



PRAECEPTA HERMETICA

An Extended Primer for Ars Magica

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Praecepta Hermetica

An Extended Primer for Ars Magica 5th Edition & Definitive Edition

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About

This extended primer is intended to be a compiled overview of the concepts and fantastic environment offered by the role-playing game Ars Magica (5th edition and Definitive Edition). It is written for both new and returning players, and is intended to cover the background and the most important concepts of the game.

It's intended to help players with an "easier" and more tailored overview than you get from flipping through multiple rulebooks and supplements in order to choose the direction of play. For example: which House you want to play, how you interact with the game world, and what you want to focus on in a campaign saga.

Very few game rules are covered in this document; instead, it focuses on what the game and its unique setting is about, as well as the important key concepts that are important to understand as a player in this very rich game world. It is not a self-contained onboarding guide, but rather a conceptual introduction to be used alongside an experienced Storyguide.

Some of Ars Magica's key strengths are:

- A medieval world that is a magically distorted version of our own. You can just read a little history or mythology for inspiration. No fantasy world can match its richness or recognizability.
- Perhaps the most creative magic system ever designed, well integrated with other systems as well as with hermetic and occult worldviews. This allows for a level of creativity that few other systems achieve. Design your own magic spells!
- The archetypal nature and diversity of the Houses – together with established political structures both within and outside the Hermetic Order – make Ars Magica a fantastic game for political intrigue, but also for exploratory adventures, magical research, mysteries, horror, and even comedy.
- Flexible and rich character creation with diegetic character development over years and entire lifetimes. Character advancement does not occur arbitrarily or in standardized "levels", but progress is granularly earned through decisions made and actions taken by the characters.
- The game and its setting has recently been truly liberated through the Open License, and it is well supported by one of the most loyal, mature and knowledgeable fanbases of any game out there.

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Introduction to Ars Magica

Dragons lie in their lairs in the mountains, angels watch over the churches, faeries dance in the forests, and demons tempt men and women into sin and ultimate damnation. The magi of the Order of Hermes live in a world of mythical power: Mythic Europe – which in many ways is the Europe of the 13th century Middle Ages; but magical creatures, infernal devils, heavenly angels, and enigmatic faeries are all undeniably real. So is magic.

Ars Magica is primarily a game about magic and magicians, and its rules for magic are widely regarded as the best and most developed in any role-playing game. The rules combine flexibility and precision, making it possible to create powerful wizards who can do almost anything, while providing clear guidelines for how powerful a wizard must be to do what you imagine. The rules also cover the creation of enchanted items, the binding of familiars, performing original magical research, running your covenant, and the training of apprentices to carry on your magical legacy. The time a magus spends in his laboratory is at least as important to him as the time he spends on adventures.

The available character types are also not equal in power. Hermetic magicians are much more powerful than other possible player characters (normally, everyone plays a magician). However, power does not necessarily correspond to how interesting a character is to play, and the Gift that allows magicians to practice magic also causes them problems in most social situations.

Unlike many other role-playing games there are numerous controlling factors to these powers, both social and metaphysical. For example, the social aspects within and outside the Order of Hermes and what behaviors are tolerated by its magicians, especially when other magicians are involved. Both the church and the mundane nobility have destroyed many covenants throughout history. Spells cast can also be traced by Quaesitors (the investigator-judges of the Order) and others who know how. Just because you are powerful enough to cast a spell does not mean it is always a good idea. Magic has real consequences. Open combat is extremely rare and deadly when or if it even happens [i.e. do not optimize your magician just for combat].

Players often have more than one character (so-called troupe role-playing). Player characters can be divided into central characters (magicians and companions) and

supporting characters (grogs). Most often, the term "grog" refers to the magicians' bodyguards and covenant soldiers, but they can also have other important functions such as diplomat, autocrat, craftsman, gamekeeper, scribe, spy, or the like. A player normally plays only one central character at a time, but can play several grogs simultaneously if necessary. The player troupe usually shares existing grogs, but not the central characters.

The game is usually centered around the place where the character magicians live, called a "covenant," rather than around a wandering group of adventurers. This opens up a whole range of new storytelling possibilities, and the covenant is as much a character in the game as any of the human beings.

Characters in *Ars Magica* change over the years, and most sagas cover at least a few years of game time. Adventures are temporary interruptions in their lives, not daily activity, and consequences that arise years later can still affect an ongoing series of connected stories, called a "saga." In many sagas, families grow, apprentices grow up, and characters die of old age. *Ars Magica*'s rules provide ample support for how characters can study, learn, and improve over time. But also for aging and eventually dying, or disappearing into Final Twilight.

The Order of Hermes

"Let us work together as one and grow hale and strong."
– Bonisagus, The Hermetic Oath

Almost all powerful magicians in Europe in the 13th century are members of the Hermetic Order (also known as the Mysterious Order of Hermes or, informally, the Order).

The Hermetic Order was founded in 767 CE by the witch Trianoma and the wizard Bonisagus. Trianoma had a desire to unite Europe's scattered magicians into a single group that could learn from each other. She did not know how to achieve this goal until she met Bonisagus, who had developed a breakthrough in the communication and manipulation of magic – a consistent theory called "Hermetic Magic" for its roots both in the Greek god Hermes, on whom the ancient Roman cult of Mercury

was based, and in the works of the legendary Hellenistic figure Hermes Trismegistus. This would allow magicians to share information using a common frame of reference.

While sorcerers at this time were scattered, rarely social, and as a rule highly suspicious of each other, two factors strongly favored mutual cooperation. One was Trianoma's political vision of an organization that would unite the Gifted for their mutual benefit. The other – perhaps even more important – was Bonisagus's second breakthrough, the Parma Magica (roughly translated as "magic shield"): a highly effective and easy-to-learn personal ritual that allowed these different individuals and traditions to meet on common ground with some assurance of safety.

Trianoma became Bonisagus's student, learned his theory and the Parma, and then traveled throughout Europe to recruit other magicians. Eleven magicians joined her. Bonisagus and the eleven magicians established twelve Houses in a society called the Hermetic Order of Hermes, or simply the Hermetic Order. The Order quickly recruited like-minded magicians and taught them the protective Parma Magica on condition that they swore the Hermetic Oath of mutual cooperation. Magicians who refused to swear the Oath were not taught Parma Magica; instead, they were hunted down and destroyed.

In the centuries that followed, with very few exceptions, magicians who left or refused to join the Order were hunted down and killed, giving the Order a definitive monopoly over magical resources within its 'jurisdiction' - i.e. most of Europe.

Most members of the Hermetic Order speak Latin as a common language, which allows magicians from all over Europe to share magical books and spells.

"Magi" (singular "magus" *male*, or "maga" *female*) is the Latin term for a member of the Order of Hermes while "magician" remains the generic word for anyone who practises magic. Magi of the Order generally refer to each other as sodales, the Latin term for siblings.

In total, the Order of Hermes consists of just over twelve hundred magi, nearly half of whom are from House Ex Miscellanea.

The Twelve Houses

Each member of the Order belongs to one of the twelve Houses. The Houses were founded by and are named after Bonisagus and eleven of the twelve other founders. Each House is led by a Primus (Latin for "the first," feminine form Prima, plural Primi). The authority and duties of the Primus vary greatly between Houses, from absolute authority (House Tremere) to mere representation (House Verditius). The Primus resides in the Domus Magna (Latin for "Great House"), the headquarters of each House.

The True Lineages

The Houses Bonisagus, Guernicus, Mercere, and Tremere are the "True Lineages." This means that every magician has been taught by a magician from that House, and that the master-apprentice relationship goes back unbroken to their Founder. No one from outside the House is ever offered membership. These Houses are the backbone of the Order of Hermes.

House Bonisagus

Bonisagus is one of the smaller but most influential Houses within the Hermetic Order. They are primarily engaged in Hermetic research or Order politics (two branches), and in the Bonisagus tradition, they generously share their knowledge with others within the community. Unique among the Houses is that, according to the Code, magicians of the House of Bonisagus have, since the time of Bonisagus, had the privileged right to take another Hermetic magician's apprentice "for the benefit of the Order." It is through the combination of the theoretical and political aspects of the House of Bonisagus that its members play a crucial role for the Order as a whole.

House Guernicus

Guernicus are primarily focused on the laws and rules of the Order. They are often the Order's judges, Quaesitors, who investigate wrongdoing and prosecute those who violate the Hermetic Code, although prominent magicians from other Houses can also become Quaesitors. The Quaesitors oversee Tribunals and ensure that the Hermetic Code is upheld. They have a unique position within the Order and their

authority is respected by the other Houses. To aid them in their mission, they have unearthed the roots of Hermetic magic traditions from Rome, Greece, and ancient Egypt. This gives them strength through tradition and access to powerful, secret rituals, which they guard in their domus magna.

House Mercere

Mercere, also known as the Redcaps, is a unique House within the Order, as its members are not only magicians with the Gift, but the majority are non-magical members. The House has a distinct and important role within the Order as messengers and merchants. They maintain a network of trade routes and establish contacts with other organizations and the world outside the Order.

House Tremere

Tremere is a highly hierarchical and strategically governed House, providing strength and courage when needed and refraining from action when peace better serves the Order. Tremere magi retain the voting seals of their filii (disciples) until the filius defeats their parens in Certamen (magical duel) – in all descending generations. As a result of this custom, the votes of House Tremere are concentrated to a very limited number of hands, and its members tend to be highly skilled in Certamen. House Tremere has always had a great appetite for knowledge and strives to control and understand the magical world. They explore deeply into various fields, including magical theory, secret rites, and metaphysics. They are also a highly political House that has a reputation for controlling mundane rulers behind the scenes for their own purposes.

The Mystery Cults

The Houses of Bjornaer, Criamon, Merinita, and Verditius are the Mystery Cults of the Order. They are groups of magicians who have been initiated into at least one of their House Mysteries.

House Bjornaer

Bjornaer focuses primarily on nature magic and the animalistic side of human nature. All Bjornaer magi possess the ability to assume the true form of an animal, known as their "heartbeast." Unlike other forms of shape-shifting, Hermetic magic is unable to distinguish the heartbeast from a normal animal - something that irritated Bonisagus himself. Understanding the heartbeast in particular and animals in general is still considered more important than Hermetic magic by many in this House. Through emphasis in their education, the members of the House have inherited this special ability and culture, and they strongly value their personal freedom and individuality. The history of the House is deeply rooted in Northern and Germanic mythology, and many of its traditions and rituals reflect these cultural influences.

House Criamon

Criamon is deeply rooted in its own unique and esoteric philosophy, based on Empedocles' cyclical reality of the four classical elements cosmology and Pythagoras' doctrine of the transmigration of souls. Contrary to most other magi, Criamon actively seeks to enter the Magical Twilight in pursuit of understanding a higher mystery they call "The Enigma" or "The Riddle." Its members have a habit of marking their faces and bodies with complex arcane symbols. Due to their introverted and enigmatic nature, Criamon often have distant or complicated relationships with other Houses within the Order. Their disinterest in political games and their mystical methods make them enigmatic to many other magicians.

House Merinita

Merinita focuses almost entirely on the realms and secrets of the fae. The magicians of this House are all initiated into Faerie Magic. This magic differs from traditional Hermetic magic in its focus on nature, illusion, metamorphosis, contracts, and influencing and interacting with the fae and their realms. They also have access to special Ranges, Durabilities, and Effect Targets. Merinitae maintain a delicate balance between the raw power of wild nature and the subtle charm and enchantment typical of Arcadian wonders. They see faeries as important parts of the natural and magical order and strive to understand them, rather than exploit or fight them. Art, poetry, music, and other forms of creative expression are important to House Merinita. These creative expressions are often used to honor and communicate with the fae, as

well as to explore and express the House's deep connection to nature and the supernatural.

House Verditius

Verditius traces its roots back to Hephaestus, the divine craftsman and god of blacksmithing. The House guards its secrets and its unmatched skill in creating enchanted objects, which make them invaluable to other magicians and non-Gifted individuals. The basic process of enchanting objects has been shared with the Hermetic public, but the more powerful methods of the House are secrets that remain well hidden among its silent members, even internally. Verditius magicians take oaths of secrecy to ensure the sanctity of these secrets, and the penalties for breaking these oaths are severe.

Unfortunately, nearly all Verditius also inherit their founder's magical Flaw, which renders them incapable of casting Formulaic spells without the aid of casting tools.

The Societates

The Houses of Flambeau, Jerbiton, Tytalus, and to some extent Ex Miscellanea are the Societates. These magicians are bound together by common interests, shared philosophies, and camaraderie. They are the easier Houses for outsiders to join, such as a magician who for some reason finds themselves in need of changing Houses.

House Flambeau

Flambeau are the Order's self-appointed 'knights'. Combat magic, primarily fire (Ignem) but also destruction (Perdo), is of particular importance. Fighting evil with honor, dignity, and bravery is emphasized – and so are cohesion and camaraderie. The House's often aggressive and violent magicians frequently cause problems within the Order and often arouse anger among mundane and supernatural factions. However, their fearlessness and love of destruction make them invaluable whenever the Order requires the use of military force.

Flambeau often have a commitment to service, and Flambeau himself often spoke of the responsibility magi have to use the Gift for worthy purposes. House Flambeau has a reputation for sometimes overstepping the boundaries of the Code. For example, some of them are active in the Crusades and the Reconquista (the reconquest of the

Iberian Peninsula from the Moors), despite the Code's clear clause against involvement in mundane affairs. The independent spirit of the House means that many secretly admire the self-willed magi who are willing to violate the Code to do what they believe is right. At the same time, House Flambeau is known for its willingness to assist the Quaesitors in trying and (especially) punishing lawbreakers. The majority of the Order's law enforcement "muscle", the hoplites, consist of Flambeau magicians.

House Jerbiton

Jerbiton believes that magicians should not isolate themselves in their studies of the arcane, but actively participate in the human world. They see it as their duty to build bridges between magi and mundanes, and to preserve and promote human culture and knowledge of all kinds. They sometimes take on the task of keeping the Order on good terms with the nobility and the church. This inclination among its members often stems from a noble background – disciples are sometimes taken from the aristocracy, and these magicians often maintain ties afterward. Other members are recruited from skilled artists and craftsmen who possess the Gift. The Gentle Gift is particularly common in this House.

Magic within House Jerbiton tends to be subtle and integrated with everyday activities. They often use their magic to create and preserve art, improve social interactions, and for political purposes. Members of the House are often skilled in illusion, mental magic, and magic that improves communication and understanding.

House Tytalus

Tytalus' philosophy is to master all forms of conflict for personal development. To this end, they promote innovation in all kinds of competition. They often do not feel alive unless they are in a constant state of struggle and conflict, constantly testing the strengths and weaknesses of others.

Tytalus himself was a skilled politician as well as a powerful wizard. He put a lot of effort and time into stirring up the other Founders, especially Guernicus, over the structure and governance of the Hermetic Order. Tytalus became an advocate for a democratic structure for the Order, and much of the early Hermetic Code was formulated as a result of public debates between Guernicus and Tytalus.

House Tytalus is almost the opposite of House Tremere. While the Tremere believe

in stability and respect for elders, the Tytalus believe in constant change and challenge. They are often masters of intrigue and manipulation.

House Ex Miscellanea

Ex Miscellanea is by far the largest of the Order's twelve Houses - yet it has the least prestige and recognition among other magicians. This is because, unlike other Houses, there is no unified concept that unites the House, no common ancestry, single cultic belief, or shared philosophy. Instead, the House consists of numerous lines, mystery cults, and societies, each with its own history, culture, and magic. The magicians of this House gather only sporadically, and even then, the gatherings are usually meetings between members of the same tradition. Most magicians in Ex Miscellanea prefer to act independently of each other, and the House as a whole has no common philosophy. The downside of this is that it also means there is no unity; for example, members can rarely rely on the House to support them at a Tribunal unless they have actively made an effort to recruit allies. Overall however, the House wants to be inclusive and adaptable. The protection and preservation of unique and smaller traditions is seen as important.

The Four Historical Crises

Four major crises have shaken the Order since its founding in 767 AD:

- 1) "The War Against the Spider", and the subsequent formation and later integration of House Ex Miscellanea.
- 2) Founder Tremeres' attempt to take control of the entire Order, which culminated in "The Sundering of House Tremere."
- 3) The diabolical "Corruption of House Tytalus."
- 4) "The Schism War", a civil war within the Order that led to the annihilation of House Diedne.

The War Against the Spider

Damhan-Allaidh is a Gaelic name meaning "Spider." The Spider was a powerful and evil witchmaster who was an active opponent of the Order of Hermes and organized other wizards to violently resist its expansion. Damhan-Allaidh's allies included Anglo-Saxon round wizards and monstrous shape-shifters, the Gruagachan.

At that time, the Order of Hermes had no presence in the British Isles, which were home to a variety of capable magical traditions and many powerful sorcerers. After several Order magicians were slaughtered at Carnac, it was decided at the Tribunal in 799 to declare Damhan-Allaidh an enemy of the Order.

Pralix of House Tytalus was sent to lead the effort to destroy the Spider. After numerous setbacks and difficult battles, she finally succeeded with the help of many local witch magicians. Together with her newfound local allies, she immediately founded the Ordo Miscellanea, which became a direct rival to the Order of Hermes, and another war was very close. This tension was resolved in 817 when the Ordo Miscellanea became House Ex Miscellanea, doubling the size of the Order.

Most magicians believe that Damhan-Allaidh was killed in the decisive battle of the Pralix War, but there are some who believe he escaped. Rumors still persist that one day he or his descendants will return to exact revenge on the Order.

The Sundering of House Tremere

Tremere was the last remaining Founder of the Order, and his ultimate goal was world domination. His plan was to finally dominate by declaring himself Overlord of the Order at the Grand Tribunal in 850. His plans had not yet been realized when, in 848, a group of magicians opposed to Tremere succeeded in crushing his power structure.

Although Tremere negotiated peace terms with his enemies from the Schism, with the intervention of Primus of House Guernicus, his memories of the event were removed as part of the agreement, and therefore the architects of the Schism remain unknown and the true details remain a mystery. Members of House Jerbiton claim to have participated in the Sundering, or are suspected of having done so, as is Albanus, the second Primus of House Tremere.

The Corruption of House Tytalus

By the mid-900's, the practice of negotiating with, invoking, and attempting to control demons had become widespread within House Tytalus, including by the fourth Primus of the House, Tasgillia. This was revealed by Tasgillia's filia Kalliste when she presented evidence to the Quaesitors in 961, paving the way for her to succeed Tasgillia as the fifth Prima, which created significant ill will towards her in the House that remains to this day. However, House Tytalus was thereby purified.

The event is known as the Corruption of House Tytalus, but it is important to note that magicians in House Tytalus often have a very different view of these events; for many in House Tytalus, the informant was the real criminal. Within House Tytalus, the event is also known as "The Betrayal."

It is also noted by some scholars as a possible contributing factor to the Schism War.

The Schism War

Perhaps the single most defining event in the history of the Order since its founding. The Schism War in the early 11th century was a civil war within the Order. It had significant consequences for many of the Order's institutions and organizations, up to and including the adoption of the Certamen for resolving disputes of a certain magnitude between members of the Order. The conflict also restored the perception of the importance of the Quaesitors.

House Diedne was from the beginning perhaps the most powerful of the founding Houses of the Order of Hermes. It was a pagan, Druidic, non-Latin House that contributed Spontaneous Magic to the Hermetic knowledge that Bonisagus later taught at the founding of the Order.

The pagans of Diedne had always been somewhat distant from the rest of the Order, which had always been largely Christian. Dark rumors about their religious rites had spread after the corruption of Tytalus, and few trusted them. The hostilities were largely justified by suspicions – mainly from House Tremere – of human sacrifice practices, and often manifested as Wizard Wars against Diedne magi.

The conflict slowly escalated, and the discord ultimately led to the cancellation of many of the regional Tribunals in 1004. Things reached a point of no return when House Tremere declared total Wizard War against the entire House Diedne in 1010, soon followed by House Flambeau and House Jerbiton. Magi Trianomae of House Bonisagus then convinced the Primus of House Guernicus to convene an emergency Grand Tribunal to resolve the issue instead of the regular Tribunals that would otherwise take place in 1011. The Primi of House Bonisagus and Mercere quickly agreed to this. After a heated debate, the Grand Tribunal decided by a narrow vote to completely renounce House Diedne.

The decision resulted in an open war, in which the Order of Hermes, led by Tremere and Flambeau, completely wiped out House Diedne. House Guernicus, led by Primus Antonius, kept seeking a peaceful solution for a long time, but in the end, they too attacked House Diedne despite significant internal conflict.

Half of the magi of House Tremere died during the war, but the conflict went a long way towards restoring the pride and prestige the House had lost due to the Sundering.

House Bonisagus was terribly divided by the conflict, which widened the rift between the Trianoma and Bonisagus factions and led to Primus Thamus Collis abdicating after the renouncement of House Diedne.

House Merinita retained sympathy for House Diedne throughout the period, even after the renouncement, which was opposed by Prima Rhiannon.

The Schism War was terribly divisive and remains a specter in the Order to this day. Many details of the Schism War are hidden in secrecy and remain mysterious – including, according to certain whispers, the degree of actual guilt of House Diedne for the crimes of which they were accused.

The Tribunals

While each of the Order's twelve Houses maintain a distinct baseline or tradition in the pursuit and transmission of knowledge and power, the Order is also divided into Tribunals, each defined by a geographical region. Each Tribunal holds a meeting of its magi every seven years; attendance is not mandatory, although it is crucial for certain procedures (e.g., those who have completed their apprenticeships are formally presented for official membership; The Quaesitors adjudicate disputes that cannot be resolved within a covenant, a geographically localized magical community, and impose penalties for violations of the Hermetic Code.

The Tribunal is led by a Praeco, usually the oldest magus or maga present. The Praeco does not vote, but has the casting vote to break ties and has the power to decide the order in which business is conducted and, in extreme cases, to silence a magician or dismiss them from the Tribunal. The legality of the Tribunal is overseen by the presiding Quaesitor, who determines whether a quorum is present to legitimize the proceedings. At least twelve magi from at least four different covenants must be personally present for a Tribunal to be considered valid.

Magi may vote by proxy, by giving their voting seal to someone present on their behalf, and depending on the agreement with the person giving the seal, the proxy may be obliged or free to vote in a certain way.

Every thirty-third year, each Tribunal sends representatives to the Grand Tribunal, which takes place at the site of the Order's founding in the Black Forest (Schwarzwald), the covenant of Durenmar, domus magna of House Bonisagus. The Grand Tribunal proceeds much like a regional Tribunal, but the Primus of House Bonisagus is always the Praeco, even if older magi are present, and the Primus of House Guernicus is always the ruling Quaesitor.

The Grand Tribunal discusses issues that affect the entire Order, and its decisions are generally given much greater weight than those of the regional Tribunals. Furthermore, it is the only Tribunal with authority over the entire Order, and thus the arena where disputes between Tribunals must be settled.



The 13 Tribunals are:

- Greater Alps (mountainous region of Central Europe)
- Hibernia (Ireland)
- Iberia (Spain and Portugal)
- Levant (Holy Land)
- Loch Leglean (Scotland)
- Normandy (Northern France and the County of Flanders)
- Novgorod (Russia and parts of Eastern Europe)
- Provençal (roughly Occitania, or le Midi in France)
- Rhine (Northern parts of the Holy Roman Empire)
- Rome (Italy)
- Stonehenge (England and Wales)
- Thebes (Greece and southern Balkans)
- Transylvania (the northern Balkans and parts of Eastern Europe)

The Code

The Hermetic Oath

The basis for the Hermetic Order as an organization is the Hermetic Code. This text, also called "The Hermetic Oath" because all members of the Order recite and swear on it when they are admitted, establishes the structure of the Order and sets certain limits on what its members are allowed to do. It establishes the obligations of magicians to each other and to the world at large.

The Code was designed to give magicians as much freedom as possible, while protecting them from each other.

The extent to which magi obey the Code varies from magi to magi, covenant to covenant, and Tribunal to Tribunal. Magi who violate the Code and are caught usually get into trouble with their Tribunal.

Although the Code has several important points, two critical aspects stand out:

1. The magician swears to accept the judgment of other magi in the Tribunal. The Order is divided into regional councils, called Tribunals, where each magus (in the region) has an equal vote. By establishing the authority of a Tribunal session, the Code unites magi in a Hermetic society. All magi are accountable to other magi in their region, creating peers, allies, enemies, and so on.
2. The Code has many parts, but essentially it is something along the lines of "do not interfere with the magical growth of other members of the Order." Since determining whether someone has done so is decided by vote, upholding or avoiding the Code is as much a matter of politics as it is of law.

The result is that a magician is limited in their actions when these may affect or provoke other magi, so that they do not turn against him in the Tribunal.

When dealing with other members of the Order, two issues are often the most important:

1. Magi value their privacy and dislike when others scrutinize their affairs. One should strictly refrain from spying on one's peers or intruding on their private sanctums. Of course, more basic morality is also expected, such as not stealing their property.
2. The natural resource magi covet is vis, literally raw magical power: rare magical items of essence such as the tooth of a magical wolf or dew collected in an untouched meadow on the autumn equinox. Magi can do a lot with raw vis, and therefore vis sources are particularly valuable and often disputed. Much of Hermetic politics revolves around managing ownership of vis and vis sources.

Juramentum Hermeticum - The Hermetic Oath

I, Bonisagus, hereby swear my everlasting loyalty to the Order of Hermes and its members.

I will not deprive nor attempt to deprive any member of the Order of his magical power. I will not slay nor attempt to slay any member of the Order, except in justly executed and formally declared Wizards' War. I hereby understand that Wizards' War is an open conflict between two magi who may slay each other without breaking this oath, and that should I be slain in a Wizards' War, no retribution shall fall on he who slays me.

I will abide by the decisions made by fair vote at Tribunal. I will have one vote at Tribunal, and I will use it prudently. I will respect as equal the votes of all others at Tribunal.

I will not endanger the Order through my actions. Nor will I interfere with the affairs of mundanes and thereby bring ruin on my sodales. I will not deal with devils, lest I imperil my soul and the souls of my sodales as well. I will not molest the faeries, lest their vengeance catch my sodales also.

I will not use magic to scry upon members of the Order of Hermes, nor shall I use it to peer into their affairs.

I will train apprentices who will swear to this Code, and should any of them turn against the Order and my sodales, I shall be the first to strike them down and bring them to justice. No apprentice of mine shall be called a magus until he first swears to uphold this Code.

[House Bonisagus only]: I shall further the knowledge of the Order and share with its members all that I find in my search for wisdom and power.

[All other Houses]: I concede to Bonisagus the right to take my apprentice if he should find my apprentice valuable to him in his studies.

I request that should I break this oath, I be cast out of the Order. If I am cast out of the Order, I ask my sodales to find me and slay me, that my life not continue in degradation and infamy.

The enemies of the Order are my enemies. The friends of the Order are my friends. The allies of the Order are my allies. Let us work together as one and grow hale and strong.

This oath I hereby swear on the third day of Pisces, in the nine hundred and fifth year of Aries. Woe to they who try to tempt me to break this oath, and woe to me if I succumb to the temptation.

The Peripheral Code

The Peripheral Code consists of all decisions made by the Tribunal since the founding of the Order. Its formal authority derives from the clause in the Hermetic Oath requiring magicians to abide by the decisions of the Tribunal, but since each case is unique, later Tribunals are not bound by the decisions of earlier Tribunals. There are contradictory precedents throughout the Peripheral Code, and few magi outside the Quaesitors are familiar with all its details. However, some points are widely known and worth discussing.

In theory, death is the only punishment for violating the Code, but in practice, the Tribunals rarely impose this punishment. Instead, they settle for vis fines, periods of service, or other milder punishments. However, the penalties are backed up by the ultimate sanction, and refusal to submit to the punishment imposed by a Tribunal is always considered grounds for the death penalty. This is enforced by declaring a Wizard's March, which expels the offender from the Order and thus deprives him of the protection of the Code. This is called "Renouncement," and magicians who are subject to a Wizard's March are known as "Renounced magi." Since, according to tradition, the criminal's possessions are given to those who kill him, powerful magi are often interested in helping to hunt down the perpetrators.

Loss of Magical Power

This clause is often invoked to punish acts against a magician that do not involve physical harm, such as destroying his laboratory or killing his grogs. The reasoning is that by depriving a magician of the resources he needs to study, the perpetrator deprives him of some of the magical power he would otherwise have had. However, the central meaning of the clause is that magi must not attempt to harm each other's Gift.

Wizard War

The Code allows a conflict between two magi to escalate into open conflict under certain conditions. When these conditions are met, the two magi involved may temporarily step outside the boundaries of the Code to resolve their differences. A magician initiates a Wizard War by sending a declaration of war to the other. The

message must arrive on the next full moon night. The war then begins at the rising of the next full moon and lasts until the next full moon after that.

Unfair or constant use of Wizard War is discouraged by most sensible magi. Sometimes those who declare war too often find themselves the victims of a Wizard's March.

Tribunals

Tribunals are central to the political life of the Order, which was always Trianoma's intention. However, this clause is crucial because it gives Tribunals some authority to create new rules and interpret the clauses of the Code to suit changing situations.

Interference in Mundane Affairs

The clause prohibiting involvement in mundane affairs is probably the most controversial clause in the Code. Covenants must deal with worldly matters repeatedly in order to even exist, and fortifying dwellings with a significant number of warriors tends to attract the attention of local nobles. As a result, the second half of the sentence, "and thereby bring misfortune upon my sodales," is brought up in most debates. As long as dealing with worldly affairs does not harm other magi, or appear likely to cause such harm, they are practically permitted. However, many precedents have established that working as a "court wizard" is a violation of the Code.

Dealing with Demons

The Order hunts down and kills any members found to have dealt with demons. This is the only clause that is applied absolutely. Attempting to destroy demons is normally acceptable, but even then it is frowned upon as it may draw the attention of the Infernal upon the Order. That is a conflict most of the Order does not want.

Molesting Faeries

The interpretation of this clause depends largely on what counts as harassment. Faerie locations and indeed faeries themselves are often good sources of vis, so not all magi are willing to argue that storming into a faerie regio with flaming spells, stealing large

amounts of faerie property, and then returning to their covenant counts as harassment. This has made it quite difficult to say what counts as harassment, and prosecutions under this clause tend to be about politics and whether other magi have suffered. Unlike the clauses on mundane and demonic matters, it does not prohibit friendly contact with the fae at any level.

Magical Beings

One notable thing missing from the Code is a clause providing protection for magical creatures or external wizards. This was intentional, as Trianoma wanted the Order to be able to use force to compel all Gifted to join. However, excessive interference with powerful magical beings may still fall under "endangering the Order through my actions."

Magical Espionage

This prohibition clause is applied with surprising rigor. Tribunals have ruled that it is illegal to spy on a non-magician if this allows one to learn about another magician's activities, that simply walking around invisible counts as magical espionage, and that one can be punished for using Intellego magic on magi even if one did not know that they were magi. There are also opposing decisions on many of these points, but in general, Tribunals have taken a very strict view of what constitutes magical espionage.

Apprentices

Unlike the espionage clause, the clause on apprentices is hardly ever applied. Magi are not required to train apprentices, and the obligation for a parens to participate in a Wizard's March against their filius is seen more as a social expectation than a legal duty.

However, the special right of Bonisagus magi to take apprentices from other magi is upheld, as is the obligation of Bonisagus magi to share their research.

Relations with the Outside World

Dangerous Factions

There are several powerful factions in Europe that magi should be particularly wary of:

- The Church is a powerful social institution that wields divine power and is allied with saints, angels, and other divine beings. Magi must be careful not to turn the wrath of the Church against their sodales.
- Demons are corrupting, vile, and dangerous creatures. They are so despised that magi are completely forbidden from negotiating with them. One must avoid doing so – or at least, avoid being caught.
- There are many powerful faeries. While magi can generally deal with them as they please, their power means that magi must be careful not to cause enmity between them and other magi. If one's dealings with faeries cause them to strike against other magi for any reason, then one is in trouble with the Order.
- History has taught the Order that it is necessary to refrain from forming allegiances with the mundane (ordinary people who lack magical power, such as the nobility and the people they lead), lest one court wizard turn against another. Members of the Order are therefore forbidden to "meddle in mundane affairs" or to bow in allegiance to the nobility. This makes integration with feudal society more difficult. Of all the prohibitions in the Code, this is perhaps the most problematic, as no one can live in Europe without relying on the labor and craftsmanship of mundane people nor avoid living on noble-claimed land. Nevertheless, it is best to be cautious about excessive involvement, and especially about openly allying with a mundane faction.

Shunning both feudal allegiance and the Dominion, many covenants find themselves periodically pressured by mundane encroachment, doing shady deals with the mundane, or avoiding the church's attempts at proselytization. But magicians are not separated from mundane society. They rely on common crafts and labor to provide them with food and products, they often take an interest in common learning and the arts, and many are religious or have other ties to the mundane.

Commoners

Most commoners fear magicians and stay away from their covenants. This fear is generally reasonable, as covenants are almost always found in magical areas, where strange and dangerous things happen. Furthermore, magicians themselves, because of the Gift (and their notorious ability to turn people into frogs), tend to instill fear in the uneducated. Local legends may grow up around a covenant, and older legends or legends from distant places may become attached to it, giving it a very strange and largely undeserved reputation.

On the other hand, a covenant in a remote location that keeps to itself may be almost unknown among the peasants. They have no particular reason to want to know about it, and there is no reason for them to hear about it. In this case, they are probably still afraid of the area, which almost certainly has a magical aura, but they may not even know that there are magicians living there.

Most covenants rely on a few farmers to grow food, just as the nobility and clergy do. These farmers find the magi creepy because of the Gift, but can accept them as masters as long as they treat their wards relatively well. In fact, they may even be seen as better masters than most, since magicians can do something about bad weather, plagues, or attacking dragons. Reasonable covenants have a non-Gifted official responsible for direct interaction with the peasants, but there is no reason why the local peasants should not feel a certain degree of affection for "their" wizards, as long as they do not have to deal with them personally too often.

Finally, commoners who do not fit into European society for whatever reason may seek refuge with the covenant. Women who want to become scholars or warriors, serfs who want to be free, and people fleeing the consequences of a (wrongful or just) judgment are all potential recruits. Most of the time, people join the covenant because they have a good reason not to be anywhere else, rather than because they particularly want to live with wizards.

The Church

Relations between the Order and the Church are officially non-existent. The Order is well aware that the Church, with God's support, could potentially wipe them out. The Church is also well aware that Hermetic magi are very powerful and that at least some of them are good Christians. The Order's tendency to harbor heretics arouses

suspicion, but as long as magi stay out of Church affairs, the Church seems less willing to take official action.

Individual priests, however, have a wide range of attitudes, from self-righteous conviction that magicians are devil worshippers who must be destroyed, to enthusiastic cooperation with them as fellow researchers, albeit researchers with unusual talents. Most covenants try to establish good relations with the local parish priests, and most succeed in doing so. Again, it is often a good idea to use non-Gifted intermediaries.

Tribunals tend to treat interference in Church affairs as a very serious crime, simply because the Church is the only organization with the potential to wipe out the entire Order. Friendly, or at least neutral, relations are encouraged; magi who initiate attacks against the Church can expect to be renounced and marched before they can inspire a crusade.

The Nobility

Many nobles are aware of the Hermetic Order, and all local nobles will quickly become aware of a common covenant with defenses and armed troops. Some nobles also have a vague sense that these powerful wizards are not required to swear allegiance to them or serve them as court magicians, and therefore they often apply a little more subtlety when trying to forge relationships with their powerful neighbors.

Again, individual attitudes vary greatly, from eagerly fawning in hopes of magical assistance, to outright hostility in hopes of convincing the magicians to settle elsewhere, far away. Most covenants try to establish good relations with the local nobility, but many fail to win over everyone, leaving a constant rival as a thorn in their side. Few nobles are foolish enough to launch a direct attack on a covenant, and those who are tend to die. Likewise, any covenant that deliberately wipes out a noble rival would quickly face the Tribunal and be marched. The mundane nobility, like the Church, is too large and powerful for the Order to challenge if it unites against a common enemy.

The Peripheral Codex has tended to rule that agreements with nobles that do not involve services or permanent magical assistance do not violate the clause on non-interference in mundane affairs. However, this is only a tendency, and covenants

with extensive mundane involvement should carefully monitor their hermetic relations so as not to find themselves isolated and subsequently condemned at the Tribunal.

Cities

Most covenants and magicians stay away from cities. In a city, the Gift is a major disadvantage, and most cities have a Dominion aura that greatly interferes with magic and magical research. On the other hand, cities contain scholars, merchants, and all manner of worldly resources, and even simple magic can support effective trade, so some magicians, especially those from House Jerbiton, enjoy living in the hustle and bustle.

City covenants try to find a separate magical aura, preferably a regio, where they can carry out laboratory work without unnecessary interference, and often offer their services as intermediaries for more remote covenants that want contact with an urban area. For most magi, cities are an interesting place to visit, but they would not want to live there.

Other Magicians

Hermetic magi may be the most powerful users of magic in Europe, but they are far from the only ones. People with supernatural abilities are more common than those with the Gift, and not everyone with the Gift becomes a hermetic magician. The official policy is still that all wizards must join the Order or die. However, this is not always enforced, especially if the wizard in question is weak, a member of the Church, or a nobleman.

Powerful, isolated wizards are strongly encouraged to join and may well be killed if they refuse, but other wizards can be threatened with serious consequences if they cause problems for the Order. Since outsider wizards have no equivalent to Parma Magica, these threats can easily be backed up.

There is one case where the "Join or Die" policy is rigorously enforced. Any non-Hermetic wizard who learns Parma Magica, Aegis of the Hearth, or any other

form of general magical resistance must join the Order of Hermes or be hunted down. The Order is largely unanimous in its view that this monopoly must be preserved.

There are several known but lesser magical organizations within Europe. Perhaps the most untouchable of them being the Augustan Brotherhood, a secret society of Gifted court wizards. They claim to be heirs to the poet-wizard Virgil and want to restore a Roman Empire like Augustus's. The Brotherhood lives inside the courts of Mythic Europe, where a patron's protection shields it from the Order. Estimates of its size run from as few as a dozen to as many as three hundred active brothers.

In the Middle East, the sahirs of the Order of Suleiman rule the magical landscape and oppose the expansion of the Order of Hermes into Islamic lands. The sahirs practice Solomonic Astrology and Alchemy, summon Jinn to do their bidding and they excel at long-term strategic warfare, information gathering, and asymmetric attrition.

The Order of Odin is a suspected Scandinavian group of shadowy wizards practicing runic magic. Not everyone is convinced they even exist, but so far all attempts at uncovering them have failed, and so have every attempt at establishing a lasting covenant in Scandinavia.

The Four Realms of Power

The "mundane" world of physical existence is a place where four kinds of supernatural forces have varying degrees of influence and presence. The four "Powers" or "Realms" that influence Mythic Europe are: the Divine Realm (Dominion), the Infernal, the Faerie Realm(s), and the Magical Realm.

Each Realm has a distinct aura, covering certain areas of the world. Within an aura, the power of that Realm is stronger than the others, and this local strength affects the use of powers from other Realms. Powerful or prolonged exposure to any of the four supernatural powers causes Warping in ordinary people. For example, when they live within a very strong aura or are affected by a powerful mystical effect from either realm.

Magicians are normally affiliated with the Magical Realm from which they draw their power (but they do not belong to it). Magicians therefore usually live in magical places and spend much of their time improving magical arts and power. They value and collect raw magic, called *vis*, that is magical power in concentrated form, such as dew collected from a magical mountain peak or the tooth of a magical wolf.

All four realms are interconnected, and Hermetic theorists have debated the nature of these relationships for centuries. There are two prevailing views among scholars of the Order:

- The Platonic View: The Divine is the source of light and being. The Magic realm is its first emanation, pure light radiating from the divine being. The Faerie and Infernal realms arise where that light meets humanity. Faerie is the light reflected from human minds and souls, so it makes our stories and dreams real. Infernal is the shadow humanity casts, our flaws made concrete.
- The Aristotelian View: The Divine is pure actuality, ultimate existence. Magic is the process of coming into being, always beneath the Divine yet always drawing nearer. Faerie is human imagination made actual. Infernal is the process of passing out of existence, which is why demons seek only to ruin.

It is generally accepted that the Divine Realm is more powerful than the other three, possibly infinitely so. Since Hermetic magi use the power of the Magic Realm, they tend to view this Realm as more important than the Faerie Realm and the Infernal Realm.

The Divine

The Divine Realm manifests itself in Mythical Europe primarily through Dominion, a widespread supernatural aura. God does not seem to limit his grace to a single faith, and Islam, Judaism, and Christianity all enjoy the blessing of Dominion.

Dominion encompasses holy sites such as churches, consecrated land, and places of miracles, and also extends to the living and working areas of the devout. Holy relics are objects imbued with Divine power.

When the Gifted are exposed to a Divine aura, they may feel their magical power flicker like a flame in a strong wind, or they may suffer from headaches or pain in body parts often affected by magic. All forms of magic are more difficult and dangerous to practice under Dominion.

The Church is one of the most powerful social and supernatural institutions in Europe, perhaps the strongest, and its relations with the Order are complex. Many church leaders view magic as sinful and forbidden, while others see it as a neutral "gift" that can be used for both good and evil.

Although most magi, like mundanes, are Christians and worship God, they tend to be more pragmatic, separating divine worship from the magical places that God (in His wisdom) has chosen to place on this earth. Some even oppose the rise of the Dominion or cling to pagan gods.

The Infernal

Demons are driven to corrupt, destroy, and tempt all mortals into sin. While the Order of Hermes refuses to explicitly designate the Infernal as its enemy (it risks drawing too much attention and wrath upon the Order), the Order's magi have been forbidden from making pacts with the servants of Hell ever since a diabolical corruption scandal nearly destroyed House Tytalus in the 11th century. As the evil and negative counterpart to the Divine, Infernal forces also weaken the effects of all magic that is not attuned to Hell or other damned places.

Infernal-tainted forms of magic exist, usually with great deceptive or destructive power, or acquired too easily, especially for the purpose of tempting careless wizards. Anyone in the Order found guilty of diabolism is expelled and hunted down.

As deceit is a central part of a demon's essential nature, Hermetic magic cannot reveal deception produced by a demon; thus making Intellego spells unreliable to detect demonic lies, infernal illusions as well as the demons themselves – although other supernatural powers (particularly of the Divine) may be able to do so.

The Faerie Realm

The faeries' most powerful influence is over the mundane world, where it does not clash with other supernatural forces. The faeries shun both the Divine and the Infernal. There are many faeries in Mythic Europe, and their intrigue often involves both wizards and ordinary people. These creatures are often capricious, sometimes malicious, but are inevitably dependent on human attention, emotions, and creative expression. Despite such considerations, the study of the Faerie Realm can be rewarding, so some magi seek out these enigmatic creatures, while others despise them or try to manipulate them for their own ends.

Magi of the Order are permitted to associate with the faeries (in fact, one of the Houses of the Order has become increasingly dominated by its members' pursuit of 'Faerie Magic', House Merinita) as long as they do not arouse their wrath and thereby endanger their sodales.

The Magic Realm

The Magic Realm has been described as "how the world could be", towards its greater potential. In many ways, magical versions of things are the better versions of their mundane counterparts. They are more aesthetically pleasing to look at, healthier, larger, more intelligent – overall simply better in every way. Certain magical creatures, called "creatures of virtue," are the best examples of this magical expression and often have extreme examples of their abilities – enlarged fangs, gigantic wingspan, or unusual coloring.

The Magic Realm also includes spirits and elementals from the earthly world, as well as the ghosts of people who have not received a burial under the protection of the Divine.

Magical auras are places where things seem more real than in the mundane world. Colors are deeper, scents are more distinct, and sounds are more intense. Magical creatures are naturally more common here, although they may share the area with inhabitants or pockets of the other Realms. Hermetic theorists are still unsure why

magical auras occur, although great magical feats or resting places of powerful magical beasts will almost certainly create a magical aura over time.

Hermetic covenants are almost always located in magical auras with a strength of 1 to 5. More powerful areas are significantly rarer and also become dangerous to live in for extended periods. Magical distortion or disfigurement is common for mundane people who are exposed to powerful magical auras for long periods of time.

The Magic and the Faerie realms have a certain positive resonance with each other, which is reflected in the fact that the benefits of either aura also benefit the forces of the other realm, and in that distant or lost pagan traditions may have connections to both.

Regiones

Sometimes, within very specific supernatural areas, special types of auras exist or arise. These can exist within larger domains or on their own, and can be of any Realm. They are called "regiones" (singular "regio").

Regiones can consist of several levels of aura, layers upon layers in ascending order of power; the lowest level is normally the one connected to the ordinary world. They can be as small as a house or as large as a world of their own. Regiones have inhabitants, just like other areas with supernatural aura. These beings tend to gather at specific levels, although they can usually freely cross level boundaries. The higher one travels in the regio, the stranger and more supernatural its inhabitants become.

Entering and Leaving Regiones

Anyone who crosses the border into a regio disappears from the ordinary world and enters a supernatural world. There are three ways to enter most regiones: being led, entering voluntarily, or getting lost.

To voluntarily enter a regio, a border must be sensed or a path must be found. Sensing a border usually requires some supernatural ability or a suitable Intellego spell. The

path can be as simple as circling a hill seven times clockwise, or as intricate as you can imagine. It might open only on a certain day, or only to a certain kind of person.

Powerful magi may also have access to spells that force open a border or path.

Magic in Regiones

Supernatural powers or spells used in a regio are mostly affected in the same way as in normal auras. However, any power used within a foreign regio can be significantly riskier [botch dice are doubled].

If a regio is "closed," it is not possible to use magic or arcane connections in or out of it, as it is disconnected from the normal world.

Regiones Origin

Regiones most often form in two ways:

- 1) Besieged auras: When an inhabited aura is surrounded and compressed by a different type of aura, it may vanish. If its inhabitants are strong enough, it can rise into a regio instead. The old contents then sit at the new level, and the base level keeps decayed, rotten copies of the buildings. A few Hermetic covenants have entered regiones this way.
- 2) Spectacular events: A powerful event can raise a new regio level with a higher aura, often duplicating worldly structures. People may then spread between the two levels. One or two covenants have entered regiones this way as well.

Magi would love to create regiones at will, but they can't. Attempts through grand magical events have been unreliable and often disastrous.

Hermetic Magic

Hermetic magic is by far the most comprehensive and flexible tradition of magic practiced in Europe. In the 700s, the wizard Bonisagus developed a universal theory of magic, and the Hermetic Order was born. The most immediate benefit of Hermetic magic was that it allowed magicians from different magical backgrounds to share their knowledge. Before Bonisagus' theory, the practice of magic had been highly individualized and thus limited in scope. With the ability to share and accumulate knowledge, Hermetic magi gained a tremendous advantage over other magicians. However, this universal theory is not without its drawbacks. Critics of the system argue that the strict regulation of Hermetic magic deprives truly brilliant magicians of the chance to discover the magical methods that suit them best, and that it is only really helpful to mediocre magicians who need a precise system to guide them.

The Hermetic Order is only one part of the larger magical world. There are non-Hermetic magicians of many European traditions, whose magic can be very powerful in specific areas but is almost always less flexible than that practiced by members of the Order. Hermetic magi often use the derogatory term "hedge magic" to refer to these other magical traditions.

A major advantage of Hermetic magic is its flexibility. A Hermetic magician can:

- Learn and cast formulaic spells and ritual spells from both teachers and books.
- Invent new formulaic and ritual spells on their own.
- Cast spontaneous spells, which do not need to be learned in advance.
- Duel with other Hermetic magicians in the safer form of magical combat known as Certamen.
- Create temporary or permanent enchanted items, or a personal talisman.
- Bind a familiar to help and strengthen them with their magic.
- Create a personal life extension ritual to extend their life beyond normal limits.
- Use vis (raw magical essence) to strengthen magic, or create permanent effects and objects.

There are some things, such as reviving the dead or seeing through time, that Hermetic magic simply cannot do. These are called the Limitations of Magic (see below).

There are other things, such as casting a huge spell that affects an entire country, which no magician has ever done (allegedly), but which should theoretically be possible.

The Gift

The ability to practice magic is known as "The Gift" among Hermetic magi. Only people with The Gift can learn Hermetic magic, but not all of them are able to. The Gift is very rare, appearing in perhaps one person in many thousand. Magi have many theories about the cause of the Gift, but none that are widely accepted.

The Gift has a strong emotional effect on those around the Gifted person, making them suspicious and distrustful of the Gifted individual. As a result, social interactions are more difficult for the Gifted. Some magicians have the Gentle Gift, which does not affect people in this way, while others have a more pronounced Blatant Gift that greatly worsens the effect.

The Gift only affects those who are in the presence of the Gifted individual. Letters from a Gifted individual do not have this effect, nor does a messenger from such an individual, unless the messenger themselves has the Gift.

People do not become accustomed to the Gift itself, even if they have lived with magicians their entire lives. However, they can become accustomed to individuals with the Gift, just as prolonged association overcomes the effects of a reputation. The mundane members of a covenant can be assumed to be accustomed to the resident magi and react to them as appropriate to their actual behavior. Nevertheless, they will be suspicious of visiting magicians.

People who have dealt with many different Gifted individuals may become capable of recognizing the effect of the Gift for what it is. They still feel suspicion and envy, but they can still act politely. A mundane person tasked with welcoming all visitors to a covenant will likely understand this after a decade or so.

Parma Magica completely blocks these effects of the Gift. A magician with Parma Magica is not bothered by other magicians' Gift, even though other people are still bothered by their Gift. This effect may have been as valuable as magical resistance in the founding of the Order.

Animals also react badly to people with the Gift. For their part, the reaction tends to be a combination of fear and hostility. Gifted characters cannot ride horses without magical assistance, as the horse will try to throw them off as quickly as possible. Similarly, they cannot train ordinary dogs to recognize them as friends.

Creatures belonging to one of the four supernatural realms may have different reactions to Gifted individuals. Some behave like ordinary animals, others like ordinary humans, while some seem completely unaffected by the Gift. Demons, in particular, do not seem bothered by the Gift, but this may be because they envy every human being anyway.

Basic Elements

The basic elements of Hermetic magic are as follows:

- Hermetic magic is a very useful but not entirely perfect theory. Its structure reflects the things that magicians expect to happen when they work with magic. Although the expected usually occurs, the exact effects of magic can be influenced by countless factors, including such vagaries as the phase of the moon, the spiritual nature of the target, and the mental state of the magician.
- The formal system is elaborated in Latin, and virtually all studies and spells require a solid knowledge of the language, as well as the standardized gestures and other techniques used. Hermetic magic, due to its systematized formal theory, is relatively easy to learn and can be studied from books once the basics have been learned. This also makes it relatively easy to share knowledge and research among magicians.
- Magical effects are classified according to the five Techniques and ten Forms that make up "The Hermetic Arts" (see below). Each Art is largely independent of the others, so magicians can focus their studies on a specific type of magic if they wish.
- Hermetic magic includes the ability to cast both formal and spontaneous spells, as well as long but powerful rituals and enchanting objects in the laboratory.
- The Hermetic system has standardized ranges, targets, and durations for spells.

- Ranges:
 -) Personal
 - +1) Touch or Eye Contact
 - +2) Voice
 - +3) Sight
 - +4) Arcane Connection
- Target:
 -) Individual or Circle
 - +1) Part (e.g., a limb or a specific section of something)
 - +2) Group or Room
 - +3) Structure (basically a building)
 - +4) Area (requires a ritual)
- Durations are linked to the movements of celestial bodies:
 -) Instantaneous
 - +1) The magician's concentration or a diameter (2 minutes)
 - +2) Sun (until the next sunrise or sunset)
 - +3) Moon (until both a new moon and a full moon have set)
 - +4) Year (requires a ritual)
- A Hermetic magician can normally only cast spells on a target that can be perceived. However, the magician can use an active arcane connection to influence targets at a distance that cannot otherwise be perceived, as well as to break through their magical protection. It needs to be something that is a natural part of the target, such as a lock of hair or a stone from the facade of a building. Sympathetic connections can then be used to further increase the chance of penetrating magical resistance, such as the target's signature, birth name, secret names, daily horoscope, birth horoscope, or a representation such as an image or figure. However, baptismal names cannot be used because the Divine power prevents this.
- All magic used by a magician leaves a unique personal imprint on the place or on the target (think of it as a magical fingerprint), the magician's sigil. It can be used to see that magic has been used and also to track down who performed it. Quaesitors are the specialists who do this. There are techniques for attempting to distort or conceal one's magical sigil, but they are not entirely perfect.
- Hermetic magic normally draws its power from the Magic Realm, but wizards themselves still belong to the mortal realm. They have magical powers, but are not magical beings and therefore have no inherent Might Score. Merinita magi often draw their power from the Faerie Realm instead of the Magic Realm, and diabolists can obtain extra power from the Infernal Realm.

- Powerful or prolonged exposure to the four supernatural powers causes irreversible Warping in humans, which can cause various types of permanent changes (sometimes positive, but more often negative) or force a magician into longer and longer Twilight states, which often becomes a major problem for older magicians. Warping is caused by prolonged exposure to strong auras; sudden exposure to a powerful mystical effect (e.g., a Hermetic spell of level 30+, unless designed specifically for the individual); continuous exposure over a long period of time to a mystical effect (regardless of strength, even if designed. e.g. the Longevity ritual); when losing control (botch) over magical energies; and by entering Twilight.
- To be effective, a Hermetic magician should have access to a moderately strong magical aura, a good library, and a well-equipped personal laboratory with a stable supply of exotic consumables for study, research, enchantment, and the magical projects they wish to undertake. This requires significant infrastructure, finances, and maintenance. Order magi therefore normally join together in so-called covenants, which are usually based in secluded, magically favorable locations, reducing the individual burden and increasing security.
- Magi of the Order have two types of magical protection at their disposal that give them a particular advantage over other magicians and supernatural beings such as spirits, faeries, and demons:

1) The powerful form of personal magical resistance called Parma Magica, in the form of a special mini-ritual (taking about two minutes) which the magician performs on himself at sunrise and sunset. A skilled magician can extend his Parma to another person nearby when necessary, for example when a disciple is being trained or a grog needs temporary protection. Doing this also solves the Gift's negative effects.

2) The Aegis of the Hearth, an expensive ritual that is a further development of Parma Magica, but provides magical protection covering an entire area - usually the covenant. It is normally cast once a year at the winter solstice and requires a significant amount of vis. Few magi want to live outside the protection of an Aegis.

The Hermetic Arts

The term "Arts" collectively refers to Techniques and Forms – the two classes of magical disciplines that work together in Hermetic spellcasting.

Techniques govern the essential manipulations that magic can perform; Forms, the essential natural phenomena that magic can manipulate. Techniques and Forms are known by their Latin names. A Technique is referred to by a verb conjugated in the first person, and a Form by a noun. The magician combines a Technique and a Form to cast a spell, and together their names indicate the spell's general function.

For example, a "Creo Ignem" spell uses the Technique "Creo" ("I create") and the Form "Ignem" ("fire") and produces light, heat, or fire. A "Muto Ignem" spell ("Muto" = "I change") transforms light, heat, or fire in some way, such as by increasing its intensity, size, or shape.

Techniques

Creo (Cr) - "I create." The ability to create something from nothing or improve what already exists. It is used to bring forth new objects, beings, or enhanced states, or to heal and repair damage.

Intellego (In) - "I understand." Used to understand and perceive the world around us. It allows the magician to get information, reveal hidden things, or see things that are otherwise inaccessible to the senses.

Muto (Mu) - "I change." The ability to change an object or creature into something other than what it naturally is. This can involve changing the shape, structure, or function of something. For example, turning stone into gold, or granting temporary abilities that one does not naturally possess.

Perdo (Pe) - "I destroy." Used to destroy, break down, or eliminate something. It can be used to cause illness or injury, destroy matter, or eliminate properties and conditions.

Rego (Re) - "I control." The ability to control or direct something that already exists. It allows the magician to manipulate objects, phenomena, or beings without changing their fundamental nature. For example, directing or moving objects, controlling the actions of another being, or the direction of the wind.

Forms

Animal (An) - "Animal." Everything related to animals and their bodies or senses. This includes both living animals and their remains such as fur, bones, meat as well as the parchment and vellum that makes up most books.

Aquam (Aq) - "Water". Liquids, especially water in all its forms (except rain), but also other liquids such as oil, wine, and poison.

Auram (Au) - "Air". Air, weather, and atmospheric phenomena, such as wind, rain, thunder, and lightning. It is used to influence the weather and control the element of air.

Corpus (Co) - "Body". The human body. It includes everything related to living humans (or humanoid beings) and their bodies, both in life and death.

Herbam (He) - "Plants". All plants and plant-based materials, including living trees, wood, and plant fibers such as fabric or paper.

Ignem (Ig) - "Fire". Used to create and manipulate burning fire, heat, and the light that these phenomena provide.

Imaginem (Im) - "Image". Deals with perception and illusion. Imaginem affects all the images, sounds, smells, and tactile impressions that the senses perceive.

Mentem (Me) - "Mind." Thoughts, feelings, and memories. Used to influence the mind, either by reading, manipulating, or altering human consciousness. Ghosts are of Mentem.

Terram (Te) - "Earth". Encompasses matter such as earth, stone, metal, and other solids. Used to control and manipulate these materials.

Vim (Vi) - "Power". Concerns the power and essence of magic itself. It is used to influence other magical effects and structures, as well as to channel raw magical energy. Magicians also use Vim when they want to try to influence angels and demons.

Limits of Magic

Magic, despite being a very powerful force, is not omnipotent. There are certain laws it must follow and certain limits it can't exceed. The limits of Hermetic magic are described below. Most Hermetic theorists believe that there are only two fundamental limits: The Limit of the Divine, and the Limit of Essential Nature, and that the other limits stem from one or both of these. Some theorists believe that the lesser limits are merely flaws in Bonisagus' theory.

The limits of Hermetic magic are well known to the Order, but that does not prevent magi from challenging them. Many magi spend countless years searching in vain for a way to overcome these limits. Of course, any magician who actually succeeds in doing so will become famous, perhaps as famous as the Founders of the Order themselves.

The Limit of the Divine

Hermetic magic cannot affect the Divine. Any magic that attempts to do so simply fails. Everyone agrees that Hermetic powerlessness in the face of miracles is a result of this limit, as is the inability of Hermetic magic to affect the transubstantiated bread and wine of the Eucharist. Divine agents, such as saints and angels, are somewhat protected from magic, but are not normally completely immune. As a general rule, it seems that all beings with a will separate from God's can be affected by magic, at least in principle. Only direct action from God is completely immune.

The Limit of Essential Nature

Any magic that violates the essential nature of a thing must be sustained, and when the power is no longer supplied, the thing returns to its natural state. Thus, Muto magic must always be sustained, while the effects of Rego magic remain after the spell

ends. The essential nature of a thing cannot change itself. While Hermetic magic can completely change how a thing looks, it cannot affect what that thing is.

The essential nature of an object varies depending on what it is. All humans are fundamentally human; mortal beings with reason, senses, and the ability to move and reproduce. The basic form of the human body is also part of its essential nature, even though parts can be cut off. Some humans have other factors in their essential nature. For example, some people are essentially blind, while others are blind only as a result of chance.

The Lesser Limits

Limit of Aging

Hermetic magic cannot stop or reverse natural aging, although it can slow it down and mitigate its effects. Most magi believe that this stems from the Limit of Essential Nature.

Limit of Arcane Connections

Hermetic magic cannot affect an unseen target without an Arcane Connection. This is widely believed to be a flaw in Hermetic theory, as Intellego magic is much less strictly bound by this limit than other types. For example, Intellego can determine if there are people behind a wall that the magician can see, but Perdo Corpus cannot affect those people until the magician is aware of them.

Limit of Creation

Hermetic magic is incapable of creating anything permanent without the use of raw vis. This limit affects all uses of Creo magic. Since Creo magic does not violate the essential nature of the target, Creo magic that uses raw vis does not need to be maintained. Theorists are divided on whether this stems from the Limit of the Divine or the Limit of Essential Nature. Some believe it is a flaw in Bonisagus' theory.

Limit of Energy

Hermetic magic cannot restore physical energy (Exhaustion Levels), nor can it restore self-confidence (Confidence). Most magi believe this to be a flaw in Hermetic theory.

Limit of the Infernal

Intellego magic is almost completely useless against the Infernal, as it only reveals what the demons want you to believe, whether it is true or not. The source of this limit is hotly debated. Optimists believe it is a limitation of Hermetic theory.

Pessimists believe it stems from the Limit of the Divine. Moderates believe it stems from the Limit of Essential Nature, as deception is the nature of demons, so if you use Intellego against them, you will only discover their deceptions. Heretical magi point out that, thanks to this limit, there is no way to distinguish between God and a very powerful demon.

Limit of the Lunar Sphere

Hermetic magic cannot affect the Lunar Sphere or anything above it. Most magi believe that this stems from the Limit of the Divine. The Lunar Sphere is the innermost of the celestial spheres carrying the stars and planets in their orbits around the Earth, and this restriction rarely affects magi.

Limit of the Soul

Hermetic magic cannot affect an immortal soul, and therefore cannot create true human life or restore the dead to life. Most magi believe this stems from the Limit of the Divine, although a significant number believe that Hermetic magic's inability to raise the dead merely reflect a flaw in the theory. Animals do not have immortal souls and can therefore be created. Magical creatures and faeries are generally believed not to have immortal souls, and there are spells that appear to create them, but some magi believe that such spells actually summon existing creatures. Angels and demons are nothing more than immortal souls, but can be affected by Vim.

Limit of Time

Hermetic magic is incapable of changing the course of time. It cannot affect anything in the past, and can only affect the future by making changes in the present. This limit also means that Hermetic magic cannot predict the past or the future (other magic is required for this). Most magicians believe that this stems from the Limit of the Divine.

Limit of True Feeling

A few humans have a love, friendship, or faith that Hermetic magic cannot influence in any way. Magi agree that this must stem from one of the two fundamental Limits, since most emotions can be influenced by magic, but they disagree on which one.

Limit of Vis

Hermetic magic cannot change the Art with which raw wisdom is affiliated. Most magicians believe that this is a result of the Restriction of Essential Nature.

Limit of Warping

Prolonged exposure to active magic or high auras usually causes changes, generally referred to as warping (or distortion). Hermetic magic is completely incapable of affecting these changes once they have occurred. Magical Twilight is a manifestation of warping. Most magicians would like to believe that this stems from the Limit of the Divine, as it would make magic a manifestation of Divine power. Others believe that it stems from the Limit of Essential Nature.

Original Research

Many magi (but primarily House Bonisagus) feel that original research is the core of Hermetic magic, and the true passion of Bonisagus, continuing the Founder's ingenuity by pushing the boundaries of magic. Several also believe that this is the best way to fulfill the specifications of the Hermetic Oath, and that it is their duty to explore the unspoken mysteries of magic. Others strive to push the boundaries of

magic for vain reasons, hoping to attach their name to a discovery that will live on long after their Longevity ritual has failed them.

A magician can begin original research at any point in their career. Some wait and increase their knowledge of the Hermetic Arts to strengthen their abilities in the laboratory, while others begin as soon as they leave their apprenticeship. There are no minimum requirements for Art or Ability to undertake original research, and the process is the same whether the magician is a wise old archimagus or a curious youth.

Original research often takes several years and can be done in three tiers depending on how significant an undertaking you want to do:

Minor Breakthroughs

A Minor Breakthrough is something that can be immediately used and taught within the existing framework of Hermetic magic. For example, a new Range or a new Duration for spells than those that already exist. Minor Breakthroughs could be more common, but they are rare because most magi (especially Bonisagi) have grander goals. Why invent a new Range when you can try to break a Hermetic Limit? Grandiosity often drives magi toward more difficult projects.

Major Breakthroughs

A Major Breakthrough pushes the boundaries of Magic Theory without actually breaking them. New Magic Virtues, incorporation of some kind of primitive magic into the Hermetic tradition, etc. A Major Breakthrough can also allow you to adapt a standard application of a Hermetic idea in a new way. Notatus' development of the Aegis of the Hearth was a Major Breakthrough, an advanced variant based on Bonisagus' Parma Magica. A Major Breakthrough will make the magician famous.

Hermetic Breakthroughs

A Hermetic Breakthrough is a new arcane ability or something that breaks one of the fundamental Limits of Magic, such as magic affecting the lunar sphere, true resurrection of the dead, etc. These are extremely rare and difficult. Almost anything could be possible; this is magic in its most unexplored state. Examples of possible new

arcane abilities could be, in practice, sending mental images from one magician's mind to another (i.e., raw telepathy) or an ability to pass through different levels of regiones without the use of spells.

Breaking one of the Lesser Limits on Hermetic magic is a very difficult but achievable goal, which could definitely change the nature of magic in the saga. Officially, Parma Magica is the only Hermetic Breakthrough that has occurred in the 450 years of the Order, but there are suspicions that others may have occurred.

Nomenclature

Game Term	Explanation
Arcane Connection (AC)	A magical link (usually an object associated with or derived from part of the target) that makes it possible to influence something or someone at a distance. A Hermetic magician can use it to cast spells at the target across any distance, and to push those spells through Magic Resistance.
Artes Liberales, Liberal Arts	The seven liberal arts, the basis of medieval academic education. Important for Hermetic magic and academic studies. Artes Liberales are divided into two groups: Trivium (grammar, logic, and rhetoric) and Quadrivium (arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music).
Aura	An area with a specific magical, divine, infernal, or faerie-based presence.
Spell Mastery	In-depth knowledge and skill in a specific formulaic spell.
Botch	Magic is always unpredictable. The most common danger is that the magician makes a serious mistake that not only fails the spell, but has other unforeseen effects - usually negative. Magicians who botch spells incur Warping and, in more serious cases, may end up in Magical Twilight.
Hedge Wizard	A condescending term used within the Order for outsider magicians.
Ceremonial Casting	A technique for spontaneous magic where spending time casting the spell in a structured and ceremonial way can increase its power or chances of success. 15 minutes per magnitude.
Certamen	Magical duel between magi to resolve disputes. Normally does not cause damage (taboo), but the winner may choose to cast a spell on the opponent.
Covenant	The place where a group of magi and their followers live and work together.
Diedne	The rejected House, known for its druidic roots and later accused of diabolism and human sacrifice. Wiped out in the Schism War that nearly tore the Order apart in the early 11th century.
Dominion	The divine magical aura, and the area under divine influence. Dominion spreads everywhere where the clergy operates, both in cities and in cultivated countryside. It becomes stronger near or in sanctuaries. Church bells effectively spread Dominion.
Domus Magna	The headquarters of a magical House. Normally the leading covenant.
Durenmar	The first covenant founded by Bonisagus, located in the Black Forest (Schwarzwald) in the Rhine Tribunal.
Enigma	A central philosophy within House Criamon involving the understanding of the secrets of the universe.
Familiar	A magical animal that is closely bound to a magician and shares some of their powers and life.
Faerie	Creatures and powers of the Faerie Realm. These are often capricious, sometimes malicious. They always care about humans, but sometimes in the way a torturer cares about his victim. They hold fast to agreements and covenants. House Merinita in particular focuses on faeries and faerie magic.
Filius/Filia/Filii	Man/Woman/Plural. A disciple who has become a fully-fledged magician. One becomes the filius of one's teacher, and sometimes this is used as a suffix to one's name.
Scrying	Using magic to monitor or spy on someone from a distance. Prohibited and highly taboo to do against magicians within the Order.
Forms	The essential natural phenomena that Hermetic magic can manipulate. The forms are: Animal, Aquam, Auram, Corpus, Herbam, Ignem, Imaginem, Mentem, Terram, and Vim.
Formulaic magic, Formulaic spell	This type of magic is based on carefully crafted and learned spells, which are specifically designed and prepared to achieve predictable and reliable results. The magic is powerful and effective, but not particularly flexible. It requires study and practice, and magi are limited to the spells they have

	learned and memorized in advance.
Gauntlet	The Gauntlet is a central ritual and trial that an apprentice must undergo to become a full-fledged Hermetic magus. It marks the end of formal training and the beginning of independent magician life. Each House within the Hermetic Order has its own unique traditions and requirements for the Gauntlet.
Grog	Ordinary people who serve and protect a covenant.
The Founders	The original 13 magicians who founded the Order of Hermes.
The Gift	The unusual ability to use almost all forms of magic, provided with the right training. All magicians have the Gift. The Gift makes people around them uncomfortable and more suspicious. It causes a negative modifier of -3 to all social interactions with mundanes, and makes animals extremely uneasy.
Aegis of the Hearth	A special ritual, known only to the Order, that protects a covenant from magical intrusion. It needs to be cast once a year at significant cost of vis.
Code of Hermes	The laws that govern Hermetic magi and their accepted behaviors within the Order.
Order of Hermes, Hermetic Order, The Order	Almost all powerful magicians in Europe in the 13th century are members of the Hermetic Order of Hermes.
Hermetic Magic	The magical tradition founded by Bonisagus, inspired by Hermes Trismegistus and used by all magi of the Order.
Hermetic Arts	The magical disciplines on which magic is based, divided into 5 Techniques and 10 Forms.
Hoplite	The "muscle" and enforcers of the Order when violence is needed. They often hunt down diabolists (who are most often killed immediately) and criminals who do not comply with the quaesitors. Quaesitors sometimes have hoplites in tow if they need to conduct riskier investigations or if the magician they are investigating is expected to cause trouble. Many hoplites are from House Flambeau.
Court Wizards	Magicians who work for nobles and kings, often in violation of Hermetic laws, or outside of the Order.
House	The twelve groups within the Hermetic Order, each with its own philosophy and tradition.
Laboratory Text	A written account of how a specific magical effect (usually a spell) is achieved. Normally, a magician automatically creates a lab text when conducting magical research. However, in order for it to be useful to other magicians, it needs to be transcribed (seasonal work).
Laboratory	A magical laboratory where magicians conduct research, experiment, create spells, enchant objects, extract wisdom, etc. A magician normally spends most of their time there, and without a laboratory, the magician becomes quite handicapped.
Charged Item	Magical items that can be used once or a limited number of times before their power is depleted. The advantage is that they do not cost wisdom to create, but they are still seasonal work.
Apprentice	An apprentice trained by a magician. Normally, only one apprentice is taken at a time, and it takes about 15 years. It is a significant investment, but they are still sought after as they can be used for all kinds of tasks and magical assistance at least until they graduate.
Longevity Ritual	A ritual that extends a magician's life and counteracts aging. The ritual is always specific and unique to the magician.
Magus/Maga/Magi	Male/Female/Plural. Latin for magician. Often used within the Order.
Gentle Gift	A trait that prevents the magician's Gift from causing mistrust among mundane people. Simplifies social interactions.
Mundane	Ordinary people without magical powers.

Mystery Cults	The secret societies within the Order that have specialized magical knowledge. Four of the Houses are Mystery Cults: Bjornaer, Criamon, Merinita, Verditius
Parens	Magicians who have trained an apprentice. The title is only used after the apprenticeship period. The master becomes the parens of the newly qualified magician.
Parma Magica	A special magical protection spell that protects magicians from hostile magic and the effects of other magicians' Gifts. It is personal and expires at dawn and dusk, at which point the magician normally recasts it immediately. It takes about one diameter (2 minutes). Parma Magica is the Order's special secret and gives them an advantage over all other magicians.
Penetration	The ability to overcome an opponent's magical protection when casting a spell.
Praeco	Honorary title for the chairperson of a Tribunal meeting. Normally given to the oldest magician present.
Primus/Prima/Primi	Man/Woman/Plural. The leader of a House.
Quaesitor	A magician trained in interpreting and upholding Hermetic laws, who has been granted the authority to act as an investigator. Most quaesitors are from House Guernicus, but promising magicians from other Houses can also become Quaesitors. A quaesitor investigates violations of the Code and presents legal cases before the Tribunal.
Regiones	Singular: Regio. Places, areas, or entire worlds with an Aura of one of the four Realms that are completely or partially separated from our ordinary world.
Realm	The four supernatural powers: the Divine, the Magical, the Faeries, or the Infernal.
Ritual Magic	Powerful and complex magical ceremonies that often require significant resources and time to perform. Rituals always come at a cost.
Redcap	Messengers of House Mercere. House members usually wear red hats as a tradition.
Voting Sigil	A symbol representing a magician's vote in Tribunal matters. Within House Tremere, a master holds the voting sigils of his disciples in descending order until he is defeated in the Certamen or dies. The sigils are highly concentrated there. In some tribunals, magisters and archmages have more votes than newly hatched magicians.
Sanctum	A magician's private and protected sanctuary. Normally contains both living quarters and a laboratory.
True Faith	Deep and genuine belief in a higher power, usually God, which provides a certain degree of protection against magic and other supernatural forces. This protection comes from strong, unwavering spirituality and faith, which is not just a formal religious belief, but is so deep and true that it has concrete effects on the individual's destiny and abilities.
True Lineages	Those Houses within the Order of Hermes that have an unbroken chain of teachers and disciples going back to the founders. (Bonisagus, Guernicus, Mercere, Tremere)
Wizards Sigil	All magic used by a magician leaves a personal imprint on the place or its target (think of it as a fingerprint). It can be used to see that magic has been used and also to track down who performed it (Quaesitors are specialists in this). There are techniques for trying to distort or hide one's magical sigil, but they are not entirely perfect.
The Schism War	The terrible civil war in the early 11th century that wiped out House Diedne and nearly tore the Order apart.
Twilight	A state in which a magician loses contact with the physical world and becomes one with magic, which can happen when the magician loses control of their magic. The state can last from seconds to several years. Over time, older magicians become more and more "vulnerable" to Twilight - often to the point of disappearing into the Final Twilight. Only Criamon actively seeks the state of Twilight.
Final Twilight	The permanent state in which a magician loses contact with the physical world and becomes one with magic, without returning.

Fast Casting	Quickly and reactively casting a spell in response to an immediate event or threat.
Sodalis	Singular, plural: <i>sodales</i> . A formal term for members of the same covenant or Order. I.e., sibling, friend, comrade. The word is used among equals, emphasizing that all Hermetic magicians are equal within the Order (although it is always the case that some are more equal than others).
Spontaneous Magic	Spontaneous magic offers magi a flexible and immediate method of using magic without preparation. Although less powerful and stable than Formulaic Magic, its ability to adapt to a variety of situations and problems is invaluable to Hermetic magi.
Sympathetic Connection	When one has some knowledge or contact with the target of a spell, one can use sympathetic links to increase one's chance of penetrating magical resistance. Examples: The target's signature, birth name, secret names, daily horoscope, birth horoscope, or a representation such as an image or figure. However, baptismal names cannot be used because the Divine Power prevents this.
Talisman	A very personal magical object that helps a magician concentrate and focus magical power. It can also be enchanted with specific effects. A magician can only have one Talisman, and it is always considered part of the magician, and is therefore also a two-way arcane connection.
Techniques	The five basic magical manipulations: Creo, Intellego, Muto, Perdo, and Rego.
Token	A physical token that allows a magician or creature of Might to be accepted by the Aegis of the Hearth (and thus not restricted by it), even if they were not present at the ritual itself. Normally, the number of tokens is limited and careful track is kept for obvious reasons.
Tribunal	A meeting where magi from a certain region (also called a Tribunal) gather to make decisions and judge disputes. Normally, a regional Tribunal is held every seven years. Every 33 years, the 13 regions of the Order send their representatives to the Grand Tribunal, which is held at Durenmar in the Black Forest (Schwarzwald).
Wizard's March	A formal declaration that a magician is excommunicated and can be hunted and killed by other members of the Order. Some magi of the Order specialize in this, since traditionally, whoever kills a marched magician can lay claim to all of their belongings.
Warping	Changes that occur during prolonged exposure to magical forces or high auras (6+). Powerful magic (level 30+) can cause immediate warping.
Vis	Magical energy in physical form used to perform powerful magic and permanent effects. Ritual magic requires vis. Vis is the most valuable thing for most magi and it's the hard currency of the Order.
Blatant Gift	The magician's magical Gift causes stronger distrust among ordinary people and direct hostility among animals. Penalty -6 on social interactions.