Magic, Psi and Ki

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Overview

Many things get done in the fantasy campaign by manipulating energy. And while the types of energy Are often completely different from each other the effects often look the same So I'm documenting them as one block. To start with there are three major groups of energy.

Magic - the use of magical power to produce results.
Psi or Mind gifts - The ability to use mental gifts and energies to produce results.
Ki - the ability to tap and use an inner well of personal energy.

Magic Is the ability to manipulate magical power or mana. Spell casters use their own internal energies to manipulate Mana. It is not known where Mana comes from, but mana is generally all around us, it can flow and pool. The caster uses their own energy to raise, focus, and apply mana. The act of raising, focusing and applying energy is called spell casting. That spellcasting can be very unstructured all the way up to very structured. There are two ways you can view casting.

The water model of magic. If you view mana as a kind of water then the very unstructured forms of spell casting are like scooping the water up in your hands and splashing them at someone as opposed to creating dams and dikes and pipes and hoses to deliver the water where you want to go. As you go from less structured to more structured it takes less energy to achieve the same result while taking more time and often requiring more care and detail work. The simplest form of casting are cantrips, which of the equivalent of splashing water out of a pool with your hand. They are blazingly quick, not particularly effective for anything beyond very small results like lighting a candle. The next form is slightly more structured, and it is called sorcery. A sorcerer is kind of like a kid with a hand pump who can pull up the water and direct it while dynamically changing with the circumstances so that they can redirect the water at the drop of a hat. The next level up, Wizardry, is much more structured but it does come in a range of complexities from simple structures with tightly focused purposes (Squirt guns), to more general Complicated structures (household plumbing), all the way up to monumental works (the Hoover dam)

The communication model of magic. You can view spell casting as composing communications out of words. You say the word "flame" and a small flame appears (a cantrip). You say the phrase "a flaming ball of death is coming your way" and a flaming ball of death is summoned and is heading in a specific direction (Sorcery). When it is more complicated requires more than words to get the point across (like a business presentation) then we are talking wizardries. And most of the tools and extra details that go into wizardry are mostly to keep the conversation going when the wizard isn't there. The biggest difference between a sorcery and a wizardry Is that a wizardry can continue when the saucer is no longer speaking are generating the conversation.

Each type of mana behaves in its own particular way especially when being manipulated by the caster or when interacting with each other. Some of these ways are very logical. The magical element of water is very effective in combating the magical element of fire. The magical element of fire takes more work to control but produces more damage than the magical element of air. The magical element of dark is diametrically opposed to the magical element of light. There are some energies that human mages can barely get access to and even when they are casting with them they are often on the edge of being out of control. There are also energies that are so phenomenally dangerous that only the most powerful of mages can even attempt to work with them.

The Fundamental energies
The insanely dangerous energies.

Chaos or Wild Magics. Wild magics are the magic of creation. They are profoundly chaotic, almost impossible to control, and wildly powerful. The world is designed so that the structure of the world prevents easy access to wild magics. Casting with wild magic is very much like a human trying to redirect lightning with their bare hands. They have a name for that type of spellcaster, the name is "fuse".

The Eternal energies
The sometimes I can cast with them energies

The eternal energies are a set of energies that are slow to summon, slippery to hold, hard to redirect, often difficult to banish and often have lasting effects and echoes. In general even though they are actually highly ordered and structured, that Order is rarely apparent to the spellcaster. These energies are known as Belief, Stream, and Fabric

Belief. Belief is the energy of faith. It is very difficult to get a handle on and generally only the gods can reliably use it. This really is the power of miracles. It can be cast and manipulated by mages and is used by priests and priestesses. It despite that there is a fundamental difference between when a mage or priest attempts to manipulate belief and when the divine is present. Don't make the mistake of believing that a priest is simply a mage. A priest is a channel for their deity.

Stream. Stream is the energy of time and possibilities. Like belief is very difficult to get a handle on and generally only the gods can reliably use it. Mages and shamans and others such as oracles can use it in much the same way that humans can ride a rhinoceros. You may be physically able to do it, but you really don't have much ability to control the direction it goes. Someone who is using Stream can see what is happened in the past (Generally much easier than any other type of usage of Stream) as well as get a sense of what may be in the future. In general the foreseeings done with Stream are highly influenced by the mental state of the person doing the seeing. In other words, they often see the types of things they would expect to see.

Fabric. Fabric is the energy of space. Like belief and stream is very difficult to get a handle on and only the gods can reliably use it. But it is relatively easier to control spell castings with Fabric. This is the energy associated with seeing things at a distance (clairvoyance) as well as being associated with the Really cool spells like teleportation.

The Elemental energies

The bread-and-butter of most spell casters

Elemental powers are fairly easy for a spellcaster to get a handle on. The world is designed in such a way that mages have relatively easy access to the elemental energies. They are generally fast to summon and easy to manipulate and behave according to various rules and principles. They have their own kind of order and will behave in predictable ways. Elemental energies are less likely to have lasting magical effects then the Eternal energies and they can have have fairly lasting physical effects.

Most creatures are actually composed of a balance of the elemental energies in a dynamic balance. Too much exposure to any one elemental energy can imbalance an individual and make them sick. One of the first things that most spell casters learn is how to manipulate the energy without taking it into themselves and thus unbalancing themselves.

The elemental energies are:

Fire - Fire is quick to summon hard to control or banish. Losing control usually means something gets scorched. In general fire likes to do damage and consume things.

Water - Water is less quick to summon, almost as hard to control as fire, but it is rarely necessary to banish it because you can usually just let it dissipate and run off itself. Water is harder to focus in order to damage.

Air - Air is quick to summon and hard to control or banish the losing control rarely involves major damage. Air is very hard to focus in order to damage though it moves quickly

Earth - Earth is slow to summon, hard to move, and slow to stop. Once going, Earth can do a great deal of damage

Light - Light is quick to summon, easy to move, relatively easy to stop although you do need to do it quickly. In general Light does not tend to do a great deal of damage but it's side effects are often more significant (temporarily blinding someone, distracting someone etc.)

Dark - Dark is also quick to summon, easy to move and relatively easy to stop. Like light it does not tend to do a great deal of damage but again its side effects are often significant.

Life - Life energies are slightly slower to summon then light and dark, as well as being very hard to focus on something. Life energies are lousy for doing damage with. You can conceivably hit somebody with so much life that they are unbalanced. Life energies are better for certain types of healings and divinations. They are very useful for doing damage to creatures animated by deah such as the undead.

Death - Death energies are slightly slower to summon them light and dark, as well as being very hard to focus on something. By the very nature Death energies are useful in injuring living creatures.

Shadow - Shadow is normally a fleeting type of energy that is created by the interaction of light and dark. Sometimes you can find pools of shadow at twilight but generally it exists in those locations between light and dark. While shadow is not the most reliable of elemental materials it does have some advantages for several key actions: such as confusing a person's eyes, clouding their minds or causing fear. Shadow also has a "resonance" with other blocks of shadow. As a result, Shadow mages have easier access to the ability to walk from shadow to shadow.

Nature - "Life is, Nature will be". In general nature occurs where there is a preponderance of life and a small amount of death. There is a natural dynamically generated energy called nature. Nature is the energy that binds most living things to the natural order. Shamans often deal with Nature.

Decay - Decay occurs where there is a preponderance of death and a smaller amount of life. Decay is the energy that binds most Undead to that unnatural order.

The Personal energies

The its not magic but boy does it look like energies

The Personal energies are the energies that exist in and around mentating creatures. Personal energies are fast to summon (when they come from internal sources). Personal energies are easily manipulated at an intuitive level. Personal energies will readily form simple and fragile patterns. Those patterns are disrupted by the flow of other energies in the area. Most Personal energies have a personal flavor.

Psi or Mind Gifts.

Ki.

Spellcasting

There are three steps in casting a spell. The first is gathering the energy, the second is focusing that energy and the third is releasing it.

Gathering the energy

Gathering the energy is a fundamental part of the casting process. Most spells will use the mage's internal energy to summon and manipulate the specific type of energy needed. How well a character can access their own power is governed by their PSI stat. Using the power to gather energy expends Mental Fatigue. This MFT can be supplemented by energy from Material Components, Magic Items, Living Sacrifice, Worship, Physical Exertion, or just by being given the energy by another.

The skill used in gathering the energy is Manipulate Energy. An ME skill is needed for each type of energy to be manipulated. ME: skills such as ME:Fire can be used to make perception rolls for detecting the energy in question. A perception skill for a specific energy type can be used to determine the intensity and extent of the energy.

Focusing the Energy

In focusing the energy the caster directs and channels the energies toward a specific end. Material components used during this part of the spell would be used for channeling the energies involved \footnote{ Material Component could be damaged (magically) if it cannot contain the energies involved}. Somatic and verbal components add to this part of the spell process as does any meditative state or trance..

The mage determines how much energy will be applied at this point. The time taken in focusing the energies is spent in setting up the various actions to be performed by the energy. The time spent in applying the energy is fairly constant compared to the time spent focusing the energies.

Applying Energy

The energy released should follow the form laid out by the caster when he focused on the spell

Spell types

Spells vary in their complexity and in the time it takes to cast them. There are special names for spell casts of a given complexity and cast time. Those names are Sorceries, Cantrips, Spells, Rituals and Rites.

Cantrips. Cantrips are simple magicks. They are simple in structure and low powered. Often simple material components will supply the power needed. A caster casting cantrips needs to have a skill in Casting:Cantrips in order to be considered ranked in the action they are attempting.

Sorceries. Sorceries are castings that have a structure imposed by the caster at the time of cast and are generally fairly flexible.

Spells. Spells are ritualized sorceries. They have a structure and effect that are determined when they are designed. Thus a caster using a ``Throw Fire'' spell may only vary the specific effects of the spell taht are designed to be varied.

ritual. A ritual is a highly structured and detailed spell that involves the manipulation of more than one mages worth of energy at a time. In order to do this the caster must gather power from some outside source. To cast rituals requires the Hold Energy skill for energy type being used.

Rites. A rite is a ritual that requires the work of two or more casters during its casting.

Spell Design

Spell design consists of isolating the various attributes of the spell such as the energies to be used and the actions to be taken and using these attributes to add or subtract from a pool of Spell Design Points (SDP).

Factors in Spell Design

Energy Type

This describes the types of energies to be manipulated. First, there are the Personal Energies: Power and Psi. Both are easy to summon from within or raise via sacrifice.

Next there are the Eternal energies : Belief, Fabric and Stream. Belief is the energy created by the worship or investment of faith in another entity, being, or object. Stream is the energy derived from the dynamics of the time continua. Fabric is the energy derived from the shifts of equilibrium of seemingly static forces involved in the here and now.

The Elemental energies are Light, Dark, Fire, Air, Water, Earth, Life, Death.

The Ephemeral energies are Shadow, Nature, and Decay.

Factors involved in Focusing Energy

Actions

This is what the energies are to be used for. These actually spend time during the Focusing process. These actions are often described in a pairing between an action and its opposite.

The actions are Detection or Concealment, Divination or Anti-Divination, Summoning or Banishment, Creation or Destruction, Concentration or Dissapation, Transport or Anti-transport, Binding or Releasing, Transmutation or Stasis, Translocation or Anchoring, Influence, Control, Damage or Restore, Shield, Activate, and Hold.

Detection	Identifying the existence of something.
Concealment	Hiding the existence of something
Divination	Determining something about an object such as its location or nature.
Anti-Divination	Blocking the determination of the attributes of an object or occurence.
Summoning	Bringing energy to the immediate locale .
Banishment	Returning energy from the immediate locale to its origin.
Creation	The generation of an energy from nothing.
Destruction	The elimination of an energy from existence.

Concentration	The gathering of energy from the nearby region to a more intense whole.
Dissapation	The scattering of energy into a more diffuse form.
Transport	To move through a distance.
Anti-transport	
Binding	To tie energy to a physical object.
Releasing	
Transmutation	
Stasis	
Translocation	To travel a distance without passing through the fabric of the {\em current} plane.
Anchoring	To prevent translocation.
Influence	
Control	
Damage	To rend or otherwise hurt.
Restore	
Shield	
Activate	Activates a spell
Fast Activate	Activates a spell at one quarter of its normal cast time
Hold	

Casting Components

Casting Components covers external props, preparation, and other components.

Verbal	Verbal Components are vocal actions that aid in the casting of the spell. This is the default. It assumes anormal speaking voice chant.
Somatic	Somatic Components are physical actions such as hand waving or finger moving.
Material	Material components are physical objects or materials that aid in supplying, channeling, or directing energy.
Preparation	Preparation covers any activity that may be performed before the spell is cast.
True Name	

Casting Components Properties

Each casting components value to the design of the spell may be modified by the various properties of the Casting Components. If the material is rare or particularly fine, it will add to the spell's abilities.

Expensive

Cheap

Rare

Common

Renewable

Non-Renewable

Reusable

Non-Reusable

Complex

Loud

Quiet

Long

Short

Factors involved in the Application of the Energy

Target Type

Target type describes whether the energies affect a target, multiple targets, or no targets at all.

A Target Type is what the spell is directed at. A spell with no Target Type is directed at the energy used in the spell. A ``Summon Fire'' spell has no target type. A ``Blast'Em'' spell has a target type.

No Target	The spell is not intended to effect anything other than the base energy type used in the spell.
Target,Self	The spell is intended to effect the caster.
Single Target	The spell is intended to effect on one object or entity.
Multiple Targets	The spell is intended to effect multiple targets. The assumption here is that the Quantitative Effect is {\bf split} between the multiple targets wheareas an Area of Effect spell has that Quantitative Effect apply equally among all of the targets.
Area of Effect	The spell is intended to effect everything in a given area.

A spell that has a range and a target but no Area of Effect would look like this:
A spell that has a Target and an Area of effect but no range would look like:
A spell that has a range and an Area of Effect would look like this:

Target Components

A spell targeted at living creatures may be narrowed down to effect only what is desired.

Physical Form

Mind

Perception

Spell Statistics

Each spell has six statistics that are manipulatable and balanced by the spell designer.

Resistance (RES). Resistance is how easily can the spell be resisted. The higher this value is the better it is for the caster. When doing spell design the designer will be modifying Resistance. When the spell design is complete the value for RES will be used to generate the Resistance Difficulty Factor (RDF)

Equation 1. Resistence

RDF = 7 - Resistance

Quantitative Effect (QE). A quantitative value for the total effect a spell can have. QE is a numeric constant. This is translated to actual effect via a table. For Damage or Restoration spells this directly translates as the damage done by the spell.

Casting Diffulty Factor (CDF). The Difficulty Factor involved in casting the spell.

Energy Cost (EC). The Energy Cost is the amount of Mental Fatigue used to cast the spell from start to finish.

Casting Time (CT). Catsing Time is the time taken in pulses or any appropriate time unit. More casting time is lower cost, less casting time is higher cost.

Table 1. SDP Casting Time Scale

Casting Time Scale	SDP
Pulse	2
Second	4
5 Seconds	6
1/2 Min	8
2 Minutes	12
10 Minutes	16
1 Hour	24
4 Hours	32
1 Day	40
1 Week	48

Range. Touch range spells require the caster to come into physical contact with the target. Numeric range spells have a scale and value that is bought with SDP.

No Range   Implies that the caster is the origin of the spell emanation

Touch   Requires the casters body to come into contact with the Target.

Numeric   Bought with SDP as below.

Table 2. SDP Range Scale

Range Scale	SDP
0	0
0.1 Meter	-2
0.5 Meter	-4
1 Meter	-8
5 Meters	-12
10 Meters	-16
100 Meters	-24
1 Km	-32

AOE.

Table 3. SDP AOE Scale

Casting Time Scale	SDP
AOE Scale	SDP
0	0
1 Meter	2
2 Meters	4
5 Meters	8
10 Meters	16
20 Meters	32

Duration (DUR). Duration is the length of time that the effect of the spell lasts. An Instaneous spell lasts for a very small and fleeting duration. Active Concentration duration spells last for as long as the caster concenmtrates on the spell. Any other actions the caster may partake of will be considered florentine actions. Passive Concentration duration spells last for as long as the caster is concious and or clear minded. Permanent spells last until dispelled or disrupted. Spells that have a numeric duration buy the scale and value of the duration. By default the scale is in pulses and the value is the mage's PSI.

Table 4. SDP Duration Time Scale

Casting Time Scale	SDP
Duration Time Scale	SDP
Instantaneous	0
Pulse	-1
Second	-2
5 Seconds	-3
1/2 Min	-4
2 Minutes	-6
10 Minutes	-8

Casting Time Scale	SDP
1 Hour	-12
4 Hours	-16
1 Day	-20
1 Week	-24

Basic Rules of Spell Design

One or more energy types must be used in the spell.

To bring energy into use the caster must Summon, Create, Concentrate or have the energy otherwise available.

To bring the power into use the caster do one of the following: Translocate it, Transport it, Bind it and physically move it, or Hold it and physically move it.

Spells designed to inflict damage on a target must use the Damage action.

Bindings are only needed when the energy needs to be anchored to an object or place.

Spells that use Influence, Control, Damage and Restoration must have a target.

Example. A spell is designed by starting with 25 + Mages MST in SDP. All spell statistics are 0. CDF = 0, Resistance = 0; DUR = 0; RNG = 0; QE = 0; EC = 0. A {\it Laser} spell is designed as follows. We start with the Base spell type. We choose the Energy Type of Light. The first action needed is the Summoning of the Light. The next action is to transport the Light to the target. After transporting the Light, we must apply it to the target in order to damage it. Now let us design another spell. We will design a {\it Lightnings Hand} spell. We specify multiple targets.

Other Notes that are of interest. Investment Rituals are specific to the energy being used. Normally, invested items can resist. With sufficient preparation the resistance can be dropped to 0. Warding rituals are similiar.

Spell Design Tables

Table 5. SDP:Energy Types

Energy Type	SDP	Speed
Power	-7	0
Belief	0	7
Stream	-2	5
Fabric	-1	6
Light	-4	3
Dark	-4	3
Life	-4	3
Death	-4	3
Fire	-5	2
Water	-5	2
Air	-5	2
Earth	-5	2
Shadow	-6	1

Energy Type	SDP	Speed
Starlight	-6	1
Nature	-6	1
Decay	-6	1
Telekinetics		
Phanokinetics		
Temporokinetics		
Energetics		
Biokinetics		

Table 6. SDP: Actions

Action Type	SDP	Speed
Det/Conceal	-1	1
Div/A-Div	-1	1
Summon/Banish	-1	2
Create/Destroy	-1	10
Conc/Dissapate	-1	3
Transport/A-Tra	-1	4
Bind/Release	-1	7
Trans/Stasis	-1	8
Translocate	-1	9
Hold	-1	1
Activate	-2	5
Fast Activate	-3	1
Influence	-2	1
Control	-3	2
Damage	-3	2
Restore	-2	3

Table 7. SDP:Casting Component Type

Casting Component	SDP
Verbal	0
Somatic	4
Material	4
Preparation	4
Runes	6
True Name	8
Requires to-hit roll	4
Energy Held for duration	-4

Table 8. SDP:Casting Component Properties

Component Properties	SDP
Cheap	0
Moderate	1
Expensive	2
Common	0
Uncommon	1
Rare	2
Renewable	0
Non-Renewable	2
Reusable	0
Non-Reusable	1
Simple	0
Moderate Complex	1
Complex	3
Quiet	0
Normal Speech Level	1
Loud	2
Short	0
Same Length as Spell	1
Long	2

Table 9. SDP:Target Types

Factor Name	SDP
No Target	0
Directed,Self	-2
Single Target	-4
Multiple Targets	-8
Spells	-10
Area of Effect	-16

Table 10. SDP Target Components

Target Component	SDP
Matter(Inanimate)	-1
Body(Animate)	-1
Mana(Inanimate)	-1
Lifeforce(Animate)	-1
Thought	-1
Perception	-1

Target Component	SDP
Essence(Soul)	-1

Table 11. Costs for Misc. Factor Changes

Factor	SDP
Rank linked QE	5/1
Rank linked AOE	5/1
Rank Linked RES	4/1
Rank Linked DUR	3/1
Rank Linked RNG	3/1

Table 12. Costs for Factor Changes

Factor Manipulation	Factor/SDP Ratio
AOE	1/2
CDF	1/1
RES	2/1
QE	2/1
DUR	1/1
RNG	1/1
EC	3/1