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ABOUT

This is my take to reimagine the magic system of Mage: The Ascension.

What I imagine the characters to do.

Mages uncover mysteries, define them, exploit them and defend them from rivals. Mages try to sway the local population to their cause.

How I imagine the magic

Magic is mysterious. Even members of the Traditions don't quite agree on how it works and offer conflicting theories. There is no coherent progression among mages either. Master is not a position based on testable skill, because the abilities of mages are unique.

What I have changed

Spheres do not restrict the characters in terms of possible effects, but in terms of requirements. Any apprentice can try for any effect, provided she has all the ingredients. Powerful mages are faster, safer and free of trappings.

There is **no Prime** sphere, **Entropy is Fate**. There is **no Time**, it is divided between Correspondence and Fate, **Spirit is strictly for emotions, dream and the subconscious**. That doesn't mean there are no spirits, demons, gods, monsters, dragons and things without a name. Some might even be susceptible to Spirit, but others might instead be better acted upon with Life, Mind, Forces or any other sphere.

There is **no universal Quintessence**. Characters can have a trait to collect some supernatural energy (cf. *Prayer*). Nodes and Junctures offer specialized benefits.

There is a new category of character options called **Arete Benefits**. You get one for every dot of Arete. These options include metamagic capability formerly part of the Prime Sphere, abilities that were part of the basic rules for all Mages (like Quintessence), certain magical merits and backgrounds. Why make this category?

- Cutting down on basic options reduces the required knowledge to play. You only have to know your character.
- Untying packages like the Prime sphere allows for better customisation. If you only want potions, you only take potions.
- Special rules allow for distinct characters. Each options somehow breaks the basic rules for this character. That's cool.
- The Traditions, Conventions and Crafts have a **suggested benefit**, which is more interesting than a cheaper sphere. Consider these suggestions as suggestions. Also feel free to rename and re flavor the options to fit your character.

Backgrounds provide bonuses to extended rituals, called Ceremonies.. There are no other backgrounds.

Spheres

There are seven Spheres. Sphere allow for effecting some part of reality through magic or science or whatever you call it. The Spheres are...

Mind : language, perception, rational thought, information

Spirit : dreams, emotion, the subconscious

Matter : chemistry, materials, construction, lead to gold

Life : healing, shapechange, plagues, agriculture

Forces : light, electricity, sound, movement, the weather

Correspondence: scrying, teleports, pocket spaces, being in several places at once, stopping time

Fate : connections, the future, the past, probabilities

Does that mean there are only 7 Traditions?

No. You can easily have a Seat of Prime and a Seat of Entropy for the Celestial Chorus and Euthanatoi respectively. After all, no one ever said the Traditions' metaphysics was correct and even if it were, the rules needn't respect it.

What Sphere does it take to enter the Umbra?

Any one. The worlds that are remote from humanity's collective will are much more respondent to a mage's paradigm. So if you want to use Spirit, to enter the Dreamtime, go for it. If you want to use Matter, to dig a tunnel to the Hollow Earth, have at it. And what's the Digital Web really? The current version of the Correspondence Point? A network of computers connected by Forces? Or information governed by Mind?

How do I manipulate people?

There are several options. You may use Spirit, to make them like you. Or fear you. Or fall in love with you. You may use Mind, to manipulate the information they are working with. For example, you might make them believe that you are authorized to access a facility. Or that those are not the druids they are looking for. Making them stop looking for druids, leaving the Stormtroopers and start farming, is more in line with Spirit.

Spheres range from one to five dots. You can use a sphere, even if you have no dots in it. In that case, you have to meet **four requirements**.

- You need a **Sanctum**, a holy place, a laboratory. Here you keep various tools and ingredients. Maybe you have chose the place carefully for ritual significance.
- You must have a **Formula**. As a downtime activity you can study new formulas. This is much simpler, if you can work with another mages formula and adapt it to your style. Therefore mages like to trade formulas.
- You need a **Ritual**. That is, casting a spell takes at least ten minutes.
- You need a **Tool**. While wizards are said to like staffs and daggers, an iPhone or the Holy Bible will do. You do not have to use only one tool. Just think about what tools fit your character.

When you gain a dot in a Sphere you have two options.

1. Master one of the four requirements.
2. Turn one of your formulas into a Knack. You can take this option once.

When you **master Sanctum**, you can cast magic from this sphere anywhere. When you **master formulas**, you can improvise. When you **master tools** you don't need one. When you **master Ritual** for a sphere, you may roll after one turn.

When you **select a formula as your Knack**, you become very good with it. You can **ignore sanctum and choose two extra** of these options, whenever you cast it.

- Cast as a free action.
- Do not lose a die, when you keep it active.
- Reduce paradox gained by -1.
- Roll an ability that fits your style as bonus dice.

Mage rank

The Traditions use a rough system of rank and prestige and the Technocracy employs something similar. Your mage rank is dependent on the **average of your two highest spheres** (round up). Arete is disregarded in this context, as it symbolizes a character's personal best self. Arete is therefore ill-suited for official measurements and rankings.

In this set of rules, Sphere ratings can exceed Arete.

The ranks are:

- | | |
|-------|----------|
| 1 - 2 | Initiate |
| 3 | Disciple |
| 4 | Adept |
| 5 | Master |

Characters of higher rank enjoy bonuses in social situations. This rule does mean that a character can be strictly better than a "master", but they would have to prove themselves.

DOING MAGIC

DICE POOL AND DIFFICULTY

To do magic you roll **Arete + Sphere**. If you have **mastered a requirement** but still fulfill it, can reroll one die. For example, if you have mastered Tools for the sphere, but still use one, you get one reroll.

Some Arete benefits allow you to **ignore one of the requirements** under certain circumstances. This is different from having mastered the requirements, does not provide rerolls, even if you fulfill them. But, if you have mastered a requirement and ignore it at the same time, you get the reroll. Benefits that allow for ignoring requirements include *Prayer, Creation, Wheel, Mana, Patience, Cheval, Subtlety, Seer* and *Wonders*.

The **base difficulty** is 7.

Casting is done with **single roll** that takes 10 minutes. If you have mastered Rituals you can fast cast and start with 1 round or reroll a die, if you take your time. You can also increase casting time significantly to get bonuses (cf. *Ceremonies*).

DURATION

Next, determine whether the spell is instant or active. An instant spell does a thing once. An active spell does the same thing over and over. An instant spell can heal a patient, an active spell will keep him healthy. An instant allows you pass through a wall, an active spell allows for passing through any number of walls.

For every active spell you keep, you lose one die on all magic rolls. An active spell allows for ongoing adjustment. If you color your hair with an active spell, you can change the color constantly.

You can prepare a **receptacle** for your spell (see below). You can then release the active spell into it. If you do the spell keeps going, but doesn't count as active anymore. The hair coloring spell will continue to color all new hair, but you can no longer vary the color.

SUCCESSSES

The number of accumulated successes determines how powerful your magic is. Choose one of the following categories. Some spells might be considered **epic** (see below).

KNOWLEDGE

You can ask a question. The answer depends on your successes. You can split successes to ask several questions.

- 1 Get Yes / No or a direction for an answer.
- 2 Get a short description or a name.
- 3 Get a detailed description.
- 4 Also get some background information.
- 5 Get detailed background information.
- +1 Your target is close by but not visible.

- +2 Your target is in town.
- +3 Your target is in the region.
- +4 Your target is in the country.
- +5 Your target is somewhere on the continent.
- +6 Your target is somewhere else.

The range is only relevant for the initial casting. If you keep a knowledge spell active you are notified of changes, even if the target moves further away. You can use an active knowledge spell to target **other magic at range**. You need a rough description for bulk work and detailed description for fine manipulation.

CHANGES/CREATIONS

- 1 A cosmetic change
- 2 A minor change.
- 3 A substantial change or creation.
- +1 Your target is complex.
- +1 Your target is alive.

Multiply with target size...

- x1 About human size.
- x2 A small room
- x4 A large hall or garden.
- x8 A mansion or city block.

Changes usually only apply to the target that are initially present, even if the spell is active. If you want to target everything that enters the area later on, treat the area as one step larger.

ATTACKS

- 1 Success - Damage 1
- 2 Successes - Damage 3
- 3 Successes - Damage 6
- 4 Successes - Damage 10
- Etc.

Multiply with target size as per Changes.

If you want an ongoing damage spell, reduce the effective damage one step, in addition for the usual penalties of an active spell.

Mind control is considered an ongoing attack. A target can choose follow the command or suffer bashing damage.

BONUSES

For additional **dice on attributes** or **armor** use the following table. The target enjoys these bonuses, while the spell is active.

- 2 Successes - +1
- 4 Successes - +2
- 6 Successes - +3

10 Successes - +4

15 Successes - +5

These action bonuses cannot be reliably put into a receptacle, although the *Cybernetics* benefit helps with that.

Additional actions are bought per piece. While the spell is active, extra actions can be consumed by the target. The spell ends after the actions are consumed, so you need to keep it up until you have use the action. Only one additional action can be used per turn.

1 Successes - A purely mental action

2 Successes - A physical action

3 Successes - Hanging Spell

4 Successes - Any action

A Hanging Spell is one chosen spell that a mage can then use. The mage must be able to fast cast the spell and fulfill or ignore all other requirements when the action is taken. A hanging spell cannot be turned into an extended casting. The *Alchemy* benefit allows for more effective ways of delaying spells.

VULGARITY

Determine how vulgar the effect is. There is a scale of 1 - 5.

- 1: Inconspicuous. No one will suspect anything wrong.
- 2: Contrived: That might be possible somehow.
- 3: Weird: Bystanders will have a strange feeling and doubts about the events.
- 4: Impossible: This contradicts obviously established information.
- 5: MAGIC: Summon a pink three-headed dragon.

If there is a doubt, let the player in question decide. Convert a number of dice equal to the vulgarity of the effect into paradox dice. Use another color or roll them separately. A dox die counts as two successes on a hit.

On any odd number on a dox die, you incur a point of paradox. If there is an actual human witness and you use an effect that is *impossible* or *MAGIC*, you gain an additional point of paradox.

If you convert all your dice into dox dice, you may discard dice. Some benefits can reduce the paradox gained from a roll, including *Consensual*, *Cosmology* and *Subtlety*.

PARADOX

When you accrue two paradox from the same roll or when you have 5 or more paradox, a backlash occurs.

Roll a number of dice equal to your current paradox.

1-4: This point of paradox was harmless. Erase it.

5-7: A minor effect. Erase this point.

8-9: A major effect. Erase this point.

10: Keep this point, gain another.

A minor effect isn't too bad. Exhaustion (~ bashing damage), items that can be replaced break down (milk turns sour, ingredients go bad), other people or animals feel strange in your presence.

A major effect can hurt (~ aggravated damage), destroy important objects (the laboratory), make people react badly, block a path. Of course, other effects are possible.

PERMUTATIONS

TARGET SPHERE VS. METHOD SPHERE

Which Sphere do you use to cure a headache? Life, probably. Or maybe Matter to make some Aspirin. Or use Spirit, to make them feel good and start their body's self-healing.

Life in this instant is called the target sphere. It's the obvious choice. Matter and Spirit take more circuitous routes for the same end. It works like this: If you can explain *how* another sphere helps in a spell, you may roll Arete + Method Sphere instead of Arete + Target Sphere, if that yields a larger dice pool.

You cannot use the Sphere masteries in your method sphere, though. So you either have to use masteries in the target sphere or handle requirements by other means. The *Four Humours* benefit allows for a more effective merger of two spheres.

CEREMONIES

Mages can willingly extend their casting times to one or more hours. If you perform such a ceremony, you may choose one of the following benefits for every hour of work.

- You may substitute your Arete or Sphere in the casting roll with an appropriate Ability. (Can be chosen only once.)
- If you have a **library that fits the Sphere** you use, you can ignore one requirement. You can use this more than once, if you have several dots of appropriate library.
- You can employ a **workshop for the appropriate practice** (creations, information gathering...) to gain bonus successes up to your Workshop Rating. One success is channeled per hour.
- You can take a ritual cleansing or similar precautions to avoid paradox. One hour prevents one point, up your background rating in **Meditation Chamber**.
- If you may create a receptacle to hold a spell. You can spend several hours this way, to have the **receptacle** work longer.

COMMUNAL CASTINGS

When several mages work together in a Ritual, they need compatible styles. Designate one leading character. This character must have a Formula for the spell or must be able to improvise.

Requirements for Sanctum must be met according to the weakest character in the group.

Requirements for Tools must be met by individual participants. All participants calculate their individual dice pools and add their successes.

Arete benefits that help with casting rolls can be used by individual members. Arete benefits that affect range or targeting are applicable, if the lead character has them.

If the spell is active, all participants must uphold it.

The *Chorodia* benefit allows for sharing character traits in a communal casting. *Questing* characters can work with most styles.

MORE THAN ONE SPHERE

While the classic Mage rules use spells with more than one sphere regularly, in these rules you **usually only ever need one sphere**. Some spells that actually might require two spheres are Travelling Back In Time (Correspondence + Fate) or Creating A Human Being (Life + Mind + Spirit).

In that case you have to fulfill requirements for all spheres involved. For your dice pool use your lowest Sphere level.

RESONANCE, NODES AND JUNCTURES

Certain places and times bear a Resonance. Resonance is a keyword, like "Healing", "Calm", "Competition". Ability checks that fit the keyword are at -1 difficulty.

Places with Resonance are sometimes called Nodes or Crays. At a Node, Mages can ignore the Formula requirement for spells fitting the keyword. The *Architecture* benefit allows for the creation of nodes.

A Juncture is a temporal and localized phenomenon. Holy days are a good bet. At a Juncture a Mage can ignore any one requirement for spells fitting the Resonance.

EPIC SPELLS

Certain effects might be deemed beyond the scope of even most mages' abilities. What this might be depends on the preferences of your gaming group. Maybe travelling to Jupiter in flying cadillacs with mounted rail guns is everyday business for your cabal or maybe you prefer a more street level approach.

Spells that are typically considered epic include...

- Creating human life.
- Reviving the long dead.
- Changing the fate of a society
- Creating an extra dimensional space or Horizon Realm

- Traveling back in time
- Reaching the far Umbra.
- Changing a character's Fat Splat, including Gilgul
- (During the Avatar Storm) Entering the Umbra

If a spell comes up, that might be epic, discuss it in your group. An honest attempt is certainly worth XP for for Doing Powerful Magic.

For epic spells your Sphere masteries do not work. In addition, the Storyteller will tell you two of the following and one more for every step your Mage Rank is below Master, before you can even attempt the spell.

- You need a Node and/or Juncture with a fitting Resonance.
- You need a special Formula, designed for this very instance.
- You need rare ingredients.
- You need the help of certain Mages.
- You need the help of certain other supernaturals.
- The spell's effect will require some time to build up.
- You must refrain from certain activities, while the spell is active.
- You will hurt a lot.

SORCERERS AND HEDGE WIZARDS

Sorcerers or Hedge Mages, those Unawakened spellcasters, required a special set of systems in the original rules. Here it is much simpler.

- Sorcerers can have Arete.
- Sorcerers have at most one dot in each Sphere. They must choose a Knack.
- In all other ways, they work like Mages.

Therefore, except when their benefits or Knack allow it, they cannot rely on sphere masteries. Sorcerers do suffer Paradox, but at least rolling dox dice offers a little bit more oomph under these rules. Sorcerers may benefit from Cabal Advantages in Sorcerer or mixed cabals.

Why do Sorcerers have Arete? Isn't that Enlightenment?

Well, actually the most appropriate translation for the Greek word Arete is "own best self", a dog's arete is being a dog, including barking, hunting and doing dog-like stuff. So certainly, Sorcerers may have that. Also in this set of rules, having dots in spheres, is more like being enlightened, as each dot in Arete adds some baggage to your paradigm and style, while Spheres allow you to shed requirements.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

FORMULAS

Formulas are "single effects". A formula should include a verb and possible targets. For example:

- Turns materials into gold

- Makes people like me
- Teleports me and company to other places
- Heals injuries in humans
- Brings me money

Characters may study a formula, when an appropriate amount of downtime passes. Roll...

<< Rules missing >>

If a formula is **especially narrow**, for example if it makes “children” like you or teleports you “home”, you can treat as half a formula during character creation and only require half as many successes, if you learn it later.

Characters with the *Questing* and *Divine Workings* benefit have an easier time, picking up formulas.

RECEPTACLES

Receptacles can be created during ceremonies. The more time you spend, the longer the spell will last.

Time spent	Receptacle quality
1 hour	1 hour
2 hours	1 day
3 hours	1 week
4 hours	2 weeks
5 hours	1 month
6 hours	3 months
7 hours	Half a year
8 hours	1 year
9 hours	7 to 12 years
10 hours	About 100 years
11+hours	A long, long time.

A receptacle doesn't have to be a physical thing. A holy fire is a classic example. You might also ward a town against the Fae as long as the children of Cochrane Elementary sing a certain song. Member of the Syndicate will often set up a company.

There is one rule: Whatever appearance your receptacle has, it has a single point of failure. An object may be destroyed, a fire extinguished and a school may be closed down. If you are paranoid, you can link several receptacles to the same spell as backup.

The *Cycles* gives you free shifts, when creating receptacles.

SANCTA

A sanctum is a place that includes all the materials and amenities for doing magic. Mages may set up a haphazard sanctum in places that suits their style. A Singer may use a church, an Iterator a high-tech lab. Making the the necessary adjustments takes at least one hour.

A proper sanctum that a mage has invested in for some time, will have additional safeguards and precautions in place. When a paradox backlash occurs, you may reroll one die in the backlash roll.

BACKGROUNDS

Backgrounds are rated from 1 - 5 and can be used in Ceremonies.

A dot in libraries is specific to a Sphere. Using a library can broaden a character's capabilities.

A workshop is specific to a Practice. Example practices include:

- Offense
- Defense
- Information gathering
- Travel
- ...

Workshops can provide additional successes on a casting.

A meditation chamber or cleansing facility is generic, can be used to prevent paradox gain during a casing.

EXAMPLES

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CHARACTER CREATION

The Cabal

Before you start with statting your character, think about what kind of cabal you want to play. Why are your characters working together? And more importantly, what are you working at?

Established cabals grant an advantage to their members. This advantage relies on the group's cooperation and gathered resources. Leaving the group will result in loss of the advantage in short order, although such characters might research individually. If a member already has the particular advantage, discuss an alternative fitting the cabal theme.

These are some example themes. You can choose one or invent your own. If you prefer to have your characters meet during play, choose an advantage in due time. Also select a name for your Cabal.

Ascension Warriors

You are at the forefront of the Ascension war. You manipulate the public to push your worldview, you sabotage the other side, you take down their assets and try to stay alive. *Suggested advantage:* A Knack in Fate, Mind or a benefit like Bottom Line, Maleficia or Subtlety.

Explorers

You go places no one else does. Whether it's strange layers of the spirit worlds or ancient temples in far corners of the world. You might also be called to infiltrate enemy bases. *Suggested advantage:* A Knack in Correspondence or Spirit or the Exploration or Street Magic benefit.

Guardians

You fight and protect. Whether there are monsters running free or hostile mages afoot, who they gonna call is you. You might also be called to secure meetings of the powerful or transport prisoners. *Suggested advantage:* A Knack in Forces or a benefit like Patience, Do, Sanctify or Cybernetics.

Heralds

You are representatives of the Council of Nine (or COMMAND, if you play Union). You bring messages to the members and make sure orders are seen to. You might negotiate with independents or adjudicate problems between cabals and chantries. *Suggested advantage:* A Knack in Mind or a variation of the Do benefit focussing on Skills and Knowledges.

Keepers

Collections of artefacts, prisons full of demons, portals to hell or archives of ancient knowledge. Someone has to collect these things, keep them safe and use them if necessary. It's what you do. You might be called in as experts when whatever something similar to your

keeping is found. Of course, many applicants want a piece of what you got. And sometimes it is necessary to venture beyond that hell gate.

Suggested advantage: The Cosmology benefit or a Knack in Spirit.

Researchers

Let others do politics and war, you strive for knowledge! Other might call on your expertise or ask you to investigate mysterious events.

Suggested advantage: A benefit like Art, Divine Workings, Creation, Webospace or Wonders

Support

You provide some service to your fellow mages. Medicine, respite, supplies, transport, maybe education for them Newbs. It's not so much that you are called, but that people knock at your door. Sometimes with trouble on their heels.

Suggested advantage: A knack in Life or a benefit like Shielded Labs, Voices or Prayer.

BACKGROUNDS

You also get to spend 10 points on Backgrounds. These Backgrounds always belong to the whole cabal. You do not get individual Backgrounds for free. Backgrounds are used in downtime activities (see above).

Above Cabal level, characters might be member to a **Chantry**. Chantries command additional Backgrounds. It's your decision how many people it takes to turn a large Cabal into a small Chantry.

Magic

Distribute seven dots between Arete and Spheres. (Spheres can exceed Arete.) Note the advantage from your Cabal theme.

Start with a number of formulas equal to Intelligence plus one for every dot in Spheres. For every dot for of Arete, choose one Arete benefit.

ARETE BENEFITS

Depending on your a Tradition, Convention or Craft one benefit is **suggested**. When you are trained by the faction, this is usually the first thing they teach you. You can be nominal member of the faction, even if you do not have their associated benefit. (Conservative members might look at you funny.)

The following options each include a typical **Trouble**. When a Trouble hinders or endangers your character, gain 1 Willpower. Higher level characters might have many benefits and troubles. In that case it might not be practical to account for all in play. Tell the group which troubles are most relevant to your character.

You can freely **re flavor** the name and appearance of each **benefit and trouble** to fit your mage's style and paradigm. The *other names* mentioned are meant as suggestions. Of course, you can invent your own benefit, if your fellow players and Storyteller are alright with that.

THE TRADITIONS

Do (Akashics)

There is no difference between magic and mundane. The disciplined mind can see through the illusion. When you are trained in a Talent or Skill, you may explain how your understanding of a sphere helps you in your endeavours. Reroll a number of dice equal to the sphere rating. The benefit doesn't work on downtime activities.

Troubles: The Way requires constant training. Others will perceive you as ascetic. Often, you are out of the loop, when it comes to fashion or politics.

Other names: Perfect Self, Advanced Training, 7331. Variations of this benefit might affect Talents and Knowledges or Skills and Knowledges.

Prayer (Celestial Chorus)

The One provides strength and guidance. When you worship in a Temple (i.e. Sanctum) for about an hour, roll Mage Rank + Meditation. Each success provides one Faith point. You can spend one Faith to ignore one requirement or reroll one die on a magic roll. Faith from several prayers does not stack and you cannot pray more than once per day.

Troubles: Throughout history the faithful have reiterated one theme: Do unto others... Let the children come... Of course, helping those in need is no trouble at all.

Other names: Gardening (Craft), Manage your Assets (Finance), Aether Conversion (Science)

Seer (Cult of Ecstasy)

You are an oracle, a prophet, a seer. Once per scene, when you had a smoke, a moment of meditation or whatever opens your mind, you can make a magic roll to gain information about something or someone present. For this roll ignore all requirements.

Troubles: Not all visions come when you call them. Especially the nasty ones just turn up, often in fits of screaming or babbling. You might not sleep too well.

Other names: Friends in high places

The Wheel (Euthanatoi)

Everything comes to an end, sometimes you have to help the Wheel along. It is never something you do lightly. Others might call it, Art or Craft. For you, it is Work. You can ignore one requirement in workings that diminish, kill or break down.

Troubles: Those who stare into the abyss often become dispassionate. Their complexion becomes pale, their touch cold. People will avoid them and animals will shy away.

Other names: Jhor, Entropic, Primordial, The Essence of Water

Voices (Dreamspeakers)

You talk with the spirits and they are always around. When you are in danger or dire straits, the spirits may help you. Once per scene, you can benefit from some magic with a fixed

number of successes equal to your rating in the appropriate Sphere. You do not get to decide the details and the spirits don't usually act aggressively or vulgar.

Troubles: While the spirits are friendly towards you, there is no friendship without reciprocity. Usually their demands are quite trivial, a pot of milk in the morning, some tobacco on Saturdays, but sometimes there is something bigger going on.

Other names: Guardian Angel, Autocorrect, Prestidigitation

The Art (Order of Hermes)

Bonisagus was able to found the Order of Hermes, after he made a comprehensive theory of what magic is and how to prevent it. These abilities are still the primary asset of the Hermetics. You can perceive magic as a thing. Other mages might realize that circumstances are strange or that something has been messed with, but might not have a clear understanding that a willworker was involved, if the approach was alien to their paradigm.

You can also end other mages' spells. Treat as casting without requirements in the most appropriate sphere.

Troubles: You have a reliable system for magic. But sometimes... things do not fit. Beings from beyond reality, artifacts older than time and powers out of nightmares.

Other names: The Prime

Wonders (Sons of Ether)

You can build gadgets that create a certain effect. (You must know the spell the spell as a formula!) You can then activate the item as a quick cast. You can also give it to other characters.

To create a wonder, first build the object as a downtime activity. The number of successes determines number of free dice, the gadget provides. Scientists with a compatible background may use their own casting pool, but may not use more than twice that number of dice. Wonders are not consumed upon activation.

Troubles: Those who work with machines will tell you that the thing "has character". Your prototypes certainly do. It's not that they simply stop working, but with time they will sometimes acquire quirks.

Other names: Talismans

Webspace (Virtual Adepts)

You have a private haven on the Digital Web, where you can easily store and retrieve data. You may access your Libraries remotely.

Troubles: Call it haunting or hacking, walking the paths makes you and your virtual real estate susceptible as well. Many have brought back unwanted guests.

Other names: The Dreamtime, The Akashic Record, Umbral Library, Heavenly Flower Garden

Cycles (Verbena)

Life turns dead and, as the seasons turn, new life arises. You can integrate your magic with the cycles of the natural world, achieving amazing durations on your Craft. Add two shifts on the table, whenever you create a receptacle.

Troubles: Your approach relies on a schedule. After all, you cannot harvest what is not ripe. That isn't a problem usually, but sometimes you hit a Black Day

Other names: Geomancy, Macro economics

THE DISPARATE ALLIANCE

Subtlety (Ahl-i-Batin)

Once per scene, you can make a magic roll to escape or hide as a free action. All other requirements for the spell must be met. Ignore Sanctum for that spell or reduce paradox taken by one.

Troubles: You value a light touch. Violence and vulgarity are not your style. Sometimes such attempts just don't work.

Other names: Arcane

Cheval (Bata'a)

When you perform a Ritual, you invite one of the Loa into your body and ignore the Formula requirement. On the downside, you are no longer in control. You cannot spend Willpower on the casting and you cannot use other Arete benefits.

Troubles: A human body is extraordinary. Sometimes your guests don't want to leave.

Expect to find yourself in interesting places.

Other names: Masks, Expert Systems, The Rave

Street Magic (Hollow Ones)

Your magic is at the pulse of the city. You can set up a Sanctum pretty much anywhere. Also your Workshops fit into the back of a car.

Troubles: Your equipment is often haphazard and crude compared to other mages'. When paradox strikes, it is sometimes especially nasty.

Other names: Innovation, New Age Mysticism

Mana (Kopa Loei)

The ho'omana flows through natural channels. The kahuna understands how to redirect this flow. When you use a spell to give something a new direction, position or target you may ignore either the Ritual or Sanctum requirement. The spell must be instant (not active). A new target must be roughly equivalent according to your paradigm.

Troubles: You have problems creating or annihilating things. Sometimes such spells fail.

Other names: The Practice of Shaping

Divine Workings (Ngoma)

Those who bear The Gift have the responsibility to understand the ways of the gods to counsel their communities. Once per day, when you look for signs, roll 3d10 and note the results. Throughout the day, you may substitute those results for dice any character just rolled.

Troubles: Your metaphysical research doesn't leave much time for other more mundane or even magical endeavours. Sometimes that new idea is just more interesting than finishing something.

Other names: Astrology, Enigmas, Dream, The Feed

Chorodia (Sisters of Hippolyta)

Magic is best performed in a chorodia of Sisters. In a communal casting, you share all your Sphere masteries and Arete benefits with your fellows and you share theirs.

Troubles: You were trained to work with like-minded mages. Sometimes working alone is not so easy. Furthermore, working with outsiders is hard and sometimes fails spectacularly. (You are probably considered a traitor, if you ever face the latter problem.)

Other Names: Teamwork, Coven, Think Tank

Alchemy (Solificati)

You refine materials opening their magic potential. When you cast a spell into a receptacle, you do not have to specify a target at once. Instead, the target is determined by using the receptacle in the proper manner (swallowing the pill, lighting the candle, putting in the battery, sitting on a chair...). The receptacles duration starts to count down, once the spell is activated.

Troubles: Repeated use of your products sometimes has side effects, be it addiction, poisoning or contamination.

Other names: Djinni Lamps, Candle Making, Energy Packs

Djinn (Taftani)

Salomo was said to bind the djinn and you practice the old Weavings. For your personal djinni servant, choose appearance, stats and general personality more or less within human boundaries. It has two dots in magic and works like a Sorcerer.

Troubles: Even a servant with seemingly normal appearance can sometimes give normals the creeps. There is just something wrong about it. Also, while your servant will generally heed your wishes, it does have needs as well and... exotic ones at that.

Other names: Homunculus, Familiar, Intelligent Artefact, Genegeneered Organism

Sanctify (Templar)

You are on a mission of God: Take down the monsters, create a new church! You can sanctify items, places or persons. Make a casting check with the Sphere appropriate for the target you want to sanctify. Assume, you have a Formula. (As opposed to "ignoring Formulas".)

Targets resist black magic (make a reflexive magic roll) and hurt monsters. Sanctified weapons deal aggravated against them and one round in contact with a Sanctified target afflict 1 aggravated damage.

Troubles: To wield the powers of light, one must not be touched by darkness. Pollution will require extensive and often painful cleansing rituals.

Other names: Primum Coating. Whatever you call it, determine what is "black magic" and "monsters" is in your paradigm.

Proper Action (Wu Lung)

You know how to approach the Celestial Hierarchy properly. When you perform a Ceremony, you may choose two option after the first hour.

Troubles: Rituals performed in this manner require high precision and may go haywire when disturbed. Other than that, they are just plain better. People should really know about it.

Other names: Enochian (Linguistics), High Ritual (Occultism) or other names and skills depending on approach.

OTHER CRAFTS

Shapeshift (Balamob)

The hero twins taught the people about the spirit animals. As an action, you assume the form of the revered Jaguar. You incur one point of Paradox. (Two, if there are witnesses.)

Troubles: Losing oneself is the common problem for this type of magic. You have made the change often enough, but still there are weird impulses and cravings when you assume your other form.

Other names: Spirit Animal, Skinchange

Patience (Hem-ka Sobk)

You have learned a Formula to focus your mind on the task and feel the flow of Sekhem. When you keep this spell active, you are not hindered by emotion and you can ignore the Ritual requirement. You cannot improvise, though.

Troubles: Sobk will not allow you to use your gifts for unworthy purposes. You are his hunter alone.

Other names: Discipline, The Mode

THE TECHNOCRATIC UNION

Cybernetics (Iteration X)

You have been modified. You can use buff spells upon yourself without a Formula. You do not lose a die for the first buff you keep active and you may use an unusual sphere like Matter for these procedures, but then you make yourself susceptible to that sphere.

Troubles: Whatever you did to yourself, requires upkeep in a specialised environment. If you suffer a paradox backlash, your modifications are prone to failure. Like with any usual receptacle, there is a way to switch of this benefit.

Other names: Internal Alchemy, Genemods (with Life), Totem (with Spirit).

Consensual (NWO)

Your magic hardly seems to be magic at all. It's all well placed words, seemingly ordinary equipment and personal competence. After you roll for a spell, you may remove a paradox die, if you don't like its result.

Troubles: When the consensus won't do, you are out of your loop. That might happen in places with strong local customs or in places where Reality Deviants have taken hold.

Other names: The Old Ways (Just the other way round!)

Shielded Labs (Progenitors)

You know the joke about a Progenitor forgetting to order a door to the new lab, because he never leaves? - Well, nowadays there is a growing number of 'action scientists', but labs are still cool. Inside your Sanctum, your paradigm determines what is vulgar. You can dictate for any magic how many dox dice should be rolled. In addition, you can always get *detailed*

information about your labs no matter where you are, as if you had a Knowledge spell running.

Troubles: Moving and creating such an elaborate environment takes a lot of effort. Furthermore outsiders might contaminate the place and can only be allowed in after extensive cleansing, if at all.

Other names: Sanctum Sanctorum, Palace

The Bottom Line (Syndicate)

People want to live. That's the bottom line. They will do everything, as long as they believe that it will make their lives better. Understanding this is real power. When you use a non-threatening procedure on people, you may treat a group as one step smaller on the table for Changes.

Troubles: Your money and status are worth nothing, if you are all alone in some deserted place.

Other names: Cult Leader

Hardened (Void Engineers)

You are humanity's first and last line of defence. Stuff must work. When you spend Willpower, in addition to the usual benefits of Willpower, you may ignore one die of reductions to your casting dice pool. (Because of injury, active spells etc.) You may also delay a paradox backlash once per scene. The paradox will add up until the next backlash is triggered.

Troubles: Your systems are often modified to suit your problems and modified in the field. Therefore they are rarely compatible with other people's gear.

Other names: Righteousness, Patterned, Conservative, The Essence of Earth

THE ORDER OF REASON

While the Nine Mystic Traditions didn't change much since the Grand Convocation, there were major shifts in power and paradigm among the Order of Reason until it finally became the Technocracy.

- The **Cabal of Pure Thought** are pure before God. Use Sanctify
- The **High Guild** haven't changed much to become the Syndicate. Use the Bottom Line.
- The **Hippocratic Circle** already knew about New Life.
- The **High Artisans** created Wonders in their time, before they found the x-th iteration of Autochtonia.

Cosmology (Celestial Masters)

Backdoors in reality and boons from other worlds, for the daring the Heavens offer many prices that defy the mundane. When you roll for a paradox backlash, you get an advantageous result on a 1-2.

Troubles: Not everything out there is safe. Stories of dark beings abound and sometimes your workarounds have unexpected side effects.

Other Names: Significant Cultural Artefacts, Kinain or Kinfolk

Architecture (Craftsmasons)

The Craftsmasons are the architects of the Order, both literally and metaphorically. You understand the secret geometry of place. When you design an environment, be it a building, a park or maybe a vessel, you may give it a Resonance.

Troubles:

Other Names: Feng Shui

Four Humours (Hippocratic Circle)

The four humours govern the bodily functions and the human character. Relying on this holistic theory, you can treat Life and Spirit as a single sphere. As this approach is particularly complex, you cannot use this Sphere for method casting.

Troubles: You are totally immersed in your studies, your paradigm is the world to you. You have a hard time making connections with outsiders, at best they see you as odd.

Other names: Holistic theories for other spheres may include The Theory of Everything (Forces & Matter), Maya (Mind & Correspondence), Dimensional Sciences (Fate & Correspondence).

Questing (Ksirafai)

As an assassin, you are required to mingle with other groups and you generally use any means necessary, be they Magic, Faith or Science. When you encounter a formula, you may roll Arete + appropriate Sphere. If you roll enough successes (as per studying a formula), you have learned it. If you do not, you may still study it normally. You can also work with most other mages in communal castings.

Troubles: Who are you really? Is this all there is? Sometimes you feel the need to leave it all. If you don't, only strong discipline will keep you grounded.

Other names: Eclectic, Open, Seeker, The Essence of Air

Exploration (Void Seekers)

A new world? Map it. The unicorn? Hunt it. Prester John's domain? Find it. You may spend Willpower to escape, resist or ignore the attack or influence of wondrous places and creatures. You also take -1 difficulty on ability checks regarding such findings.

Troubles: The unknown is irresistible to you.

Other Names: Spirit Ambassador, Faerie Friend

OTHER PRACTICES

Blôt (Valdaermen)

This Dark Ages fellowship followed the example of Odin who hung from the ash for seven days. You can use Health as Willpower. You do not take penalties from injury.

Trouble: Your practice leaves you scarred. The soft of heart shy away from you. And sometimes the pain is just too much.

Other Names: Castigation, Self-Sacrifice

Chaos Magic

This idiosyncratic style attempts to invert established social and magical practices. Practitioners rely on extreme experiences, shocking performance, magical symbols used out of context, made up Spaghetti gods or posing as superheroes. When you use magic to overcome a human made obstacle, you ignore Tools or gain one Willpower. You may not use this, when you are out to hurt people, and people will know they have been messed with, even if they do not identify you.

Troubles: You're a pain to work with. You have a hard time teaching your Formulas (even though you might adopt theirs) or work with most other mages. Some practitioners also develop an antisocial understanding of the words "people" and "hurt", turning this into a Left-Hand Path.

Other Names: I'M A NINJA! (Go Kamisori Gama), Punk

Creation

You manage to pull data from webspace into meatspace, turn ideas into reality. When you spend Willpower on a magic roll to create something, in addition to the usual effects of Willpower, you may also ignore one requirement. This benefit only affects roll that you actually spend Willpower on. So, if you want to roll several times for a spell, you need to spend Willpower every time.

Troubles: You lead the way for others to follow. Soon, you will help the world awaken! If only it didn't take the lamers so long to catch up. It just so... irritating.

Other names: Reality Hacking, Force of Will, Dynamic, Spontaneity, The Essence of Fire

Maleficia

Practicing this Left-Hand Path, you specialise in extended human suffering. When you cast a malicious spell on someone, you do not lose a die to keep it active, if you set a condition how the curse can be ended. You can only bestow no more than one curse on each of your victims.

Troubles: "What goes around, comes around", they say. You might get away, if you use your power only to even the odds, but it's just so easy to teach them a lesson.

Other names: The Evil Eye, Blessings (The other way round, but you cannot use it on friends and allies)

Madness (Marauders)

When you cast a most vulgar (MAGIC!) spell with a simple intention like "Stop!", "Go away!", "Open!", "Die!", you can ignore all requirements. If you do not have five dice in your pool, you may still roll all five paradox dice. Furthermore, a paradox backlash on such a spell never injures you personally or hinders your movement. (Possible effects include collateral damage and changes to your appearance or perception.)

This benefit cannot be combined with other Arete benefits.

Troubles: A character who relies on this benefit will cease to function in social situations due to accrued paradox flaws. On the other hand, you will start understanding your Marauder buddies perfectly.

Other names: Wild Talent

Sacrifice (Nephandi)

The most reviled form of magic draws on the life force of others. When you sacrifice a large animal in a ritual, you temporarily learn a Formula. (You can act as if you had studied it.) This usually lasts for about a day. Human blood will bestow a Knack upon you.

Troubles: The Left-Hand Path is all so tempting. Why would you ever stop. Except for the do gooders out for your head, the Devils out for your soul and the victims on your conscience.

Other names: There is no other way to do this.

Sleep walker

You count as a witness to other mages for purposes of paradox. Most mages with this trait will either fully awaken in time and choose another option instead of this one, or they will stay away from vulgar magic, or they go insane.

	Attributes		(5/4/3)
Physical	Social		Mental
Brawn 00000	Charisma 00000	Intelligence 00000	
Dexterity 00000	Contacts 00000	Wits 00000	
	Abilities		(13/11/9)
Talents	Skills		Knowledges
Alertness 00000	Craft 00000	Academics 00000	
Arts 00000	Etiquette 00000	Finance 00000	
Athletics 00000	Drive 00000	Medicine 00000	
Brawl 00000	Investigation 00000	Law 00000	
Empathy 00000	Leadership 00000	Linguistics 00000	
Intimidation 00000	Meditation 00000	Occultism 00000	
Sixth Sense 00000	Melee 00000	Politics 00000	
Streetwise 00000	Shooting 00000	Science 00000	
Stealth 00000	Survival 00000	Technology 00000	
Spheres	Arete 00000 00000	Health	
Correspondence S R F T K		[-0] Bruised	[]
Fate S R F T K		[-1] Hurt	[]

Forces	S R F T K		[-1] Injured	[]
Life	S R F T K		[-2] Wounded	[]
Matter	S R F T K		[-2] Mauled	[]
Mind	S R F T K		[-5] Crippled	[]
Spirit	S R F T K		Incapacitated	[]

Waste bin

AB

Shi-Ren - The Bottom Line

Li Hai - Street Magic

Kannagara - Proper Action

Jnani - Voices

Vajrapani - "Cybernetics"

CC

Anchorites - "The Digital Web"

Septarians - "Hardened Systems"

Latitudinarians -

Monists - Seeker

Alexandrinian Society - Alchemy

Sons of Mithras - Do

Children of Albi -

Nashimites - Divine Workings

CoX

Aghoris - Blot

Acharne - The Bottom Line

Hagalaz - Blot

Fellowship of Pan - "Exploration" Faery Friend

Dissonance Society - ? Political Activists ?

K'an Lu - Do

Klubwerks - Cheval

DS

Keepers of the Sacred Fire - !"Consensual"

Solitaries - "Digital Web"

Ghost Wheel Society -

Red Spear Society - "Hardened Systems"

Baruti - ? Storykeepers ? Seer

E

Natrapas - Palace

Madzimbabwe - Voices
Pomegranate Deme - Faith
Aided - Cycles
Lhaxsmists - The Digital Web
Golden Chalice
Knights of Rhadamantys
Albireo

V

Gardeners of the Tree - Patterened
Twisters of Fate - Wheel
Moon-Seekers - Street Magic
Lifeweavers - Exploration

VA

Cyberpunk - Cyberware
Cypherpunks - Divine Workings
Chaoticians - The Wheel
Reality Hackers - Reality Hakcing
Nexplorers - Exploration

OoH

Bonisagus -
Flambeu - Creation
Bjornaer - Shapeshift
Janissary - Essence of Air
Diedne - Cycles
Merinita - Explorer
Verditius / Thig- Wonders
Tytalus - "Divine Workings"
Quaesitor -
Criamon - Seer
Shaea - Proper Action / Linguistics
Xaos / Fortuna -

INCURSIONS

A timeline for ectoplasm hitting the Supernatural Fan in five easy steps.

When it ends here, that's what the public knows:

Stage I: Inconspicuous. The local newspapers might have a story. Nothing big.

Stage II: Contrived. It was a serial killer. Or a sequence of animal attacks. Or a mass hallucination.

Stage III: Weird. There might be an explanation. But the people who were there will never quite believe it.

Stage IV: Impossible. When it's all over, conspiracy theorists will storm the place.

Stage V: HELL. You might want to ground-zero the place, *then* think about a cover story.

How the PCs get involved:

Stage I: It's either in their backyard or someone asks them for help. Maybe a friend's friend disappeared. Maybe the characters are in the phonebook under Wizard.

Stage II: The local authorities will seek help. Maybe the Sheriff heard of that medium who supposedly finds people. He never quite *believed* it, but right now he needs all the help he can get.

Stage III: People who look for these things start to notice. Maybe the characters do so themselves. Maybe someone in their club, gives them a call.

Stage IV: It's on. By now the major supernatural factions have sent agents.

Stage V: At this point, you don't want investigators anymore. It's either Search & Rescue or the really big guns..

output d{0,0,0,0,0,0,1,1,1,1} + d{0,0,0,0,0,0,2,2,2,2}