then exorcise the spirit, or banish it by successfully casting a specific type of expulsion magic. If the original body of a mortal possessor has been killed in its absence, then its soul usually dies when it is exorcised. Spirits merely return to the Spirit World..

Needless to say, a possessing spirit or soul can willingly abandon a possession at any time.

DOMINANT POSSESSION

Dominant Possession occurs when the possessing spirit takes complete control of the body. The victim is fully aware that its body has been taken over but is absolutely powerless, unable to take any action at all. The possessor does not have access to any of the memories, skills or magic of the possessed, but substitutes its own instead.

To actively detect a dominant possession requires a successful, unopposed test of either Insight if viewed magically, or Trance.

PASSIVE POSSESSION

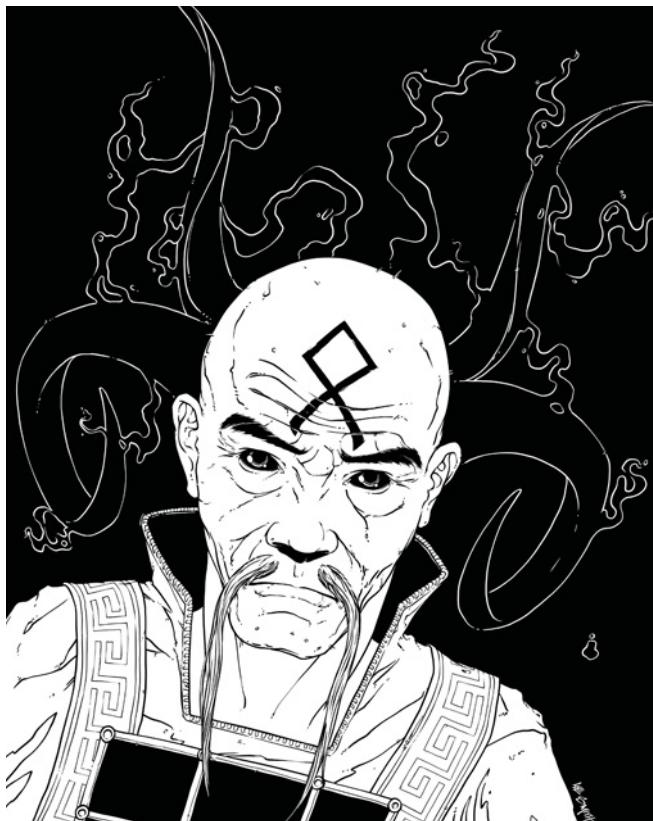
Passive Possession occurs when the spirit lodges itself within the victim, but is unable to seize control, allowing the host to remain in full command of its faculties. Instead the spirit 'merely' inflicts its powers on the host's body.

COVERT POSSESSION

As per Passive Possession, but the spirit remains hidden. The victim remains unaware of his possession, unless the spirit chooses to inform him of its presence. Some spirits take over the victim's body

DIABOLIC SPIRITS

In many cultures spirits have long been thought of as demons or devils, otherworldly beings who take control of the living to wreak havoc in the real world. With the wide range of abilities, and spirit types available, it would be easy for a Games Master to use animism to design fully fledged demonologists, perhaps even using Wraiths as a template for more material demons. The stereotypical hierarchy of the underworld could easily be replicated by assigning increasing Intensity to higher ranked fiends, with Demon Lords possessing Intensity 6 or higher.



at night when they are sleeping, thus keeping their existence secret, save for inevitable physical exhaustion, and odd fleeting nightmares.

Detecting a covert possession requires a successful Opposed roll of the investigator's Insight (if viewed magically) or Trance skill versus the spirit's Stealth skill.

ANIMISM TRICKS

Animism provides a great deal of flexibility in mimicking most historical or fantasy forms of animism, shamanism and totemism. Yet there are a number of cunning tricks used in novels or recorded in cultural mythology that Games Masters can use, or grant to specific cults as part of their secret teachings.

REJUVENATING SPIRITS

As described in the Spiritual Attributes section, the Magic Points of a spirit only recover when it is in the Spirit World, since it is the source which provides their magical life-force. Those spirits present in the material world, whether bound to a fetish or manifested via summoning, have no way of recovering their energy, and may eventually wither away depending on how badly they are treated.

In a similar way the souls of corporeal creatures cannot recover their Magic Points whilst present in the Spirit World, since their magical strength comes from the physical world.

Animists whose spirits have been damaged by magical attacks or Spirit Combat may therefore have a difficult choice to make. Manumitting a spirit from a fetish so it can return to the Spirit World will allow it to recover its strength, but there is no guarantee it will permit itself to be re-bound. Conversely failing to liberate a greatly weakened spirit is effectively condemning it to impotence, or even

death: something the cult, tradition or donator of the spirit may frown upon.

To overcome this, animists can ceremonially sacrifice their own Magic Points directly to the damaged spirit, restoring its essence. This helps prevent a spirit from withering away, and has no detrimental effect on the animist, who may regain donated Magic Points normally through whichever methods are used in the campaign.

SPIRIT TRAPS

A whole array of cunning traps can be prepared using spirits, to guard a particular item or area. The classic method is to construct a fetish from fragile material (or one that will be inadvertently destroyed as part of everyday use) thereby unbinding the spirit held within; such as a log hidden in a wood pile which will be burned for heat, or a carefully inscribed mandala drawn into the sandy floor of a cave. Breaking the fetish allows the spirit to escape; and woe betide those who are in the vicinity. Hostile entities like wraiths, curse or sickness spirits are preferred for such traps because, on release they can engage trespassers in Spirit Combat to take their revenge.

BINDING A SOUL INTO A LIVING CREATURE

Binding a soul of a sapient person into another living creature is a nefarious act reserved for those cults that revel in chaos and evil. The host beast is usually something considered insulting or taboo, and usually of little threat to the animist who performs the binding. Whether the original body of the victim is left to die from neglect or is utilised in some other way depends on the objective of the animist. Some Bindings are simply temporary punishments designed to humiliate; the creator permitting the victim to return to his body after the lesson is learned.

BODY SNATCHING

Body snatching takes the concept of soul binding one step further, using it for subversive purposes. A demon ruling a kingdom using the body of its monarch is a familiar trope of Sword & Sorcery fantasy.

To body snatch the animist chooses a victim and, after defeating them in Spirit Combat, binds their soul into another creature. The empty body that remains is then inhabited by the animist, who need not worry about a potentially hostile soul co-habiting the physical shell; nor about triggering the suspicion of anyone in search of possession regarding the snatched body via Trance or other magical means..

Body snatches are nearly impossible to detect, save for the changed personality of the occupant. Physically the disguise is perfect. The animist's own body may be in some danger whilst he takes command of another. In settings where fetches are unknown, the usual stereotype is that the spiritualist literally exchanges bodies with the victim; so that a tenant remains who will, at the very least, feed his temporarily abandoned shell.

Of course if the animist's original body dies he no longer has any place to escape back to, causing his own death if somehow exorcised.

SURVIVING AFTER DEATH

A technique passed down amongst a few highly skilled shamans is the ability to survive after death. Since highly skilled animists have rigid control over their own soul, they can hold themselves on the Spirit Plane for some specific purpose, effectively postponing their

SPIRITS IN DIFFERENT SETTINGS

In pseudo-historical settings the presence of a spirit, and its effects are normally invisible to the naked eye. Clues can be given to their attendance using other perceptions, skin breaking out in goosebumps or a faint moaning for example – but without some form of magical detection, bound or summoned spirits cannot be targeted.

In low fantasy settings the existence of a spirit can be more obvious. The immediate area around the spirit might take on certain visual cues, for instance hallucinatory morphing of objects seen out of the corner of the eye or an inexplicable deepening of shadows. To target such manifestations without magical aid requires a successful Perception check in each round.

In epic fantasy settings the presence of manifested spirits is clearly seen, and can be directly targeted. The source, and nature of the spirits directly affects their appearance. A totemic shaman for instance may appear to be guarded by a ghostly black wolf which eats any spell cast at its master; whilst a victim of a dominantly possessing sickness spirit may appear to have his skin constantly erupting in weeping sores, and pustules.

The visibility of spirits in a campaign should be considered carefully, as it can set the tone of animist magic. Zero or low visibility makes tackling animists dangerous, but adds greatly to a feeling of suspicion, and fear. Highly visible spirits are far easier to defeat with magic, but provide a very dramatic impact.

transcendence to the source of all things or whatever afterlife is destined for them.

In the Spirit World they cannot regain Magic Points, and it is only a matter of time before natural attrition from aggressive spirits finally dissipates their soul. To avoid this, most animists try to locate the nearest living creature they feel capable of discorporating, defeating in Spirit Combat, and possess it. This could be anything from a small animal to their own murderer.

Once returned to a living body the shaman can recover Magic Points normally. However the maximum number of Magic Points the shaman can muster is limited by the Characteristic POW of the creature they now occupy.

Of course a shaman who persists in this semi-vampiric manner is vulnerable to being exorcised. If this occurs it may result in the shaman's true death or force them to restart the cycle, depending on how they achieved their first self-aware reincarnation.

Several options are:

❖ Knowledge of how to survive after death is inherent with gaining the rank of High Shaman. Such animists must succeed in an Opposed test of their Trance skill against the Attack roll which killed them, or else be overwhelmed by the shock of the blow, and unable to prevent their soul from transcending.

❖ The shaman must succeed in an unopposed Willpower test, but also needs to define what his objective for continued living will be. Once he has achieved this aim the shaman's soul continues to the afterlife.

BINDING HUGE SPIRITS

As Spirit Combat suggests, larger spirits can be challenged by a group of animists acting in concert. Whilst fundamentally dangerous (since individual animists could easily be slain with a single backlash) such efforts can be rewarded by overthrowing spirits of

impressively large Intensity. The defeat of such spirits permits the animists to bind, dissipate or extract a single service from the entity.

Binding the spirit can be a liability. Choosing to bind the spirit within a fetish effectively imprisons it - a good thing if the spirit in question is malicious or destructive. On the other hand, the spirit's POW may make it impossible to control by anyone calling it out of the fetish.

Requesting a service from the spirit is also risky. Usually the boon is deferred to a later time, granting the spirit a chance to recover. Such requests are normally granted to the cult or tradition of those that managed to defeat it, rather to a specific individual. However this does permit any member of that cult who knows of the bargain and the name of the entity to call upon the owed debt.

SPIRIT TYPES

Spirits come in many forms, ranging from minor nature spirits through to powerful kami of major environmental forces, beyond mortal control; mischievous ghosts through to dreadful undead manifestations.

Although spirits are living entities rather than mechanistic spells, they still have specific sources or powers to which they are associated.

- ❖ A spirit can be an incarnation of an abstract magical or natural effect
- ❖ A spirit can be the individual or collective essence of a species of plant or animal
- ❖ A spirit can be the venerated soul of a dead ancestor
- ❖ A spirit can be the vengeful remnant of a dead creature

APPLYING SPIRIT POWERS

Animists can use a spirit's powers in three ways; Augmentation, Embodiment, Abdication, and Discorporation.

Augmentation: *The simplest, and safest spirits are Nature, and Guardian spirits who augment the animist. The spirit gives the practitioner a benefit by flowing through or around his body, and is easily returned to a fetish. An animist who walks through some form of magical anti-spirit barrier will strip his augmenting spirits away if it powerful enough to affect them.*

Embodiment: *This is the active task of assimilating a spirit's powers, and advantages into the animist's physical being, directly channeling, and becoming one with the spirit. Elemental or Shape-shifting spirits work in this way. Embodiment can be risky, and demanding: a weak animist who incautiously embodies such a spirit risks being consumed or entrapped by it. Whilst embodying a spirit, the animist is unable to physically cross anti-spirit barriers that are strong enough to stop a spirit of that Intensity.*

Abdication: *This is where an animist surrenders control of his body by willingly letting himself be possessed. This normally applies to ancestor spirits that possess the animist, taking complete command. However other spirits, especially those of great power or authority, might demand use of the animist's body in exchange for performing a service. Should an ancestor or great spirit not wish to depart, there is little the unfortunate practitioner can do. As with embodiment, Animism-suppressing or -countering magics will pose a physical barrier to a possessed animist.*

All spirits are sentient, although the degree of sentience varies according to the spirit's representation and type. Ancestor spirits, for example, are fully sapient, and display all the intelligence and coherence of their mortal form; but nature spirits are likely to behave, perceive, and articulate themselves in ways that reflect their origin. Skilled animists are capable of interpreting their (sometimes incoherent) ways of communicating, through their training and exposure to the Spirit World.

DESIGNING SPIRITS

Most of the spirits listed in this chapter are starting examples of a vast range of possibilities. To create new and unique spirits, use the following guidelines:

- ❖ Each type of spirit possesses one or more abilities which encompass their powers. Not all spirits are designed to grant an advantage to an animist, some are intended only as challenges for characters to defeat.
- ❖ Any advantage a spirit might offer when bound should be capable of being sustained as a permanent effect. The advantage should also be roughly balanced according to other comparable spirits, and the other forms of higher magic (mysticism, theism and sorcery).
- ❖ An advantage is always proportional to a spirit's Intensity. Since spirits usually have no defined limit to their POW, spirits often come in weaker and stronger forms.
- ❖ All spirits possess certain default skills. Spirits start with a Spectral Combat skill equal to $50\% + \text{POW} + \text{CHA}$, and a Willpower of $50\% + (\text{POW} \times 2)$.

SPIRIT ABILITIES

Several of the following abilities rely on the spirit first infesting the target, in the form of either dominant, passive or covert possession. This requires that the victim is beaten in Spirit Combat as per Consequences of Defeat (page 138) or it gains the Possess Special Effect.

ANIMATE (SPECIFIC SUBSTANCE)

The spirit can embody itself into non-living matter, allowing it to shape or move the substance as if an actual body. If the material is a pure element such as earth or fire, the spirit may manifest itself physically as per an Elemental with a size in cubic metres equal to twice its Intensity (page 242). If, on the other hand, the material is flesh of a dead creature, it instead provides the powers of an Undeath spirit granting bonuses to physical Characteristics (page 153).

AUTONOMY

Spirit has the ability to venture beyond the normal distance limits of a binding or its summoner's aura of influence. This allows the spirit to act as an independent scout or messenger.

BLESS

The spirit can boost one Attribute or Skill of whomever controls it. The amount increased depends on the Intensity of the spirit, and the specific type of blessing (see Curse Spirit Effects table for associated costs), but no Attribute or Skill may be boosted beyond double its original value.

CANNIBALISTIC

The spirit gains the ability to regenerate its own Magic Points by absorbing the essence of spirits it battles in Spirit Combat. Every successful attack the spirit makes transfers that many Magic Points to its own total. If this exceeds the spirit's own POW, any surplus energy is wasted.

COMPREHENSION

Grants the ability to understand and speak with creatures associated with that spirit or its animal totem. For example, a wolf spirit would allow its user to speak with wolves.

CONJUGATE

Spirit can maintain a permanent mental link with an animist who summons or binds it, no matter the distance between the two or separation if one or other is within the Spirit World.

COVERT

The spirit has a Stealth skill at 50%+INT+CHA, with which it can hide from active magical or spiritual observation by opposing the Perception skill of the observer.

CURSE

The spirit can lower one Attribute or Skill of a victim it passively or covertly possesses. The amount reduced depends on the Intensity of the spirit and the specific type of curse. For example, a victim could be cursed with weakness if possessed by a spirit which reduces

CURSE SPIRIT EFFECTS

<i>Curse Type</i>	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Action Points	1 per three full points of Intensity	A possessed victim can be rendered helpless if reduced to zero Action Points
Armour Points	1 per point of Intensity	Only reduces natural armour, not worn armour
Damage Modifier	1 step per point of Intensity	This can reduce a Damage Modifier to negative values
Experience Modifier	1 per two full points of Intensity	If lowered to zero, the victim can no longer improve their skills
Healing Rate	1 per two full points of Intensity	A possessed character reduced to zero can no longer heal naturally, and must rely on magic instead
Hit Points	1 per point of Intensity	If a Hit Location is reduced to zero, it is treated as if suffering a Serious Wound
Luck Points	1 per two full points of Intensity	Bad luck!
Movement Rate	1 per point of Intensity	If reduced to zero the possessed character can barely crawl
Strike Rank	2 per point of Intensity	Strike Rank can be reduced to negative values
Skill	1 Difficulty Grade per two full points of Intensity	The affected skill can be rendered unusable if the Difficulty Grade reaches Hopeless

their Damage Modifier, or alternately cursed with clumsiness in war by using a spirit which reduces one of the victim's combat styles.

DEADLY

Gains the ability to either Dissipate or Sunder a spirit it has beaten in Spirit Combat (page 137). A spirit may only have the ability to inflict one or the other, not both.

DEMESNE

A potent ability, the spirit gains dominion over aspects of its environment within a range of one hundred times its POW in metres. Normally the limits of its influence are specified in the spirit's description. For example, a plant spirit could control the growth, flowering and fruiting of vegetation within its area of effect, whilst a truth spirit might prevent falsehoods being uttered. If the demesne of the spirit is challenged by a character, they may attempt to overcome its power by winning an opposed roll of relevant skills. For example, to lie within the demesne of the truth spirit would require opposing the spirit's Willpower with the character's Deceit skill.

DISCORPORATE

Assuming the spirit is not bound, it may drag the soul of a mortal from their body into the Spirit World. The spirit has a base Discorporate skill of 50%+POW+INT. An unwilling target may resist the attempt in an opposed roll of their Willpower versus the spirit's Discorporate skill. If they succeed, they cannot be affected by the discorporation ability of that spirit again, until a full day has passed.

DISEASE

The spirit carries one or more diseases. Instead of possessing a victim, it instead infects them via Spirit Combat, providing it succeeds in an attack, and gains one or more levels of success over the foe. Once infected, the victim must roll against their Endurance skill to determine the severity of the disease, suffering a reduction if the spirit's Willpower skill is higher, and over 100%.

Depending on the result of the Endurance roll, the severity is as follows:

- ﴿ Critical: severity is Chronic, effect occurs each week.
- ﴿ Success: severity is Acute, effect occurs each day.
- ﴿ Failure: severity is Terminal, effect occurs each hour.
- ﴿ Fumble: victim is possessed by the spirit, and becomes an asymptomatic carrier of the disease, inadvertently infecting others with whom they come into physical contact.

An imparted disease endures until the sickness is cured magically. The type of condition (page 75) is limited by the Intensity of the carrying spirit. Nothing prevents a spirit carrying a combination of disease conditions, save that the total Intensity cost cannot exceed that of the spirit. For instance an Intensity 3 sickness spirit could carry Bleeding disease, or a combination of Blindness and Fever instead.

- ﴿ Intensity 1: Confusion, Contagious, Exhaustion, Fever, Hallucination, Nausea, Sapping
- ﴿ Intensity 2: Blindness, Deafness, Dumbness, Maiming, Mania, Weakness
- ﴿ Intensity 3: Agony, Bleeding, Paralysis, Unconsciousness
- ﴿ Intensity 4: Asphyxiation, Death

If the spirit has more than one condition, they trigger in cascading sequence in ascending order of required Intensity. Thus a victim

of the previously described Intensity 3 spirit would suffer fever the first time the disease takes effect, then fever and blindness the second, after which (since the blindness might be permanent) the victim will suffer fever each occurrence thereafter.

DOMINATION (SPECIFIC SPECIES)

Allows totemic spirits to command all living animals related to it within a distance equal to its POW in metres. A serpent spirit for example could dominate all snakes within range.

ENDOWMENT (SPECIFIC CAPABILITY)

The spirit grants the magician a special capability, sense, movement or resistance as owned by the spirit's totem. Usually these take the form of a Creature Ability (page 214), or combat Special Effect. The minimum required spirit Intensity varies, depending on the capability endowed, and nature of the spirit cult.

ETERNAL

The spirit has Recurring trait (page 138), which enables it to return after being dissipated.

GLAMOUR

Enables the spirit to create illusions within a range equal to its POW in metres. This glamour is a mental illusion that works in a similar way to the sorcery spell Phantom (Sense) (page 171). The spirit can affect one sense per level of its Intensity, with a Magnitude of twice that.

HEALING

The spirit is able to cure the effects of disease, if its Intensity is sufficient to counter the condition (see Disease Ability, page 143). It also permits recovery of Minor, Serious and Major Wounds (although they are unable to replace lost limbs), by sacrificing 1 Magic Point per Hit Point healed.

MANA

Permits the spirit to donate its Magic Points to the summoner or holder of its fetish, for use in casting magic or aiding in Spirit Combat.

MANIFESTATION

Spirit may move between the mundane and Spirit World at will. It takes one Action to shift from one to the other. Whilst in the Spirit World the spirit is immune from all attacks (magical or physical) from corporal opponents.

MIASMA

Enables the spirit to induce feelings of despair, dread and horror within a radius of its POW in metres. The Magnitude of the effect is equal to twice the spirit's Intensity. Anyone unable to block the magic must succeed in an opposed test of Willpower skills, or else flee the area in abject terror.

PASSION (SPECIFIC EMOTION OR DISORDER)

The spirit can invoke an overwhelmingly strong passion or state of mind in those it possesses. Although in a few cases they can be used beneficially, most are used in a hostile manner. The following passions and mental disorders provide mechanical effects of how they should be used in play. As with the Disease Ability (page 143), each has an associated number in parentheses, showing the

minimum Intensity of spirit required to inflict that state of mind, assuming it manages to possess the target.

Amnesia Spirits (1): An amnesia spirit makes the victim chronically forgetful. Although it has no effect on skills, it does prevent them from remembering anything that happens during the period of their possession. This doesn't stop the host from behaving normally (assuming they do not act on knowledge revealed since the amnesia started), only that they have no recollection of it, even after the spirit is expelled.

Confusion Spirits (2): Causes confusion during times of stress, or at the malicious whim of the possessing spirit. During a confusion attack, any skill attempt made by the host is resisted by spirit's Willpower in an opposed test. If the victim loses, they do the incorrect thing, possibly striking the wrong target in combat, casting a different spell to what was intended, answering a question which wasn't asked, and so on.

Deceit Spirits (1): Induces the possessed victim to lie, cheat and steal, no matter the consequences. They simply cannot help themselves, although they can attempt to disguise their subterfuge through use of the Deceit and Conceal skills.

Fear Spirits (2): The possessed host suffers foreboding and timidity, as if they were under the effect of the Demoralise spell (page 125). The subject of the fear must be related to the cult or tradition, thus a sea based spirit could inflict a fear of drowning, and so on.

Greed Spirits (1): Also known as Gluttony Spirits, possession causes the host to become enamoured of a specific item, substance or stimulus. Whenever the victim comes into contact with the object of their greed, they will attempt to horde, secrete, covert, consume or immerse themselves to their detriment for the next 1d3 hours. Examples might be alcohol, gold, or even sexual liaison.

Grief Spirits (3): Instils a sense of loss so great that the host becomes passively suicidal. They do not actively seek dangerous situations, but will only half-heartedly protect themselves if one occurs. Whenever asked to parry, evade or make an opposed test, to resist hostile magic for instance, the victim must reverse the number rolled on the dice if it would generate a worse result.

Hate Spirits (2): These spirits exaggerate the possessed host's natural inclinations towards a particular individual, race, cult or culture, making them irritable and surly. Whenever the opportunity presents itself, usually when unobserved, the victim will succumb to overwhelming hatred; leading them to quarrel with, brutalise, torture, or rarely to even murder the object of their hate.

Love Spirits (1): The newly possessed host falls in love with the first compatible partner he or she sees. Once a love object is found, the host is utterly infatuated, gaining a Love (Individual) Passion equal to the Willpower value of the spirit. This is thereafter used as an opposing motivation whenever the host is called to leave their beloved, or work against his or her interests.

Madness Spirits (2): Akin to having a demon whispering into your ear, madness spirits force the host – at times of stress – into acts of irrational or gibbering behaviour. Depending on the spirit's inclination, this is done by changing the perceptions of the victim, sadistically torturing them, or instilling a degree of increasing paranoia. Madness attacks last 1d3x10 minutes, occurring whenever a skill check is made by the host, and the spirit overcomes that roll in an opposed test using its Willpower.

Violence Spirits (3): Removes all ethical and moral restraints towards using combat to solve problems. Any hint of dissent or outright threat will trigger a violent outburst. Worse still, the host glories in violence so much that they will joyously brutalise all living things within reach, be they friend, foe or even innocents. Violent outbursts can be resisted if the host can overcome the spirit in an opposed test of Willpower, but once triggered, the violence only stops when the host is incapacitated by exhaustion or a lack of responding victims. Note that violence does not necessarily equate to death – most hosts utilising their natural weapons over drawing a weapon, unless directly threatened by one first.

PERCEPTIVE

Spirit has the ability to see possessing spirits, bound spirits inside creatures and fetishes, shapeshifted beings, and penetrate illusions in its immediate vicinity. The spirit has a base Perceive Unseen skill of 50%+POW+INT which can be countered by the target of its scrutiny with an opposed test against Conceal, Disguise, Stealth, or a pertinent magical skill.

PERSISTENT

The spirit gains immunity to magical dismissal of any form. This does not mean it is immune to magical damage or Spirit Combat, only that spells such as Banish or Exorcism do not affect it.

PUPPETEER

The possessing spirit can control the physical body of others. It can be used benevolently to take control of a totem animal or protect a spirit magician's body whilst he is discorporate. Hostile spirits on the other hand, use this ability to steal the body of a foe to achieve the spirit's strongest desires.

SAGACITY

Possesses a skill at a value equal to the spirit's 100% + (INTx2). There is no limit to the type of skill imparted, provided it is relevant to the spirit concerned. So a spirit devoted to war might know weapon skills, whereas one linked to a particular family may provide genealogical knowledge instead.

SHAPECHANGE (SPECIFIC SPECIES)

Grants the ability to shape change the spirit magician into his cult's totem animal, as described under Shape-shifting spirits (page 152).

SPELLCASTING

Allows the spirit to either cast magic on behalf of its summoner with a skill of 50%+POW+CHA, or share knowledge of the spells it knows with the holder of its fetish.

SUBJUGATE

Allows the spirit the ability to bind one or more other spirits of lesser Intensity, holding them as vassals without the necessity of a fetish. For spirits of the same tradition, this is usually a willing servitude – a mountain spirit holding several lesser earth elemental spirits, for instance. If the spirits are not associated, the subjugation is more one of forced enslavement. Each lesser spirit held in subjugation reduces the holding spirit's Magic Points by a value equal to its Intensity as an enduring cost. Subjugation ends if the holding spirit is ever reduced to zero Magic Points.

TELEKINESIS

This ability grants the spirit the ability to move objects in the physical world despite its nominally intangible form. It gains a STR equal to its Intensity, and can shift items up to its POW in metres distant.

WARDING

Gains the ability to ward off hostile magic from something the spirit guards, automatically blocking spells with a Magnitude less than or equal to twice the spirit's Intensity. Although magic is blocked, it is not dismissed by contact with the spirit. For instance, weapon enhancement spells do not vanish when the magician is hit, nor is the enchanted weapon prevented from striking them; only that any magical boosting to damage does not occur.

WITHER

The spirit is able to physically damage corporeal beings, using its Spectral Combat skill or some other Combat Style it possessed before death. The blows inflicts damage equal to its usual Spirit Damage that ignores all non-magical parries and physical armour; requiring opponents to Evade or flee its attacks.

EXAMPLE SPIRITS

The following spirits are presented with base Characteristic ranges and skills. However since the POW of the spirit depends on the Intensity chosen for it (see Defining Spirits page 132), no average Attributes are provided as they fluctuate according to the POW of the spirit.

Nothing prevents a Games Master from adding or removing abilities from the following spirits to create unique entities more suited to their campaign settings.

ANCESTOR SPIRITS

Eternal, plus one or more of Discorporate, Sagacity, Spellcasting, and Subjugate

Ancestor spirits are the souls of family members who, after death, reside either in the Spirit World, in the underworld or whatever afterlife is provided by the local pantheon; all depending on the setting. An animist who quests in the Spirit World can always find a way to reach these places, although he will normally only ever encounter ancestors with whom he has a relationship, finding both venerated predecessors and despised enemies. Such spirits can be found continuing their existence in houses, halls, tribes or communities resembling those they occupied before death; or despondently wandering in the gloom of limbo.

Animists may ask questions or request aid from their honoured ancestors; or conversely attempt to bind and imprison an enemy ancestor, preventing it from being called upon by their foes.

Ancestor spirits are a natural source of knowledge and information. In their mortal life they achieved greatness through skills, talents, and deeds that have secured their continued veneration in the afterlife. The spirits of those who died without noteworthy deeds tend to fade and dissipate, once their immediate descendants pass on. Thus most ancestor spirits are noted heroes, remembered many generations after their death, and continually honoured in ceremonies personal and grand, small and large.

A specific ancestor spirit is summoned to the material world by an animist of direct descent. If there is no blood-lineage, a shaman



must travel to the home of the ancestor in its afterlife. Once summoned or located, the spirit can be asked questions concerning the family line, or events which happened during its lifetime. Such requests only require a successful Influence roll, the offering of 1 Magic Point – representing a donation of blood or life-force – and cost nothing further.

Animists can also request an ancestor's aid in performing a specific and important service. This comes at a greater cost, involving an immediate sacrifice of at least 1 Magic Point per Intensity of the ancestor, and continued votive gifts to that particular spirit (if necessary this can be abstracted to either spending an Experience Roll each year or one Magic Point each month, if Games Masters prefer). Continued veneration in this way keeps the memory of the ancestor alive, promoting his continued existence. In return the ancestor grants its help to overcome the problem facing the petitioner.

Ancestor spirits are very versatile, and may either agree to perform a single service as a spirit there and then, or offer to incarnate in the body of the descendent if this is a more appropriate act.

Certain ancestors might be prepared to temporarily inhabit an heirloom or item (such as a tribal treasure) of great personal significance in order to be manifested later. The item can be anything held in esteem by the community, and the ancestor will bind itself to the item as if it were a fetish, and wait within until the appropriate

time for it to emerge. Such confinement is extremely unpleasant for the ancestor spirit, and so the expectation is that it last for a very short time – days rather than weeks or months. Any longer, and the ancestor may turn hostile and immediately return to the Spirit Plane upon release, after extracting suitable penance from the summoner.

Physically incarnating requires the descendent to voluntarily permit the ancestor spirit to possess his body. This bargain places the animist at a dangerous disadvantage since he cannot prevent his body from being abused by the ancestor spirit. Unsympathetic ancestors often succumb to long forgotten passions, or attempt extreme acts to further their renown – being in little danger of personal harm if their host dies.

Whilst possessed, the animist may gain access to new abilities, spells, and spirits pertaining to the ancestor. Warrior ancestors have combat skills, shaman ancestors have spirit skills, hunter ancestors have stealth and tracking skills, medicine ancestors have healing skills, and so on.

Residing in another body or object means that an ancestor spirit cannot be called upon by other members of that cult or tradition; for this reason an ancestor spirit usually only remains until it has achieved the summoning objective. Regardless of how the ancestor is incarnated or lodged, it counts against the animist's number of spirits that can be controlled.

SPIRITS THAT INITIATE COMBAT

Although all spirits have a Spectral Combat skill, it does not mean that an animist can send any old spirit off to engage a mortal in Spirit Combat. Spirits are not ubiquitous fire-and-forget weapons to destroy an enemy's Magic Points. Rather they have a specific purpose, and alternate abilities to back it up.

The important term here is **initiate**. Whilst a spirit can always fight back when attacked, most cannot start a Spirit Combat except against particular foes.

Each of the common spirit types mentioned in this chapter has a defined limit clarifying if, and what types of target, that spirit can initiate Spirit Combat with.

Save for a handful of cases (Ancestor, Curse, Death or Sickness spirits for example) none of the described spirits can be used to aggressively instigate an attack against mortals in Spirit Combat.

Repeated summonings or being summoned for minor or trivial tasks may irritate the spirit, forcing the animist to defeat his ancestor in mock Spirit Combat. If the animist loses, then the ancestor considers the request below its dignity and refuses to help. If the animist wins instead, the ancestor is roused into providing aid, but the ancestor may be considered as either neutral or hostile.

ANCESTOR SPIRIT

Characteristics

INT: As per mortal of the species

POW: As per its Intensity

CHA: As per mortal of the species

Skills:

Culture and Lore skills of their people and region = 100%+(INTx2),

Spectral Combat = 50%+POW+CHA,

Willpower of 50%+(POWx2)

In addition, the ancestor may take a number of selections, equal to 1d3+Intensity, from the following list of Spirit Abilities:

- ❖ Discorporate: allows the ancestor to summon the soul of a nearby mortal descendent into the Spirit World.
- ❖ Sagacity: spirit knows a skill relevant to the profession of the ancestor at 100%+(INTx2).
- ❖ Spellcasting: holds knowledge of 1d3 Folk Magic spells (which it can cast assuming the ancestor has the Folk Magic skill).
- ❖ Subjugate: ancestor has a spirit ally of one less Intensity than itself, which appears within 1d3 Combat Rounds of being summoned (assuming the ancestor has the Trance and Binding skills).

BANE SPIRITS

Cannibalistic, Deadly

Fragments of pure Chaos or some other source of evil, bane spirits strive to absorb the essence of other spirits. Due to their relationship with entropy, once the Magic Points of the targeted spirit have been reduced to zero, the bane spirit consumes it utterly and irrevocably, so that it is forever destroyed, even those with the Recurring trait.

QUESTIONING ANCESTORS

Some animist traditions require the ancestor to inhabit the body of its summoner in the material world, so that it can communicate directly with those who question it; rather than indirectly via a go-between. In settings where this is the norm, an animist must always voluntarily permit the ancestor to possess them unless the animist has travelled into the Spirit Plane to question the spirit in its home in the afterlife. Where an animist has abdicated control of his body, the ancestor will usually respect the trust of the summoner, and leave of its own free will once it has satisfied all enquiries.

ANCESTRAL DEMIGODS

When a soul first departs for the afterlife, it becomes a spirit of equal POW to its living self. However, over time those ancestral spirits which receive regular worship, and propitiation slowly grow in strength. It may take centuries, but ultimately the spirit will transcend their normal species limit to characteristic POW. In this way the spirits of tribal founders, national heroes or even assuaged enemies can eventually become demigods in their own right.

Bane spirits are abhorred to the point that they are often bound and imprisoned in remote or accursed locations, preventing them from causing irreparable harm. Only the insane, or those driven to suicidal revenge, tend to use them. If imbued into a fetish, bane spirits can be used as a weapon nominally sent against other spirits to engage in Spirit Combat. Bane spirits can destroy other bane spirits.

The majority of bane spirits are oblivious to the physical world, and lack the ability to manifest into the material realm to attack mortals. Instead they fester upon the Spirit World causing untold damage to other spirits which mistakenly stray into their vicinity.

BANE SPIRIT

Characteristics

INS: 1d6

POW: As per Intensity

CHA: 1d6

Skills:

Spectral Combat = 50%+POW+CHA,

Willpower of 50%+(POWx2)

CURSE SPIRITS

Curse, Covert, Manifestation

Overtly malicious, curse spirits are sent by animists to possess mortals bringing them misfortune. They can be found in places that have suffered terrible natural disasters.

Curse spirits impose detrimental effects such as reduce Action Points, slow Healing Rate, and so on. The conditions they inflict directly affect the possessed victim, and can only be stopped by exorcising the spirit, assuming the victim is even aware that he is possessed in the first place.

CURSE SPIRIT

Characteristics

INS: 2d6

POW: As per Intensity

CHA: 2d6

Skills:

Spectral Combat skill = 50%+POW+CHA,
 Stealth = 50%+INS+CHA,
 Willpower = 50%+(POWx2)

DEATH SPIRITS*Deadly, Manifestation*

These spirits are viewed in different ways by different cultures. Some see dying as a natural part of the cycle of existence, and therefore nothing to be feared. Others are horrified by death spirits, seeing them as the tools of depraved animists to spread terror. The spirit's appearance reflects the attitude of the cult or tradition; peaceful bringers of death taking the form of serene angels to guide the victim to the afterlife, whereas murderous slayers might appear as such things like burning skulls, giant poisonous animals or hooded, scythe-wielding vultures.

Death spirits are sometimes bound to protect places and objects, or more often summoned to attack specific targets, attacking the transgressor in Spirit Combat either way. If the spirit wins the battle it Sunderns the soul of the victim, ripping it free of its corporeal body, and sending it to whatever fate lies in store. This is invariably fatal for mortal creatures but preserves their essence and identity as a spirit.

DEATH SPIRIT*Characteristics*

INS: 3d6

POW: As per Intensity

CHA: 3d6

Skills:

Spectral Combat = 50%+POW+CHA,
 Willpower = 50%+(POWx2)

ELEMENTAL SPIRITS*Animate, Demesne*

Elemental spirits are direct incarnations of the elements (earth, air, fire, water and darkness) or manifestations of natural forces and phenomenon: mountains, volcanoes, tsunami, and so on.

Animists can bind elemental spirits in the normal manner but the object or location must be chosen carefully because, even within the binding, some of the elemental spirit's power is always manifested. A Salamander spirit must be bound into a fetish capable of withstanding heat while an Undine fetish will become damp and clammy.

When summoned or released from a fetish an elemental spirit, if left uncontrolled, will gravitate to the nearest source of its element within range. By itself it is just a spirit, and has no significant effect on the mundane plane. The spirit's power does not truly manifest until commanded to embody itself. As with any control attempt, the animist must spend 1 Magic Point. If the roll is successful, the animist has two choices: Permitting the spirit to animate a suitable volume of its native material, as per a normal elemental, or, embodying the elemental so that it manifests within his own body.

The later choice grants the animist the physical and magical benefits of an elemental. Thus an animist embodying a sylph would be surrounded by a vortex of buffeting winds, but could fly and send out jets of wind to pummel opponents. If a gnome was embodied instead, the animist would take on a gravelly appearance, and be

able to sink into the ground as if some sort of amorphous creature of flowing sand.

Whilst embodying an elemental spirit, the Animist is physically immune to the elemental's incidental effects himself, but cannot control their affect on his belongings or companions. So an embodied Salamander will burn away the animist's clothes, consume his equipment, and potentially injure any nearby friends from radiated heat. Furthermore, expelling the elemental spirit is more difficult than for other spirits, as the animist must make a successful Trance roll to successfully force it back into the fetish, each attempt costing an additional Magic Point. Finally, while in his elemental form, the animist is vulnerable to additional damage from an opposing element. For all these reasons, embodying a powerful elemental spirit is a step that is never undertaken lightly.

Animists embodying an elemental spirit gain the abilities of an elemental of a size based on the spirit's Intensity as outlined below.

ELEMENTAL INTENSITY/SIZE RELATIONSHIP

<i>Spirit Intensity</i>	<i>Elemental Size</i>
1	2 cubic metres
2	4 cubic metres
3	6 cubic metres
4	8 cubic metres
5	10 cubic metres
+1	+2 cubic metres, and so on

The animist's STR, DEX and Hit Points are replaced by the spirit's values (which are rolled as normal for an elemental of its SIZ when first encountered). This normally calls for an adjustment of derived Attributes such as Combat Actions, Damage Modifier and Initiative Bonus. Any special attack the elemental possesses is retained but uses the animist's Unarmed skill value instead.

When the elemental spirit is expelled, any damage it sustained whilst embodied is divided evenly between all the animist's Hit Locations (rounding up as usual). For example if a human shaman took 23 points of damage while in elemental form then he would take 4 points of damage to each of his 7 locations once he returned to his normal form. If the damage is enough to cause a Serious Wound the animist must resist the injury effects by succeeding in a Hard Endurance roll, or a Formidable Endurance roll if a Major Wound. The result of the roll is applied to all the critically injured locations simultaneously.

Although embodying an elemental spirit can be extremely impressive, it also opens the practitioner up to new problems. An animist embodying an elemental spirit will take double damage from attacks using the opposing element, and can be instantly dispersed by contact with an opposing elemental of the same size or bigger in cubic metres. Reducing the elemental form to 0 Hit Points instantly breaks the binding and frees the spirit, possibly also critically injuring or killing the magician in the process. Spells which can dismiss elementals will free the elemental, and destroy the binding if the Magnitude of the magic is equal or greater than twice the spirit's Intensity.

Elemental spirits do not initiate Spirit Combat except against other elemental spirits of an opposite element.

FETCHES

Special

A fetch is a shaman's spiritual ally, representing the opening of his consciousness in the Spirit World. Not every Shamanic tradition features fetches, and those that do vary in the nature of the fetch. In some traditions the fetch is the awakened "other half" of the shaman. In this case the fetch and shaman are two sides of the same soul with the fetch perceiving and travelling the Spirit World whilst the shaman exists on the mundane plane.

In other traditions the fetch is a totemic spirit who is drawn to the shaman to become his spiritual guide. In both cases the shaman must undertake a successful quest in order to gain his fetch.

A fetch's abilities vary widely between traditions. In cases where the fetch is the shaman's counterpart, it represents the opening of spiritual abilities to the shaman rather than being an independent being in its own right. The fetch might provide the shaman with exotic powers, such as the ability to shapechange. If the fetch is an animal or ancestor guide then the shaman may gain the ability to communicate with the animals of the fetch's species, control them or gain the traits of that creature; or become party to certain secrets if the fetch is an ancestor.

There are two main choices when designing a fetch, an Awakened Fetch, where the shaman simply unlocks or expands a hitherto hidden part of his soul; or an Allied Fetch which is a separate spirit that forms a lifelong pact with the shaman. Unless otherwise stated, a fetch cannot roam any further from the shaman's soul to which it is bound than his POW in metres.

FETCH TYPES

	<i>Awakened Fetch</i>	<i>Allied Fetch</i>
INT:	As the shaman	2d6+6
POW:	As the shaman	1d6+12
CHA:	As the shaman	2d6+6

Skills:
 Spectral Combat skill = 50%+POW+CHA,
 Lore (specific Cult or Tradition) = 100%+(INTx2),
 Willpower = 50%+(POWx2)

- ❖ Intensity: A fetch's intensity is calculated by cross-referencing the POW of the fetch on the Spirit Intensity Table on page [133](#).
- ❖ Spirit Abilities: A fetch also possesses 1d3+Intensity abilities, selected or rolled randomly from the Fetch Abilities table.

Gaining a fetch always brings certain side-effects:

- ❖ The fetch may influence the personality of the shaman depending on its totemic nature, for instance a bear spirit fetch may cause the shaman to become soporific during the winter.
- ❖ The fetch may draw upon the Magic Points of the shaman in times of dire need.
- ❖ The fetch will abandon the shaman if he betrays the teachings of his shamanic tradition.

Fetches can grow in experience just as the shaman does. If desired, a shaman can transfer any or all of his Experience rolls to his fetch instead.

QUESTING FOR A FETCH

Questing for a fetch is a dangerous ritual, and if it fails it may cripple or kill the shaman. No mechanics are suggested to abstract this process since such an epic undertaking should be played out in the form of a highly challenging scenario.

Quests usually involve the re-enactment of a cult's mythic foundation to locate or awaken the shaman's fetch, and culminate in a dangerous battle against the traditional enemy of his tradition. The quest includes moral ordeals involving both the shaman's community, and his treatment of spirits, the correct solutions being those endorsed, and taught by his cult. Trials of skill, cunning, and magical strength are also common, the opponents the shaman faces being the friendly, and neutral spirits of his own tradition. The quest helps the shaman reinforce his relationships with the spirit world, and he can use these bonds to aid in the climactic confrontation.

Failing in the final battle usually results in dissipation of the shaman's soul. Few tears are shed at such an occurrence as it generally indicates that the candidate was not in sympathy with the ideas of the spirit tradition, or that they were dangerously overconfident of their own abilities. Either way, it is better for the cult that they failed rather than ending up as a flawed shaman.

GUARDIAN SPIRITS

Warding

Guardian spirits protect the animist from hostile magic or indeed other spirits. They are found in places where vast magics have been unleashed, such as huge ceremonies or battlefields for example.

Within the mundane plane a guardian spirit protects the holder of its fetish by interposing itself before offensive spells. The spirit can neutralize spells with a Magnitude of up to twice its own Intensity. If the spell's Magnitude is greater, the spirit is unable to affect it. If a guardian spirit encounters an anti-spirit spell, such as Spirit Block or

FETCH ABILITIES

<i>1d20</i>	<i>Ability</i>	<i>1d20</i>	<i>Ability</i>
1	Animate	11	Eternal
2	Autonomy	12	Mana
3	Cannibalistic	13	Manifestation
4	Comprehension	14	Perceptive
5	Conjugate	15	Persistent
6	Covert	16	Sagacity
7	Deadly	17	Shapechange
8	Discorporate	18	Spellcasting
9	Domination	19	Subjugate
10	Healing	20	Warding

Banish, it may attempt to resist the spell before it is affected.

A guardian spirit offers additional protection by intercepting enemy spirits and engaging them in combat before they can attack the animist. They do not initiate Spirit Combat otherwise.

GUARDIAN SPIRIT

Characteristics

INS: 1d6+6

POW: As per Intensity

CHA: 1d6+6

Skills:
 Spectral Combat = 50%+POW+CHA,
 Willpower = 50%+(POWx2)

HAUNTS

Eternal, Manifestation, plus one or more of Glamour, Miasma, Spellcasting, Telekinesis and Wither

Haunts are the spirits of the dead who did not receive the proper funeral rites or who have died violently, and are incapable of leaving the material world, denying them progress to the afterlife, and leaving the soul to suffer for all eternity.

Mortals may end up becoming haunts in several ways:

- ❖ Cursed by a shaman. By enchanting the soul to be permanently bound to the material world, and forbidding it access to the Spirit World the shaman creates an unliving hell for the deceased.
- ❖ Unfulfilled Desires. Dying before an important vow was completed or expiring full of hatred and rage, desiring revenge. In these cases a desperate character can tie themselves to the material world by an act of will (roll POW or less on a d100). This enables them to persist as a spirit until they can complete their last wishes.
- ❖ Driven by Passion: A soul can become a haunt by dying whilst overwhelmed by a great passion - unrequited love or despair for instance. In these cases the chance of returning as a haunt is simply Games Master fiat, according to how fitting it would be to the campaign.

Haunts are bound to the material world, an unseen presence fully aware of what is occurring around it but unable to leave the immediate area of the location or item to which they are tied. The object they are linked to can be their unburied remains, their place of death, some object associated with them in life, or something else entirely. Ghost stories of many cultures are filled with varied examples of ties that prevent haunts from passing on.

Although frightening, most of these spirits can do little but appear as ghostly apparitions to hapless observers, and bewail their fate. Nonetheless, some acquire certain powers during their transition to a haunt, each ability costing the haunt dearly in Magic Points to invoke.

Like most spirits a Haunt is usually invisible, it may spend 1 Magic Point to manifest itself visually for up to its POW in minutes. Most haunts must manifest in order to use any of their abilities.

A manifested haunt remains intangible to physical objects, able to pass through solid objects at will. On the other hand it becomes vulnerable to magic, although destroying it with magical damage simply disperses its essence but does not prevent its eventual return. By default all haunts possess the Recurring trait.

Permanently dealing with a haunt is not easy. Trance or magical senses may reveal the location of whatever ties it to the world. If this is an object, destroying it may be enough to release the spirit, but depending on its motivation the haunt may fight against such actions. If on the other hand it is a location or more abstractly, an event, undoing the binding may require determining why the spirit became tied in the first place, and trying to resolve the issue. If tied to its mortal remains, conducting the ceremonies appropriate to the haunt's own culture, and traditions may very well break the bonds, releasing the restless spirit to the afterlife it yearns.

Like bound spirits, haunts cannot regenerate Magic Points normally – but they are able to slowly drain vitality from the natural world around them, a process that creates an unsettling area shunned by animals, and where the plants are stunted and withered. A haunt can tap the Magic Points of any animal or plant that has lower POW than the Haunt's Intensity.

When creating a haunt its skills and Characteristics can be generated randomly or directly taken from the dead person in question. Restless spirits which have persisted for centuries often grow stronger over time, permitting some haunts to achieve higher levels of Intensity.

HAUNT

Characteristics

INT: As per Mortal of the species

POW: As per Intensity

CHA: As per Mortal of the species

Skills:

Willpower = 50%+(POWx2)

Add other skills as necessary to give the haunt poignancy or purpose, Sing or Lore (Vital Campaign Secret) for example.

Spirit Abilities: A haunt gains a number of abilities equal to its Intensity, selected from the following list:

- ❖ *Glamour: The spirit can create illusions which are experienced by all within a range of the spirit's POW in metres. Each glamour costs 1 Magic Point to create, and affects one sense per level of its Intensity. The ability is often used to replay the events that caused the haunt to be created.*
- ❖ *Miasma: The spirit can magically induce feelings of dread and horror to anyone within range of its aura. Each wave of miasma costs the spirit 1 Magic Point.*
- ❖ *Spellcasting: Becoming a haunt usually severs the spirit from any form of higher magic, but some may retain the ability to cast Folk Magic. The haunt either uses those spells known whilst alive, or gains 1d3+1 spells such as Befuddle, Curse, Disruption, and so on.*
- ❖ *Telekinesis: The spirit has a STR equal to its Intensity which it can use to move items around. This costs 1 Magic Point, and lasts for its POW in minutes.*
- ❖ *Wither: The spirit is able to physically damage corporeal beings. For the cost of 1 Magic Point, the spirit can make a single attack with a skill equal to whatever Combat Style or Unarmed skill it possessed before death. The blow inflicts damage equal to its usual Spirit Damage that ignores all non-magical parries and physical armour. Magical Armour Points reduce damage as normal.*

With all the other powers at their command, haunts do not initiate Spirit Combat against mortals.

MEDICINE SPIRITS

Healing

Medicine spirits are used to heal wounds or cure disease effects imparted by sickness spirits. They are rarely bound to a fetish save by shamans who can rejuvenate them, since as all spirits, they cannot recover Magic Points naturally in the mundane world. Medicine spirits are therefore usually summoned directly from the Spirit World to perform healing tasks.

Peaceable by nature, a medicine spirit may only initiate Spirit Combat against sickness spirits, their innate foes.

MEDICINE SPIRIT

Characteristics
INS: 1d6+6
POW: As per Intensity
CHA: 1d6+6
Skills:
Spectral Combat = 50%+POW+CHA, Willpower = 50%+(POWx2)

cousins. See the Creatures chapter for further details of a variety of creatures.

NATURE SPIRITS

Animal Nature Spirit	Regional Nature Spirit
INS : As the species	1d6
POW: As per Intensity	As per Intensity
CHA: Equal to INS	3d6
Skills: Spectral Combat skill = 50%+POW+CHA, Willpower = 50%+(POWx2)	

Abilities: See Above.

NATURE SPIRITS

One or more of Bless, Demesne, Domination and Endowment

Nature spirits gather at ordinary occurring concentrations of animals and vegetation, and are entities of the world's natural flora and fauna.

Nature spirits are frequently the subject of totemic veneration where an animal, particular plant or even an area of land, becomes representative of a community – the spiritual guardian and strength of a tribe. Animists who devote themselves to a totem in this way are always on friendly terms with spirits related to their totem, but suffer neutral or hostile reactions from other predating or preyed upon animal nature spirits. Likewise those that venerate a particular region of deciduous forest for instance, will find that the plant spirits within are friendly, but the nature spirits of neighbouring coniferous woodlands are at best neutral, if not actively hostile.

Nature spirits embody a myriad of different abilities depending on the region or creature of origin. In general such spirits should not possess more Spirit Abilities than its Intensity. It can of course select the same ability twice, but only when affecting a different attribute, skill, effect (and so on), and are restricted to things that represent a quality expressed by the corporeal form(s) of the species or plant-life. If two or more nature spirits with the same specific ability are used at the same time by the same animist, only the stronger spirit will take effect.

- ❖ **Bless:** The spirit can boost an Attribute or skill relevant to that totem. A leopard spirit might boost Action Points for example.
- ❖ **Demesne:** The spirit controls the plant life of a particular region. The spirit can control the growth, flowering, fruiting, and defoliation of vegetation within range. These effects are necessarily slow, but thanks to the vitality of the spirit, can be forced to occur out of season.
- ❖ **Domination:** The spirit controls behaviour of members of its own species. Thus a spider spirit could exert command over every arachnid within range of its aura.
- ❖ **Endowment:** Use a trait possessed by the totemic species, such as a special sense or movement. For instance shark spirits could grant the creature ability of Blood Sense or Swimmer, whilst a Lotus flower spirit might grant Venomous.

Nature spirits do not initiate Spirit Combat except against enemy nature spirits.

Other than its POW, which is based upon its Intensity, the other Characteristics of a nature spirit match those of its corporeal

PREDATOR SPIRITS

Bless, Persistent, Puppeteer

These are the more aggressive variants of animal or monster spirits, prowling the Spirit World looking for suitable prey. Useful to animists of less ethical traditions, predator spirits are able to track down a particular soul, no matter the distance, and then rip the victim to shreds. Unlike other spirits, Predator spirits are capable of hunting their prey in the physical world making them perfect to attack targets well protected from spiritual interference.

Two conditions need to be filled to summon a predator spirit into the mundane world.

First, predator spirits require some personal effects (hair, nail clippings, clothing, and so on) to track their prey; the effects must be burned or destroyed during the ritual to summon the spirit.

Second the animist offers the spirit a creature of some kind as part of the summoning ritual. The creature's soul must be defeated in spirit combat by the predator; which then dominantly possesses the host's physical body, creating a warped creature (whether physically or psychologically) that unerringly hunts its victim, not ceasing to sleep or eat until the prey is caught. In fact the creature will reject all food save the flesh, and blood of the victim they are hunting.

Predator spirits often rely on their cunning or stealth to launch attacks, since the creature it possesses is not invulnerable to physical damage. As the victim usually has no warning of his fate the first he will know of his pursuit is the first ambush. If the predator spirit fails to make a clean kill on its initial attack, it retreats to reassess the situation; withholding its next attempt to ensure it has a tactical advantage. If the victim takes flight the spirit pursues; and, because it will never stop, this can cause grave distress to the prey.

The hunt continues until the host is killed or starves to death. At this stage the predator spirit can, assuming it has any Magic Points remaining, attempt to possess a new creature. If defeated, or no new host is nearby, it returns to the Spirit World freed of its obligation.

Animists must consider the host creature carefully. Large animals are obviously more dangerous in combat, but find it difficult to enter civilised places without attracting attention. Smaller creatures can pass unseen more easily, but may find it difficult to keep up if the target flees, or to kill them when caught. Nothing prevents a human (or humanoid) from acting as the host and, if this case, they take-on the wild, animalistic characteristics of a predator. This may be enough of a signal to alert a target to a very big problem.

A number of low Intensity predators can be summoned to hunt as a pack – although each spirit summoning must be treated separately.

PREDATOR SPIRIT***Characteristics***

STR: As per Host
CON: As per Host
SIZ: As per Host
DEX: As per Host
INS: 2d6+6
POW: As per Intensity
CHA: 1d6+6

Skills:

Spectral Combat skill = 50%+POW+CHA,
Stealth = 50%+INS+CHA,
Willpower = 50%+(POWx2)

Spirit Abilities: In addition to Persistent, and Puppeteer, the spirit gains a number of Bless bonuses to its Attributes equal to its Intensity. Popular augmentations are to the creature's Armour Points, Damage Modifier, and Movement Rate.

SHAPE-SHIFTING SPIRITS***Shapechange***

Shape-shifting spirits allow animists to change their physical form into that of another creature or being – most frequently a creature or beast associated with their totem or tradition. An animist of the Great Bear Clan could, for example, use a shape-shifting spirit to become a grizzly bear or similar ursine.

Shape-shifting spirits must be embodied by the animist, a risky practice because, like elemental spirits, shape-shifters cannot be automatically recalled or dismissed.

The type of animal form a shape-shifter can adopt depends on the spirit's Intensity. The greater the Intensity the bigger the creature. The Characteristics of creatures assumed are always those of an average member of that species.

SPIRIT INTENSITY FOR SIZ OF CREATURE

Intensity	Creature SIZ
1	7-12
2	13-21
3	22-33
4	34-48
5	49-66
6	67-87
7	88-111

Summoning a shape-shifting spirit or calling it from a fetish works as normal. Once embodied the animist must spend a Magic Point, and succeed in a Binding roll to force it back into its fetish or return it to the Spirit Plane. This can be potentially dangerous: if the animist has few Magic Points remaining, he may run out of power before he can return to his own shape – trapping him in his animal form.

In his shifted form the animist gains the average physical Characteristics, Armour Points, Hit Points, Creature Abilities, and natural locomotion of the animal, but keeps his own skills. Physical damage sustained in the animal form is carried over between transformations (and vice-versa), although what might have been a Serious Wound when shifted as a small animal may become a mere scratch when human. Whereas a Serious Wound suffered in the form of a

very large creature may translate into a Major Wound, and possibly even death when the animist returns to his original shape.

In the latter case, iff the severity of a wound increases after the spirit has been dismissed, the animist must make an unopposed Endurance roll at a penalty of one skill grade per injured location, or suffer the detrimental effects of the injury, based on its severity.

Shape-shifting spirits are usually peaceable, and do not initiate Spirit Combat.

SHAPE SHIFTING SPIRIT***Characteristics***

INS: As per Host
POW: As per Intensity
CHA: Equal to INS

Skills:

Spectral Combat skill = 50%+POW+CHA,
Willpower = 50%+(POWx2)

SICKNESS SPIRITS***Covert, Disease, Manifestation***

Malevolent beings, sickness spirits inflict misery through infecting victims with the disease they carry. They are attracted by the departure of souls to the Spirit World, gathering close to the bodies of the recently dead; but can also be drawn by congregations of other sickness spirits. Widespread plague can result from a small, localised sickness as more, and more sickness spirits are drawn to the area.

Lone sickness spirits lie in wait in the Spirit World waiting for unsuspecting mortals to approach. They then follow them until they sleep or pass into an unconscious state. At this point the sickness spirit manifests, and engages the target in spirit combat. If it gains a level of success the spirit infects the victim, and wanders off to find another host. Only rarely do they covertly possess a victim in order to come into contact with other mortals.

Animists can bind sickness spirits into a fetish – and some evil shamans revel in such bindings – using them to sicken foes in direct combat.

Unlike mundane diseases, those caused by spirits do not recover naturally even with application of the Healing skill. If the spirit has gone further, and maliciously possessed the victim, then not even the curative spells of Higher Magic will work – since unless the spirit is first driven out, the effects will return after the usual onset period has run its course.

High Intensity sickness spirits are not, thankfully, ubiquitous, and animists very rarely have access to them. Knowledge of lethal sickness spirits is usually reserved to cults devoted to spreading disease. Even then, a tradition will know only a handful of specific diseases, each one an explicit spirit counting towards the tradition's limit. Such dreadful cults are rare, and most likely the subject of sustained attempts to eradicate them, for the good of the world.

SICKNESS SPIRIT***Characteristics***

INS: 2d6
POW: As per Intensity
CHA: 2d6

Skills:
 Spectral Combat skill = 50%+POW+CHA,
 Stealth = 50%+INS+CHA,
 Willpower = 50%+(POWx2)

UNDEATH SPIRITS

Animate (Dead Flesh)

Undeath spirits are the souls of dead mortals who thirst to return to the mortal world, usually by re-inhabiting their own long dead body. They can often be found clustering near ancient necropolises or battlefields, relatively harmless unless summoned by an animist or provoked by some act of desecration.

The only ability these spirits command is the ability to possess dead corpses, not necessarily their own – raising them as undead. The potency of the spirit empowers the dead remains it occupies, granting a bonus of triple its Intensity to the undead creature's STR, and CON. It also gains the Undead creature ability.

An undeath spirit may only animate a corpse of up to their POW in SIZ. Once in control of a body they are loathe to return to the Spirit World. They are incapable of initiating Spirit Combat.

UNDEATH SPIRIT

Characteristics

INT: 2d6+6

POW: As per Intensity

CHA: 3d6

Skills:

Spectral Combat skill = 50%+POW+CHA,
 Athletics STR+DEX+40%,
 Brawn STR+SIZ+20%,
 Endurance (CONx2)+20%,
 Evade (DEX x2)+40%,
 Perception INT+POW+30%,
 Unarmed STR+DEX+40%,
 Willpower (POWx2)+40%,
 Combat Style STR+DEX+40%

armour a wraith manifests has an Armour Point value equal to its Intensity, but since wraiths are intangible to physical objects, these Armour Points only block magical damage.

Wraith attacks are as intangible as the wraith itself, so unless parrying with a magically enhanced weapon any blow the wraith inflicts passes through the defending weapon, and armour. Magical Armour Points reduce the wraith's Spirit Damage by the magic's intensity. Wraith weapons inflict a chilling, insidious form of damage which makes the wounds they inflict turn black with necrosis. Such wounds never recover naturally, but require magic to heal.

Should a wraith's opponents not possess magically enhanced weapons, the spirit treats any parry as being an automatic failure, allowing the spirit the opportunity to generate Special Effects: being impaled by a wraith dagger is every bit as nasty as being impaled by a real one. Otherwise combat proceeds as normal save that cunning wraiths will sometimes attack through an ostensibly solid object to catch an opponent by surprise.

A wraith never initiates Spirit Combat, and is unable to pursue enemies beyond its tomb or place of death. Thus outmatched foes always have the option of fleeing these deadly spirits.

WRAITH SPIRITS

Characteristic

INT: 2d6+6

POW: As per Intensity

CHA: 2d6+6

Skills:

Spectral Combat skill = 50%+POW+CHA,
 Willpower 50%+(POWx2)

WRAITHS

Eternal, Manifestation, Wither

Wraiths are angry, malevolent spirits that, whilst anchored to a specific location, can shift between the material, and Spirit Worlds at will. Their anger stems from their partial confinement to the mundane world, and partial denial of the Spirit World; products of a vengeful desire to protect their own tombs or as the by-product of necromantic battlefield sorceries, wraiths are wrathful, malicious spirits intent on venting their grievances.

A wraith is similar to a haunt but far more potent. A wraith that manifests is capable of physically harming mortal foes but remains intangible to physical attacks, and is vulnerable only to magic. A wraith has only one hit location. Reducing its Magic Points to zero temporarily drives the creature back to the Spirit World for 24 hours, after which its Magic Points fully regenerate. The only way to permanently destroy a wraith is to pursue it into the Spirit World, and destroy it there. Cunning wraiths sometimes recognise animists, and withdraw from combat early in order to preserve their Magic Points for potential Spirit Combat.

It is typical for a wraith to manifest as it appeared in life, displaying its arms, and armour. They fight using their Spectral Combat skill inflicting their Spirit Damage on a successful attack. The

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Mysticism is the implementation of phenomenal abilities by the force of one's willpower, either via contemplative concentration, or by summoning or suppressing strong passions. The effects of mysticism can be great if used wisely, but despite being modest in comparison to other disciplines in terms of flexibility and raw power, it drains the psychic strength of the user quickly. However, the path of mysticism encourages a philosophy of self improvement, as it augments the natural skills and capabilities of the user.

Mystics do not study spells; instead they learn to channel their energies into enhancing their personal capabilities, sometimes far outstripping those of their fellows. Through a combination of meditative technique and applied knowledge, mystics can increase their likelihood of success with skills, invoke seemingly supernatural powers, and develop incredible reactions to direct threats and other hostile situations.

None of this is achieved through overt magic, but by understanding the true nature of his capabilities, focusing on the energies needed, and channelling them in the right way and at the right time to achieve what is needed. By necessity, a mystic's powers are self-centred: they cannot be conferred on others. Mysticism is a very personal journey that only the individual can experience. What he learns on that journey elevates him far above the norm.

SEEKING THE TRUTH WITHIN

The two key skills of mystics are Meditation and Mysticism. Meditation is used to train the mind of a mystic, enabling it to achieve a state of relaxation and perfect self-belief. It also enables them to be able to concentrate on several activities at once. Mysticism represents the depth of knowledge concerning a particular mystical path, granting knowledge of the esoteric abilities - disciplines known as talents - available to that philosophy.

MEDITATION (INT+CON)

Meditation is the ability to reach a state of concentration by removing all extraneous distractions. Once achieved, this higher mind state permits the mystic to tap their inner powers, and perform feats of parallel thought impossible to non-mystics. Increasing competence in Meditation improves the mystic's ability to concentrate on several mystical abilities simultaneously.

A mystic may maintain a cumulative level of Intensity of active talents equal to their Meditation skill divided by 10. Thus, a mystic with Meditation 66% can manifest a maximum Intensity of 7. This intensity could be applied to a single active talent – in which case no other talents could be used – or split between several talents: Augment X to Intensity 2, Invoke Y at Intensity 1, and Enhance Z to Intensity 4 for example. When a talent becomes inactive, its intensity is immediately released, and can be used for something else.

MEDITATIONS ON POWER

Of all the magic disciplines available in MITHRAS, mysticism is perhaps the least magical. To an external observer, much of what a mystic is capable of achieving seems the result of incredible skill or training, rather than some supernatural force. The source of a mystic's power, at least the Magic Points with which he performs his acts of excellence, lends itself primarily to self generation (see Where Do Magic Points Come From, page 115). This may contradict or undermine the principles behind the magical ecology of the setting if the Games Master does not wish a more exotic form of mysticism.

As an alternative, mystics may provide their own Magic Points by performing long hours of meditation, dance, creating art or even choral singing, thus keeping the restoration of their power both in check, and also in keeping with the philosophy of mysticism.

MYSTICISM (POW+CON)

Mysticism is the knowledge concerning the secret techniques and abilities taught to a particular Path of Mystic enlightenment. It not only controls the maximum Intensity at which any particular talent can be implemented, but may also govern how quickly the mystic masters each of the talents available to that path.

Mysticism is used to achieve the following effects:

- ❖ Augment specific skills by shifting their difficulty grade
- ❖ Enhance the mystic's attributes (Damage Modifier, Healing Rate, and so on)
- ❖ Invoke particular traits or abilities

A mystic is limited to using each individual talent at a maximum Intensity of one twentieth of the Mysticism skill from which it originates. Thus a mystic with 34% in the Path of the Awakening Dragon would be limited to implementing any of its talents at an Intensity of 2 at most. However, using Meditation he may be able to maintain several of these talents at the same time.

PATHS AND TALENTS

Each incidence of the Mysticism skill must be tied to a specific foundation of mystical knowledge, known as a path. These paths are often based on ancient hermetic teachings, passed down in sacred books or by esoteric gurus or secret mountain-top schools.

A path contains knowledge of multiple mental disciplines called talents – namely skill augmentations, trait invocations, and attribute enhancements – which are defined later on in this chapter. There is no preset limit to the number of talents a path can contain, although the mystical school that has developed the path will have imposed its own limitations based on its particular doctrine. Furthermore the talents contained within a path tend to be linked, and these natural relationships will impose their own limitations.

For example, the Path of Abjuration might include: Augment Endurance, Augment Survival, Invoke Denial (Food), Invoke Denial (Water), Invoke Denial (Sleep), Enhance Fatigue and Enhance Hit Points. Conversely the Path of Shadows might offer Augment Perception, Augment Stealth, Augment Ranged Combat Style, Invoke Adhesion, Invoke Astral Projection, Invoke Dark Sight and Enhance Fatigue.

Paths are therefore the mystical equivalent of Combat Styles: diverse talents and abilities folded into the umbrella skill of Mysticism. A path is usually tied to a profession or philosophy, and depending on the setting it might be rare for an adept to learn more than one.

These different combinations of talents can lend a character some quite remarkable capabilities in a very wide variety of unusual situations that differ from theism and animism.

STARTING MYSTICS

If a character begins the game as a mystic he must choose one path to follow that is built from talents either designed by the Games Master, agreed between the player and Games Master, or chosen from the examples given in the Cults and Brotherhoods chapter. Only one path can be chosen at this stage but others can potentially be learned and developed during the course of play.

MJU'S SAGA

A faithful student of the Path of Shadows, Mju is already in possession of the talents Augment Perception, Augment Stealth and Invoke Dark Sight. Yet he has been forbidden from learning more of the path's secret talents until he rises to the rank of disciple. To prove himself worthy, Mju is tasked to climb Cloud-reach Mountain a week before the sacred festival of Sun Return, and remain upon its summit for seven days in deep contemplation of the inner meaning of his path.

Mju accepts the challenge, and begins the long trek across the desert of the high plateau to its northern peaks. He has many adventures along the way, at one point aiding a pair of sisters who are seeking an ancient temple of Yethis to clear the ruins of their evil. Eventually he reaches the white tipped mountain, carefully scaling its dangerously sheer slopes. The broken off summit is cold, windswept, and ice covered, but Mju takes this as part of the test, settling himself for days of meditation to ignore the hardships.

During the following days he starts to notice certain oddities about the peak. A slightly rank smell in the brief periods the wind stops blowing. Odd scratches, and perhaps carvings on the rocks which form a natural amphitheatre. Even some ragged scraps of what could be brown crusted desert robes frozen into the ice. Something about all these hints at an unforeseen danger, so Mju augments his Perception skill to keep alert during the remaining days of meditation.

On the night of Sun Return his sharpened hearing picks up the sounds of flapping wings. Mju invokes his second talent of Dark Sight, and spots a vast number of winged beasts all heading for the summit. In desperation he utilises his last talent to augment his Stealth skill, squeezing himself into a narrow crevasse on the downwind side of the peak. All that night the assorted griffons, iqari, and giant eagles dance atop the mountain in a great ritual celebration, and at day break, they fly off in different directions.

When Mju finally returns to the travelling caravan of his master and explains in respectful tones the sights he saw, the old guru knows that unlike many before him, his student passed the test. Promoted to a disciple of the Path of Shadows, Mju is now free to learn the next two talents of his path...

It should be noted that some talents are potentially very powerful, and should be considered carefully before being made accessible to characters. Games Masters may wish to limit the availability of certain talents according to cult rank, ensuring that characters learn the secrets of their path in a particular order, and withholding the most potent abilities until the cult deems them responsible enough to be trusted with such knowledge.

Mystic characters begin play with knowledge of a number of talents equal to one twentieth of their Mysticism skill. These will generally be the least potent of the talents available to that path, as suited to a low ranking or novice student.

LEARNING TALENTS

Learning new talents is not just a case of handing over cash as if a financial transaction. Rather it necessitates an investment of time and Experience Rolls as described in the Magic chapter on page 118. Even if a character has a sufficient number of Experience Rolls available, consent to learn a new talent must be sought first since knowledge of these arts is carefully restricted by the masters of a path.

Gaining permission to learn new talents usually requires the mystic to demonstrate a certain base competence in skill, loyalty to the master who teaches them, and possibly proof of their readiness

by undertaking a difficult or dangerous test. There are countless ways for a mystical order to winnow out those unworthy of learning their most powerful secrets. Roleplaying the interaction between the mystic and his teachers builds the depth of their relationship to that path, and can form the basis for adventures.

USING MYSTICISM

Mysticism permits some extraordinary powers which can produce dramatic results. Although less inherently flexible than sorcery, and less crushing than theism, in their own niche mystics can be formidable foes. Their talents can boost their skills to phenomenal levels, grant them unusual physical or mental abilities, and increase their attributes to those of legendary heroes.

To gain access to these inner mysteries requires constant and regular practice. Although expensive in terms of magical strength, being dependent only upon themselves, mystics have no need to enslave spirits or return to temples to regain their effectiveness. Indeed the potent nature of their talents can pose a serious challenge to magicians who follow other disciplines of magic.

IMPLEMENTING A TALENT

Summoning the strength to implement a talent requires a mystic to utter a short mantra or exhale breath in a focussed shout, whilst making some sort of mystical gesture – normally a sweeping or striking motion – which aids concentration. In addition the mystic must satisfy the following conditions.

Firstly the mystic may only implement a talent which he has specifically been taught. Knowing a path does not automatically grant understanding (or awareness) of all the talents which belong to it.

CONSEQUENCES OF MYSTICISM

Although mysticism can be used in a number of exotic, imaginative ways from creating mysterious desert hermits to ascetic philosopher monks, it is inevitable that players will eventually want to create warrior mystics; attracted by the thought of augmenting their Combat Style skills or number of Action Points to unbeatable levels.

Games Masters should carefully consider the consequences of allowing mystics access to these types of talents. If permitted, then practitioners of these Paths of Mysticism will be near unstoppable by mortal opponents – which is not necessarily a bad thing provided it is embraced by the campaign setting.

This can be done in a number of ways. A devotee of a mystic warrior tradition may be treated with fear or fawning respect so that the character rarely has to fight. Ordinary soldiers may develop specific tactics to take on such formidable mystics, saturating their defences with volleys of ranged weapon fire or sacrificially attacking en masse, fully expecting half their number to fall. Perhaps mystic warriors are so fearsome that it is forbidden by law for them to kill save in times of war or on specific command of their master.

So unless warrior mystics are commonplace in the setting, the Games Master should expect to have foes scythed down; the only challenges being other mystics, maybe those of an opposing path. To get the better of such a character may instead require political intrigue, use of narcotics or poisons, alternate forms of magic, cunning traps or maybe just playing on the mystic's passions.

MJU'S SAGA

As a disciple of the Path of Shadows Mju has learned the talents Augment Perception, Augment Stealth, Invoke Adhesion, Invoke Dark Sight and Enhance Fatigue. In addition, after spending nearly a year meditating in the deep desert, he has also created his own Path of the Jerboa, via which he mastered the talents of Augment Athletics and Enhance Movement Rate.

This gives him a total of seven talents. However Mju only possesses a POW of 12 which means he may only maintain the concurrent practice of six talents at any time. After much thought he decides to drop Enhance Movement Rate from his daily mental exercises and keep the others. If needed he can resume the practice of enhancing his Movement Rate, restoring the ability after a week of meditation; but at the cost of dropping another talent from his repertoire.

Secondly the mystic must have enough Magic Points remaining to attempt the talent. If too few remain either the talent doesn't work or they may suffer some detrimental effect (see Running out of Magic Points page [117](#)).

Last but by no means least; the mystic must pass the requisite Mysticism skill check. Failure to implement the talent normally results in nothing more than the loss of a few Magic Points.

COSTS OF IMPLEMENTING TALENTS

Talents cost a variable amount of Magic Points to activate depending on their type – see Magnitude and Intensity below – and the success level of the implementation roll.

Once the base cost is known, the Mysticism roll is made:

- ❖ Critical Success: the talent works, and only half the Magic Point cost is expended.
- ❖ Success: the talent works, and the full Magic Point cost is expended.
- ❖ Failure: the talent fails, and a single Magic Point is expended.
- ❖ Fumble: the talent fails, and the full Magic Point cost is expended.

IMPLEMENTATION TIME

All mystical talents require one turn of preparation per point of their Intensity, and no other action may be performed whilst the talent is prepared. On the last turn of preparation the mystic makes a Mysticism roll and, if successful, the talent is initiated immediately.

MAGNITUDE AND INTENSITY

Magnitude is the Magic Point cost required to call upon a talent. Intensity is the level of effect achieved. These are as follows:

- ❖ Augment Skill: 1 Magic Point per level of Intensity. A level of Intensity improves the success chance of the skill by one grade. For example, increasing a skill from Standard to Easy costs 1 Magic Point; increasing it to Very Easy costs 2, and so on.
- ❖ Invoke Trait: 2 Magic Points. All traits have a default Intensity of 1.
- ❖ Enhance Attribute: 3 Magic Points per step of increase. Each step is a level of Intensity (for example, enhancing Damage Modifier by one step, from 1d2 to 1d4 costs 3 Magic Points;

enhancing from 1d2 to 1d6 costs 6 Magic Points, and so forth).

The upshot for mystics is that use of *Mysticism* can be Magic Point intensive when compared with other types of magic. However, when used creatively, *Mysticism* can be incredibly potent. A character's natural abilities can be enhanced to a level that is not necessarily available to other magical disciplines.

DURATION OF TALENTS

Unless specifically stated in its description, a talent only remains in place for the period of time required to action it. Once the immediate task for which the talent was called upon has been concluded, its effect lapses.

For example, enhancing Movement Rate to run a race should last only for that race, augmenting a Combat Style would be for the length of that melee, whereas inducing Featherlight would remain until the mystic finishes walking over a river.

As a rule of thumb, once a mystic focuses his attention on another, different task, the currently maintained talents drop. However, until a talent is dropped the Magic Points used to implement it cannot start to recover.

Common sense should be applied as to when the talent naturally ends. It is unreasonable to suggest that an augmented Combat Style continues once the mystic's foes have been defeated, or that an invoked perception lasts beyond the investigation of a person or area if the mystic becomes distracted by other events.

DISPELLING TALENTS

Since mysticism is based upon inner focus and strength of will, it is not normally susceptible to magical dismissal via spells such as *Avert*, *Dismiss*, *Neutralise*, and the like. The best way of dealing with mystics is to induce some form of mental or psychological disturbance which may cause their concentration to break; or render them unconscious, whereupon any active talents immediately drop.

When subjected to such a disturbance the mystic is permitted to resist using their Willpower in an opposed roll against the skill actively used against them, in order to maintain concentration. For instance, if injured by a thrown object, the mystic would oppose the Athletics roll of the thrower. Some discretion is required to ensure that the distraction is valid to the situation. A separate Willpower roll is needed for each active talent.

Conversely mystics have no ubiquitous way of defending themselves against direct magical assault, save by augmenting skills such as Endurance, Evade or Willpower.

LIMITATIONS TO TALENTS

The maximum level of Intensity at which an individual talent can be implemented is equal to one twentieth of the relevant *Mysticism* skill.

The maximum combined levels of Intensity of all active talents cannot exceed the Mystic's Meditation skill divided by 10.

No matter how many paths and talents a mystic knows, he may only actively practice a limited number of them. A mystic can concurrently maintain the training of a number of talents up to half the value of his POW. If the mystic wants to change one of the talents regularly practiced, he may discard it from his training regime, and

spend a week recalling the talent he wishes to replace it with. A Meditation roll is required to see if the mystic succeeds. If the roll fails, he not only loses access to the dropped talent but must spend another week in meditative practice to re-master the new one.

TALENT DESCRIPTIONS

Talents come in three varieties based upon the boost or ability they grant. These are either skill augmentations, invoking traits or enhancing attributes, as described in the following sections. Each has its own Magic Point costs and scaling limitations.

AUGMENTING SKILLS

The mystic augments his skills by concentrating on the nature of the task at hand, and channelling his own positive energies into attaining a desired result. A mystic literally envisages his own success, and then prepares himself to attain it.

Each level of Intensity improves the mystic's chance of success by one difficulty grade (see Modifying Skills page 38). This can be used to counteract situational penalties the mystic is already suffering, or augment them to superhuman levels of skill.

A mystic cannot boost his skill chance beyond the grade of Very Easy. Any levels of Intensity beyond this are ostensibly wasted, but will come into play if the mystic is subsequently penalised by detrimental circumstances.

INVOKING TRAITS

Traits are specialised physical, mental and emotional endeavours akin to those found for many creatures. All traits by default have an Intensity of 1, making them very useful abilities with which to compliment the mystic's other path talents. A trait confers a specific power for the duration it is implemented.

The available traits are as follows:

ADHESION

The mystic can move freely on vertical surfaces, and even move upside down on a ceiling with no special equipment. Such Movement is always at half the mystic's normal Movement Rate.

ARROWCUT

The mystic is able to parry and deflect projectiles (arrows, darts, spears, and so forth) using his bare hands; or weapons not normally permitted to perform such feats, such as swords or whips.

ASTRAL PROJECTION

The mystic can project a visible, albeit ethereal image of himself to a distance in kilometres equal to his Meditation skill. The Astral Protection acts a conduit for the mystic to communicate with and observe a distant location, but he cannot physically interact with it.

AURA (X)

The mystic projects a particular kind of aura (Fear, Intimidation, Serenity, Mastery, and so on) that can be used to present a particular aspect to those who behold him. Overcoming the mystic's aura requires an opposed roll of Willpower versus the mystic's *Mysticism* roll for invoking the trait. The aura affects all things within a radius of the mystic's POW in metres.

MJU'S SAGA

Mju is travelling the dark streets of Meeros one night hoping to meet an old friend, when he spots a suspicious figure flitting along an alleyway, curved knife in hand. He covertly follows the suspected assassin into the sacred grove, located next to the senate house. Unfortunately for the mystic it is autumn, and the ground is littered with dry leaves which crunch underfoot. The Games Master rules that crossing the leaves unheard is a Formidable task. So Mju takes a few moments to focus on his Augment Stealth talent, implementing it at an Intensity of 3 to ensure success. This costs him three Magic Points and modifies the difficulty grade from Formidable to Easy.

Mju follows the suspicious man into the senate house. Inside the peristyle building it is almost pitch black, little light from the starry night sky penetrating through the roof opening. Momentarily stumped Mju eventually discerns a faint illumination on the far side of the audience chamber, where the knife wielder, holding a softly glowing orb, is conversing with a shadowy cloaked figure.

Despite his augmented Stealth skill, Mju somehow gives away his presence as he creeps closer to the clandestine meeting. In a heartbeat the globe is extinguished. Mju hears the refined accent of a Meerish noble whisper 'kill him' before the sound of departing sandals leave the marbled hall. Hearing no other footsteps Mju realises his life is in extreme danger.

He decides he needs to invoke his Dark Sight talent, taking a voluntary penalty to his Mysticism skill (see Casting Requirements page 119) for not whispering the mantra aloud. Despite this Mju succeeds, and for the cost of 2 Magic Points, reveals the darkened chamber to his mystical senses. The hunting knife wielder has no such advantage, and Mju breaks his neck from behind. A quick investigation reveals the ritual scarring of the Brotherhood of Dust, branded upon the assassin's tongue; the favoured tools of the Badoshi Warlords...

AWARENESS

The mystic is aware of a particular kind of emanation (threat, love, danger, magic, and so on) within a radius equal to his POW in metres. He cannot gauge specifics; only that the emanation exists and is close by.

DARK SIGHT

Allows the mystic to 'see' normally in any level of limited light, even its complete absence.

DENIAL (X)

The mystic can deny the effects of one specific environmental condition. Denial (Rain), for example, would keep the mystic dry in even the most intense monsoon; Denial (Air) allows the mystic to forgo breathing for an extended period; Denial (Falling) would allow the mystic to briefly levitate above the ground; Denial (Sunlight) would prevent the burning, dehydrating effects of the most intense sun.

EARTH SENSE

The mystic has a perfect sense of direction, depth and orientation beneath ground, and suffers no penalties to Perception rolls for underground environments.

ECHOLOCATION

The mystic senses his environment through reflections of sonic waves. This means that he can perceive others that may be either motionless or hidden. In such circumstances, using a Stealth roll

to attempt to remain unperceived by the mystic is one grade more difficult.

FEATHERLIGHT

The mystic's physical weight becomes negligible, allowing him to balance on impossibly thin or slender surfaces, including those that should not be able to support the his mass (twigs, saplings, and so on).

FORMIDABLE NATURAL WEAPONS

The hands and feet of the mystic are treated as size Large for the purposes of attacking and parrying in combat.

HEART SLOW

The mystic is able to finely control his heart and metabolic rates, reducing them almost to a standstill. Using this trait a mystic must remain completely inactive for its duration but, to all intents and purposes, has no pulse, no heart rhythm, and organic functions have ceased. He becomes immune to other Life Sense attempts and appears to be dead. Once the trait finishes the mystic's faculties are fully restored.

IMMUNITY (X)

The mystic is completely immune to one specific type of damage caused by a particular source. This source can be magical, physical, or energy based, but should be quite narrow in scope. Examples include, but are not limited to: cold, fire, electricity, iron, poison, disease, cutting, crushing, falling, impaling, and so on.

INDOMITABLE

The Mystic is utterly immune to attempts at mind control or domination, including spells and spirit possession.

LIFE SENSE

In tune with the rhythms of nature, the mystic can determine the vitality of any living thing by touch alone. If the mystic touches another he learns of the target's current injuries, Fatigue level, and whether it is currently afflicted by any poison or disease. The mystic is also aware of any form of life within a number of metres equal to his Willpower skill, which may make Stealth difficult to accomplish.

MAGIC SENSE

Similar to Life Sense but instead permits the mystic to detect magical emanations over distance. If the mystic touches another he learns of the target's current magic points, carried enchantments, and active spells.

NIGHT SIGHT

Allows the mystic to treat partial darkness as illuminated, and darkness as partial darkness.

PAIN CONTROL

The mystic is inured to pain and able to work through its effects. Endurance rolls when experiencing any kind of injury are considered to be automatic successes.

SPIRIT SENSE

Similar to Life and Magic Sense, but the mystic's senses are attenuated specifically to the activity of spirits and the spirit plane. The mystic can sense what spirits are active within a radius equal to



his Willpower in metres and, if he succeeds in an Insight roll, can gauge the general intensity of the spirit entities. Spirit Sense confers no other powers or protection when dealing with spirits.

SQUEEZE

The mystic is able to manipulate his body, allowing him to squeeze into recesses and through gaps that would otherwise be impossible. The smallest opening, hollow or volume the mystic may utilise is one third of his SIZ.

ENHANCING ATTRIBUTES

Mystics can enhance an Attribute, temporarily increasing its effectiveness. The following attributes can be enhanced in the ways described below. Luck Points and Experience Modifier cannot be enhanced.

ACTION POINTS

Each level of intensity increases available Action Points by 1. The additional Action Points can only be used for defensive actions in combat. Thus, a mystic who spends 6 Magic Points to enhance his Action Points from 3 to 5 may only use these additional Action Points to Parry or Evade. He cannot use the additional points to make additional attacks or cast additional magic.

DAMAGE MODIFIER

Each point of Intensity increases the Damage Modifier by one step. Thus, at Intensity 3 (for a cost of 9 Magic Points, if available) a mystic's Damage Modifier of +1d2 would increase to +1d8.

MJU'S SAGA

Sent to spy on the nefarious Badoshi Warlords to assess their plans for war against Meeros, Mju is attempting to sneak into their compound – a lofty valley fortress high in the Grey Peaks. Moving cautiously, he is traversing a long, high corridor which leads to the pleasure gardens of the inner courtyard, and needs to bypass the six alert guards waiting at the end of the passageway. Knowing that if he is seen he will be attacked, Mju considers his options.

First he invokes Adhesion which gives him the ability to traverse sheer surfaces and ceilings. Mju immediately scuttles up the closest wall, and crouches, spider-like, on the ceiling, where none of the guards will think to look. Next he decides to boost his Stealth by Intensity 2. This increases his circumstantial modifier from Standard to Very Good, doubling his base Stealth skill to 160%.

He carefully manoeuvres along the ceiling and the Games Master calls for a Stealth roll to gauge Mju's progress. Luck is against him, and he rolls a 96 which is an automatic failure. Even with their Perception skills suffering a 60% penalty (from Mju's augmented Stealth skill exceeding 100%), one of the guards notices some falling grit dislodged from the ceiling, looks up, and spots the skulking mystic.

Mju immediately leaps down behind the sentries, diving into the luxuriant growth of the flowering gardens. Then in the few moments it takes for the stunned guards to react, he slips into a water lily covered pool. Knowing that the grounds will be thoroughly searched, Mju drops his Adhesion talent, freeing up as much of his meditative capacity as possible to enhance his Fatigue by four levels, whilst still maintaining his augmented stealth.

Three of the Badoshi arrive to check the pool, remaining there for over two minutes to ensure nobody is hiding beneath the surface. Although Mju took a deep breath before immersing himself, he eventually runs out of air, and soon burns through the extra Fatigue levels, almost drowning before the guards leave to search the rest of the garden. Now out of Magic Points, and in serious jeopardy of capture or death, Mju stealthily flees the fortress, cursing its bad stonemasonry...

FATIGUE

Each point of Intensity negates a level of Fatigue. This attribute can be enhanced pre-emptively in anticipation of becoming fatigued. Thus a 'fresh' mystic who spends 6 Magic Points could grant himself two buffer levels of Fatigue which could be lost before he started feeling the effects of his strenuous activity.

At the conclusion of the task any negated levels of fatigue return, potentially causing the mystic to collapse into unconsciousness.

HEALING RATE

Enhanced Healing Rate works slightly differently to the standard Attribute Enhancement rules. The amount of Hit Points healed is not increased, but the speed at which Healing Rate works is. Each level of intensity improves the speed of recovery by one step as follows

- ❖ Combat Rounds
- ❖ Minutes
- ❖ Hours
- ❖ Days
- ❖ Weeks
- ❖ Months

Usually Minor Wounds heal at a rate of 1 Day, Serious Wounds at a rate of 1 Week, and Major Wounds at a rate of 1 Month. Each level of Intensity changes the speed of healing. Thus, at Intensity



2, hit points are recovered at the following speeds: Minor Wounds 1 Minute, Serious Wounds 1 hour, and Major Wounds 1 day. Enhanced Healing Rate rapidly speeds-up recovery but it will not reattach severed limbs or restore the use of maimed ones.

A mystic may remain in a healing trance for as long as it takes to fully recover. However he may perform no other tasks during this time.

HIT POINTS

Each level of Intensity boosts Hit Points in every location by 1. So an Intensity 4 Hit Point enhancement would raise all Hit Locations by 4 points. These additional Hit Points absorb damage first, before the natural Hit Points are affected.

However these temporary Hit Points do not change the Serious and Major Wound boundaries, which remain tied to the mystic's natural Hit Points. Enhancing Hit Points after a Serious or Major Wound is suffered does not permit damaged locations to return to functionality.

MOVEMENT RATE

Each level of Intensity increases Movement by 2 metres.

INITIATIVE

Each level of Intensity adds 2 to the Initiative roll.

Above: The fabled Floating Citadels of the Azure Mystics. These sages specialise in the Adjuration of the Physical Earth, focusing on the Denial of Gravity. Through their advanced state of enlightenment the Azure Mystics have been able to raise their monastery citadels into the skies. They drift amongst the clouds covering many leagues a day in unguided flight, going wherever the air currents dictate.



Sorcery is the technique of invoking magical effects through the understanding and application of transcendent knowledge. Once a sorcerer comprehends the objective rules of reality, they can employ them in a repeatable and methodical manner. Of course this does not mean a sorcerer can figure out these fundamental laws for themselves, only that once a technique or formula is learned, they can manipulate it in a variety of ingenious ways.

The path of sorcery is often a hard one, requiring much time spent in study and research. Even its reputation can be viewed with an element of suspicion when compared to the worship of communal gods or the veneration of tribal spirits; as those not privy to its secrets tend to regard it with jealousy or perhaps fear, especially when the sorcerer is an aloof recluse without need for or responsibility towards his community.

Not all practitioners are loners. Some take apprentices to pass on the art to those of the next generation, whilst others form schools or guilds in which they share their knowledge in return for mutual protection or a degree of respectability. More sophisticated societies often evolve specialised orders, utilising their unions to practice particular types of sorcery as a profession, from itinerant weather-workers to mercenary spell-swords. At its pinnacle, sorcery can even be used to shield nations from more ‘primitive’ forms of magic, or provide an increase to the standard of living by the maintenance of innovative enchantments.

Whilst the ability to cast sorcery, depending on the campaign setting, may be limited to those born to it or trained in the art from childhood, each sorcery spell is merely an invocation which can be mastered by those sorcerers willing to spend the time to grasp its philosophical meanings, or at least to memorise the methodology. As such, most orders of sorcery keep the secrets of their most potent magics well hidden, even to their own students, for fear of the spell’s power being abused, or corrupting its wielder.

Although sorcery is often viewed as a dark or evil in Sword & Sorcery literature, it need not necessarily be so. Sorcery can be used beneficially or play a key role in societies lacking other forms of magic, depending on the manner in which the Games Master wishes to present it.

MANIPULATING THE COSMOS

The practice of sorcery requires two core skills, Invocation and Shaping. Invocation reflects the depth of knowledge concerning a particular philosophy or school of sorcery; whilst Shaping is the skill of the sorcerer to manipulate the parameters of a spell, so that can be cast in a flexible and innovative manner.

INVOCATION (INT x2)

Invocation represents a sorcerer’s ability to successfully cast spells learned from a particular source, be that a grimoire, mentor, school, extra-planar demon or even an ancient artefact. The precise scope of what the skill covers depends upon the campaign setting, but each incidence of Invocation must be assigned to a specific type or well-spring of sorcery.

The skill encompasses a plethora of magical principles from comprehending the philosophy underlying how that type of sorcery works; to being able to achieve the necessary mental state to manipulate reality. As the value of this skill increases, so does the capability of the sorcerer to create greater changes.

The Intensity of a sorcery spell is equal to one tenth of the Invocation skill used to cast it.

SHAPING (INT+POW)

In their default form, sorcery spells are relatively feeble in scope. Shaping is the method used to change the parameters of a sorcery spell so that it can be wrought to meet certain requirements, such as increasing its range or duration.

Once the base concepts of Shaping are known, they can be applied to any spell known by the sorcerer, no matter its school or tradition. Thus sorcerers normally need only learn a single Shaping skill (see Restricting Components of Sorcery Spells page 165).

Shaping is never rolled against when casting sorcery, rather it acts like a governor to limit the degree of modification which can be applied to a spell. The maximum level of alteration is equal to one

tenth of the value of the Shaping skill. Thus a sorcerer with Shaping 47% would be able to apply 5 points to shape the parameters of any sorcery spell he cast.

These points may be divided up amongst any of the following components to optimise the spell as desired:

- ❖ **Combine:** Used to fuse together several spells into a single casting
- ❖ **Duration:** Used to extend the period of time the spell's effects last
- ❖ **Magnitude:** Used to penetrate magical defences or resist magical attacks
- ❖ **Range:** Used to increase the distance a spell can be cast over
- ❖ **Targets:** Used to increase the number of targets affected by the spell

COMBINE

This component permits the sorcerer to combine the effects of several sorcery spells into a single casting, so that they all affect the target simultaneously. This not only saves time on casting, but also preserves Magic Points, as all the conjoined spells share the same shaping components (see Invocation Costs page [165](#)). Use the following guidelines when combining spells:

- ❖ A spell may not be combined with another instance of itself; only different spells may be combined
- ❖ If the conjoined spells come from different sources, then the lowest Invocation skill is used as the base casting chance
- ❖ The conjoined spells must all share the same target or targets
- ❖ Any shaping applied to a combined casting is assigned to each, and every one of the spells involved at no extra Magic Point cost
- ❖ Each additional spell added using combine, costs one extra Magic Point and increases the difficulty grade of the Invocation roll by one step (see Focus page [165](#))

Although combined spells might require several different resistance checks, the target only makes a single resistance roll – the result matched against each requisite opposed skill. Thus it is perfectly possible, for example, to save against all the combined spells requiring Resist Endurance whilst simultaneously failing to throw off the Resist Willpower spells.

SHAPING TABLE

<i>Points of Shaping</i>	<i>Combine</i>	<i>Duration (Mins)</i>	<i>Magnitude</i>	<i>Range</i>	<i>Targets</i>
None	None	POW	1	Touch	1
1	2 Spells	2xPOW	2	1m x POW	2
2	3 Spells	3xPOW	3	5m x POW	3
3	4 Spells	4xPOW	4	10m x POW	4
4	5 Spells	5xPOW	5	50m x POW	5
5	6 Spells	6xPOW	6	100m x POW	6
6	7 Spells	7xPOW	7	500m x POW	7
7	8 Spells	8xPOW	8	1km x POW	8
8	9 Spells	9xPOW	9	5km x POW	9
9	10 Spells	10xPOW	10	10km x POW	10
10	11 Spells	11 x POW	11	15km x POW	11
Each point...	+1 Spell	+1 x POW	+1 Magnitude	+5km x POW	+1

DURATION

Sorcery spells have a default duration equal to the POW of the caster in minutes.

Applying one or more points of Shaping to the Duration component will extend the length of a sorcery spell as noted in the table. The spell remains running for the entire duration, although in some cases part of its effect may require active concentration to function (see Concentration page [166](#)).

Some spells may end up with an extended duration which can last hours, or even longer. In these cases the Magic Point Attribute of the sorcerer is temporarily reduced by the number of Magic Points used to cast that spell until the magic is dropped or expires.

MAGNITUDE

Sorcery spells have a default Magnitude of 1, making them weak and vulnerable.

Applying one or more points of Shaping to the Magnitude component will improve its ability to overwhelm magical defences or resist magical attacks. It has no effect on the Intensity of a sorcery spell which is solely based upon the caster's Invocation skill.

RANGE

Sorcery spells have a default Range of Touch, requiring that the recipient be within physical reach of the caster.

Applying one or more points of Shaping to the Range component will allow the spell to be cast over greater distances, potentially achieving ranges beyond the immediate perception of the caster. In such cases the sorcerer will need alternate methods of observing the target.

Sorcery spells limited to Touch range may only be cast on others if physical contact can be maintained for the entirety of the Invocation.

Once someone or something is affected by a sorcery spell, it continues even if they travel beyond the spell's Range. Spells which require Concentration (see page [166](#)) lapse into passive mode once the target exceeds this distance, but only for the period it remains beyond the Range limit.

TARGETS

Sorcery spells have a default Target of one object, creature or person, which may be the caster himself.

FURTHER EXTENDING DURATION

Some Games Masters may find the duration of sorcery to be too limited for how magic works in their campaign setting. The following alternative progression is offered to those that like to greatly extend the active effects of spells. Bear in mind however that until a sorcery spell has finally completed, the Magic Points used to cast it do not recover.

Points of Shaping	Duration
None	Caster's POW in Turns
1	Caster's POW in Rounds
2	Caster's POW in Minutes
3	Caster's POW x 5 Minutes
4	Caster's POW x 15 Minutes
5	Caster's POW x Hours
6	Caster's POW x 6 Hours
7	Caster's POW x Days
8	Caster's POW x Weeks
9	Caster's POW x Months
10	Caster's POW x Years
Each point...	Continue progression: Decades, Centuries, Millennia, and so on...

SOURCES OF KNOWLEDGE

The fundamentals of sorcery are as varied as the sources from which its knowledge can be learned. All depends entirely on who, or what, has preserved such arcane knowledge. Although sorcery is often tied to the archetype of reading cryptic old spellbooks, it need not have any relationship with that particular stereotype.

Sorcery might instead be recorded in the form of towering prehistoric pictograms carved into the sides of mountains or be accessible only to those that drink the waters of a legendary well. Perhaps only those that journey beyond the boundaries of reality can master its esoteric secrets.

Of course the theory and practice of sorcery can be passed on by living beings too, without need for books or artefacts. Lone masters might hand down their sagacity as ancient aural traditions to their students. Maybe such wisdom is held only by demons or spirits of the otherworld, which must be summoned and appeased before they teach those who dare to call them up. Sorcery could even be learned by listening to the hidden meanings of mournful hyena howls around campfires at night.

Infinite are the sources of sorcerous knowledge. The only limit is your imagination.

Applying one or more points of Shaping to the Targets component will allow the spell to affect an increasing number of multiple targets, each one receiving the full consequence of the magic. That is to say, each target receives an identical copy of the original spell.

Unless specifically permitted by its description, the targets of a spell may not be changed once it is cast.

SCHOOLS AND SPELLS

A sorcerer's power and spells are restricted to the particular philosophy or tradition of sorcery he studies. Named schools of sorcery, the term represents a collated body of knowledge rather than a formal organisation.

Access to a specific school of sorcery can be held by particular groups, individuals, objects or even locations. Thus a sorcery tradition need not necessarily be taught by a formal cult, rather it can potentially be self-learned if the sorcerer can comprehend the source for himself.

For instance a sorcery cult could be nothing more than a group of loosely affiliated wizards who are all aware, and make use of a particular source; an infamous tome such as the Scroll of Khronus or the psychic powers gained by inhaling the deadly narcotic smoke of the ebony lotus; some discovering the secrets by themselves, others guided by a mentor already privy to the knowledge.

In a similar vein, there are no preset limitations as to how many spells are available to a particular school of sorcery. Yet the spells accessible to that philosophical path will generally be related in terms of metaphysical mechanics as to how they work, or will possess similar supernatural effects.

For example the Stygian Path is a school of sorcery which specialises in manipulating darkness, granting access to the spells: Animate Darkness, Dominate (Reptiles), Palsy, Sculpt Darkness, Smother, Teleport (via Shadows), and Wrack (Darkness). Whereas the Masters of Metamorphosis may learn a school of sorcery that controls the changing of things using the spells: Abjure, Diminish, Enhance, Haste, Regenerate, Shapechange and Transmogrify.

With this in mind, schools of sorcery should be crafted to fulfil a particular concept. They need not be balanced with one another; corrupt diabolic cults might indeed offer more spells than their benevolent counterparts. A grimoire might only grant a single, albeit potent, spell; whereas a respected guild of sorcery could provide a dozen. The precise balance or lack thereof is for the Games Master to decide when designing his campaign.

Further consideration should be made towards whether a sorcerer can join several guilds or discover additional sources of arcane knowledge. MYTHRAS is not predisposed towards the limitless accumulation of innumerable spells, but rather the clever and innovative use of a few. However, this should not preclude such occurrences if that is what is desired.

STARTING SORCERERS

A character starting the game as a sorcerer should choose a single school of sorcery to study; one designed by the Games Master, agreed to between the player and Games Master, or chosen from the examples given in these rules or the relevant setting. Only one school of sorcery can be chosen at this stage but others can potentially be discovered during the course of play.

In addition, the source of this sorcery should be decided also; whether it is an object, a mentor or a cult. There is no penalty to being self-taught, a common conceit of the Sword & Sorcery genre.

Sorcerer characters begin with a number of spells from that school equal to one twentieth of their Invocation skill. Once the campaign starts they are restricted in what additional spells they can study, and when they can learn them.

KRATOS' SAGA

Kratos started out as a modest scribe in the famed city of Meeros. Unfortunately, his increasing interest in the arcane arts soon brought him into conflict with the cult priests of Myceras, who exiled him on suspicion of stealing forbidden texts. The scholar swore vengeance towards the city of his birth and journeyed far into unknown lands in search of true power.

Ultimately Kratos found an old hag who taught him the fundamentals of sorcery in exchange for certain... favours. After a year of subservience, suffering her horrible embraces, Kratos learnt the skills of Invocation (Stygian Path) 32% and Shaping 33%. Then, in a dastardly act of betrayal, he strangled his mentor, stealing the strange crystal which seemed to be the source of her sorcerous knowledge.

Alone in the wilderness, the sorcerer is discovered by a troop of man-eating centaurs. Faced with becoming their next meal, Kratos attempts to invoke a spell to frighten the monsters away. Lacking the skill to affect the centaurs directly, he tries to Animate the shadows dancing about his camp fire.

With his Shaping skill he has four points he can use to manipulate the magic. He uses 1 point to extend the Range of the spell to 16 metres, so that it can reach the centaurs. The remaining 3 points he places into the Targets component, so that he can simultaneously control four separate shadows. His invocation is successful so he sends the amorphous figures of flickering darkness towards the slavering man-horse chimeras. To his great surprise, the centaurs yell in superstitious terror, and prostrate themselves at his feet begging for mercy...

LEARNING SPELLS

Learning new spells requires an investment of Experience Rolls as described in the Magic chapter on page [118](#). Whether or not new spells are available is a different matter. For example, an adept member of a powerful guild may be withheld from freely acquiring the more dangerous spells of the order; only being taught once they demonstrate the correct level of understanding or responsibility. A mage who learns his art from a demon might instead need to provide the entity with a suitable offering (a diabolical deed or rare sacrifice) before he is shown a new spell.

Likewise a self-taught sorcerer who picks up a grimoire cannot learn every spell inscribed within its pages as soon as they have the Experience Rolls to invest. There are limits to how much, and how quickly a sorcerer can understand and absorb knowledge from the complex metaphysical implications of such a work.

As a rough guideline, spells accessible to a school of sorcery are usually linked or entwined in such a way that they must be learned:

- ❖ In a particular order; acquisition of lesser incantations being needed to comprehend the underlying techniques to invoke higher ones.
- ❖ When a specific degree of mastery is reached, each spell limited to a particular cult rank or value of the Invocation skill may be learned as the sorcerer has demonstrated the necessary level of comprehension.
- ❖ Only after the student has shown the correct attitude, behaviour or dedication to be permitted deeper knowledge.

Thus the learning of new spells is not an automatic ability or right. Access to them must be earned through roleplaying and over a period of time in the campaign. A new spell should be regarded as a reward for completing a particularly difficult task, as a consequence

of advancing cult rank or even as the result of many months research and study. When knowledge is quite literally power, a sorcerer should not be able simply to purchase spells by handing over a cartload of silver. Although a gift might influence the mind of a sorcerer's mentor, the spell itself is almost always priceless.

USING SORCERY

Although sorcery is not necessarily the most potent type of supernatural power available to mortals, the ability of a sorcerer to shape his magic makes it extremely versatile. Sorcerers can weave a handful of awesome spells into a single, magic-efficient casting; blast small units of warriors with the same spell; or even control the mind of a victim from hundreds of kilometres away. This ability, which greatly augments one or more spell components, enables their magic to far exceed the more rigid parameters of other types.

The inherent flexibility of sorcery extends beyond its ability to be shaped. Unlike animism there is no dependency upon third party spirits which might slip from control. Similarly they need not return to specific holy places to recover their magical strength unlike theists. In effect, sorcery grants its practitioner freedom from needing things or places. All that is required is knowledge of the spell, and enough Magic Points to invoke it.

INVOKING A SPELL

Casting a sorcery spell requires that the sorcerer performs a short invocation, allowing him to mentally impose the spell's transcendental formula upon the cosmos, changing reality. It may be an envisioning of a complex glyph or articulate utterance of a harmonic mantra. Whatever the procedure, for the spell to work the sorcerer must meet the following prerequisites.

Firstly they must actually know the spell being cast. Simply reading or repeating a spell parrot fashion from something like a scroll will not work if the sorcerer has no understanding of its underlying metaphysics.

Secondly they must have the requisite number of Magic Points remaining. Attempting to cast a spell with insufficient Magic Points

KRATOS' SAGA

Now in command of a troop of loyal centaurs, Kratos sends them forth to gather tribute and sacrificial victims whilst he spends his time studying the strange artefact he stole. He knows the fist-sized black diamond was the source of the hag's sorcery, from the cold tingling the crystal elicits when he touches it. Some dim memory suggests that this may be the Tear of Yethis, an infamous relic said to be the only remaining fragment of a mighty Serpent Demon who once ruled the world.

After much experimentation Kratos discovers that pouring fresh human blood over the stone causes its holder to experience vivid dreams in which the demon lord appears, passing on forbidden arcane knowledge to he who would learn to master such power. As his skill and arrogance increase, Kratos begins to demand new spells from his diabolical mentor. The demon slyly agrees, providing the sorcerer is willing to pay the hellish price.

In exchange for the ritual slaughter of nine pure virgins from the highest ranked families of Meeros, the demon promises to teach the increasingly corrupt Kratos the magical ability to shift between pools of shadow. The sorcerer readily agrees, little comprehending that the next spell will cost him far, far more.

means that either the spell doesn't work, or something bad occurs to the sorcerer to find the last fragments of power (see Running out of Magic Points page 117).

Thirdly on the last turn of casting, the sorcerer must pass an Invocation skill check. Failing to cast the spell correctly usually results in nothing bad save that the magic doesn't work, or at worst the squandering of a few Magic Points.

INVOCATION COSTS

The cost of casting a sorcery spell depends on how much it is shaped, and the success level of the Invocation skill roll.

Base cost is 1 Magic Point plus an additional one point per spell component modified. For instance a spell which has its Range and Duration components increased will have a base cost of 3 Magic Points. If several spells are woven together using Combine, then an additional Magic Point is added to the cost for each extra spell.

Once the base cost is known, the Invocation roll is made:

- ❖ Critical Success: the spell works but only half the Magic Point cost is expended.
- ❖ Success: the spell works, and the full Magic Point cost is expended.
- ❖ Failure: the spell fails, but no Magic Points are expended.
- ❖ Fumble: the spell fails, and the full Magic Point cost is expended.

INVOCATION TIME

The time taken to cast a sorcery spell is equivalent to 1 Turn plus an additional Turn for each spell component modified. This is usually the same as its Magic Point cost except in cases where Combine (or the optional Swiftness component) is utilised.

The Invocation skill check is made on the final turn of casting; the result of the roll occurring immediately.

MAGNITUDE AND INTENSITY

Sorcery spells have a default Intensity equal to one tenth of the caster's Invocation skill. Their Magnitude depends on how many shaping points were devoted to that spell component.

Sorcerers need not apply the entirety of their available Intensity if they desire to limit the spell's effect.

RESTRICTING COMPONENTS OF SORCERY SPELLS

Not all schools of sorcery need have access to the same component parameters, not even the default ones. A campaign could be created where certain paths of sorcery lack knowledge of a particular shaping technique, perhaps being compensated for by the addition of a different, more exotic component. If used in this way, sorcerers should require a separate and specific Shaping skill for each type of Invocation they know.

The Zemgarian School of Unseen Sorcery for example could teach Shaping but using only the components of Magnitude, Range, Targets and Focus. Whereas the Inebriated Sorcerers of Tzushan may teach their apprentices the components of Combine, Duration, Magnitude and Fortune.

ALTERNATE COMPONENTS FOR SORCERY SPELLS

Other parameters can be added to Shaping, granting sorcery spells additional strange and exotic abilities. Some of these components are not strictly balanced with one another, so care should be taken if introducing them to a campaign.

Ablation – Used with spells which have the Resist trait, each point of shaping applied to Ablation grinds down any protective magic on the target which tries to block the incoming spell; reducing its Magnitude by the level of ablation. This is still the case even if the protective magic successfully blocked the sorcery spell.

Focus – Used to ensure that a spell works, no matter what the mental and physical distractions, each point of shaping applied to Focus permits the sorcerer to ignore one level of difficulty applied against them. This covers the loss of verbal or somatic components, mental state due to narcotics, combining multiple spells, and even penalties applied for suffering wounds. This component cannot raise the casting chance above its base value.

Fortune – Used with spells which have the Resist trait, each point of shaping applied to Fortune allows an additional casting roll from which the sorcerer selects the most favourable result. A spell cast with 3 points of shaping applied to Fortune would permit the sorcerer to roll four times and choose the best roll.

Precision – Used with spells that randomly target Hit Locations, each point of shaping applied to Precision allows the caster to adjust the dice roll by 1 to select the most advantageous location.

Swiftness – Used to hasten the casting of complex or heavily manipulated spells, each point of shaping applied to Swiftness reduces the casting time by 1 Turn, to a minimum of one.

DISPELLING A SORCERY SPELL

Sorcery spells resist dispelling using their Magnitude. Thus if this component is left unaugmented sorcery can be fairly easy to dismiss.

LIMITATIONS OF SORCERY

There are no restrictions to the number of concurrent spells a sorcerer can maintain, save that only a single Concentration spell can be focused on at any moment in time.

Due to the boggling complexity of sorcerous invocations, there is a limit to how many spells a sorcerer can keep in his mind. Thus a sorcerer may only memorise a number of spells up to the value of his INT characteristic. In the rare situation that the sorcerer has access to more spells than he has the space to memorise them, spells may be swapped by spending a week of intense deliberation in reclusive isolation to exchange them.

SPELL DESCRIPTIONS

All sorcery spells are defined by several traits which control how each spell functions. By design sorcery spells lack a degree of physical and temporal description since these parameters can be modified by Shaping as it is cast.

This flexibility can make certain spells appear to be remarkably potent, especially those which have their duration or range greatly extended. Such possibilities are intentional, providing an interesting opportunity for those who wish to cunningly manipulate their magic.



Most potential game abuses are handled in the spell descriptions. However, Games Masters who find that certain spell combinations are causing problems should feel free to impose extra restrictions – such as reducing spell functionality, preventing the same spells being available to a single school of sorcery, or using the same tactics against the player characters.

The following two traits are available to sorcery spells:

CONCENTRATION

The spell's active effects only function so long as the character specifically concentrates on it. During this time the sorcerer is usually restricted to moving at a maximum of walking pace, and performing Free or Reactive Actions (when necessary; use common sense). Any passive elements of the spell continue running without the need to concentrate; for example a Fly spell requires concentration to actually move, but it will simply keep the sorcerer floating in place if his concentration lapses. By default a sorcerer may only concentrate on a single Concentration spell at any one time.

RESIST (ENDURANCE/WILLPOWER/EVADE)

Offensive spells allow the target to make an opposed test of their Endurance, Willpower or Evade skill (as specified by the spell) against the casting roll of the sorcerer, to avoid the effect of the spell entirely. To resist using Evade, the character must expend a Combat Action.

Be warned that some of the following spells are extraordinarily powerful, included only for the use of major antagonists or as long lost arcane secrets. They are extremely rare and not intended for starting player characters.

ABJURE (SUBSTANCE/PROCESS)

Resist (Special)

Abjure allows the recipient of the spell to abstain from something usually required for life, utterly removing its need (or effect) until the spell ends. Each variant of the spell affects a specific substance or process, which could be anything, including Food, Water, Breath, Sleep, Dreams, Narcotics, and so on. Due to its flexibility, the Games Master should use common sense when more unusual versions of the spell are used, for example Abjure (Narcotics) will not only remove any desire to take narcotics in the first place, but also ensure any already taken will no longer affect the target.

The sorcerer can affect targets with a maximum SIZ of three times the spell's Intensity. If the recipient is unwilling they are permitted to resist using Willpower. Exceedingly rare and exotic versions of this spell exist such as Abjure Pain, Abjure Sensory Perception, and even Abjure Ageing.

ANIMATE (SUBSTANCE)

Concentration, Resist (Special)

Animate quite literally invests an inanimate object with a semblance of life, permitting it to move under its own power. Each variant of the spell affects a specific type of substance, which can be fairly broad in scope. For example wood, stone, fire, darkness, rope, fabric, and so on.

The sorcerer can animate an object with a maximum SIZ of three times the spell's Intensity. Insubstantial substances such as air, fire, darkness or clouds are instead measured in terms of volume, with the sorcerer able to affect a number of cubic metres equal to the spell's Intensity. The animated object gains a default Movement Rate of 1m, which may be incremented by assigning points of Intensity (on a one for one basis) to movement rather than to the amount of SIZ or Volume affected.

Providing they have some degree of flexibility or the ability to extrude portions of themselves, animated objects may perform complex physical manipulations. These are performed by using the sorcerer's own skills, reduced by one difficulty grade. If combined with the appropriate Sculpt spell (see Shaping), the sorcerer can achieve much finer control and ignore this penalty. Where necessary, treat

TO ROCK AND ROLL

The material and shape of an object has important implications on how the Animate spell is used.

For instance, a sorcerer who knows Animate (Stone) 78% could use it to move a boulder of up to SIZ 24 (a little over 200kg), but he couldn't affect a solid cliff face with a much larger size, nor could he break a lump from it unless the fault lines and cracks already existed. However, a more insubstantial material like water is easier to divide up, so there would be no problem splitting off a small pool of water from a lake.

Shape is also vital. Animating a boulder would allow it to ponderously roll about, but it obviously could not pick up an object, open a door (although it might be able to smash through it) or anything else which required limbs or digits to achieve. An animated statue on the other hand would possess the requisite appendages.

Some objects may appear innocuous but can be potentially formidable in the right circumstances. An animated bunch of ropes or a carpet could be an excellent way of entangling opponents, or an animated fire sent dancing through a tent encampment a deadly distraction.

the object as having a Damage Bonus based on twice its SIZ, or as an elemental of equal volume.

Sorcerers must actively concentrate to cause animated objects to move or perform complex manipulation. If their concentration lapses the object becomes quiescent until the sorcerer can focus his will through it again. Objects which are already under magical control are only affected if the Magnitude of the Animate is equal or greater than the previous effect.

If the animated object is carried or worn by a living creature, then it may resist the spell with Endurance. Whilst the spell can be used to discommode/break such objects, their manipulation cannot be used to directly inflict harm on the creature (see Shrink page [174](#)).

ATTRACT (THREAT)

Resist (Willpower)

Attract makes the recipient of the spell a scapegoat for certain, and usually harmful, occurrences. Each variant of the spell affects a specific type of threat, for instance spells, creatures, spirits or even missiles. Often used as a punitive curse or self-sacrificial gesture rather than an offensive weapon, Attract draws all incidences of its particular threat which pass within a radius equal to the spell's Intensity in metres, redirecting them so that they target the recipient instead.

The mechanical effects of the spell depend entirely upon the type of threat:

- ❖ Creatures: Attracts aggressive beasts with a SIZ of up to three times the spell's Intensity.
- ❖ Magic: Attracts offensive ranged magic with a Magnitude equal or less than the spell's Intensity.
- ❖ Missiles: Attracts ranged weapons with a maximum damage (including magical augments) equal or less than the spell's Intensity.
- ❖ Spirits: Attracts aggressive spirits with a maximum Intensity of half the spell's Intensity.

BANISH

Resist (Willpower)

Banish enables a sorcerer to dismiss a spiritual or demonic entity with a maximum POW of three times the spell's Intensity, back to the Plane from whence it was summoned (or from which it travelled). If the target is unwilling it is permitted to resist using Willpower.

This spell does not work on spirits which are residing within a fetish to which they are bound. If brought forth from the object to perform a service, however, the spirit becomes vulnerable to the banishment; which if successful, sunders the binding. Likewise Banish does not work on spirits currently possessing a victim, but only those which are tricked into abandoning the host first.

BYPASS ARMOUR

Bypass Armour affects objects, armaments or the natural weapons of creatures so that they pass through armour. The spell allows the weapon or trap to ignore a number of Armour Points equal to the spell's Intensity. This spell also works against magical protection, such as Damage Resistance or Shield.

CASTBACK

Castback shields the recipient from magic in a somewhat haphazard manner, with the chance that any spell cast at them may

potentially be reflected back at its caster. The sorcery can only affect spells possessing the Resist trait which have a Magnitude equal to or less than the Magnitude of the Castback.

In such cases if the recipient of the Castback fails to resist the incoming spell, then it affects him normally. If on the other hand he succeeds in resisting, the reflected spell is sent back to its caster who in turn must roll to see if he himself suffers its effects!

Castback has no way of discerning the difference between hostile or beneficent magic, and affects all spells save those the target casts on himself.

The recipient cannot exceed a maximum SIZ of three times the spell's Intensity.

DAMAGE ENHANCEMENT

Damage Enhancement augments the physical damage inflicted by an object or creature. This can be anything from natural weapons, a two handed axe or even the spikes of a pit trap. The magic increases the minimum amount of damage that is inflicted during a successful attack, raising it to the value of the spell's Intensity if the dice roll is lower. The spell cannot inflict more damage than the weapon is normally capable of.

DAMAGE RESISTANCE

Damage Resistance protects an (entire) object or person against physical damage. It provides the recipient with a number of Armour Points equal to the spell's Intensity. These do not stack with existing protection (whether worn or natural) so that only the highest value protection works.

This magic does not necessarily need only to be cast on living creatures. It can just as easily be used to toughen a sword, make a door more difficult to hack through, or render a delicate glass bottle near unbreakable. The target cannot exceed a maximum SIZ of three times the spell's Intensity.

DIMINISH (CHARACTERISTIC)

Resist (Willpower/Endurance)

Diminish allows a sorcerer to reduce a physical or mental trait of a living target. Each variant of the spell affects a specific characteristic, diminishing it by 2 points per Intensity of the spell – to a minimum of 1. The target must possess the characteristic in question to be effective.

If the target is unwilling it is permitted to resist the spell, using Endurance if the spell is affecting a physical characteristic (STR, CON, SIZ or DEX) or Willpower if affecting a mental one (INT, POW or CHA). Note that creatures affected by Diminish (SIZ) actually shrink, rather than becoming wasted and skeletal as with the Tap spell.

DOMINATE (CREATURES)

Concentration, Resist (Willpower)

Dominate grants the sorcerer psychic control over a creature of the specific species the spell affects. The spell is limited by the intellect of the target, the caster only able to subjugate creatures with an INT or INS up to twice the spell's Intensity. Those that fall within this range may resist with Willpower.

Whilst the sorcerer concentrates, he may mentally issue commands to the victim, who (in most circumstances) cannot refuse. If the sorcerer allows his concentration to lapse, the victim temporarily regains volition; at least until the next time the sorcerer re-establishes



Kratos wields his Dominate (Reptiles) spell to command a lizardman raiding party of the Zo Swamps to serve him. With this subservient force, the sorcerer plans his revenge against Meeros.

concentration. Dominate does not grant any awareness of what the target is doing when beyond the perception of the sorcerer. In addition, if the target escapes the Range of the spell they are freed from control, although it can be established again if they return.

Certain circumstances permit a new resistance roll to break the spell, such as acts which run contrary to the target's strongest beliefs or instincts, for example being forced to murder a loved one. In these cases the subjugated victim may resist using a Passion, Oath or some similarly relevant skill. Suicidal commands instantly break the spell.

DRAW (CREATURES)

Resist (Willpower)

Draw summons creatures of a specific type within range towards a target. Each variant of the spell affects a family of species, such as fish, felines or birds. It affects creatures up to a maximum SIZ of three times the spell's Intensity, which may resist the summons using Willpower. Those that fail are drawn towards the target, moving at a natural speed suitable to that type of creature.

Physical obstructions may prevent the creatures from reaching the desired location. Upon their arrival, some other magic must be used to control the creatures since Draw provides no protection or domination against them. Aggressive species may potentially rampage or mindlessly attack depending on their natural instincts.

The target of the spell may be an object, location or person – although the latter, if unwilling, may also attempt to resist. If successful the target throws off the curse, and the spell fails.

Although the magic may seem extremely potent, it is balanced by the amount of time required to gather together creatures from overly long distances. In addition, interfering with nature on a wide scale often results in unforeseen (and dire) consequences. Thus Draw is most often used for things like: pestering an individual with insects, clandestinely stealing an entire herd of cattle, or blighting a city with a plague of rats.

ENCHANT (OBJECT)

Resist (Special)

Enchant enables a caster to make one of their sorcery spells everlasting, but at the cost of seriously reducing their magical strength. Normally enchantments are bound into inanimate objects, something which will last beyond the life of the sorcerer, perhaps even becoming a legendary object. On the other hand a living target can be enchanted, although the spell is often one of a deleterious nature.

A spell which is to be made perpetual must be Combined with the casting of Enchant. In addition, it is limited to possessing only as many points of shaping as the Intensity of the Enchant. The strain of creating the enchantment permanently reduces the sorcerer's Magic Points attribute by the magic point cost of the combined spell. These can be recovered later if the enchantment is unwoven by the

WHY ENCHANT?

Few player character sorcerers are likely to create enchantments since the ultimate cost always comes from their own Magic Points attribute. Although it may seem foolish to enchant objects or people with permanent spells due to this crippling reduction in power, there are some circumstances where it can actually be a reasonable act.

In magically poor settings, recovery of Magic Points may be slow and difficult. An enchanted object in this case, will actually save the sorcerer from expending power, especially if it is a spell which he uses regularly – a carpet enchanted with Fly for instance.

Progression in a magical guild or cult might require the creation of an enchantment, a wizard's staff being a common concept. Combining this with the right spell could create a dangerous weapon of sorcery (Wrack), grant a supplementary pool of Magic Points (Store Manna), or some other imaginative use.

Last but by no means least, a sorcerer can use an enchantment to bless or curse a victim with a persistent effect. A rather infamous example would be changing a prince into a baboon with a permanent Shapechange spell, although with the right shaping entire cities could be damned with some nefarious sorcery.

original caster or the object (or person) is destroyed. Dismissing or Neutralising an enchantment only suppresses its powers temporarily.

It is recommended that only objects be permitted to be enchanted with spells requiring the Concentration trait. Enchantments should be recorded with the Invocation skill of the enchanted spell at the time of its creation, along with whatever shaping was performed.

ENHANCE (CHARACTERISTIC)

Resist (Willpower/Endurance)

Enhance allows a sorcerer to increase a physical or mental trait of a target. It works in precisely the same way as Diminish, save that it improves a specific characteristic, enhancing it by 2 points per Intensity of the spell – to a maximum of twice the original characteristic value. Malevolent use of the spell may be resisted.

Careful consideration should be taken before permitting characters access to certain versions of this spell, such as Enhance (DEX, INT or POW), due to the potentially unbalancing nature of these spells.

ENLARGE

Resist (Special)

Enlarge is the opposite of the Shrink spell. It is used to expand non-living or inanimate objects, the initial SIZ of which cannot exceed a maximum of three times the spell's Intensity. Under its effect, the dimensions and weight of the object are multiplied by a factor equal to the Intensity. For instance a plank of wood subject to an Intensity 7 Enlarge spell it would grow to seven times its length and mass, possibly allowing it to form a bridge.

Normally objects cannot resist the magic, but if it is carried or worn by a living creature, then the victim may resist the spell with Endurance. Used offensively in this way, the creature has the chance to brace itself or simply drop the object as it expands. Thus whilst having a suit of mail grow to five times bigger and heavier may be a hindering inconvenience, it will not cause direct harm. Additionally, an object will stop growing when it meets too much resistance.

ENSLAVE (CREATURES)

Resist (Willpower)

Enslave grants the sorcerer power to manipulate large numbers of targets, all of whom must be of the same species as specified by the spell. Instead of crushing the will of its victims, turning them into helpless automatons (as per the Dominate spell), the magic instils a powerful yet wholly artificial zeal or desire within those which it affects – giving them a temporary Passion at a value equal to the caster's Invocation skill. This can be anything from devoted adoration towards the sorcerer to an unremitting hatred for a hitherto friendly nation.

The potential number of victims a sorcerer can Enslave is equal to ten times the Intensity of the spell, multiplied by its Targets component; thus if cast at Intensity 7 with four Targets, the spell will actually attempt to affect 280 victims. These are normally gathered in a crowd or restricted area so that both the sorcerer can see them, and they can hear him. The sorcerer can only enslave creatures with an INT or INS up to twice the spell's Intensity. Those that fail to resist will listen to the words of the sorcerer and be influenced by them.

Whilst under the influence of this spell, victims cannot directly harm the caster, thinking him sacrosanct or a fount of wisdom. However they can baulk at a command if the order brings them into conflict with another Passion of equal or higher value. Enslave is normally used by powerful sorcerers to raise armies, subjugate tribes or corrupt ruling bodies, enabling them to subtly seize power or ensure their own safety in an otherwise hostile society.

EVOKE

Resist (Willpower)

Evoke brings an extra-planar being to the presence of the caster; which can be anything from a demon or genie, to an intangible spirit. The only requirements are that it cannot be native to the plane of existence to which it is summoned, that it does not possess a POW greater than three times the spell's Intensity, and that the sorcerer knows its true name. For some settings, each incidence of this spell might be specific to a unique individual.

Although Evoke may summon the entity, it does not grant him any power over the extra-planar being. Unless some sort of magical protection or compulsion is used, the sorcerer is completely at the mercy of the entity, relying on ritual tradition or good nature. Of

SUMMONING OTHERWORLD ENTITIES

Using Evoke to summon entities from other worlds or dimensions is one of those spells which, according to the genre, commonly requires a great deal of preparation as described in the Introduction to Magic chapter (see Ritualistic Casting Times page 115).

In this particular case, the Games Master could require that the initial summoning of the entity requires roleplaying a long drawn out ritual, with full descriptions of the laying down of protective wards, and any required sacrifices. Then, assuming the summoned creature doesn't just destroy the sorcerer or drag him back to its own realm, some form of negotiation should take place for future services.

Once this deal is struck the entity could be allowed to return home, ready to respond the next time it is called by the Evoke spell. However, these future summonings merely require the sorcerer to call out the being's name whilst casting the spell, allowing it to respond near instantaneously.

course the being may not necessarily attack or punish its summoner, but few are happy about being yanked from their native plane without some sort of suitable *raison d'être* or a gift to smooth ruffled feelings.

Summoned entities only remain in the world for as long as the Duration of the spell. In addition they cannot travel further from the place of their summoning than the spell's Range.

FLY

Concentration

Fly enables the recipient to move freely through the air at their own behest. The spell can affect a person, creature or object of a SIZ up to three times its Intensity, granting them a base Movement Rate of 6. Further levels of Intensity not allocated to SIZ can instead be used to augment the speed of flight, each point granting an additional 6 metres per round. For instance an Intensity 7 Fly spell could grant a SIZ 14 creature a Movement Rate whilst flying of 18.

Fly requires concentration only when actively moving. If concentration lapses the magic continues, keeping the recipient hovering aloft; although if travelling at high speed it might take a round or two to coast to a stop.

If the spell is used on a beast of burden or an object used to support others (such as a carpet) it must be capable of lifting the combined SIZ of both the creature or object, and those mounted upon it. Otherwise it either fails to take off, or sinks towards the ground at a rate deemed fitting by the Games Master.

HASTE

Haste augments the Movement Rate of whatever it is cast on, whether a person, creature or object. The spell can affect targets up to a maximum SIZ of three times the Intensity of the spell. Under its effect, the recipient's Movement Rate is increased by an amount equal to the Intensity. If the target is an inanimate object, it increases the top speed of the vehicle or vessel, but does not provide motive power.

HIDE LIFE

Hide Life conceals the recipient's soul in a specially prepared object called a soul jar, which can take any form the caster desires. It works only on targets with a maximum POW of up to twice the Intensity of the spell. Under its effects the recipient loses a single Hit Point from every location, but in exchange cannot be killed. Each time they suffer an injury, affliction or spell which would normally slay them, at the moment of death their body discorporates and reforms next to the object in which the life force is stored.

It takes the body a period of one month divided by the Intensity of the spell to fully reform and heal. Conversely, if the recipient ventures further away from its soul jar than the Range of the spell, it begins to degenerate, suffering damage in reverse. Dying beyond the reach of the spell is permanent.

Hide Life can be dismissed or neutralised, but requires the counter-magic to be cast directly onto the soul jar, which is normally well hidden or protected. The only other way of ending the spell is to smash the object itself, which may prove hard if it is carved or fashioned out of exceptionally durable material. Although Hide Life prevents death, it does not cease ageing, as many sorcerers who later become withered liches have discovered to their cost.

HINDER

Resist (Endurance)

Hinder reduces the Movement Rate of whatever it is cast on, in a similar manner to Haste. The spell can affect targets of up to a maximum SIZ of three times the spell's Intensity. Those that fail to resist are slowed by a number of metres equal to the Intensity. However, a target's Movement Rate cannot be lowered to less than 1 metre per round with this spell.

HOLDFAST

Resist (Endurance)

Holdfast magically adheres an object (of a SIZ up to three times the spell's Intensity) to another surface. The bonding is unbreakable by normal means, save for the destruction of the target or the surface it is bonded to. It can only be dispelled by magic if the counter spell can overcome the Magnitude of the Holdfast.

The materials of the two surfaces make no difference to the spell. However, if the target is a living being, it is permitted to resist using its Endurance. This magic is often used to seal doors into their frames, stick weapons into scabbards, or even fasten thieves to objects they were trying to steal!

IMPRISON

Resist (Willpower)

Imprison creates an invisible barrier around a person or creature, blocking it from leaving the area. The magic only affects corporeal beings with a maximum POW or SIZ of up to three times the spell's Intensity. If either characteristic exceeds the limit the spell fails. The imprisoned creature is permitted a single chance to resist. If they successfully overcome the magic, they can escape.

Depending on the setting, Imprison may require the area of the imprisonment to be pre-prepared with use of powders, glyphs or geometric designs. It is often combined with the Evoke spell to provide some degree of protection when summoning hostile entities.

INTUITION

Concentration, Resist (Willpower)

Intuition permits the sorcerer to discern the true emotions and motives of the target, as if he had made a successful Insight roll. The spell can only affect targets with an INT up to twice its Intensity. Although the magic allows a deeper awareness of psychological state, it does not enable the sorcerer to read memories or guarded thoughts. Targets who are aware of the spell may try to veil their feelings, gaining another resistance roll against the caster's Invocation skill, each time they try to deflect the sorcerer's probing.

MARK

Resist (Willpower)

Mark is used to magically tag an object with a mystical sigil, so that it may be located, summoned or even targeted by another spell without being in range of the caster's perception. The magic can mark an object of a SIZ up to three times the spell's Intensity. Whilst the caster is within the Range of the spell, he is aware of the object's distance and direction. Whether or not the magical mark is visible depends on the setting, but once placed it cannot be removed until the spell ends. If cast upon a living creature, it may attempt to resist the effects of the spell.

MYSTIC (SENSE)

Concentration

Mystic (Sense) enables the caster to perceive magic using the sense of perception as specified by the spell. This could take the form of seeing auras, hearing faint tinkling, smelling peculiar scents or even feeling his skin crawl.

Due to the diversity of senses, the magical object need not be in direct perception, but less precise sensory methods may make it difficult exactly to locate the source. The power of Mystic (Sense) permits it to extend into alternate planes, for example the Spirit World, if such exist in the setting.

The sorcerer will be able roughly to judge the Magic Points of objects and people to within 1d3 points. If observing a spell or enchantment with an Intensity equal or less than that of the sorcerer's Mystic (Sense), he may discern what the type of magic (Theistic, Mystic, etc), what it does, and the unique signature of whichever cult, guild or tradition cast it – or if already a member of that group, the individual.

NEUTRALISE MAGIC

Neutralise Magic suppresses a single spell or miracle on a target, with a Magnitude equal or less than its own. The magic is negated only as long as the Duration of Neutralise Magic, which in most cases is more than enough time for the targeted spell to expire. Magic with a longer duration reinstates itself when Neutralise ends, thus it cannot be used to permanently negate long-running curses or break enchantments for example, but could be used to briefly bring relief or bypass them.

If used against spells or miracles which specifically protect against magic (such as Spell Protection or Reflect), Neutralise Magic takes precedence in those situations when the Magnitude of both is equal.

Neutralise Magic can be used defensively to negate incoming spells using the Counter Spell reactive action. It affects targets with a SIZ up to three times the Intensity of the spell.

PALSY

Resist (Endurance)

Palsy renders a single random Hit Location on the target completely useless, the affected area twitching and unresponsive. The precise effect depends on the location struck. Being hit in the head causes the victim to become completely incapacitated, the chest results in paralysis from the neck down, the abdomen paralysis from the waist down, and a limb simply ceases functioning.

The spell cannot affect Hit Locations which normally possess Hit Points greater than the Palsy's Intensity. Nor can a single casting of the spell be used to target multiple locations on the same victim.

PERCEIVE (SENSE)

Resist (Endurance)

Perceive grants the recipient a new and unusual sensory perception. This could be anything from Echolocation to X-Ray Vision. The recipient cannot exceed a SIZ more than three times the spell's Intensity and if unwilling, may resist. Each version of the spell relates to a single unique sense, which can be made up by the Games Master or chosen from the Creature Traits table.

Depending on the setting, the spell may strangely mutate existing sensory organs, or grow exotic new ones, such as giant bat-like ears, delicate antennae or even glowing slit eyes – potentially causing distrust, fear or nausea to observers.

PHANTOM (SENSE)

Concentration, Resist (Special)

Phantom produces an illusory effect on a target, tailored to fool a specific sense. There are many versions of this spell, each one affecting a different type of perception. The most common are used to subvert sight, sound, smell, taste and touch; but others exist to fool more exotic senses such as temperature, magic or emotion. Several phantasm spells can be woven together to form a single illusion, using the Combine component.

Illusions produced by the Phantom spell confuse the senses of those who interact with them, but do not change the underlying reality hidden beneath. As such, phantasms cannot inflict direct harm, but can be indirectly dangerous. For example a visual illusion of a paved floor could hide the existence of a spiked pit beneath it, or the smell and taste of a deadly acid could be hidden under the illusory bouquet of fine wine.

Of course, illusions need not be used to hide danger but could intimidate or bluff instead. The same visual illusion could make a pony appear to be a deadly sabre-toothed tiger, or turn the rags of a beggar into princely robes.

Detecting an illusion is not normally permitted unless the observer has good reason to question its validity. The audible and visual phantasm of a tiger cast on a pony will fool almost anyone, yet a dog witnessing the same illusion would notice that the tiger smelled very strongly of horse, and would have a strong suspicion that it was not all it seemed. In such cases the observer may attempt to resist using their Willpower against the Invocation skill of the caster. Resistance rolls are also permitted if the phantasm attempts to aggressively overwhelm those subject to its illusory effects (see below).

Phantasms can react to their surroundings provided the sorcerer concentrates on the spell. If the caster's attention lapses the illusion enters a relatively static standby mode, still operant but no longer dynamically responding to the environment; so background noises, scents and such like rarely need to be concentrated on.

For instance casting the phantasm of a tiger out of thin air would require the caster to concentrate to make it move or respond to attacks; whereas casting the same phantasm on the pony would need no concentration, since all he has done is changed its external appearance, and the animal will move by itself – although cropping grass and fleeing at the first sign of danger might be giveaways.

Phantom can only be used to replicate senses and memories previously experienced by the caster, or things he can mentally imagine. Thus a sorcerer could create some horrific looking monster with a hundred eyes, but correctly mimicking the taste of Fireberry Juice may be beyond his ability if he hasn't already sampled it. Such minor oversights are often a good way of recognising phantasms.

The following guidelines are provided to help judge the effects of particular sensory illusions:

SIGHT

Creates a visible yet non-corporeal illusion which cannot exceed a length, height or width of more than the Intensity of the spell in metres. This can range from simply changing the colour of a door to creating a carpet of aggressive, multicoloured snakes which continually wriggle over each other. If used subtly, a visual illusion can help disguise the true appearance of an object or creature, changing skin tones or the pattern of clothing. Creating a fabrication completely out of context with the setting allows the viewer a chance to resist,

as does physically interacting with it. Animate illusionary creatures use the relevant skills of the sorcerer to perform physical actions; for example, an illusionary giant spider attempting to avoid a thrown javelin would use the sorcerer's own Evade skill to scuttle clear.

SMELL

Reproduces any single scent of something, from a pleasant perfume to the stench of vomit or the smell of cut grass to freshly cooked food. The illusory scent has a detectable radius in metres (to humans at least) equal to the Intensity of the spell. When used creatively, the smell can drive off those who find the odour unpleasant, or cause them to involuntarily gag or choke. Conversely the scent might draw the attention of persons or creatures who find it attractive.

SOUND

Generates an audible illusion, anything from a faint, distracting whisper to an overwhelming clap of thunder. The sorcerer can influence the nature and volume of the sound so long as he continues to concentrate upon it. Although very loud sounds can be produced, the illusion cannot cause permanent deafness or damage. On the other hand the volume can be high enough to interfere with verbal communication, or hide the sounds of other things happening. Treat the volume to be equal to ten times the Intensity on the Decibel scale. Any task which requires hearing one's own voice or maintaining concentration (such as spell casting), can attempt to resist, or suffer the usual consequences.

TASTE

Produces any taste the sorcerer has previously encountered, from the most subtle of flavourings to mouth fouling tangs. The target of this spell need not just be food or drink, although that is primary focus. It can be used to make the skin of a lover taste like lemon zest or be applied to a knife so that whatever it cuts is tainted with the flavour of rotted fish sauce. Using this spell offensively is somewhat difficult, but it might be utilised to cause a faux pas; forcing someone to spit something out unexpectedly, or perhaps make somebody abandon a complete meal, allowing the caster to claim it for himself.

TOUCH

Creates an illusion of tactility, which when combined with other types of phantasm can grant them a greater degree of reality. The sense imposed can range from feathery tickles to resilient impact, although in truth there is nothing actually there. So a target could be goosed from afar or the bite of a phantasmal tiger given crushing force. Indeed the spell is so versatile it can be used to replace the painful lash of a whip with the sense of being gently caressed. Such sensations simply fool those that interact with target, thus the spell cannot inflict, and is itself immune to, damage. Victims may still believe they have been wounded (or not as the case may be), and must resist the spell to avoid psychosomatic effects of receiving wounds, even though they have not suffered any actual harm.

PORTAL

Concentration

Portal creates a magical gateway connecting two places, which when stepped through, allows instantaneous transportation between the caster's side to the terminus, which may be located anywhere within Range. The portal is large enough for objects or creatures with a SIZ up to three times the spell's Intensity to pass through.

However, the portal only remains open for as long as the sorcerer concentrates. If his attention lapses, the portal remains in place, but is impassable.

The appearance of the portal usually depends on the setting. Games Masters should decide whether a portal terminus can be placed blindly, whether it relies on close personal familiarity with the chosen location, or requires use of other magic such as Project (Sense) or Mark.

Conversely portals may require a specially enchanted spot or object to function, such as a set of standing stones. Another consideration is whether sensory information can pass through the portal as if it were a window to another place, or if the surface remains mysteriously opaque.

PROJECT (SENSE)

Concentration

Project allows the recipient to send one of his senses beyond his body in the form of an astral projection. This disincorporated 'receptor' is both invisible and intangible, permitting it to travel anywhere with no chance of observation save for those with magical perception. Each individual Project spell relates to a specific sense, which is not necessarily limited to just human perceptions. A sorcerer who knows several of these spells can Combine them together, clairvoyance and clairaudience for example.

Wherever the projected sense travels, it relays back its particular sensory information, allowing the recipient to see, listen, touch or so on via the receptor. Whilst one of his senses is projected in this way, the recipient can no longer use it with his physical body. So a sorcerer who projects his hearing off to a distant location becomes deaf until the spell ends or he brings the projected sense back.

Concentration is required for two aspects of the spell: moving the astral receptor, and attempting a Perception check with the projected sense. Relatively speaking the sense moves quite slowly, with a maximum speed of ten times the spell's Intensity in kilometres per hour. When focus lapses, the receptor remains static but it keeps on relaying ambient information. If for any reason the projected sense is detected, it can be dispelled or even attacked with a magically

DEATH FROM AFAR

Although Project (Sense) is often used to search or spy from remote yet secure locations, its main advantage is that it enables a sorcerer to cast spells at extreme Range, ostensibly safe from reprisal. Whilst this may seem the perfect way to curse or assassinate a victim (and indeed is a staple of the Sword & Sorcery genre), there are certain difficulties with using it in this manner.

Firstly there is no guarantee the sorcerer will actually know the precise location of his intended victim. Of course the location of a public figure such as a king may be guessed at, but it still might take some time to find his exact position, especially if he lacks a regular schedule. Once a victim discovers he is being magically hunted it would be easy to hide or move somewhere unforeseen by his hunter, making it nigh impossible to locate by scrying.

Secondly, after extending the Range of a sorcery spell to reach tens or hundreds of kilometres, few Shaping points remain to augment its Magnitude; meaning that even modest magical protection will block the attack. This is especially true for places such as temple sanctuaries or wizard's towers which tend to be warded against such magical assaults.

augmented weapon or spell – which if successful, transfers the magical effect or damage back to the head of the recipient.

A sorcerer can use Project (Sense) to be able to aim a second spell at a target who is out of direct observation – whether because of distance or blocking obstacles. The piggy-backed spell must also have sufficient Range to reach the target, and cannot possess a greater Intensity than that of the Project spell.

PROTECTIVE WARD

Protective Ward is an augmenting spell which must be cast in association with one or more other sorcery spells, using the Combine component to meld them together. Its purpose is to form an extended wall to which spells such as Damage Resistance, Spell Resistance or Spirit Resistance can be bound, so that the magic defends an area or volume, rather than individual targets.

The ward can cover an area (or encompass a volume) of up to 1 metre per point of Intensity in width, height and depth. Thus an Intensity 6 Protective Ward could be used to create a simple wall 6 metres wide, a trapezoid pyramid measuring 6m along each vertices, or even a hemisphere 6m in diameter. As preparation before it is cast, the ward must be inscribed upon a solid surface, its sigils or lines either drawn, scratched or etched along the perimeter of the area so protected.

When cast, the sorcerer decides in which direction the ward is permeable, if any. Thus a warding could be set up to affect anything entering the warded area, or conversely anything leaving it. In certain circumstances the caster may wish that the magics woven into the perimeter work in both directions.

REGENERATE

Concentration

Regenerate allows the sorcerer to slowly heal injuries by accelerating the natural healing processes of the target. The magic will counteract bleeding and stabilise a dying target, but cannot repair Major Wounds. Targets regenerate a number of Hit Points per hour equal to the Intensity of the spell. These points may be divided across several locations or all applied to one location at the will of the caster. However, the sorcerer must actively concentrate on the spell for healing to occur. If concentration lapses or the spell is terminated early, the amount of Hit Points recovered is proportional to the time spent regenerating.

REPULSE (CREATURES)

Resist (Willpower)

Repulse is the exact opposite of the Draw spell (see page 168), driving off creatures of a specific type within range of the target. It has a range of useful applications, such as a personal insect repellent or purging homes of vermin. On a larger scale Repulse can keep villages clear of especially dangerous creatures, which might pose a threat to the inhabitants. As a curse it works well too, from driving prey away from a hunter up to the damning of entire cities by repelling people from entering their forbidding gates!

The precise nature of the repulsion is left to the caster to decide. It takes the form of some emotive response, for example disgust, nervousness or outright terror.

REVIVIFY

Concentration

Revivify is used to animate a dead body, creating a mindless undead automaton such as a skeleton or zombie. The spell requires the relatively whole corpse of a dead creature in order to work, although bodies can be assembled piecemeal from dismembered parts of several less intact carcasses, provided time is spent stitching flesh or wiring bone together first.

The sorcerer can revivify corpses with a maximum SIZ of three times the spell's Intensity. The characteristics of the skeleton or zombie are as described in the Creatures chapter, but gain a bonus to STR and CON equal to the Intensity of the spell. All other attributes are based on the original creature.

Being mindless, revivified undead rely on their creator to guide them. Thus they act with physical skills equivalent to those of the sorcerer (capped by the value of the caster's Invocation skill), but if he allows his concentration to relax, they lapse into quiescence until actively guided again. Nothing prevents the sorcerer from further augmenting the undead servitor with other magic or arming it, provided it has the physiology to wear or wield such items.



SCULPT (SUBSTANCE)

Concentration, Resist (Special)

Sculpt enables a sorcerer to mould the form of a particular substance, shaping it to his will. Each variant of the spell affects a specific type of substance, which can be fairly inclusive, for instance sand, stone, water, metal, and so on. The sorcerer can sculpt a volume or object with a maximum SIZ of three times the spell's Intensity. Insubstantial substances such as smoke, shadows or mist are instead measured in terms of cubic metres equal to the spell's Intensity.

Concentration is only required to actively shape the substance, the spell maintaining the new form until the next change the sorcerer wishes to make. At the conclusion of the spell the substance will retain its final form, provided the material is rigid. For instance a hole opened in a wall would remain, but a statue moulded out of water would collapse.

Although sculpt can create any form imaginable, the actual artistic value or architectural strength of the new shape is limited by the appropriate Craft or Engineering skill; thus a sorcerer who tried to repair the hull of a ship with this spell would only be as effective as his Craft (Carpentry), albeit he'd need no tools, and could perform the task in mere moments.

If the targeted object is carried or worn by a living creature, then they may resist the spell with Endurance. Whilst the spell can be used to discommode/break such objects, their manipulation cannot be used to directly inflict harm on the creature (see Shrink, opposite).

Exotic versions of this spell can be used on living substances, provided the spell can affect the entire plant or creature. Unwilling targets may attempt to resist. No damage is inflicted on those that fail, but their physique and appearance may be warped as the sorcerer desires.

SENSE (OBJECT, STATE OR SUBSTANCE)

Concentration

Sense is utilised as a means to detect valuables, lost possessions or hidden objects from afar. Each incidence of this spell senses a specific type of object, physiological status or unique substance. Such categories are usually quite broad, to ensure some degree of versatility. Examples include precious metals, fresh water, weapons, flesh and bone, edible food, or even undead.

The caster must concentrate to detect his spell's objective, which reveals its presence by tweaking one of the sorcerer's primary senses. Thus the location of water might be indicated by a gurgling, tinkling noise which strengthens as the caster draws closer to its source.

Sufficient thickness of interposing material will block the spell, which can penetrate a number of metres of solid wood, earth or water equal to the spell's Intensity. Denser materials such as metal or stone reduce this to a number of centimetres equal to the Intensity. Penetrating magical protections require that the Intensity of Sense exceeds that of the protective spell.

Sense cannot discern more insubstantial things like emotions or intents.

SHAPECHANGE (TO CREATURE)

Resist (Endurance)

Shapechange morphs the physical body of the target into that of another species. The sorcerer can affect any living creature of a SIZ up to three times the Intensity of the spell. The SIZ of the original form, added to the difference in SIZ between the original and modified form, must be within this range.

The magic transforms the target into an average example of the new species. He adopts the physical Characteristics (STR, CON, SIZ and DEX) of the creature assumed, plus whatever inherent attacks and modes of locomotion it possesses. The recipient may use the creature's base skills or his own, if they are better. Magical or supernatural abilities are not granted, and nor are any of the mental characteristics.

For example, a sorcerer of SIZ 10 who wishes to change into a lion (average SIZ 22), requires a Shapechange of Intensity 8; whereas if the same sorcerer wished to turn into a rat (average SIZ 1), he would only need an Intensity of 7.

There are many variants of Shapechange, each one specific to a species of creature. The categories are quite broad in scope, however, covering an entire family: for example: rodents, canines, snakes, etc. To change into a Wyvern, for example, one would need Shapechange (Draconic); assuming the sorcerer had sufficient Intensity to achieve the new form. The spell only works on living things, which may resist if they are unwilling.

SHRINK

Resist (Special)

Shrink is used to miniaturise non-living or inanimate objects, the SIZ of which cannot exceed a maximum of three times the spell's Intensity. The manner in which objects decrease their proportions is different to the Diminish spell, since objects targeted with this magic may be quite small and light. Instead Shrink reduces their dimensions and weight by a factor equal to the Intensity. For example a broad sword has a default SIZ of 1, but if subject to an Intensity 8 Shrink spell it would be reduced to an eighth of its length and mass, making it much easier to conceal.

If the targeted object is carried or worn by a living creature, then they may resist the spell with Endurance. Otherwise the object gets no save against the magic. When used offensively upon worn objects, the targeted item either tears open, squeezes off, or if it is too resilient to break, simply stops shrinking when it meets too much resistance. So using Shrink on a soldier's full helmet might miniaturise it to the point where it is painfully tight and impossible to remove, but it will not inflict any significant harm on its wearer.

SMOTHER

Resist (Endurance)

Smother slowly asphyxiates a target, starving it of air so that it collapses choking and gasping. The magic affects targets with a SIZ up to three times the Intensity of the spell. Those that fail to resist begin to suffocate immediately, suffering damage at the start of the next Round (see Asphyxiation page 71). The spell can also be used on flames to extinguish candles, lamps, and even fires of up to 1 cubic metre per Intensity.

Normally this spell ceases to inflict damage once the victim passes out. Rarer versions possess more dire effects, actually filling the victim's lungs with water, blood, or even sand so that they actually die.

SPELL RESISTANCE

Spell Resistance provides the recipient protection against magic cast at them. It blocks incoming spells with a Magnitude equal to, or less than, its own. If a spell or miracle manages to overcome this protection, the Spell Resistance suffers no harm, unless of course it itself was the target of magical dismissal.

The negative side of Spell Resistance is that it cannot discern between friendly or hostile magic. Thus someone seriously wounded under its protection may need to terminate the spell or be prevented from receiving magical healing. Spell Resistance affects targets with a SIZ up to three times the Intensity of the spell.

SPIRIT RESISTANCE

Spirit Resistance blocks spirits and intangible entities of other planes from coming into contact with the recipient. The magic

blocks spirits of an Intensity up to half the Intensity of the spell. For example, an Intensity 3 disease spirit would be blocked by an Intensity 5 or 6 Spirit Resistance.

A blocked spirit is unable to touch, disorporate, possess or otherwise engage the recipient in Spirit Combat. Likewise any magic cast by a spirit at the recipient is also blocked unless the Magnitude of the spell exceeds the Intensity of the Spirit Resistance.

STORE MANNA

Store Manna creates a temporary storage vessel for Magic Points, a reservoir which can charged, then later be called on to power the sorcerer's own spells. It requires an object to be the target of the spell in which the Magic Points are physically stored. This can be anything from an eggshell to an iron idol, but more delicate objects can be prone to breakage. The object can store a maximum number of Magic Points equal to the Intensity of the spell. Travelling further from this object than the Range of the spell cuts the sorcerer off from his Magic Points.

When initially cast, Store Manna has no Magic Points of its own. These must be transferred from other sources; such as voluntary donations from other sorcerers. Depending on the setting, Magic Points might also be gathered from ritual sacrifices, tapping of magical locations, and other more unusual methods (see Where Do Magic Points Come From? Page [115](#)).

If the spell expires, naturally coming to the end of its duration or from being dispelled (or the object is broken), any remaining Magic Points stored within the object are lost.

The sorcerer can only benefit from a single casting of Store Manna at a time, additional castings either not working or replacing the previous incidence of the spell. In addition, the application of the Targets component does not permit multiplication of the Magic Point storage, but simply allows the default number to be split between multiple objects.

SUMMON

Resist (Evade)

Summon brings a non-living, inanimate object to the sorcerer, teleporting it from wherever it previously rested to his hand or body as desired. The magic can summon an object of a SIZ up to three times the spell's Intensity. Usually this is something he can directly perceive with his own senses, although objects residing at greater distances can be summoned via magical observation, or previously prepared with the Mark spell.

If the object is something in the possession of a living creature, it may attempt to resist the magical theft by snatching it back or diving away. This spell is often used to call forth prepared equipment the sorcerer does not wish to carry, or to arm himself in a moment's notice. Clothing and armour must be prior mounted on a mannequin for it to be instantly settled about the sorcerer's body. When the spell ends the object returns to the precise location it was summoned from.

SWITCH BODY

Resist (Willpower)

Switch Body enables a sorcerer to switch his consciousness with that of another, so that they exchange bodies. The caster can affect targets with a POW up to twice the Intensity of the spell. Unwilling targets who fail to resist become host to the caster's mind, and their own psyche finds itself in the sorcerer's body.

Both the sorcerer and the target retain their own skills and mental Characteristics, but gain the STR, CON, SIZ and DEX of the other's body, which may require recalculation of some attributes.

Since this spell can be used upon creatures as well as sapient beings, the sorcerer takes provisions to ensure his own body cannot suffer harm from the temporary occupant; for instance by leaving it under the supervision of servants or magically binding himself into immobility.

If the sorcerer's body is killed whilst switched with a victim, his consciousness will also die when the spell ends. Using this spell a sorcerer could briefly escape the death of their own body in order to wreak revenge. Casting Switch Body as an Enchantment (see Enchant, page [168](#)) can technically allow a sorcerer permanently to inhabit the body of a target and assume its status or influence, if he can carry off the exchange.

TAP (CHARACTERISTIC)

Resist (Special)

Tap is used to drain Characteristic points from victims in order to boost sorcerer's own, potentially achieving superhuman levels. Each version of the Tap spell affects a different characteristic. Targets may willingly submit to the spell or attempt to resist its effects, using Endurance if the spell is affecting a physical characteristic (STR, CON, SIZ or DEX) or Willpower if affecting a mental one (INT, POW or CHA).

The number of points drained from each target is equal to the spell's Intensity (down to a minimum of 1 point). The sorcerer however only gains one fifth of these points – up to a maximum of double his original characteristic value. For instance if a sorcerer cast Tap (STR) at Intensity 7 on four targets, each of the victims would lose seven points of STR whilst the sorcerer's own strength would be augmented by +6 points.

Once the spell concludes, the characteristic points of all involved revert to normal. Certain versions of this spell such as Tap (INT) or Tap (DEX) can be very potent, especially if combined with Enchant. When using Tap to steal a creature's SIZ, the magic causes the victim to become wasted and skeletal, rather than shrinking them.

TELEPATHY

Resist (Willpower)

Telepathy allows a sorcerer to establish mental two way communication with a target, without the need for shared language or even species. The caster can form the telepathic link with beings of an INT up to twice the Intensity of the spell. Non-sapient creatures use their INT equivalent and not their INS. In this case, communication is limited to the exchange of mental pictures or emotions.

The spell also grants the ability to experience memory, if the target is willing to share it. If cast on multiple targets, the sorcerer can decide if everyone connected via the Telepathy can communicate freely, or whether he acts as a hub for numerous private links.

TELEPORT

Concentration, Resist (Evade)

Teleport enables a sorcerer to instantaneously move the recipient anywhere within the Range of the spell. Several limiting factors apply to this transportation, these being that the destination is in direct observation (or tagged by the Mark spell), there is solid footing and no object bars their arrival; otherwise the spell automatically fails. A sorcerer is limited to teleporting creatures with a SIZ up to

three times the Intensity of the spell.

Although the spell permits contiguous jumping until its Duration expires, the recipient is forced to teleport back to its origin before selecting a new destination to travel to. Each jump is treated as a Reactive Action requiring the expenditure of an Action Point, and can be used to avoid attacks in an opposed roll in a similar fashion to Evade. When the spell ends or is dismissed, the recipient returns to his starting point. This occurs even if he is dead.

Teleport can be further limited by requiring the presence of a certain material or substance at either end of the jump, through which to pass. For example a sorcerer may only be able to pass from one shadow to another. Likewise this could be pools of water, burning fires or even living trees!

TRANSFER WOUND

Concentration, Resist (Endurance)

Transfer Wound allows a sorcerer to transfer physical damage from himself to the target or vice versa. By spending an Action Point and concentrating on his Turn he may move a single wound of damage equal or less than the spell's Intensity between the target and himself.

Wounds must be shifted between identical or at least roughly similar locations, which cause the spell to fail if cast on a target with alien physiology. When the spell ends, transferred wounds remain where they were last shifted. If multiple targets are incorporated, then damage transferred from the sorcerer is divided equally between each recipient.

TRANSMOGRIFY (TO SUBSTANCE)

Resist (Endurance)

Transmogrify converts the base substance of a creature or object to some other material. Each variant of the spell converts targets to a specific type of substance, which can be as broad or narrow as is suitable for the setting, for example salt, mud or even gold! The sorcerer can transmogrify a target with a maximum SIZ of three times the spell's Intensity. Living creatures and magical constructs are permitted to resist.



Kratos's Wrack (Darkness) spell easily overwhelms a Meerish champion. His pain is caused by ethereal serpents that bite and tear, their venom inflicting freezing agony.

The effect of the spell depends on the substance it was converted to. A solid material such as gold will place a living victim into a state of suspended animation which lasts until the sorcery terminates. Unless defaced, the temporary golden statue reverts back to its original form unharmed. If the substance was ice or salt on the other hand, some wearing might occur due to abrasive winds or melting.

Being transformed into a fluid substance usually spells doom for the original target. Objects converted to sand or water collapse under their own weight and may disperse entirely. Those transmogrified into more viscous substances often deform, and living creatures which emerge alive from such an experience are often horribly warped or mutated by the experience.

Whilst it can be used as a horrible curse, transmogrify is normally used in more productive (or at least inventive) ways, anything from tricking merchants to undermining fortifications. Games Masters should restrict this spell to only the most foul sorcerers if it is likely to be abused for the purpose of killing.

TRAP SOUL

Resist (Willpower)

Trap Soul snares the spirit of a corporeal creature so that at the moment of its death, it can be trapped within a specially prepared object or location. The magic can affect targets with a POW up to twice the Intensity of the spell. Unwilling targets may attempt to resist nefarious use of this spell.

Only those beings that die before the Trap Soul spell ends, and whilst still within its Range have their souls imprisoned, unable to depart for the spirit world or afterlife until the object containing them is destroyed, or the spell concludes.

Whilst held within their prison, the soul is unable to communicate, unless contacted by magic with an Intensity greater than the Trap Soul's Magnitude. Sorcerers specialising in necromancy often combine this spell with Enchant to create immortal oracles, to eternally imprison deadly enemies, or to bind the soul of a slain victim to its own place of death or body, where it endures as a Haunt (see page 150).

UNDEATH

Resist (Endurance)

Undeath enables the sorcerer to turn the recipient into an undead monster, gaining the ability to forgo air, food, water, warmth or rest; to experience immunity to disease and poison; and no longer to suffer the adverse effects of Serious Wounds, fatigue or ageing. In effect they gain the Undead creature trait. All this comes at a cost however; whilst under the effect of the magic, the recipient is infertile, no longer heals, and is incapable of generating Magic Points naturally.

The sorcerer can affect living targets with a CON up to three times the Intensity of the spell. Unwilling targets may attempt to resist. Sorcerers who fear death often resort to this spell, and combine it with Enchant to make it permanent, turning themselves into an immortal lich or mummy. Occasionally it is used to impart a terrible curse on those that transgress cult taboos or some equally heinous crime.

WRACK (SUBSTANCE OR HARM)

Concentration, Resist (Evade)

Wrack enables a sorcerer to harm opponents with deadly bolts or waves of sorcerous energy. On his Turn as a Combat Action, he may launch a magical attack against the target or targets, using his Invocation skill as the attack roll, which may be resisted with Evade. Successful attacks strike a random location, the Intensity of the spell denoting the damage it inflicts. Worn armour does not protect, but natural or magical Armour Points reduce damage as normal.

WRACK DAMAGE

Intensity	Damage
1-2	1d2
3-4	1d4
5-6	1d6
7-8	1d8
9-10	1d10
11-12	2d6

The caster must concentrate to launch a Wrack attack, but can let the spell drop into dormancy to perform other actions in-between each magical assault.

Each variant of this spell inflicts damage in a different manner, according to the school from which it was learned. For example Wrack (Darkness) taught by the Stygian Path would strike the target with serpent-like tendrils of freezing shadow, whereas Wrack (Death) learned from the Guardians of the Grave, may cause a victim's limbs to rot with necrotic lesions.

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Theism is the belief in, and worship of, godlike beings; it calls upon them to create supernatural effects on behalf of their faithful adherents. The precise manner in which this magic is provided, and how it manifests can vary dramatically according to the setting, but at its heart is the concept that worshippers appease deities with gifts and devotion, in exchange for which the entity lends certain mortals, who have been initiated into its cult, the right to call upon a part of its power.

Worshippers do not study the art of manipulating magic; rather they learn the myths and secrets of those they venerate, gaining insight into their nature, personalities and desires. With this knowledge a devoted worshipper knows how to phrase or frame a request to his gods, so that they feel compelled, or indeed inspired, to help him.

Additionally a worshipper must show his dedication to his divine patrons by offering sacrifice, service, and perhaps even selfless adoration in order to prove himself worthy of their attention. The depth of this piety influences the amount of effort to which deities will move themselves in order to aid a loyal devotee.

Since the divine status of a worshipped entity is often based upon the worship it receives, deities are motivated to watch over their supplicants. This is done in a myriad of ways, from commanding its most devoted priests to establish cults or temples – which in turn provide materialistic support to its worshippers within a community – to elevating zealots as figureheads of high political or military status, by providing them with potent powers.

Worship is the fundamental keystone of this divine (or perhaps infernal) magical ecology. The more worship, or propitiation, a deity receives, the more magical might it garners; which in turn must be given back or used to aid its supplicants or else risk losing their faithful attendance.

Not every being who receives worship is necessarily a god *per se*. One man's deity may be another man's demon. In fact nothing prevents the creation of a theistic culture which venerates monstrous, alien beings from other dimensions. Providing these beings – no matter their origin – are fed, entertained or placated in the correct manner they will channel their power through those who please them.

CALLING ON THE GODS

Calling upon the gods for their power relies upon two core skills, Devotion and Exhort. Devotion reflects the strength and depth of the bond between the theist and his deity, or deities; whilst Exhort is the ability of the worshipper to correctly intonate or phrase his requests, so that his divine patron will respond.

DEVOTION (POW+CHA)

The nature and strength of any miraculous powers a theist draws upon is based upon his Devotion. The ‘skill’ is more accurately a relationship the theist has with an individual god, a small faction or family of divine beings, or indeed an entire pantheon. The precise scope of the skill depends upon the campaign setting, but each incidence of Devotion must be assigned to a specific deity or group of deities.

It is the depth of the worshipper’s Devotion to his gods which grants potency to any theistic miracles he calls for. Whenever a theist requests aid from a deity, the Magnitude and Intensity of the miracle is equal to one tenth of his Devotion score.

Devotion is often utilised to measure the progression of a worshipper within a cult, the upper echelons being restricted to those who demonstrate the proper dedication. This in turn can limit what miracles are available to a worshipper of particular cult rank; as few religions are likely to grant their most potent powers to mere initiates.

Last but by no means least, in the right circumstances Devotion can potentially be used to resist various psychological attacks, tests of faith or contests of competing passions.

EXHORT (INT+CHA)

Exhort is the skill used to coerce the gods to send a worshipper the magical aid he requires. It can be portrayed in several ways, but combines a number of different aspects such as strength of passion, egocentric will, ritualistic knowledge and understanding of divine psychology, to put forth a request which the deity cannot ignore.

Mechanistically the skill works as a simple base chance to successfully channel power from the god. A theist with Exhort (Lord Dark Maggot) 70% has a 70% chance of performing the relevant miracle.

Exactly how a miracle manifests can vary dramatically according to the setting. A successful exhortation can impel the deity to either:

- ❖ Channel his knowledge and power through the theist
- ❖ Cast the miracle on the theist's behalf
- ❖ Manifest before the theist (and all observers) to perform the deed personally

Taking the case of the Demon Lord Ningilin as an illustration, a worshipper who successfully called upon him to destroy a group of sacrilegious enemies with his power of wormy transformation, might find that the god grants the worshipper the words of invocation and magical strength to cast the magic himself; or that the miracle simply occurs without further effort on the worshipper's part; or most worryingly of all, that Ningilin himself steps down from the sky, and personally transforms the interlopers with his own putrescent hands.

CULTS AND MIRACLES

A theist's skills are indelibly linked to a specific religion, normally organised and known as a cult. Most cults are ancient faiths and usually accepted – or at least tolerated – by the local culture. Some are limited to a single city or tribe, whereas others can span nations. Even the number of deities incorporated within a cult can vary, with some cults tied to a single divine being, whereas others can consolidate an entire pantheon. In fact a single deity could have a dozen different, independent cults devoted to various aspects of its celestial magnificence!

It is a cult's deities which provide the miracles available to dedicated worshippers. Correspondingly there are no preset restrictions to the number of miracles each cult has, nor even that they should be balanced to one another. In general, the powers offered by the cult reflect the nature of that deity or deities venerated. The only thing which is fairly certain is that the cult's own priesthood will limit the availability of what miracles to which it has access, to those of proven faith and trustworthiness.

For example the Cult of Myceras, war god of Meeros, may grant access to the miracles Beast Form, Berserk, Clear Skies, Consecrate, Fortify, Sacred Band, Shield and Sunpear. Whilst the Cult of the Seven Badoshi Devils might instead provide Bind Ghost, Chameleon, Consecrate, Earthquake, Madness, Perseverance and True Scimitar, each of the seven demigods providing one of the miracles.

Thus cults, like other magical organisations, are similar to Combat Styles: diverse combinations of deities and miracles amalgamated into a single faith. Since cults are often viewed as the patrons of particular careers or irrevocably bound to specific philosophies, it may be unusual for a worshipper to pay more than lip service to more than one faith.

Professional theists who serve the shrines and temples of a cult are often well regarded, if not feared, for their zealous beliefs; and take the trouble to dress, act and behave appropriately to properly revere their patron gods.

ACTING LIKE YOUR GOD

In some settings, as his Devotion increases, so does the propensity of the worshipper to act in the ways the focus of that veneration acts. This may not be due to any supernatural link, merely the pressures of cult membership, voluntary geases or even social expectation. Whatever the source of the influence, a worshipper's behaviour or judgment can begin to reflect those of his god, potentially leading to gradual personality changes.

It is believed by many cults that their gods are more able, or at least more willing, to aid those who espouse their divine patron's virtues. Acting in a manner contrary to a god's desires can land that worshipper in deep trouble. Much depends on the nature of the bond between theist and deity; whether it can be an informal relationship, or if the strength of the tie demands a worshipper behave precisely like the god in order to maintain the flow of magical power between them.

STARTING THEISTS

A character that begins the game as a theist must choose a single cult to follow; either designed by the Games Master, agreed between the player and Games Master, or chosen from the examples given in the Cults and Brotherhoods chapter. Only one cult can be chosen at this stage but others can potentially be joined during the course of play.

Theist characters start with knowing those miracles available to someone of their cult rank, but not exceeding a number equal to one twentieth of their Devotion skill. Once the game begins they are restricted in what additional powers they can learn, and when they can learn them.

LEARNING MIRACLES

The costs of learning new miracles are based upon an investment of Experience Rolls as described in the Magic chapter on page 118. However, most priesthoods restrict the availability of certain miracles according to cult rank, ensuring that worshippers prove their devotion and loyalty before trusting them with such knowledge. Even the achievement of promotion within the cult does not necessarily grant a character automatic access to any new powers.

Learning miracles may require the theist to prove himself worthy in a number of different ways, depending on the nature of the cult. Some require the completion of a heroic quest to attest their faith or a pilgrimage to seek out a holy spot where their god mythically gained that particular power; whilst others might necessitate the slaying of a worthy sacrifice, or a superior to demonstrate their right to this secret knowledge, or going into seclusion for many weeks inhaling mind-expanding narcotics to seek oneness with their deity.

Thus learning how to call upon new miracles is rarely just a prosaic case of paying enough silver to convince the priesthood – as that is how lay members engage the services of priests to cast miracles on their behalf. To gain these potent powers for themselves, characters must undergo great challenges and moral dilemmas, binding themselves closer to the cult and the deities they revere.

KARA'S SAGA

Kara begins the campaign by joining the priesthood of Myceras, specially selected from the virginal dancing girls who entertain the god on holy days with their passionate war dances. Whether her exclusive invitation was due to the political machinations of her father to save her from the lechery of Xenos, or whether the god himself expressed an interest due to her beauty and dedication, Kara does not know.

In exchange for an oath of abstinence and faithful service, she is inducted into the Cult of Myceras as an initiate. Much of her time is spent clearing up the mess produced by the incessant sacrificial offerings requested by the city's warriors, yet during the evenings she is taught the ways of worship. By the time the game starts she has a Devotion of 63% and has learned all four of those cult miracles which Myceras provides to Initiates (1 miracle for each 20% or thereof of her skill).

USING THEISM

A theist may call upon some of the most potent magical effects available to mortal magicians. However, their exhortations require much preparation, primarily in the form of worshipping and making dedications to the gods. These religious acts are normally restricted to places deemed sacrosanct, so the reach of a cult is often limited to the locales close by shrines, temples or particular holy sites dedicated to the deity or deities in question.

DEVOTIONAL POOLS

Cult members who advance beyond the cult rank of Lay Member may begin to draw upon the gods by use of the Exhort skill. Every miracle they call for must be paid for in advance of the request, by sacrifice or donation of Magic Points into something called a devotional pool. This pool represents the strength of the bond between worshipper and god, and must be regularly topped up.

While Magic Points remain in the pool, the theist can use them to request miracles, but once the pool is expended no more requests may be made. The source of these points need not necessarily be the theist himself (see Donating Magic Points below) but the maximum size of the pool is limited by the theist's cult rank.

- ❖ Lay Member – None
- ❖ Initiate – $\frac{1}{4}$ of the Theist's POW
- ❖ Acolyte – $\frac{1}{2}$ of the Theist's POW
- ❖ Priest – $\frac{3}{4}$ of the Theist's POW
- ❖ High Priest – All of the Theist's POW

The size of the devotional pool has no bearing on the theist's normal POW capacity for storing personal Magic Points. Assuming the theist is donating Magic Points from his own POW, after the transference is made he can regenerate or recoup Magic Points as normal.

The implication of this method of paying for their miracles is that a worshipper, with enough preparation time, can fully load up both his devotional pool, and his own personal Magic Points in advance of performing some quest. On the downside, refilling his devotional pool requires him not only to return to a place of cult significance, but also personally to donate or transfer the points from his own resources.

JOINING MORE THAN ONE CULT

If the campaign setting permits, nothing prevents membership of multiple cults, providing they are not the antithesis of each other. For instance it may be reasonable for characters to be members of a state religion and a professional cult, and still worship a family deity. In such cases a separate devotional pool must be maintained for each individual cult.

However, there is a limit to how much magical energy can be amassed. No matter how many cults they are members of, the combined amount of Magic Points stored in the pools cannot exceed the POW of the character. Attempting to do so results in Magic Points dissipating from the other pools until the stored total once again equals the theist's POW.

DONATING MAGIC POINTS

Dedicating Magic Points to their devotional pool requires that the theist be present at a shrine, temple or holy place with connection to the cult's god or pantheon. The ritual takes the form of ceremony, meditation or prayer, and often incorporates some type of offering above and beyond the pure Magic Points – perhaps an animal sacrifice, financial tribute to the priesthood or a gift pleasing to the deity.

The actual source of the Magic Points can be somewhat abstract (see Where do Magic Points Come From? page 115). For example, if Magic Points come from sacrificial offerings, then the theist himself must orchestrate, or at least participate in, the offering. The important concept here is that a worshipper must be physically present at the donation, else the Magic Points generated do not transfer to his devotional pool.

It is recommended that the current number of Magic Points in the pool cannot exceed the size of the most recent donation. Thus a theist with three Magic Points in his pool who sacrifices a white bull (worth seven Magic Points) would raise his pool to seven points, not ten. In this way a deity cannot be appeased with a series of petty offerings which slowly accumulate excessive devotional strength.

SACROSANCT LOCATIONS

The concept of only being allowed to recharge their devotional pool at specific holy places may initially seem rather restrictive, but this need not be an overly prohibitive aspect of theism. A worshipper can call upon his god or gods for miracles at any time; they only need to return to a temple to reaffirm the bond with the deity.

This fundamental element of theism should instead be seen as an opportunity by Games Masters to provide challenges and plot hooks with which to entwine his characters, granting them reasons to return to the source of their power, search out lost places of divine significance or build new temples to spread the worship of their cult.

Whilst this works well in settings where cults are localised, it can pose a problem in campaigns where the characters are expected to travel extensively. Assuming the cult or gods are not omnipresent



across the game world, Games Masters can aid theists on long or far-reaching quests in various ways. Some suggestions are:

- « The deity presenting the theist with a holy relic which acts as a portable shrine or temple
- « The ability to build temporary shrines which work a single time if sanctified with a suitable offering
- « Allowing theists to worship at foreign temples which enshrine a similar divine being as their own deity
- « Making certain natural locations by default, sacrosanct to their deity (all caves, mephitic hot springs or the sea for instance)

REQUESTING A MIRACLE

Calling for a miracle is simply a matter of performing the correct exhortation to convince the god to channel its power through or on behalf of its worshipper. Such a request depends on a number of prerequisites.

First the theist must have mastered understanding of miracle being requested, as described earlier under Learning Miracles. Without knowing the correct prayer or exhortation, the worshipper cannot convince his deity to perform the miracle.

Secondly the theist must have the requisite number of Magic Points remaining in the devotional pool he maintains with that deity. If too few remain, or the pool has run dry, the god will no longer listen to any requests made to it. Thus a worshipper should, when possible, take care to perform regular donations to their god.

KARA'S SAGA

Kara, now an acolyte of Myceras, is sent to one of the outlying watch towers which guard the city-state's fertile valley territory, garrisoned by a unit of heavy Meerish infantry. Although she left the city well prepared, several attacks by a strange creature have required Kara to cast many miracles, draining her devotional pool to a single Magic Point.

Fortunately her visit coincides with a cult holy day sacred to Myceras and the watch tower incorporates a sanctified shrine to the god. As the attending representative of the cult, Kara leads the soldiers in formal worship of their patron deity. The Games Master declares that the ceremony will generate a number of Magic Points, which Kara may tap in order to restore part of her devotional pool.

Since the squad numbers less than 100 worshippers, the amount of Magic Points she may harvest from the ceremony is equal to one quarter of Kara's POW or 4 MPs. These she transfers into her devotional pool, replenishing it to 4 MP. This is only half of her potential maximum, but even if she held a second ceremony on the next holy day she cannot increase the current number of pool Magic Points beyond four, limited as she is by the size of her congregation. Kara will need to return to the main temple to gather a greater number of Magic Points, or use an alternative source of power.

Thirdly, on the last turn of the exhortation the theist must pass an Exhort skill check. This reveals whether or not the worshipper has performed the ritual request in the correct manner. Failure to perform this correctly can result in the god turning a deaf ear to the supplicant, or worse still, punishing them in some manner.

COST OF REQUESTING A MIRACLE

The cost of requesting a miracle depends on both its cult level and the success level of the Exhort skill roll:

- « Critical Success: the miracle occurs yet there is no Magic Point cost.
- « Success: the caster's devotional pool loses the full Magic Point cost, and the miracle occurs successfully.
- « Failure: the miracle does not occur, but no Magic Point is taken from the devotional pool.
- « Fumble: the miracle does not occur, and 1 Magic Point is taken from the devotional pool.

Initiate level miracles cost one Magic Point, Acolyte level miracles cost two, and Priest level miracles cost three.

EXHORTATION TIME

Requesting a miracle takes an increasing amount of time depending on the cult level the miracle becomes available at:

- « Initiate level miracles take 1 Turn
- « Acolyte level miracles take 2 Turns
- « Priest level miracles take 3 Turns

If the theist wishes to cast multiple instances of the same miracle with a single exhortation roll, then each additional instance adds an extra turn to the time, and adds its full Magic Point requirement to the final cost.

The Exhort skill check is made on the final turn of the exhortation; the result of the skill check occurring immediately.

MAGNITUDE AND INTENSITY

The potency of miracles is based upon the strength of the relationship between a theist and his god. The more devoted the worshipper, the more power the deity can funnel through them. This not only increases the effect of the miracle, but also makes it more difficult for others to dispel.

Miracles have a default Magnitude and Intensity equal to one tenth of the worshipper's Devotion skill value.

A theist need not apply the entirety of a miracle's Intensity if they wish to limit the effect of the god's magic.

DISPELLING A MIRACLE

Miracles may be dismissed by spells or spirits capable of negating magic. Due to the inherent strength of theist miracles, it usually requires a counterspell of great potency to affect them.

LIMITATIONS TO MIRACLES

There are no overt limitations to the concurrent number or potency of miracles a theist can maintain, since in effect their god is doing all of the work for them. The only restrictions occur in the need to return to a cult sanctuary to recharge their devotional pool of Magic Points.

Some miracles may possess an extended duration which can last hours, days or even months. In these cases the size of the theist's devotional pool should be temporarily reduced by the number of Magic Points for each miracle which is still active.

MIRACLE DESCRIPTIONS

Every divine miracle is defined by a series of traits explaining how it is used in the game, followed by a description of the spell's precise effects. In most cases the physical and temporal parameters of miracles can be hand waved unless the Games Master wishes to keep detailed track during tactical situations.

Theists need not call forth miracles at their maximum effects if they wish to be more selective.

AREA (X)

The miracle affects all targets within a specified radius, described as Metres, Tens of Metres or Kilometres. The defined units are multiplied by the Intensity of the miracle to determine the actual radius. If the miracle lacks the Ranged trait, the effect is centred upon the casting theist or whatever he touches.

DURATION (X)

The miracle's effects stay in place for an amount of time defined as either Instant, Minutes, Hours, Days or Months. The defined period is multiplied by the Intensity of the miracle to calculate the actual duration, except of course if the miracle is instantaneous. At the end of this period the miracle vanishes.

RANGED (X)

Ranged miracles may be cast upon targets within a range defined as either Metres or Tens of Metres. The defined units are multiplied by the Intensity of the miracle to determine the actual distance. Miracles which lack the Ranged trait may only be cast on others if they can be touched for the entirety of the exhortation.

RANK

The minimum cult rank the spell is available to. This is a guideline only. Cults of gods which specialise or control a particular sphere of power may offer certain miracles to lower ranking cult members.

RESIST (EVADE/ENDURANCE/WILLPOWER)

Offensive miracles do not necessarily take effect automatically. Resisting targets may make an Opposed Evade, Endurance or Willpower test (as specified) in order to avoid the effect of the miracle entirely. Note that Resist (Evade) spells require the target to have a Combat Action available in order to throw themselves clear.

Note that some of the following spells can be extremely potent. This is deliberate, and Games Masters who fear abuse should limit the availability of these miracles to antagonistic cults, for which they are primarily designed. No specific guidance is provided for whether certain miracles are restricted to the exhorting theist or can be cast on others; nor whether the recipient must be a member of that cult. Such things must be decided when the cult is designed.

ABSORPTION

Duration (Minutes), Rank Initiate

This miracle absorbs incoming magic aimed at the recipient or his equipment, converting its energy into Magic Points which then replenish his personal Magic Points attribute, assuming there is space for the additional points. Excess Magic Points garnered through Absorption simply vanish. Absorption does not affect spells already in existence, prior to the miracle's manifestation. The effects of Absorption depend on the relative Magnitude of both itself and the incoming spell. Any spell absorbed by this miracle is cancelled, and has no effect.

ABSORPTION RESULTS

<i>Incoming Spell's Magnitude is...</i>	<i>Effect</i>
Equal to or weaker than Absorption's Magnitude	The incoming spell is absorbed, and Absorption remains.
1 or more points stronger than Absorption's Magnitude	Absorption eliminated, and incoming spell takes effect.

AEGIS

Duration (Minutes), Rank Initiate

Creates or augments a shield which glows with the cult symbols of the deity. The magical shield takes the attributes of a Hoplite shield, although its parrying Size depends on the Intensity of the miracle. Intensity 1-2 is a Small shield, 3-4 Medium, 5-6 Large, 7-8 Huge, 9-10 Enormous and 11+ Colossal.

The Aegis is immune to all damage. If cast upon an existent shield, it is protected until the miracle ends.

AWAKEN

Duration (Minutes), Ranged (Tens of Metres), Rank Priest

Awaken brings part of the god's awareness into its consecrated shrine or temple, enabling the deity to animate its sanctified idol or take control of its sacred animal(s), depending on the nature of the cult. It is normally reserved for cult holy days, except in times of emergency. The embodied god cannot leave the consecrated area, but during that time it can awe its worshippers, express its displeasure or defend its own shrine.

The limits of the miracle depend on what is used for the embodiment. An awakened statue or cult idol can have a combined STR+SIZ of up to ten times the Intensity. This value is used to calculate both the idol's Damage Modifier and its Hit Points per location. Its Armour Points depend upon the material it is constructed from, usually 6 for wooden idols, 8 for hollow metal and 10 for stone. The idol performs all actions at the same value as the caster's Devotion skill, has a Initiative Bonus equal to the Intensity, and one Action Point per four levels of Intensity (or fraction thereof). Other physical attributes should be created based upon the shape and size of the idol (see Default Natural Weapons for Unusually Sized Creatures page [222](#)).

Awakened creatures are handled slightly differently. Like idols the deity may awaken a creature of up to a maximum STR+SIZ of ten times the Intensity of the miracle. However, if the shrine or temple lacks a giant example of the sacred animal, the deity can instead awaken multiple beasts provided their combined total does not exceed the limit set by the Intensity. Other than that the creature or creatures possess their normal Action Points, Damage Modifier, Hit Points, Initiative Bonus and Armour Points. They perform skills at either their base (or trained) value or at the value of the caster's Devotion skill, whichever is higher.

BACKLASH

Duration (Minutes), Ranged (Metres), Rank Initiate

Backlash makes physical assault upon the recipient extremely dangerous, redirecting an inflicted injury back upon the attacker. The magic only affects wounds that inflict equal or less Hit Points than the Intensity of the miracle – translocating the damage so that it affects the attacker in precisely the same location they struck, ignoring any armour.

This miracle affects both hand to hand and ranged attacks, providing the assailant is within range. Even though the recipient may be near immune to injury, it does not provide immunity to any Special Effect they may have suffered as part of the attack.

BEAST FORM

Duration (Hours), Ranged (Metres), Rank Acolyte, Resist (Endurance)

This miracle transforms the target and all his personal belongings into an animal that is sacred to the cult. The target retains his INT, CHA and POW scores, but exchanges his STR, DEX, CON and SIZ scores for average values for that of the animal type, and gains a bonus to each physical Characteristic of +1 per point of Intensity. He also gains the natural abilities of the creature. The animal cannot be mystical or magical in any way, and the Games Master should have final say as to what manner of creature would fit a specific cult if it is not obvious.

BEHOLD

Area (Metres), Duration (Minutes), Rank Initiate, Resist (Willpower)

Behold summons a vision of what a fellow cult member of lesser rank is currently experiencing. The image requires some sort of cult related paraphernalia in which to manifest, such as a sacred mirror, pool of pure water or even narcotic smoke rising from a brazier.

The view provided is limited to the defined area, centred upon the target of the miracle, which may permit identification of their location if enough clues are visible. Behold conveys only a single primary sense, which for most cults is a visual image. Some however, depending on the deity in question, use sound or even scent instead;

in which case the medium through which the information is transmitted is different.

If the target is either magically protected against scrying by a spell of greater Magnitude, held (or hiding) within the consecrated ground of a different cult, or dead, then the miracle fails. The target of Behold may attempt to resist the miracle if desired.

BERSERK

Duration (Minutes), Rank Initiate, Resist (Willpower)

The recipient of Berserk is overcome with bloodlust, causing him to disregard his own safety in exchange for being imbued with tremendous stamina and toughness. For the duration of the miracle the Damage Modifier of the recipient is increased by two steps, the Size of his weapon counts as one step larger for the purpose of penetrating parries, and he is immune to all the detrimental effects of Serious Wounds and Fatigue. A Major wound will still incapacitate him.

In return the subject may not Parry, Evade or cast any magic while under the influence of Berserk. However the berserker automatically succeeds in resisting any Special Effect used against him.

Unwilling recipients receive a chance to resist. Normally, the recipient remains in the Berserk state for the entire duration of the spell, but Games Masters may allow a Berserk character to shake off the effects with an unopposed Willpower test. At the end of the spell, the recipient immediately suffers twice the deferred Fatigue levels they would have lost during the entire combat.

BIND GHOST

Duration (Days), Rank Acolyte, Resist (Willpower)

Bind Ghost takes the soul of a creature or person just slain, and temporarily turns it into a Haunt (see page [150](#)) bound to the place of its death. The miracle is usually performed on animal sacrifices or willing volunteers, but in cases where the victim does not wish to be so bound they are permitted the opportunity to resist.

For the duration of the miracle the ghost must obey commands given to it by the theist. However, the way it performs its duties is guided by the nature or personality of the victim. Once the miracle ends, the soul is freed from all obligations, and permitted to depart to its intended afterlife. The theist is limited to binding souls whose POW is no more than twice the Intensity of the miracle.

BLESS CROPS

Area (Tens of Metres), Duration (Months), Rank Acolyte

When cast on cultivated farmland this miracle protects the crops within its area against naturally occurring bad weather, blight, and insect infestation, guaranteeing a nominal harvest if the magic is maintained from sowing to harvest. Bless Crops can also provide protection against magical disasters, provided the Magnitude of the adverse magic does not exceed that of the blessing.

BREATHE WATER

Duration (Hours), Rank Initiate

Breathe Water permits the recipient to breathe water (the subject will still be able to breathe air as well) for the duration of the miracle. It also protects against pressure if diving deep below the surface of a lake or the sea. Under the influence of this miracle the recipient can speak and cast magic as normal.

CALL WINDS

Area (Kilometres), Duration (Hours), Rank Acolyte

This miracle permits the theist to bend the winds to his will. The maximum strength of winds they can unleash depends on their cult rank. Acolytes can control or summon up to Strong Breezes, Priests up to Moderate Gales, and High Priests up to Storms (see Weather page 84). If the caster can control the wind he may reduce it to a complete Calm or change its direction if desired. If two or more weather magics are in contest over control of the winds, the spell or miracle with the greatest Magnitude takes precedence.

CHAMELEON

Duration (Minutes), Rank Acolyte

This miracle permits the recipient to fade into the background, becoming near invisible to normal observation. However Chameleon is only effective when present in an environment specific to the nature of the cult. The Chameleon miracle provided by a sylvan cult, for example, would only be effective in woods and forests; whereas a thief cult might instead provide Chameleon which works in darkness and shadow.

Whilst the recipient remains motionless, crouched or flattened against the terrain, they cannot be spotted by normal Perception rolls relying on vision. If they move however, the constantly shifting patterns across their body will reveal them to sharp sighted individuals. In these circumstances any attempt to interact with the recipient – whether observing where they go, attacking, parrying, and so on – inflicts a penalty against the observer of one difficulty grade per four points of Intensity. Creatures with other primary senses or observers with magical perceptions are immune to this miracle.

CLEAR SKIES

Area (Kilometres), Duration (Hours), Rank Acolyte

This miracle grants a reprieve from cloudy or overcast weather. Rain dwindle, sweltering humidity is reduced, and dark clouds separate to reveal the sky. The scale of the effect depends on the cult rank of the theist. Acolytes can disperse up to Heavy Cloud cover and Moderate rains, Priests up to Moderately Overcast cloud cover and Very Heavy rains, and High Priests up to Storm Clouds and Deluges (see Weather page 84). Clear Skies cannot alter magically-created weather effects of a greater Magnitude.

CLOUD CALL

Area (Kilometres), Duration (Hours), Rank Acolyte

This miracle gathers together shreds and wisps of cloud, weaving them together to bring rain, block out the sun or even form concealing fogs. Like Clear Skies the extent of the effect depends on cult rank. Acolytes can create Heavy Cloud cover, Moderate rains or mist, Priests can gather up to Moderately Overcast cloud cover, Very Heavy rains or thick fog, and High Priests up to Storm Clouds, Deluges and Pea-soup fogs (see Weather page 84). Cloud Call cannot alter magically-created weather effects of a greater Magnitude.

CONSECRATE

Area (Tens of Metres), Duration (Months), Rank Acolyte

Consecrate is vital to the creation of sanctified ground, upon which theists may communicate with their gods. It is usually as fundamental a part of a shrine or temple foundation as its cornerstone, but may actually be cast almost anywhere providing some form of temporary altar or image of the deity is erected prior to the casting.

The minimum labour required to create a temporary sanctuary depends on the setting, but it should be significant enough to be considered a major effort; for example an entire day of collecting stones and rocks to form a crude altar. In exceptional circumstances it can be cast on cult artefacts.

The effects of the miracle are many fold. Not only does the consecrated area permit cult worshippers to recharge their Devotional Pool (see page 180), but it also allows for a number of additional cult miracles (up to the consecration's Intensity) to be embedded or bound to the area, extending their duration (or held readiness) to that of the Consecrate.

These extra miracles need not come from whoever performs the consecration, but the cult rank of the magic cannot exceed that of the consecrating acolyte or priest. Furthermore, each embedded miracle counts against the devotional pool of whichever theist cast it, until the Consecrate itself expires or, if of Instant duration, the miracle is triggered.

Such is the strength of the divine presence within the sanctified area, that requesting miracles from unaligned gods whilst inside the perimeter of the consecration becomes more difficult. Exhorting the deities of neutral cults suffer one grade of difficulty, whereas those of hostile cults are two grades harder.

KARA'S SAGA

After years of faithful service Kara is promoted to the rank of priest, and granted the opportunity to found a new shrine to Myceras in the newly annexed city of Kopash, a known den of thieves and iniquity. Kara finds a suitable plot of ground in the Mercenaries' Quarter, and has constructed a modest roofed portico, within the walls of which is the cult sanctuary where Myceras's bejewelled golden statue stands, beneath the open sky.

When it is finished Kara holds a dedication ceremony, inviting the worshippers of Myceras to attend. During these rituals she casts Consecrate to sanctify the area. At the same time she decides to bind several other miracles into the consecration in order to protect the shrine. She has the choice of only two spells suitable for the task, Beast Form or Sunsppear.

Not wishing to bind up too much of her devotional pool in maintaining the shrine defences, she settles on placing a primed Beast Form (Bull) on the statue, and a Sunsppear on the altar; requesting that Myceras cast these miracles if anyone attempts to desecrate the cult objects. This reduces the size of her pool by four points, but Kara predicts the investment will be necessary. Sure enough, the following morning Kara discovers a rather distressed thief transformed into a bull and caught within the shrine precinct; sacrificing this bull to the god sends word that this particular shrine is off limits...

CORRUPTION

Duration (Hours), Ranged, Rank Acolyte, Resist (Endurance)

This dire miracle is used as a curse against enemies or those that transgress cult tenets. If the target of the spell fails to resist, they begin to deteriorate physically in a manner suitable to the god. This could be anything from pestilent boils, vegetative outgrowths or even a slow transformation of flesh to sand.

At the end of each hour, the victim must make an unopposed Endurance roll and depending on the success level, suffer the following:

- ❖ If the roll is a critical success, the victim takes no damage
- ❖ If the roll is successful, the victim sustains 1d3 points of damage to every location
- ❖ If the roll fails, the victim sustains 1d6 points of damage to every location
- ❖ If the roll is fumbled, the victim dies in a horrific transformation of their body

Those who realise what they have contracted either seek out someone capable of dispelling the curse, or return to the cult temple, begging for forgiveness and premature cessation of the punishment.

CURE MALADY

Duration (Instant), Rank Initiate

This miracle cures the effects of any mundane disease or poison afflicting the target; or magical ones whose potency is less than the value of the Devotion skill of the caster. If the recipient is suffering from the possession of a Disease Spirit, the spell exorcises the hostile spirit provided its Intensity does not exceed half the Intensity of the miracle (rounded up). For example, an Intensity 5 Cure Malady can exorcise any Disease Spirit of Intensity 3 or less.

CURE SENSE

Duration (Instant), Rank Acolyte

Cure Sense enables the theist to cure a specific type of sensory injury such as deafness, blindness, and so on. The effects of the miracle are permanent.

DISMISS ELEMENTAL

Duration (Instant), Ranged (Tens of Metres), Rank Initiate, Resist (Willpower)

Dismiss Elemental may be cast against Gnomes, Salamanders, Shades, Sylphs or Undines. The spell affects an elemental of up to 1 cubic metre in size per point of Intensity. Failure to resist the spell causes the elemental to be dismissed, leaving the material substance of its body in place.

DISMISS MAGIC

Duration (Instant), Ranged (Tens of Metres), Rank Initiate

Dismiss Magic may be cast against either a general target, or a specific miracle or spell. Dismiss Magic will eliminate a combined Magnitude of spells equal to its own Magnitude. A spell cannot be partially eliminated. When used against a spell of equal or lower Magnitude which normally counters magic (such as Absorption, Spell Resistance or Reflection) then Dismiss Magic takes precedence.

If not aimed at a specific spell, Dismiss Magic starts with the most powerful magic affecting the target. If it fails to eliminate any spell (because the spell's Magnitude is too high), then the miracle ends, and no more spells will be eliminated.

Dismiss Magic may be fired defensively to neutralise incoming offensive spells, by using the Counter Spell reactive action.

EARTHQUAKE

Area (Tens of Metres), Duration (Instant), Rank Priest, Resist (Evade)

Earthquake causes a ground tremor capable of knocking people from their feet and collapsing rigid buildings. At the very minimum, failing to resist the miracle causes the victim to fall prone. If located within a building, built up area or some vulnerable location (such as a forest or beneath a cliff), failing to evade also indicates that the person is struck, and trapped by falling debris. For secondary effects, consult the following table. Use the size of the damage dice in a Contest of Strength (see Brawn) to determine the difficulty of being extracted from the wreckage.

EARTHQUAKE TABLE

Intensity	Secondary Effects	Potential Damage
1	Suspended objects swing.	None
2	Delicately balanced objects topple.	None
3	Walls and buildings creak.	None
4	Plaster and glass windows crack, trees and other tall objects quiver dramatically.	None
5	Heavy furniture moved, wall mounted objects fall, cracks open in walls.	None
6	Modest buildings of earth, wattle and daub or mud brick partially collapse. Minor branches fall.	1d2 damage to a single location
7	Heavy furniture overturned. Buildings of earth, wattle and daub or mud brick destroyed. Buildings of solid timber or masonry partially collapse. Fall of columns, statuary and boundary walls. Major tree limbs fall.	1d4 damage to a single location
8	Modest buildings collapse. Ground cracks conspicuously, rockfalls from steep slopes. Underground pipes and sewers broken. Wooden bridges collapse. Small trees topple.	1d6 damage to a single location
9	Well constructed buildings collapse. Large scale fortifications, city walls and stone bridges damaged. Ground badly cracked. Landslides and avalanches considerable. Big trees topple.	1d8 damage to two locations
10	Few, if any, structures remain standing. Tunnels and caves collapse. Broad fissures in ground. Huge trees topple.	1d10 damage to three locations
11+	Total destruction, even colossal stone monuments suffer partial collapse. Cliffs and mountain flanks shatter.	1d12 damage to four locations

ELEMENTAL SUMMONING

Duration (Hours), Ranged (Metres), Rank Initiate

This miracle calls up an elemental associated with the cult to assist as a personal guard or servant. For example cults associated with the God of Storms would summon sylphs. The miracle summons an elemental of one cubic metre per point of Intensity in 1d3 Combat Rounds, which remains under the command of the theist for the entire duration but cannot stray further than the range. For obvious reasons, the caster must have access to the same volume of the elemental's material to cast this spell successfully. If less material is available, then the caster can summon a smaller elemental if desired.

ENTANGLE

Duration (Minutes), Ranged (Tens of Metres), Rank Acolyte, Resist (Evade)

Entangle animates natural vegetation so that it lashes about, snagging and gripping the target. The victim must resist the miracle or be held immobile for its entire duration.

ENTHRALL

Duration (Hours), Rank Initiate

Enthrall increases the recipient's sexual attraction, making all those naturally interested in the recipient friendlier and more focussed upon them – which could be a very good or very bad thing depending on the circumstances. Members of the opposite sex (or those of the same sex that would find the target sexually attractive) who attempt to resist any Influence or Streetwise rolls from the recipient suffer one grade of difficulty. Resisting Seduction attempts are treated as two grades harder.

EXCOMMUNICATE

Duration (Instant), Ranged (Metres), Rank Priest, Resist (Willpower)

Excommunicate can only be called down upon a worshipper of the caster's cult. It severs the mystical link the worshipper shares with his god, causing the target's devotional pool to be drained of all Magic Points, and permanently removing access to miracles from that cult. Unless the target can make amends for whatever transgression caused the excommunication to be cast in the first place, their cult specific skills of Devotion and Exhort become mere academic knowledge with no power.

EXORCISM

Duration (Instant), Rank Acolyte, Resist (Willpower)

By means of this miracle, the theist calls upon their god to drive out a spirit currently possessing a corporeal being. Whether the possession is dominant or covert is immaterial. The magic exorcises spirits with an Intensity of up to half the Intensity of the miracle. What occurs next depends on the attitude and type of spirit, but belligerent ones with the power to disorporate may be tempted to engage other nearby targets in Spirit Combat. Thus this spell can be potentially dangerous for the caster or his fellows.

EXTENSION

Duration (Special), Rank Priest

Extension lengthens the duration of any miracle with a non-instantaneous duration, for as long as the caster wishes to maintain it. Extension can be cast any time, provided the miracle being extended is still functioning. Other than reducing the theist's devotional pool by several Magic Points (three for Extension, and one or more for the extended miracle) the miracle has no other maintenance requirements; unless the Games Master wishes to add any to match his setting.

FEAR

Duration (Minutes), Ranged (Metres), Rank Initiate, Resist (Willpower)

This miracle causes the target to be gripped with overwhelming fear. Targets which fail to resist will flee in terror away from the theist, and avoid engaging in combat unless brought to bay. It has no effect on unconscious targets, targets without an INT or INS Characteristic, or targets that are currently under the effect of another emotion-controlling spell of higher Intensity.

FECUNDITY

Duration (Months), Rank Acolyte

When cast on a person or creature, Fecundity will – depending on its sex - ensure it will bear or sire offspring the next time it performs a reproductive act. Provided the miracle is maintained for the full term of gestation or pregnancy, the progeny will be born healthy. Fecundity also provides the antenatal young protection against magical curses, provided the Magnitude of the adverse magic does not exceed that of the miracle.

FORTIFY

Area (Tens of Metres), Duration (Instant), Rank Initiate, Resist (Evade)

Fortify strengthens large scale constructions, making them more resilient to damage from natural disasters, siege weapons, and magical attack. The miracle adds its Intensity to the natural Armour Points of all buildings and walls within its area of effect. Offensive magic which seeks to damage or modify a construction under the protection of Fortify has its Intensity reduced by that of the Fortify miracle.

GROWTH

Area (Tens of Metres), Duration (Hours), Rank Priest

Growth accelerates the growing speed of vegetation, ageing it by one year for each hour until the miracle concludes. Under its effects, trees and bushes can increase in size and verdure dramatically, although at the cost of wildly sprawling, tangled proliferation of every plant within the area of effect. Repeated use of this miracle can potentially grow a thick forest over what had been open fields a few days previously.

HARMONISE

Duration (Minutes), Ranged (Tens of Metres), Rank Initiate, Resist (Willpower)

Harmonise causes the target to do exactly what the theist does. If not resisted the victim must mimic every physical move, albeit in a jerky, almost puppet-like manner. It only works on beings with roughly the same physiology as the caster; with limbs or locations not shared by both participants remaining unaffected by the magic. The miracle only controls gross motor skills, and does not permit control of the victim's speech. Use of this magic can humiliate someone from afar, or perhaps even force them into performing a murderous or suicidal act.

If Harmonise is used to force the subject to attack or defend, the combat style rolls are automatically one grade harder to accomplish owing to the jerky movement of the victim.

HEAL BODY

Duration (Instant), Rank Acolyte

This powerful miracle instantly heals all Minor and Serious Wounds suffered by the target. Like Heal Wound, this miracle has no effect on Major Wounds save to stabilise the injury, preventing death. To repair maimed or dismembered body locations requires the Rejuvenate miracle.

HEAL MIND

Duration (Instant), Rank Acolyte

This miracle removes all madness and mental derangements from a single target. In the case of magically-induced madness, the

spell works if its Magnitude is equal to or greater than that of the magical disorder.

HEAL WOUND

Duration (Instant), Rank Initiate

Heals a single body location back to its full Hit Points, provided the injury is no more severe than a Serious Wound. It has no effect on Major Wounds save for stabilising the injury, preventing death.

HEART SEIZURE

Duration (Instant), Ranged (Metres), Rank Priest, Resist (Endurance)

Another dreadful miracle known to the darkest gods, whoever suffers this dire magic feels the veritable hand of the deity reach within his chest, squeezing his heart or perhaps tearing it out completely. Those that fail to resist the miracle suffer a fatal heart attack and die instantly. If the resistance roll succeeds, the target still suffers a number of Hit Points damage equal to Intensity of the spell, directly to the location where their heart is contained, normally the chest for humanoids. Creatures without hearts are immune to this miracle.

Different forms of this miracle exist, affecting different organs according to the nature of the deity offering it (Brain Seizure, for example).

ILLUSION

Area (Metres), Duration (Hours), Rank Initiate, Resist (Special)

Illusion is used to change the sensory projections of an area or single target, making it seem to be something completely different. For example a tiger can be made to look like a harmless cat, sound like it meows when it roars, and feel silky soft instead of coarse wiry fur. The theist can adjust one sensory projection per two points of Intensity. Once set, the illusion can no longer be modified.

The largest target which can be affected must be able to fit within the perimeter of the miracle. Unwilling living targets may resist with Endurance. Observers who interact with the illusion are permitted an opposed Willpower roll against the miracle, in order to resist any debilitating psychosomatic effects it creates, e.g. deafness, pain, nausea. Whilst the illusion itself is incapable of causing harm, the underlying target or area remains as dangerous as it was before the miracle.

LAY TO REST

Duration (Instant), Rank Initiate

This miracle is used to ensure that the soul of a recently killed person or creature reaches a deserving afterlife. Its primary purpose is to prevent angry, possibly coerced victims returning from death as vengeful spirits or re[inhabiting] their bodies as corporal undead.

LEECHING

Area (Tens of Metres), Duration (Minutes), Rank Acolyte

Using the blood of sacrifices scattered over an area, this miracle disrupts the flow of magic which enters the zone, dissipating its power. Within the area all magic, even that of the caster, is suppressed by the Magnitude of the miracle. Any encroaching spell whose Magnitude is reduced to zero is rendered inactive until the target of its effect leaves the area. Spells cast within the region with equal or less Magnitude automatically fail.

LIGHTNING

Duration (Instant), Ranged (Tens of Metres), Rank Initiate, Resist (Evade)

This miracle causes a sizzling bolt of lightning to either streak down from the sky, or be projected from the hand or weapon of the theist, towards the target. If the bolt is not evaded, it will inflict 1d6 damage per two points of Intensity to a random hit location. Natural and worn armour offers no protection against this damage, but magical protection does.



MADNESS

Duration (Days), Ranged (Metres), Rank Initiate, Resist (Willpower)

This miracle infuses the target with gibbering madness. Targets which fail to resist will rant and rave uncontrollably, performing acts of utter insanity in a manner fitting to their personality, plot line and dramatic circumstances. In general, mad characters should be more harmless distractions than ticking time bombs. In the case of player characters, until the Madness subsides or is somehow cured, the insane victim should be placed under control of the Games Master unless he deems the player is capable of acting out the insanity.

MINDBLAST

Duration (Days), Ranged (Metres), Rank Initiate, Resist (Willpower)

This spell blasts the intellect of the victim, obliterating their sapience. If not resisted, the victim's INT is temporarily converted to animalistic INS, removing from them the power of speech, writing or any other form of communication. It also prevents them from utilising equipment and devices. If forced to fight in this condition, the victim will by default use their Unarmed skill. Although prevented from utilising complex thought, it does not limit instinct and base cunning.

MINDLINK

Duration (Minutes), Ranged (Tens of Metres), Rank Initiate

This miracle allows mind-to-mind communication, theistic knowledge and devotional pool Magic Points to be shared between participants. Its use is normally restricted to those of the same or closely allied cults, since once the magical link is established; there are no safeguards as to what can be tapped from the participants – all of whom must join the Mindlink willingly.

Mindlink has two main purposes. Either it allows an entire cult hierarchy to support a handful of its priests so that they may cast many miracles, powered by the devotional pools of associates and underlings; or it grants lesser ranked cult members the ability (albeit temporarily) to call forth miracles normally beyond their capability.

Each instance of Mindlink connects a pair of individuals in a two way link. Several castings using the same individual but with different partners will make them the hub of a Mindlink network, able to draw on the resources of each of the partners.

If a mental or emotion-affecting spell is cast at someone participating in a Mindlink, then everyone else directly linked to them must also resist the spell or suffer its consequences. Although participants in a Mindlink share deliberately transmitted thoughts, they remain their own entity, and may sever their connection to the Mindlink by willing it so on their turn, or by leaving the spell's range.

MIRAGE

Area (Metres), Duration (Minutes), Rank Initiate

Mirage obscures a region, covering it with strange optical illusions, usually via the cult associations of the deity. An earth god might cause clouds of swirling sand which form unsettling faces; whereas a sun deity might infuse the area with blinding, shimmering curtain of light. The effect of this disconcerting obscurement is to conceal precisely what stands within the area, and make ranged attacks extremely difficult. Firing at anyone within the Mirage suffers one difficulty grade per four points of Intensity.

OBLITERATE

Area (Kilometres), Duration (Instant), Rank Priest, Resist (Willpower)

A dire spell to those who seek fame or remembrance after death, Obliterate removes every record of their existence – scouring it from scrolls, clay tablets, carved hieroglyphs, and every other method of inscribing knowledge. In addition the name of that person is wiped from the mind of everyone within range, save for the casting priest, unless they resist the miracle. Although this miracle is normally used to expunge the glory of those whose crimes are so unforgivable that they must be forgotten for all time, some darker gods offer this as a means for their worshippers to maintain secretive anonymity.

PACIFY

Area (Tens of Meters), Duration (Minutes), Rank Acolyte, Resist (Willpower)

Pacify suppresses aggressive and violent behaviour within its area of effect. Those that fail to resist the miracle are unable to cause harm to another, although they may defend themselves using non-harmful techniques. If unthreatened, those subject to the magic will sheathe or drop weapons, stop belligerent demonstration and cease all arguments. The miracle does not change personal opinion, merely makes it difficult to act in a hostile manner.

PERSEVERANCE

Duration (Hours), Rank Initiate

Through this miracle the recipient can channel the strength of his god, becoming inured to the effects of hard labour. Whilst the miracle remains active, the target of this spell will not receive another level of Fatigue, no matter the hardship faced. Perseverance does not grant any additional capability to lift, march or work; it just ensures the recipient will keep on going. This miracle has no effect upon Fatigue lost from asphyxiation or blood loss.

PROPITIATE

Area (Kilometres), Duration (Weeks), Rank Acolyte

Used by cults who try to appease darker, more hostile deities, Propitiate exchanges regular worship for the agreement to leave a region alone. The precise effect depends on the god being propitiated, but the area affected is centred upon the shrine or temple of that cult. Propitiating a lightning deity for example would not necessarily prevent storms happening within the radius of the miracle, but no serious fires or injuries would occur from lightning strikes. Similarly the tremors of an earthquake god would still be felt in a city, but no buildings would collapse – assuming the propitiations were maintained of course.

RAIN OF (SUBSTANCE)

Area (Kilometres), Duration (Minutes), Rank Priest

This miracle summons dark brooding clouds which then begin to rain a particular, and most likely horrible substance with specific relevance to the cult deity, anything from blood to frogs. The miracle is intended to inspire awe or terror rather than inflict direct harm, so the actual things raining down are relatively harmless. A rain of spiders for instance would only produce non-venomous types; a rain of fire would look scary, but as each glowing ember reached the ground it would extinguish. During the event, members of the cult should be treated as having the Intimidate ability (see page 216).

RAISE UNDEAD

Duration (Hours), Ranged (Tens of Metres), Rank Acolyte

Raise Undead uses the physical remains of a corpse to create either a skeleton or zombie. The miracle infuses the corpse with part of the deity's own consciousness, so that it can obey commands, and act with a degree of independent intelligence. However, the skill capabilities of the undead automaton are limited to those of the theist who creates them.

The number of corpses which can be raised is equal to the Intensity of the miracle. Each skeleton or zombie also gains a bonus to its STR and CON characteristics, again equal to the Intensity. Thus a theist who exhorted his god to grant him an Intensity 9 Raise Dead,

could animate 9 skeletons each with +9 to STR and CON. Only creatures of a SIZ equal or less than the caster's POW can be raised.

For further details on skeletons and zombies, refer to the Creature Chapter.

REFLECTION

Duration (Minutes), Rank Initiate

This miracle reflects incoming magic aimed at the target or his equipment, redirecting it back at the original caster, depending on their relative Magnitudes. It does not have any effect on spells that are already affecting the target, or spells the theist casts upon himself.

REFLECTION RESULTS

<i>Incoming Spell's Magnitude is...</i>	<i>Effect</i>
Equal to or weaker than Reflection's Magnitude.	Incoming spell reflected, and Reflection remains.
1 or more points stronger than Reflection's Magnitude.	Reflection eliminated, and incoming spell takes effect.

REJUVENATE

Duration (Special), Rank Priest

This miracle heals a single body location suffering from a Major Wound, no matter whether it has been crushed, mutilated or dismembered. The freshness of the injury affects the time taken for the miracle to complete. Provided the recipient is still alive, and the location was wounded within a number of hours equal to the Intensity of the miracle, then Rejuvenate will heal all the damage instantly.

Beyond this threshold the body part must undergo a more traumatic repair, which takes a number of days equal to the Hit Points lost on the location. If the miracle is allowed to lapse before the regrowth has completed, the location remains maimed and unusable, potentially left at a negative Hit Point level which cannot be cured.

RESURRECT

Duration (Instant), Rank Priest, Resist (Special)

This miracle can bring the dead back to life by summoning the spirit of the deceased and persuading it to re-enter its body. For obvious reasons the theist must cast Resurrect upon the corpse, which must possess at a minimum, those body locations vital for life. If the target died due to some lingering disease, poison or magical curse, the ailment must be eliminated first or the miracle will fail.

Resurrection is not guaranteed. The deceased spirit will often have desires which preclude their return to life. The spirit may fear the hardship of their life, the lingering pain of wounds, persistent illnesses, the feebleness of old age or may even piously wish to reach their loved ones in the afterlife. On the other hand a spirit might wish to return from the dead to protect their family, seek vengeance against their killer or complete a holy quest.

To judge the primary motivation of the spirit, work out which of their passions or devotion skills has the highest value. If this indicates that the spirit will be unwilling to return to life, it may attempt to resist the miracle using that particular passion or Devotion skill.

Resurrect must be cast within a number of days equal to the Magnitude of the spell after death, otherwise the miracle automatically fails. A resurrected character returns to life with 1 Hit Point on all extant locations.

RIPEN

Area (Metres), Duration (Instant), Rank Initiate

Ripen brings forth a single crop of fruits, tubers, roots, nuts, or seeds from the vegetation within the area of effect. The miracle does not guarantee they are edible since that depends on the plants, but does ensure the crop is at the peak of its ripeness, no matter when during the year the miracle is cast. Ripen cannot cause a plant or tree to give forth more than a single crop annually, so if it is used early during the growing season, the vegetation will spend the remainder of the year recovering.

SACRED BAND

Duration (Minutes), Ranged (Tens of Metres), Rank Initiate

When cast upon a group of worshippers the miracle binds the recipients together as a sacred brotherhood, sharing their life force between them. This has little effect until one of their number is wounded, whereupon the surviving brothers spread the effects of the injury between them.

Damage is divided evenly amongst remaining recipients, applied to the same location which was injured. Any Special Effects which occur remain only with the originally wounded band member. Thus in a band of six temple guardians linked by this miracle, if one is wounded in the arm for 8 points of damage – normally a Serious Wound – the damage is instead split so that the original target and one other suffers 2 points in that arm, whilst everyone else in the band suffers 1 point.

The maximum number of brothers who can be bound together in the band cannot exceed the Intensity of the miracle. They must also share the same basic physiology, or the miracle will fail.

The obvious application of the miracle is to augment the physical resilience of a unit of cult warriors in battle. However, it can also be used to strengthen a cult champion whilst the remainder of the pious participants remain safely hidden or out of reach of combat.

SEVER SPIRIT

Duration (Instant), Ranged (Tens of Metres), Rank Priest, Resist (Endurance)

This miracle severs the bond between body and soul, with dire effect. If not resisted, the victim is slain instantly. If however, the victim does throw off the miracle, they still receive 1 point of damage for every 2 levels of Intensity to each Hit Location simultaneously – which may, in some cases, still seriously injure or even kill the victim.

SHIELD

Duration (Minutes), Rank Initiate

This miracle protects the caster from physical attacks. Each point of Intensity grants the recipient one Armour Point on all hit locations. This protection does not stack on top of worn armour, rather it supplants it in those areas less protected than what the miracle itself provides. In some circumstances, even if the protective value of the Shield is less than the worn armour, it may still ward against certain types of magical damage.

MIRACLES BY CULT RANK

Initiate Spells Summary

Absorption	Lay to Rest
Aegis	Lightning
Backlash	Madness
Behold	Mindblast
Berserk	Mindlink
Breathe Water	Mirage
Cure Malady	Perserverance
Dismiss Elemental	Reflection
Dismiss Magic	Ripen
Elemental Summoning	Sacred Band
Enthrall	Shield
Fear	Soul Sight
Fortify	Spirit Block
Harmonise	Steadfast
Heal Wound	Sureshot
Illusion	True Weapon

Acolyte Spells Summary

Beast Form	Exorcism
Bind Ghost	Fecundity
Bless Crops	Heal Body
Call Winds	Heal Mind
Chameleon	Leaching
Clear Skies	Pacify
Cloud Call	Propitiate
Consecrate	Raise Undead
Corruption	Sunspear
Cure Sense	Thunderclap
Entangle	

Priest Spells Summary

Awaken
Earthquake
Excommunication
Extension
Growth
Heart Seizure
Obliterate
Rain of (Substance)
Rejuvenate
Resurrect
Sever Spirit

SOUL SIGHT

Duration (Minutes), Rank Initiate

This miracle enables the recipient to see the magical aura of anyone he looks at, enabling him to discern that creature or spirit's current Magic Points, as well as the nature of any active spells, the source of their magic, and any enchanted items the creature is carrying. It also permits the recipient to see into the spirit world, and see beyond any visual illusions which may be concealing a creature's true form – although this may not necessarily be a good thing in certain circumstances.

SPIRIT BLOCK

Duration (Minutes), Rank Initiate

Spirit Block is a powerful way of preventing the malign influences of spirits. The recipient receives complete protection from spirits with an Intensity of up to half the Intensity of the miracle (rounded up). So an acolyte invoking the spell at an Intensity of 7 could protect themselves from Intensity 4 spirits.

This miracle protects against spiritual assault only. Thus it prevents disorporation, spirit combat, possession, and the like. On the other hand, it provides no warding against the spells of a Haunt or physical attacks of an incorporated Predator Spirit for example.

SPIRIT BLOCK EFFECTIVENESS

Intensity	Recipient is Safe from Spirits of...
1-2	Intensity 1
3-4	Intensity 2 or lower
5-6	Intensity 3 or lower
7-8	Intensity 4 or lower
9-10	Intensity 5 or lower
Each +2	+1 Intensity

STEADFAST

Area (Metres), Duration (Minutes), Rank Initiate, Resist (Willpower)

Used when facing overwhelming odds or terrifying challenges, this miracle renders those within its area immune to any natural mental or emotional manipulation. Magical attacks which generate a similar effect, such as Fear, Fanaticism, Domination, and the like, must exceed the Magnitude of the miracle to stand a chance of affecting the target.

SUNSPEAR

Duration (Instant), Ranged (Tens of Metres), Rank Acolyte, Resist (Evade)

Sunspear summons a shaft of blazing light down from the sky to blast a single target. If not evaded, the scorching light will burn the victim for 1d6 damage per two points of Intensity in every hit location. Natural and worn armour counts against this damage. This miracle will only function in direct sunlight.

SURESHOT

Duration (Minutes), Ranged (Tens of Metres), Rank Initiate

Sureshot magically guides the trajectory of missiles thrown or fired by the recipient so that they almost always hit, no matter the situational modifiers or cover; provided at least some part of the target is visible, and they are within range of both the miracle and the weapon itself. Any failed ranged weapon attack roll is treated as a success instead. Fumbles, normal successes and critical successes

remain unaffected. The target of the missile attack can still attempt to Parry or Evade as normal.

THUNDERCLAP

Area (Tens of Metres), Duration (Minutes), Rank Acolyte, Resist (Endurance)

This miracle summons a powerful blast of thunder from the open sky, to smite down foes. All non-cult members must resist the magic. Those who fail are knocked prone by the expanding wall of sound, and struck deaf for the remainder of the miracle. Should anyone fumble the resistance roll against the spell, they are struck permanently deaf. Also, any items of glass or pottery will shatter automatically within the area of the spell.

TRUE (WEAPON)

Duration (Minutes), Rank Initiate

True (Weapon) augments the harm the recipient inflicts when wielding a cult-specified close combat weapon. The miracle doubles that type of weapon's damage up to the maximum that the weapon can inflict, and increases its Size by one step for the purpose of overcoming parries. Thus under the effects of a True (Sword) miracle the wielder would roll 1d8 twice for a broadsword, but would not receive more than 8 points. Other bonuses, such as Damage Modifier, are not affected.