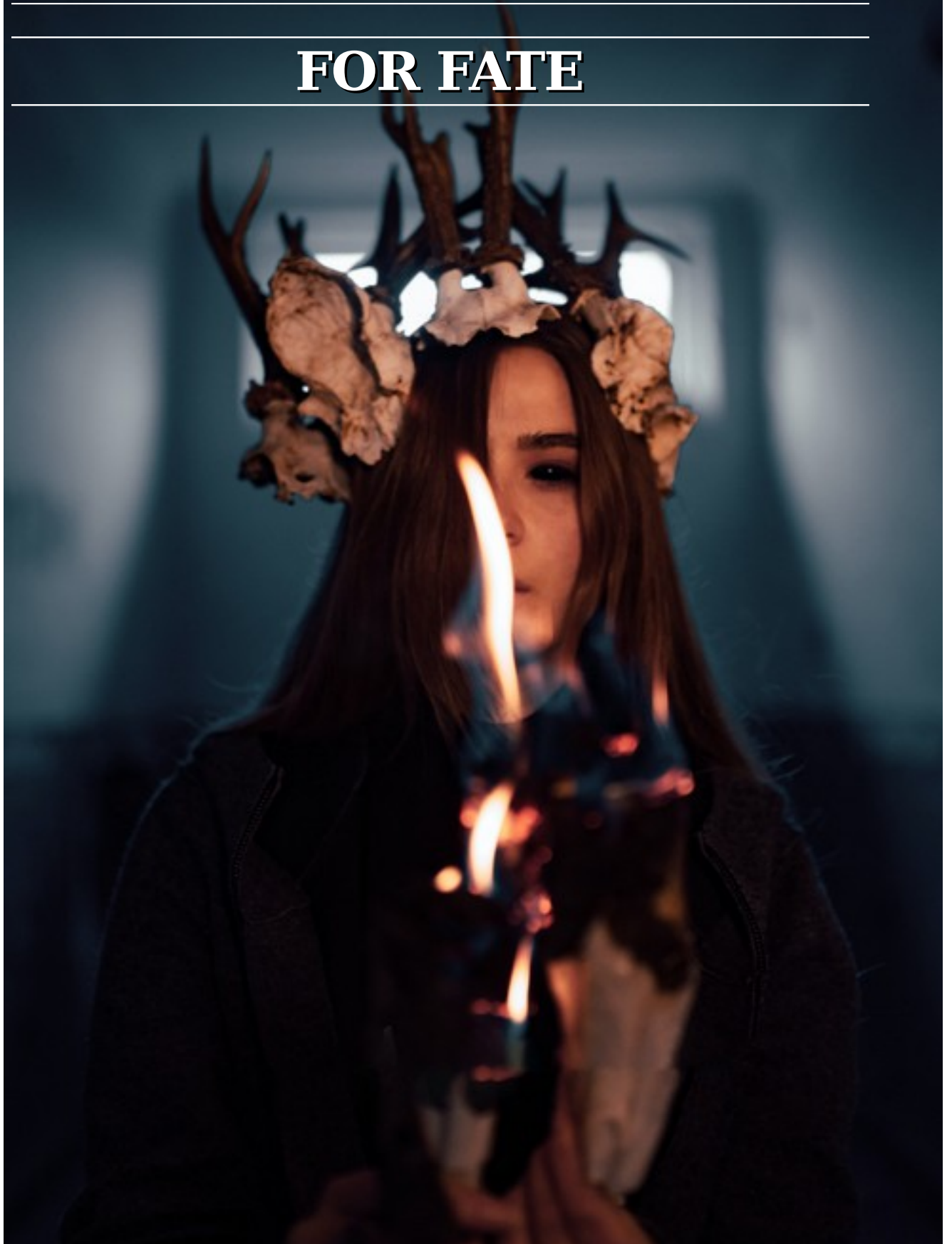

TRADITIONAL MAGIC

FOR FATE



Note:

This is an unfinished work, but as I'm not sure whether it ever will be finished, it is released "as is".

Written by Audun Myhra Bergwitz.

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INTRODUCTION

Thulsa Doom may be able to kill with his death ray, but Conan is able to outwit him, and "if it bleeds, it can die" holds true.

Gandalf may create magical fireworks without much effort, but he's several thousand years old and more like a god. Still, he prefers to use mortals to do his work since magic has its limits.

The cultists may have a magic trick up their sleeve, but for true power, they have to summon an eldritch horror.

These rules (or guidelines) are for settings where magic is more powerful than other tricks, and out of reach for most people in the world. It tries to mimic magic as it works in fantasy, urban fantasy, sword and sorcery, and horror stories, as well as in how magic is imagined in most real-world traditions.

The main goal is a setting where there's no magic energy source, magic happens because everything is connected, and by the way of symbols you can understand and manipulate these connections. Magic is about the secret patterns of the world and about the spirits that represent the world. By unlocking the secrets, you may manipulate reality itself, or you may call the spirits for help to do that.

This means "sympathetic magic", that things act on each other at a distance through a hidden sympathy as in the Hermetic saying: "As above, so below". It means ritual magic with weird components, gestures, mystic symbols, magical words, intricate geometric patterns, chanting and dancing. It means "Law of contagion", that if you have a piece of the target, you can affect it from afar since it's still part of a "whole", even if it's miles or kilometers distant. And it means spirits, from mighty demons and eldritch horrors to nature spirits and house and ancestor spirits.

The goal is to make **how magic happens** a big part of the narrative, making it more mystic and less gamified. This means that magic requires more actions and more rolls, but as a part of the narrative. If you want a more high fantasy or D&D feel where magicians toss spells around like a gunslinger uses her guns use another approach instead. [High Fantasy Magic](#) is good place to start.

The same goes for settings where magic is some sort of mystical energy, Vancian (prepared spells), psionics or some sort of fantastical science. Atomic Robo is great for fantastic science, Fate Freeport Companion has a good take on Vancian/DnD magic, for psionics check out the Fate Space Toolkit.

In a setting where magic is ubiquitous and/or all player characters are magic users, the approach here may work, but others may fit better.

These rules and guidelines are intended to be used for the world creation part of your game, and you have to flesh out exactly how it works in your game. Also, they work just as well for creating adversaries with magic as it does for players.

QUICK SUMMARY

All magic actions are Create an Advantage actions.

Magic has a base difficulty of Fantastic (+6).

More powerful magic has even higher difficulty.

Invoking Aspects, and especially created Advantages, help you do magic despite the high difficulty.

Choose an appropriate skill that you use to do magic with a stunt.

Flesh out the details by creating a Tradition.

Magic actions can be split into the following types

- Spellcasting
- Calling spirits
- Divination
- Enchantments and alchemy

MAGIC IS FANTASTIC

Looking at the ladder, magic is Fantastic so the starting difficulty should be 6.

That's a high bar, but breaking the rules of physics is no mundane thing. The main gist is that magic without any stunt bonuses, advantages or invokes should be in the realm of the epic, and even then, with some limits. Just flicking off a fireball at your enemies whenever you need it is not magic, it's a superpower.

Only a master will know enough to actually do magic with their skill alone, so if you're not Great at what you do, it will be really difficult. With a lot of help, time, and some tricks up your sleeve (stunts) you may be able to do it nonetheless. This means that to have a fair chance of doing magic you need at least a Great skill and one +2 bonus, either from invoking an aspect or from a stunt. For more success, you may invoke other aspects, and create new advantages to help you (see Magical Aid).

Though, the more powerful the magic, the more difficult it would be (see Effect modifiers). As difficulties stack up you may need to several advantages with free invokes to have a chance to succeed. The point of this is to add a lot of narrative weight to magic and its limits. Really powerful magic is something to build a

whole story arc around, as you create enough Advantages to actually have a chance at success (or ruin the evil sorcerer's chance at success).

Note:

In Fate several actions stacked to achieve a goal could be done using Challenge rules, and they might be appropriate, but for magic the important part is stacking of bonuses, and any step is optional. With a Great skill and a Great (+4) roll you can succeed with magic without any stacked bonuses, but it's a high gamble.

TRADITIONS

Are you a shaman, calling forth the spirits of the ancestors to help the tribe, or are you a warlock, binding spirits to you and forcing them to do your bidding with dark rituals?

Most fantasy games and settings have several different types of magic users. Here we call these Traditions, and you have to flesh them out yourself.

If characters can do magic this should be their High Concept, but optionally it may be another aspect. Add a Tradition (see below) when you choose the magic aspect. While "I Can Do Magic" may work in some games, usually you want a bit more flavor. Flesh it out, use the Bronze rule, and create a Tradition.

Traditions should be established when someone chooses to be a magician. Work out what the tradition you choose means. This should be part of the game creation, where all players have a say so that you end up with a version or versions of magic that fit the game that you want to play. Maybe there are several different traditions in your setting, from hedge witches to warlocks and necromancers.

Ask the following questions:

- What is it called?

conjurer, summoner, sorcerer, cleric, priest, shaman, druid, bard, acolyte, wizard, warlock, evoker, demonologist, elemental, alchemist, artificer, magi, witch, wicca, necromancer, occultist, initiate, thaumaturge, adept, godman, guru, theurgist, wu, mudang, baksu, arcanist, runemaster, seidr, galdr, noaide...

- Where and how did you learn magic?

Is there a school of magic? A university? Apprenticeships? Did you learn from your parent? Secret circles or well-known organizations? Covens? Are you self-taught? Did the spirits teach you?

- What kind of props do you use?

- What does it look like when you do magic? Do you dance and sing, or draw intricate geometric patterns?

- What kind of things can you do with magic and how does this work? Create some limits on what you actually can do here. Can you conjure spirits? Cast spells? Create alchemical potions? Divine the future? Or the present? Do you do a little bit of each, or are you a specialist?
- What spirits do you commune with and how? Is there a spirit world that you can enter?
- How do other people view you?

ASPECTS FOR A TRADITION

Add some guiding Aspects to your tradition, some that answer the questions above, emphasizing the most important parts of the tradition. This is optional, but helps flesh out the game world around the tradition, and might help when you create a character later on. If this is not the time, wait and add these aspects later on, when you have a better feeling for what exactly describes your tradition.

Adding trouble and limitation aspects also raise the cost of being a magic user, as these may be compelled against quite often.

A high concept should imply how the magic works, what you can do, and what it looks like. A limitation is either something you need to do for magic to work, something you can't do, a weakness or set of principles you have to adhere to. The trouble could be more general such as scorn from society or outright outlawing of the tradition, an enemy of the tradition or other trouble that follows from being part of the Tradition.

Organization describes how the Tradition fit in to society (or don't fit in), if it is connected to a special group, either social or cultural and what kind of social institutions that exist around it.

Add another aspect if you want to, adding more detail to how the magic works, what kind of spirits that are important or anything else.

HIGH CONCEPT (<i>name, props and what it looks like, what you can do</i>):
LIMITATION (<i>what is necessary for your magic to work, principles that you have to follow</i>):
TROUBLE (<i>what can go wrong, any enemies, is it outlawed</i>):
ORGANIZATION: (<i>how does the Tradition fit into society, is connected to a special group or culture, are there</i>

<i>institutions like schools, secret circles or apprenticeships, etc.)</i>
OPEN ASPECT (<i>for instance, more on spirits in the tradition or how the magic works</i>):

TRADITION STUNTS

Tradition also is a guide to what kind of skill(s) you should use to do magic. Add a stunt to describe what skill you normally use to make magic and how.

This stunt is a cost in addition to the Aspect that allows you do to do magic with your skill, so it's less situational than other stunts, but doesn't provide a bonus. Optionally, drop the stunt and just make the cost 1 refresh.

If you want to, limit traditions to certain types of magic, like spellcasting, conjuring, or alchemy, state what they can do.

Examples:

Magus: with your knowledge of magical symbols and invocations you may use Lore to magically Create an Advantage.

Arcanist: due to extensive studies of the arcane you may use Investigate to magically Create an Advantage by drawing upon your extensive research of the supernatural.

Alchemist: with knowledge of the essence of elements you can use Craft to Create an Advantage with potions imbued with a magical effect.

Bard: You weave stories and music with Rapport to magically Create an Advantage.

Elementalist: your understanding of the flows and currents in basic elements of the world allows you to use Will to Create an Advantage with magic.

Martial adept: your training allows you to magically Create an Advantage by using special moves with Athletics.

Spirit talker: you may ask for aid from the spirits to magically Create an Advantage with your Empathy skill.

Druid: You may use your Nature* skill to call magically Create an Advantage.

Technomancer: you can hack the codes behind reality itself and may use Engineering* to magically Create an Advantage.

* optional skills. *Nature* is for fantasy games combining survival with knowledge of nature (ie what a Druid or a Ranger might have as a core skill). *Engineering* is Craft for technological settings.

With Fate Accelerated use Approaches instead.

The main thing here is that regardless of the skill magic always the stunt allows you to Create an Advantage action that breaks the rules of physics and engages with the supernatural.

You can't directly Overcome, Attack, or Defend with magic directly, you create an advantage for your Overcome, Attack or Defend action.

ADDITIONAL STUNTS

With a tradition, there's usually a stunt family, add stunts as you see fit. One stunt that gives you a + 2 to magic in certain situations is nearly mandatory as it will be difficult to do any magic without it.

[*Magically prepare* - create an appropriate name for your tradition]: you may use one action with [magic skill] to prepare and get +2 to your action with that skill immediately afterward. . It may involve arcane mutterings and drawing occult symbols (Lore), maybe it is a dance (Athletics), a fine-tuning of the symbols or components that need to be incorporated in the spell (Investigate), a physical exercise (Physique) or a song (Rapport).

Trained by the Order of the Phoenix: Your training with the order makes you adept at understanding the secrets of fire and you get +2 when you use your Elementalist stunt to manipulate fire.

Curses from the old country: You get +2 to use your Spirit Talker stunt when you try to curse someone to fall ill or have bad luck.

Shadowy cantrips: you get +2 to create Light, Darkness, and illusions involving manipulation of light and shadows with your Bard stunt.

Alchemical spirits: you may create potions with your Craft skill that allows you to summon spirits (for an Alchemist that can't summon spirits otherwise, if you choose to limit this for traditions).

SPECIAL MAGIC STUNTS

While the Tradition stunt gives you access to a range of magical effects, and defines the character as a magic user, baking in magic effects with other stunts is of course also an option, but these should give a bonus. For instance, a special magic move in combat gives you +2 to Attack with Fight, a magical violin that adds +2 to Rapport when Creating an Advantage with music or when you shapeshift into a wolf you get +2 to Athletics actions possible for a wolf. The main difference is that these are more limited, they don't open up a whole new range of possible actions.

SPELLCASTING

Sorcery, cantrips, spellcasting, hexes, incantations, charms and curses, and possibly many more, are names for magic, but they mostly mean one thing in Fate: you somehow create an Aspect. For now, we will call it spells, but use the most appropriate name(s) for your setting. The different power levels for different names (like cantrips for mundane uses of magic) seem to be an invention of D&D, so don't place too much weight on it.

CREATE A SPELL

Spellcasting is creating (or removing) an Aspect, so you are Creating an Advantage. Decide what you try to do, how, and what Aspect that creates. Though, normally, when you Create an Advantage and fail, the Advantage goes to someone else. Consider allowing for Success at Major Cost instead, allowing for the Aspect to be created, but with some serious drawbacks.

The effect may be rather direct, including harming someone (a Consequence), but you create an aspect.

The limits to what kind of Aspect you may create are determined by the game (the GM and the rest of the group). Tradition should be a guide here as well. If it doesn't fit the game, it's a veto.

How much it affects the world, and to what degree it is supernatural should affect difficulty. For instance, creating the aspect Invisible in the Crowd or Blend in with the Shadows should be easier than full Invisible. So if you're creating an advantage from an already established Aspect, and just using magic to help, subtract 2 from the difficulty. If's it Fantastic, keep the difficulty at 6.

EFFECT MODIFIERS

The aspect you create may affect a zone, a person or creature, a structure, or a larger area, and it may be permanent or temporary or last until used.

Modifiers stack up, which means that some magic is really difficult, reaching Epic levels, and needs a lot of preparation to work.

Modifiers for time effect:

- Temporary (can be invoked free once and then disappears) +0
- Creating a situation aspect +1
- Semi-permanent (wears off after a while, max a session) +2
- Permanent +4

Modifiers for area effect

- One zone + 0
- More than one zone +1
- The whole scene +2
- Affects more than the immediate scene/surroundings + 3

- Large area +4
- A country +6
- The whole world +10

Consequences

- Causes harm (stress) or destroys things +1
- Directly causes a Consequence +2 (mild consequence) +4 (moderate consequence) +6 (severe consequence) +8 (extreme consequence)

Target range modifiers

- Touching target or it is yourself + 0
- You can sense where the target is (you can see them, hear where they are, or maybe smell it or feel it in some other way) + 1
- Target is outside visual (or other sense) range + 2
- Target is in the vicinity + 3
- Target is far away (another city) + 4

Knowing the location of someone may be an Advantage when the target is outside your normal range. Maybe you are using Contacts to establish when the prince returns to the castle from his hunt or using Investigate to figure out where the thief went and probably is now. Or the GM may grant you a free invoke if it's obvious that you know where the target is.

MAGICAL AID

Magic is difficult, and the more effect you aim for the harder it gets. So, to have any chance at success, you need some aid. In order to do so, invoke Aspects and Create Advantages. The things listed here, as well as the chapter on spirits, is not an exhaustive list, but should give you some ideas for how to have a chance of success.

SYMBOLIC LINKS/SYMPATHETIC MAGIC

To overcome the difficulty of affecting a target, you can try to Create an Advantage through a symbolic representation (use Craft or some other appropriate skill to your tradition).

This might be something like a voodoo doll or some other token, a drawing, or mystical symbols that describe them in some way.

If you have a material piece of the target (hair, spit, part of the building, etc) you may invoke that aspect as well when creating the symbolic link, usually as free invoke.

MENTAL LINKS

You may also create a mental symbolic link to the target (using Empathy or Notice) if you can't see (sense) them. This works the same way as a symbolic

link, but you create a mental image of the target instead of a physical one. Aspects that tie you to the target may be invoked so that it is easier to target someone you know.

COMPONENTS

Components are commonplace and will be a symbolic representation of what you try to achieve. While some things are rather easy to get, maybe you need frog tongues, feathers of a crow, and unicorn horn talc to cast the spell? Weird components are part of a witches brew, druids rely on herbs to create their potions of strength, alchemists love their quicksilver, and adding magical components should make your magic stronger. Roll Resources to create an Advantage of having the right components for your spell.

Some powerful spells may require a unique component, there's probably a free invoke on that once you get hold of them, but that might take a few scenes at least.

An extra (as a stunt) like "pouch of druidic herbs" may give you the components you need for most of your magic, adding +2 to your roll.

Not having the necessary components, if they are commonplace, may also be compelled against you, adding +2 to the difficulty instead. You need fire to do elemental fire magic, but getting even a match to spark in a musty and drafty cave can be difficult.

SACRIFICE

Sacrifices, if that is something that you want in your game, is also basically a sort of component, but should require different rules. Animal sacrifice may be commonplace and socially accepted in your setting, and thus no different than other components.

Human sacrifice is usually reserved for villains, but in a grimdark setting or a desperate situation maybe not. If you want animal sacrifice to be more powerful than normal, or if you want to include human sacrifice (either for villains or the players) should create an aspect that while it adds an Advantage to the spellcasting, there should be a cost in an aspect against the spellcaster.

If animal sacrifice is extra powerful, sacrificing an animal should add a +4 bonus, but either causes a moderate Consequence (mentally) or a social stigma with two free invokes against the spellcaster. For human sacrifice, allow a +6 bonus, but there's a serious Consequence to be taken for it and it will give you enemies.

SELF-SACRIFICE

In some situations, the need outweighs the cost, and a magician may drain extra resources to succeed. As an option, allow for taking a Consequence to give a

bonus to the needed action. This costs a Fate point, and the bonus follows the number of shifts that Consequence will give you ie +4 for Moderate, +6 for Severe (as you spend a Fate point, there's no point in taking a Mild consequence which will give you a +2 bonus).

TEAMWORK

Teamwork often takes the form of a ritual, for example when everyone joins in on the dance or all the cultists chant together with the high priest. Normally rules apply, so a full witches circle has far more power than the individual witch.

SPELLBOOKS AND SCROLLS

Spellbooks and scrolls are more like recipes so they don't work automatically, but are Aspects that may be used to help with the magic. Either they have to be deciphered (Lore action to create advantage) or can be invoked with a Fate point or some kind of free invoke. (Of course, you can compel with a spellbook or scroll as well, by adding a complication or maybe being cursed in some way).

Optionally add a stunt to get a permanent bonus from a spellbook.

MAGICAL PLACES

Special circumstances may be good for magic, these work as situation or game aspects. Some places may be "places of power" or have spiritual meaning (like a graveyard for summoning the dead), there may be astrological events (see Divination) like "the stars are right" or a blood moon, or whatever fits the story.

MAGICAL LANGUAGES AND SYMBOLS

Depending on the setting magical languages might be necessary for magic, hence magicians should know them, or they are optional and add extra power to your magic.

Knowing someone's or something's "true name" is an aspect that you may use to your advantage.

DIVINATION

Fate may be one of the few game systems where divining the future may actually work rules-wise.

A successful divination establishes an Aspect that will come into play in the future. A divination is always a bit vague, so the Aspect should be open to interpretation, and you only know exactly what it means when it comes into play. The player and the GM should work out together what this Aspect is, depending on the question asked. A failure means that the GM gets a free

invocation of this aspect against the player, or simply that it never comes into play. Optionally, the GM should roll the dice in secret and regardless of the result work out what the Aspect is. Then, if it fails, the GM may decide if it should come into play nonetheless or simply let players know that the divination failed when they try to invoke it.

Divining current events or past events should be easier, this is basically using magic to Create an Advantage for Investigate, Notice or Empathy.

Use the appropriate modifiers and invoke or compel aspects as for spellcasting when divining. Depending on the magician's tradition divination may require a different skill than the normal magic skill. Lore, Investigate, Empathy, Craft, or some setting-specific skill may be the Divination skill. Usually, it is about interpreting patterns in some form. Astrology, Tarot/cards, reading in tea leaves or intestines, omens in nature, dream interpretation, entering a trance, or something else entirely may be ways of doing Divination.

MAGICAL ITEMS AND ENCHANTING

Enchanted objects are a staple of most fantasy fiction and RPGs. Magical swords, staffs of power, and alchemical potions are common in high fantasy settings, but maybe the crux of a whole story arc in other settings. Less high fantasy magic is usually about magic objects with less power. Amulets and wards that protect from evil spirits are a staple of both fiction and traditional beliefs, as is the opposite: cursed objects.

In Fate, enchanted objects have magical Aspects attached to them, and have to be invoked to work. Most of the time enchanted objects are something that the characters either have or find in-game.

Depending on the setting, the hunt for a special enchanted object could be a long story arc or it could be something that characters buy from the town alchemist (or both). The sword that they inherited from their father may be the key to saving the world or just a +1 bonus stunt when Attacking or Defending (or both). Though, the common "+X to Attack sword" of more crunchy RPGs makes little sense with Fate and also makes for boring fiction. Magical items with aspects that can be both invoked and compelled are more interesting. Stormbringer, Elrics soul-eating sword is a good example from fiction. Deciding how the magical effect is created adds more to the fiction.

- Take a flaming sword: Is the flaming sword a result of binding a fire elemental to the sword? Is the elemental happy with this or will it try to break free? Does it flame up whenever it's unsheathed or do you need to do something to wake the elemental? Does it feed on the people it burns?

- Or a sword blessed by the gods? Why was this sword blessed? What do the gods want? Will they take back the sword if they don't approve of your actions?
- Or the amulet that protects from evil? What kind of evil does it protect you from and why? Does it protect you from evil spirits? Evil people? Or just unfortunate events? Are there good spirits that will come to your rescue or is it a repellent for evil spirits?
- An alchemical potion of extra strength? What kind of secrets of alchemy unlocks extra strength? Does it draw power from extraplanar sources or is it some kind of medical doping that strains your body beyond its limits?

The key is: how did the magic happen? When you decide this, you open the item up for more compels and invokes, making magical items more interesting than just a bonus.

ENCHANTING

That characters find or are given enchanted artifacts is more common than creating them. Still, maybe the tradition you've created is all about enchantment. Alchemists are the stereotypical example, but maybe you are a smith with magical powers or a runemaster? More commonly, a location is enchanted or an item is imbued with a magical property for some time.

Enchantment is about binding magic to an item or a place. This is basically the same as spellcasting, but you tie the spell to a something physical. For game purposes, enchantment should be treated the same way as spells. If you want to create a powerful artifact for some purpose, set up a ward, or curse the king's crown you still Create an Advantage. The difference is that the aspect is tied to the item or place that you enchanted. When you've used the advantage that you created, the enchantment is normally lifted. Optional invokes of the enchantment may happen, but that's up to the GM and the table.

For enchantments that are permanent for a character, this is character advancement and is something that should be done at milestones. If it adds a permanent bonus, it's a stunt, if it changes something about a character, it's a changed aspect.

SPIRITS

Spirits are a key part of magic. In many traditional or occult belief systems spirits is essential to magic, as in many works of fiction. Whether spirits are what does cause the magic and hence is part of all magic, or if summoning spirits is a separate act from spellcasting is up to you. Whether you can unlock the secrets of reality without the help of spirits or not is part of defining your tradition. For a shaman, spirits are probably the key to their magic, for an alchemist they might as well not exist.

Spirits are magical creatures, usually anthropomorphic representations of some part of nature or emotion, ancestor spirits, ghosts of the deceased, or simply some kind of supernatural otherworldly beings. What kind of spirits you have a connection to and how you deal with them depends on tradition. They may not even be called spirits, but maybe demons, daemons, elementals, elves, djinni, or eldritch beings beyond time and space. Trapping spirits and forcing them to follow orders is different from making deals with them, or asking them to help you and do favors for them in return.

Spirits may be NPCs, or they may be more abstract parts of how you do magic, and simply what allows you to cast spells. Spirits may be fleshed out as NPCs with skills and aspects, but can also just be given Spirit skill rating that they use. They may be evil or just foreign, tricksters or guardians, unstable allies, or trusted familiars.

SUMMONING

The words call, invocation, evocation, communing, conjuring, or summoning may all be used for more or less the same thing.

Narratively there's a difference between spirits that are always present in some way and spirits that have to be called in from another place. Maybe they live in the spirit world, are called from the land of the dead or some astral plane, or maybe spirits are everywhere and you just have to know where to look.

There's also a difference whether they manifest either as an ethereal form or physically, or if they just are present and can communicate with the conjurer.

Anyhow communing with (or evoking, etc) the spirits is normally a Create an Advantage action involving spirits (base difficulty of Fantastic). Aspects may be invoked and compelled to make the communing more difficult or easier. When the communion is successful you can get aid from the spirits (as with a Create an Advantage).

The thing is that you need a connection to the spirit to commune with it. This can either come from a character aspect, or you have to establish it as a situation or game aspect. If it's not obvious that this spirit is one that you can commune with, you need an Aspect to establish it. Using a Fate point to add a story detail or otherwise invoke your connection is one way, the other is to play out how you establish the connection.

A shaman may have a connection to their ancestor spirits or the spirits of nature in their area but needs to go on a spiritual quest to establish a connection to spirits in unfamiliar areas. A demonologist may know the true names of a demon or two, which can be conjured at will but may need months of studies to establish the true name of a new one. Or maybe she will try to

conjure demons without knowing the true name, using elaborate rituals to bind the demon when it appears.

MANIFESTATIONS

Depending on the Tradition and the spirits, summoning may mean that spirits appear in our world, either as ethereal beings or physical creatures. In that case, flesh out the spirit as a creature or NPC, give it stress track, aspects, and skills. If it's not very important, you may default to a concept Aspect and default Spirit skill. If the spirit is going to do something else than help out with magic, assume that it manifests itself in some way. A manifest spirit may act on its own, with its own actions.

Normally, spirits disappear when they've done what they came for. When you've used the free invoke, any Fate points or other invokes, it had done that. And unless it has reason not to, the default Consequence from harm should be to disappear back to where it came from.

To make it stay longer, you need to bind it (see below).

BINDING

Not all spirits will help you willingly, and they may not want to stay in our world. Binding spirits may be necessary to get the aid you need or to keep a spirit in this world. Normally binding and summoning are part of the same action, but on a fail may mean that the spirit appears without being bound. Or sometimes a spirit may try to break free after being summoned, either to flee back to where it comes from or to take revenge on the summoner. Binding could also be a way to create more favors from a spirit, when the initial ones are used up, or to extend the time it stays manifest.

Not all binding actions need to be hostile, it can be a case of convincing the spirit of the need for help or a negotiation for extended services.

Binding a spirit would play out as a Conflict, between the spirit's skill (Will, or Spirit if it isn't as fleshed out) and the summoners magic skill. A spirit has a separate stress track for Binding conflicts, and any consequences inflicted in such a conflict means an added favor (free invoke) or extended time from the spirit (see below). The spirit normally gives up for the first consequence, but an extra successful action or some extra invokes can add more shifts.

For extended time use the following guidelines:

End of scene: inflict a mild consequence

Until sunup/sundown: inflict a moderate consequence

Until end of session (or first full moon or similar timeframe): inflict a severe consequence

Permanent: inflict an extreme consequence

SPIRIT JOURNEYS

A spirit journey (or astral quest) may give you one or several advantages for communing with spirits or may be a full quest in itself. Magicians know how to enter the astral plane/spirit world (or what you want to call it) unless stated otherwise (either due to an aspect in play or because it's not part of the Tradition you've created). They might need to enter a trance to do so, maybe through taking a drug, meditation, or through singing, dancing, and playing.

This is also a Create an Advantage action. If the goal is simply to aid another magic action, that's all there is to it, where you enter the spirit world to ease the communication with a spirit.

Though a full journey may be necessary to establish more Aspects or aid other actions. Establishing a connection with a spirit that you don't have any connection to, but need help from may be a typical purpose for such a journey.

Such quests are whole scenes in themselves, or maybe a whole session, and should consist of at least a few contests, conflicts, and/or challenges in order to establish a connection to the spirit or some other aspect.

Journeys could start in the spiritual version of the place you are, so this location may have aspects that affect the difficulty. There may be friendly spirits, hostile spirits, or simply unknown spirits, or something else entirely may affect the journey.

FAMILIARS AND SPIRIT ALLIES

Familiars, spirits that are bound to the magician, are a common magic trope. As a recurring help, flesh it out as a full NPC and add a cost (normally an Aspect, and possibly a stunt if there's a bonus from it).

Spirit allies that regularly help the magician could also be added with a similar cost (either Stunt or Aspect, or both, depending on how important it is). Depending on the setting, spirit allies or familiars may even be PCs.

MAGIC AND CONFLICT

OPPOSING MAGIC

A magician may use their magic skill (even if they are a different tradition and uses another skill) to sabotage or block magic. While this might seem like an Attack, to keep with the rest of the rules, it's still Create an Advantage, but you invoke the aspect to create passive opposition (+2 to difficulty).

The difficulty for blocking magic is normally the same as the one for the spell being cast, and the opposing magician may of course invoke of some of the

aspects already in play, even if they were created to aid the magic in the first place.

MAGICAL COMBAT

Magic can't be used to Attack or Defend, but then what about fireballs, lightning bolts, telepathic attacks, magic shields, etc. While this kind of magic isn't the point of these rules it can be done. With enough Fate points, the right Aspects, and some free invokes, you can do most stuff with magic.

A fireball will require some work. You need to both create the ball of fire and have a way to hurl it in the right direction. Whether you actually hit should be a Shoot roll.

An example could be:

To make a fireball you should call forth the elemental spirits (see below for Spirits), bind them with ancient runes, and compel them with brimstone to do your bidding (one Create an Advantage action with Lore). Then you throw the brimstone (Shoot) in the direction of your target.

The point is that you can't simply throw fireballs from your fingertips, you need a lot of preparation and explanations in order to do it. Usually, this involves powerful magical artifacts or deals with some spirits or gods, which require an aspect as well.

TRADITION: DEMONOLOGIST

For a urban or medieval fantasy setting let's create Demonologists. Its a common trope, so let's establish what we "know" about this Dark Art:

- Demonologists studies demons, spirits reputedly from Hell, or at least from other planes of existence.
- Demons manifest in this world and each demon is unique (with aspects, stunts and skills).
- Summoning a demon is dangerous, and you need proper magic circles with intricate geometric patterns (circles with pentagrams) and occult symbols to make sure it doesn't attack you before you can bind it.
- By binding demons you can get them to do services for you by using their powers.
- Demons have true names, and if you know it, the demon is bound to the demonologist.

- Demons are evil and vengeful.
- Demonologists learn about demons from demons and by astral quests. Grimoires are powerful books that contains knowledge of demons. (Use Lore and Investigate to create advantages for demonology)
- There are no schools, most demonologists are self-taught in a way and often stumble upon this knowledge through (mis)fortune, such as meeting a demon or finding a grimoire.
- Demonologists have to practice in secret from the Church and may be seen as servants of the Devil.

ASPECTS FOR DEMONOLOGIST:

High Concept: SUMMONS AND BINDS DEMONS FROM "HELL"

Limitation: ONLY A BOUND DEMON WILL SERVE

Trouble: DON'T BREAK THE CIRCLE

Organization: A DARK ART WITH POWERFUL GRIMOIRES

Open aspect: TRUE NAMES BIND THE DEMON

STUNT:

Demonologist: can summon and bind Demons (Create Advantage of Summoned demon) with Will.

Asher's Grimoire (requires Demonologist): Get +2 to Lore when you have the Grimoire and try to Create an Advantage for summoning or binding a demon.

True name of Aeshma (requires Demonologist): get +2 to Will when summoning and binding the demon Aeshma.

AESHMA THE DEMON

DEMON OF RAGE, WILL SCREW YOU IF GIVEN THE CHANCE

Skills:

Fantastic (+6) Provoke

Great (+4) Will

Good (+3) Deceive

Fair (+2) Fight

STUNTS

Spite: spend a Fate point to make someone filled with rage

Ethereal: can at any point turn ethereal to avoid physical damage

TRADITION: CLASSIC WITCH

*"Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the cauldron boil and bake;
Eye of newt and toe of frog,
Wool of bat and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork and blind-worm's sting,
Lizard's leg and owlet's wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble."
— The Three Witches, [Macbeth](#)*

Fairy tales are full of witches, often based on the odd ideas of witches in Europe and North America during the period of the witch hunts. These tropes, fused with various ideas of magic and paganism, and especially the 20th century idea of an actual witch religion, fuels what goes into a witch in a fantasy setting, from Sabrina to Granny Weatherwax. Exactly what it means differ, from neo-pagan wicca, wise women with magic powers or actual child-eating devil-worshippers.

Fairy tale witches make odd potions in cauldrons with newt legs and crow's eyes, fly on broomsticks, wear pointy hats, poison princesses with apples and turn people into frogs. Historically witches we're mostly accused of cursing people and livestock, causing sickness and bad luck, but weird sexual details as well as Devil-worship and the eating of children is added in testimonies from witch trials. The idea of covens is actually from the 20th century, but is often used in modern portrayal of witches. Fantasy witches are not necessarily in league with the Devil, and is often more of a mix of a wise woman and a magician, though the idea of witches as a leftover religion is also common.

Adding the tropes and ideas above, we could create many different Traditions of witchcraft. Is the setting historical or modern/urban fantasy, or a sword and sorcery fantasy world? Does the Devil exist in your setting or are witches leftovers from an ancient religion? Choose the things that fit your setting.

Cauldrons and weird ingredients in potions are a good starting point for a witch tradition, regardless of setting. In a modern setting, the cauldron is probably replaced by more modern tools, but as a common tool from the bronze age and just going out of fashion in modern times, it may fit in many settings.

The pointy hat is probably a leftover for when people actually wore high hats as fashion (the period of witch hunts) more than something inherent to being a witch. Unless there is some good reason to include it, drop it.

Turning people into frogs sounds like a powerful spell, maybe more than what you want if you're going for low magic setting. Poisoning apples is not really magic from a modern point of view, though where science ends and magic begins is open to interpretation.

Riding broomsticks was something witches allegedly did when they were flying to meet the Devil himself on Walpurgisnacht or similar events, so while it could be included it probably involves help from a really powerful spirit.

Covens fits as a way for witches to learn magic, adding that as the Organization aspect.

The wise women trope, somewhat historically accurate, of a nature medicine practitioner who helps the people in need in her village may fit so let's add it. Classic divination with reading tea leaves or palms fits this trope as well.

ASPECT FOR CLASSIC WITCH:

High concept: VILLAGE WITCH

Limitation: ODD INGREDIENTS

Trouble: DISLIKED BY THE AUTHORITIES

Organization: MEMBER OF A COVEN

STUNTS:

The Cauldron: use Craft to magically Create an Advantage as a potion with odd ingredients and a cauldron.

Tea leaves: Use Empathy to magically Create an Advantage that divines the future or present with tea leaves.

Wise woman: Can make recovery attempts (both mental and physical) with Lore. (*Not a magical action, just a stunt the fits the trope*)

TRADITION: GOBLIN GALÐR

For the fantasy setting Nordskogen where goblins are tribal hunter/gatherers living in the forests.

Goblins have their own magic known as galðr. Through a special high-pitched vocal technique goblin magicians weave magic spells through songs of magical words and tones. The song can be heard far away due to the vocal technique.

Calling on help from spirits of nature and ancestor spirits may aid with the spellcasting, and through continued singing the magician may enter the spirit world.

A rich Lore helps the goblin magician to navigate the forest, the elements of the Galdr and the spirits, but as the forest changes with invading humans, orcs and elves the nature spirits are no longer where they used to be and the ancestor spirits are restless.

ASPECTS

High Concept: Weaving spells through songs of power

Limitation: Must be sung to work

Trouble: The Spirits are Disappearing from The Forest

Organization: Taught by Goblin Elders

STUNTS

Galdr: you can Magically Create an Advantage with Rapport by singing with the special galdr technique.

The Deep Call (requires galdr): in the Forest there are certain places where the galdr is especially powerful and the song will carry far longer than usual. You know where some are, and will recognise the Deep Call in new places if present. You get +2 to your galdr when in those places.

Lore of the Elders: your knowledge of goblin lore gives +2 to Lore for creating advantages for calling spirits.

TRADITION: ELVEN TEMPLE WARRIOR

For the fantasy setting Nordskogen where the Elven empire collapsed.

After the fall of the *drótt*, the temple orders fell into disarray and many temples have become mere ruins, but a few still exist and keep to the old ways. Here Templar warrior trains in the martial arts and learn the secrets of the elements. Through rigorous physical training and athletic moves, templars can command the elemental powers of fire, water, air and earth to aid in combat.

As protectors of the elven people, the temple warriors sometimes come to aid of villages in trouble.

ASPECTS

High Concept: Elementalist Mystic Protectors of the Elfs

Trouble: the old ways are forgotten

Limitation: Mastery of the Elements through Moves

Organization: Strict Discipline in the Temple

STUNTS

Elemental Move: through Athletics moves may magically Create an Advantage

Thunder step (requires Elemental Move): through your command of the elemental power of Earth you get +2 when you Create an Advantage that involves shaking the ground.

Air dance (requires Elemental Move): your command of the elemental power of Air you get +2 when you Create an Advantage that involves levitating.

TRADITION: HALFLING GANDER

For the fantasy setting Nordskogen
Halflings