

GURPS®

Fourth Edition

THAUMATOLOGY™

Urban Magics™



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INTRODUCTION

Fantasy is about worlds in which magic is real. Many accounts of those worlds depict them as rural places. The common people live in villages, the nobles in castles, and when either of them go on quests, they travel through wildernesses. Any cities they encounter are likely to be in ruins, inhabited only by ferocious beasts or angry ghosts.

Despite a seeming dearth of urban settings, numerous living cities exist: L. Frank Baum's Emerald City, J. R. R. Tolkien's Minas Tirith, Fritz Leiber's Lankhmar, Terry Pratchett's Ankh-Morpork, China Miéville's New Crobuzon, and many others. These places can be just as magical as any other location in their worlds. In some instances, they're more so: With larger

populations and wealthier economies, they can support more mages and more magical objects. Special magical arts and distinctive supernatural creatures may be found only in cities. The practice of mystical arts may make the cities themselves magical. Cities in the real world have urban legends; in fantasy worlds, such legends may be true.

If you want to include cities in your fantasy campaign – whether as starting points, places to visit, or the setting of the entire campaign – ***GURPS Thaumatology: Urban Magics*** will help you. This supplement is a collection of ideas for you to use. Most of them include new (optional) rules. GMs can rely on these if they'll help the campaign, and ignore them if they don't.

Most of this material focuses on the cities of traditional, low-tech fantasy worlds. However, many ideas here can work in a modern-fantasy setting. In fact, some are specifically designed for such a campaign or based on modern supernatural beliefs, such as electronic voice phenomena and hell money.

About ***GURPS***

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Errata. Everyone makes mistakes, including us – but we do our best to fix our errors. Up-to-date errata pages for all ***GURPS*** releases, including this book, are available on our website – see above.

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the ***GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition***. Page references that begin with B refer to that book, not this one.

PUBLICATION HISTORY

GURPS Thaumatology: Urban Magics is a set of footnotes to ***GURPS Fantasy***, particularly to its discussions of local settings in fantasy worlds. Nearly all of the content of ***Urban Magics*** is new. The treatment of ley lines is partly borrowed from, and partly inspired by, the material in ***GURPS Places of Mystery***. *The Mechanical Equivalent of Magic* is inspired by ***GURPS Technomancer***.

This book also relies on options from ***GURPS Magic***, ***GURPS Thaumatology***, and ***GURPS Thaumatology: Magical Styles***.

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CHAPTER ONE

ON THE STREET OF THE WIZARDS

By living in a city, people who have chosen the mystical arts as their profession potentially have more people in need of their services. Mages may be able to work as wizards full time, even specializing in a particular kind of magic. If there are enough mages, they may be organized or they may compete for business – sometimes both. The practice of magic

may be legally regulated or self-regulated. If mages are known to live in cities, then magically talented people may come there looking for knowledge and training – and the cities will have even more mages.

This chapter examines how the daily life of cities affects the practice of magic.

ORGANIZING MAGIC

Like almost any human activity, magic has a social aspect. Mages are seldom entirely solitary; they have other mages as mentors, disciples, allies, or rivals. The history of cities over the centuries provides several models for the organized practice of magic.

MAGES' GUILDS

Mages in historical fantasy settings, like other specialized workers, often organize into guilds. The guild organizational style fits several needs of the profession: passing on knowledge and skills, maintaining professional standards, and keeping out unlicensed practitioners.

Establishing a guild implies that mages are in business largely to earn money. This is most likely in a world where magic is a regular part of daily life (see *Magical Reliability*, p. 30). Such a world may look medieval, but its effective TL is likely to be TL(3+1) or TL(3+2); see p. B513. Although mages may be expected to step in and cast spells when people are in trouble (just as doctors are expected to help the sick or injured in an emergency), most of the time, they work for paying customers. Consequently, most mages study spells that people often want.

A mages' guild is likely to train new members through apprenticeships. The apprentice starts out performing menial tasks for his mentor. When he begins casting spells, the first one he learns is likely to be Lend Energy; this boosts the number of spells his master can cast and thus increases his income. As the apprentice learns other spells, his master will have him cast the easy ones, reserving his own effort for the more advanced ones.

Like other professional organizations, mages' guilds have an internal hierarchy. In some settings, mages have enough prestige for this to be definable as a form of

Merchant Rank (p. B30). Spells with long-distance modifiers can help hold together a national or imperial guild system. Its archmage may be anywhere from Rank 6 to 8. If such a system of ranks is of little concern to anyone but mages, its cost can be reduced to 1 point/level, making it a leveled perk as discussed for Academic or Guild Rank in *GURPS Thaumatology: Magical Styles* (p. 21).

In some worlds, advances in Rank may involve elaborate rituals that confer increased knowledge and power. Perhaps everyone starts out at Magery 0 and gains a level of Magery with each added Rank. This combination has a total cost of 15 points per Rank. (The GM needs to be willing to cope with Magery 8 being available!)

Rank in Local Guilds

As a variation on Rank, the GM may choose to define forms recognized only locally, with fewer levels. A one-city guild, whether of wizards or weavers, might have three levels: Rank 1 for a master with his own shop or practice, Rank 2 for a syndic (a member of the guild council), and Rank 3 for the guildmaster. (Mages could acquire Magery 1-3 as they learn guild secrets.) For a socially influential guild, this would confer Status in the local community in the usual way. For a guild that totally dominates a city, local Rank may *replace* Status. It's convenient to assume that Status within one city will be honored by other cities, at least within the same cultural milieu, and thus the point value of Rank and Status need not be discounted.

If a city is an independent state, with its own king, or is the capital of an empire, this limit should not apply. The city's hierarchies *are* the hierarchies of an entire society.

Alternatively, Rank 0 journeymen are only taught spells without prerequisites. Each added Rank opens up spells with one added prerequisite, until the Rank 8 archmages get to learn any spell they please. (At the GM's option, this could be defined as an Unusual Background worth an extra 5 points per level of Rank.)

Other magic-based professions may have their own guilds. For example, alchemists' guilds are common in fantasy.

SPECIALISTS

If magic is treated as a profession, bigger cities will support specialized magical practices. Two different forms of specialization are possible.

First, there's the mage who only knows a few spells, but in a big city, enough people need those spells for him to make a living from them. See the *Allied Tradesman* template (pp. 9-10).

Example: A mage with average attributes and Magery 1 could put 1 point into Apportation-9 and 8 points into Lighten Burden-12. By spending 5 FP, he could reduce a load of 300 lbs. (15×BL) to an effective 150 lbs. (7.5×BL) and carry it for 10 minutes. Without magical aid, an equally strong and fit man would lose 1 FP/second with the same load.

Second, there's the mage who has studied *one* college in depth, mastering its most difficult spells. The healer can grow back lost limbs or eyes, for example, and the elementalist can create essential matter. Some specialists of this kind know only spells from one college. Others know prerequisite spells from multiple colleges – for example, a mage who can cause or calm storms needs some air and water spells, as well as weather spells. Usually this kind of mage will charge high fees for his services, at least twice the standard rate, both because he has a wider range of spells to draw on and to compensate for all the time he spent in study. Clients who can pay his fees are more likely to live in big cities or can afford to travel there.

Enchanters are a particularly important category of specialists. In the standard magic system, they have to create enchanted items one at a time, making them the equivalent of craftsmen. Thus, most enchanted items are costly, as much as an excellent sword or a fine warhorse. Nonetheless, the skills of these specialists can grant aristocrats or wealthy merchants the benefits of spells without the study.

If a city has several mages with a particular specialization, they may have a guild style, as discussed in *GURPS Thaumatology: Magical Styles* (pp. 4-19).

SCHOOLS FOR SORCERY

Learning magic is often envisioned as resembling early styles of classroom instruction. The teacher reads aloud from a text – in this case a grimoire. Often this is in a dead language that the student hasn't fully mastered. The students memorize what the teacher reads, and they recite it back. The teacher corrects their recitals, answers questions about the text, and explains what it means. The teacher may carry a rod or staff, though more as an aid to casting spells than for punishing inattentive students.

Education exposes students to a series of standard texts. Because of magical training, the student eventually compiles his own grimoire.

Classroom instruction goes back to ancient Babylon, where students learned cuneiform writing and a dead language, Sumerian. The modern university took shape in the Middle

Ages with a similar style of instruction. Fantasy novels often portray schools of wizardry based on this model, such as Le Guin's Roke, Pratchett's Unseen University, and Rowling's Hogwarts. Anywhere there are enough practicing mages to make classroom training more convenient than one-on-one apprenticeships, such a school is likely to develop.

Some fictional schools of magic are isolated, with only students, teachers, and servants in sight. Others are in cities of various sizes. A large city may have enough magically gifted youths to support a magical day school. Any size settlement (particularly small ones) may have boarding schools for students from distant locations.

She had graduated already, coming first in English, equal first in Music, third in Mathematics, seventh in Science, second in Fighting Arts and fourth in Etiquette. She had also been a runaway first in Magic, but that wasn't printed on the certificate.

– Garth Nix, *Sabriel*

Day students and boarding students may be rivals, whether they attend two different schools or form cliques in the same school. A small town with a large school of magic may have to deal with “town and gown” conflicts between magically gifted students and unmagical townsfolk. (*GURPS Banestorm: Abydos* describes a city struggling with such issues.) In a larger city, the school may be an island of quiet retreat, or students may be out getting a broader education from the life of the city itself.

Modern schools of magic preserve many older customs, including lectures, seminars, and libraries filled with ancient books. As their education progresses, students move from rote learning in classrooms to personal apprenticeship under a master sorcerer. They may even struggle to prove their fitness to practice by inventing and writing new spells, much as Ph.D. students research and write theses. Additionally, new paths to magical knowledge may be open to them, from encyclopedic grimoires issued by specialized publishers (see *Magical Texts*, p. 6) to online discussions of magical principles.

MAGICAL FACTORIES

If industrial methods can be applied to magic (see *Industrial Magic* on p. 67 of *GURPS Fantasy* for details), enchanted items can be turned out on magical production lines at 10× the rate of standard Slow and Sure enchantments. This assumes that there is a nonhuman mana source; see *Energy Sources* (pp. 25-27) for some possibilities. If the mages themselves have to provide the energy, divide their productivity by 2.

The organization of a magical factory resembles that of mass magic (pp. 25-26); the relationship of industrial magic to mass magic is like that of standard enchanting to ceremonial magic. Industrial magic may provide jobs for many people with magical talent but limited intellect. It can also change the nature of a society, raising its effective TL, as industrial magic fills the stores with useful magical items.

Factory production implies a mass market; magic has to be in demand at least in middle-class households to provide a high enough sales volume. (See *Enchanted Housekeeping*, p. 32.) Growing populations, increasing wealth, and cheaper transportation to open bigger market areas can all help expand the market. The same magic that can support industrial magic may be able to provide all these other changes. Note that a society that has these characteristics won't much resemble the barbaric or medieval societies of many historical fantasies – it will look like an industrialized society, even if its industry is powered by mana instead of fossil fuels.

Magical Texts

Advancing technology creates the possibility of making multiple exact copies of a text, starting with the printing press at TL4. At this point, the GM needs to make a campaign decision: Does an exact copy of a magical text have the same magical properties as the original text? If printed scrolls work, one mage who masters a spell with 10 prerequisites can enable hundreds of other mages to cast it; printing makes spell prerequisites nearly meaningless. If the scrolls don't work, printing has little impact on magic; effective scrolls still need to be hand copied. The development of xerography and the Internet at TL8 makes this issue more intense, without changing its basic nature. **GURPS Thaumatology** explores these issues further (p. 107).

One possible compromise is to say that magical scrolls are like fine art reproductions. A simple printed image of a drawing or photograph doesn't command a high price. Prints can become collectible works of art for a variety of reasons: The quality of reproduction is exceptionally high. A limited print run occurred (and perhaps the plates are destroyed at the end). The artist personally signs all the prints (or even hand-colors them or adds extra small sketches). The artist personally supervises their preparation.

In the same way, for scrolls to have magical effects, it may be necessary for a mage who knows the relevant spell to take part in their printing. The costs and magical expenditures of industrial enchantment (see *Magical Factories*, pp. 5-6) can represent the need for this kind of process. Since the energy cost of a scroll is no greater than that of the spell it holds, a magical publisher can turn out multiple copies in a single day.

MAGICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTES

The Age of Sail saw the rise of scientific organizations such as the Royal Society. During the Industrial Revolution, experimental research became part of industry, in workshops such as Thomas Edison's. Research organizations could provide a model for magical innovation. In an alternate history, for example, Isaac Newton's work in alchemy might have been successful and become the main focus of the Royal Society's efforts – as in the Azoth-7 timeline in **GURPS Infinite Worlds** (pp. 112-113).

The actual operation of magical laboratories aims at the creation, first, of new spells and, second, of new enchanted items imbued with such spells. Both **GURPS Fantasy** and **GURPS**

Thaumatology present rules for this. A magical research institute can afford to develop dozens of variant spell prototypes, if necessary, until it gets one that's problem-free. A director of research can enhance the chances of success in such tests with a successful Administration roll (see *Long Tasks*, p. B346).

Magical research institutes will be arcane, not only because mages are often secretive, but also because ordinary people can't understand their work or see its point. It may require advanced knowledge of Thaumatology, for example, or the use of a peculiar notation comparable to mathematics – in **GURPS** terms, Symbol Drawing. Alternatively, it may need the ability to see magical interconnections between seemingly unrelated things, defined in **GURPS Fantasy** as *correspondences*. In addition to this, if magic is advanced enough, such laboratories may be treated as military resources, with magical spies trying to penetrate their secrets and magical counterspies trying to stop them.

MAFIAS

In worlds where magic is illegal or heavily regulated, a different sort of organization may emerge – one that uses magic to commit crimes and build criminal empires. Mages are already secretive. Mafia-style vows of silence might come naturally to them. (The word "occult" originally meant *secret* or *concealed*.)

A comparatively benign "magical mafia" might focus on providing magical services that many people want but can't buy legally. A culture that regards magic as evil may prohibit even seemingly harmless applications, but some people will question how much society could be hurt and buy items and services on the black market. Want to know if your unborn child is a son or daughter? Visit a healer who knows Body-Reading. Think the streets are unsafe? Have an enchanter Fortify your cloak.

However, black-market dealers can't go to the police if someone steals from them or threatens them. They need to take care of themselves or find protectors. Magic provides ways of doing this, from flashy attack spells to secretive curses; mages may find employment as enforcers. A black market can lead to some less benign applications of magic: fights over sales territory with lightning bolts rather than automatic rifles, extortion from peaceful mages or ordinary shopkeepers, and the sale of harmful magic to buyers with enough money. A nobleman or rich merchant may be able to learn his rival's secret plans, or hire a magical assassin to kill him – unless his rival has his own magical protectors.

Even if magic in general is legal, some categories of spells may be forbidden by law and classed as "black magic." (Magical legality classes are discussed on p. 71 of **GURPS Fantasy**.) Mages who learn and cast these spells will be criminals and will take steps to protect themselves from the law.

STREET GANGS

Street gangs have rituals, too, but they're usually not as formal as criminal organizations. Gang members have shorter time horizons. Rather than establish a lasting claim to their territory, they fight for it day by day, always on the watch for ambitious rivals. They can't afford to spend time studying complicated formulas – they need something that works right now.

Path/Book magic (as defined in *GURPS Thaumatology*) is a good fit to this kind of life. Additionally, many sorts of Path/Book magic are closer to folk beliefs and folk rituals than standard *GURPS* magic. Their rituals leave more room for

improvisation. However, their effects are less certain and less obvious than formal castings: Rather than hurling fireballs or lightning bolts, Path/Book magic provides a way to improve the odds in a battle fought with fists, swords – or guns.

Most of the other businessmen around me were simply forced to capitulate. Most of them used magic in at least one phase of their business; they had their choice of signing a contract with Magic, Incorporated, or closing their doors.

– Robert A. Heinlein, “Magic, Inc.”

SPIRIT TRANSACTIONS

The standard *GURPS* treatment of magic is as an impersonal supernatural force, whose manipulation is almost a technology. However, in some game worlds, magic is *not* an impersonal force. Instead, it's based on dealing with spirits through rituals.

Such spirits may make themselves visible to mortals, especially gifted mortals such as mages, and make demands of them. For details on the kind of spirits that can be met in a city, see *Gods and Spirit Allies* (pp. 41-42). Alternatively, the spirits may remain offstage and deal with mortals through their agents, who act as magical middlemen. A city's population of mages may include several types of such middlemen.

DEATH WILL NOT RELEASE YOU

In a world where oaths are magically binding (see *Oaths* in *GURPS Fantasy*, p. 147), a person who takes an oath acquires a Destiny by doing so. What happens if he dies without fulfilling the oath? If the dead have spirits, the oath may prevent his spirit from going on to its normal afterlife. Instead, the spirit lingers invisibly among mortals, waiting for the chance to complete its obligation. This can provide a background story for a ghost, for example.

What if magically binding oaths are transferable? The still-living party to the bargain may be able to transfer his claims against the ghost to someone else, for a price. The monetary value of whatever the ghost owed the survivor needs to be assessed. The survivor then receives that much cash, less a handling fee (typically 10-20%), and the broker gets the right to the ghost's services. In some worlds, brokers themselves use individual ghosts. In others, they resell ghosts, individually or in lots, to other people who need magical aid. In effect, this is a supernatural analog of debt slavery.

From the ghost's point of view, this amounts to trading a minor Destiny [-5] for Reprogrammable [-10]. The change from mortal form to spirit form is simply a side effect of

dying. From the mortal world's viewpoint, ghostly debt slaves are Allies with Minion (+50%, since the ghost retains its IQ and does not have Slave Mentality), Summonable, and suitable Special Abilities. Providing FP for spells is one common application; defensive Luck is another. Alternatively, the advantage may be bought directly, with the Pact limitation, in a form such as a Debt (regular payments to the ghost's family).

At the GM's discretion, such arrangements may have a limited time span. Ghostly servants may be freed when their children grow up or die, or when their new masters die. They may “age,” fading a little each year, as the living forget them. Alternatively, a more humane society may require that all ghostly debts be forgiven after some number of years.



An entire urban economy might be based on this kind of servitude – if the living didn't mind being surrounded by enslaved spirits! A dying man might even voluntarily take an oath to be a servant after his death, in exchange for his family being cared for. Tokens of ghostly obligation could become a medium of exchange for large purchases.

Hell Money

Present-day Chinese culture offers an unusual method of sacrifice, known as hell money. This is paper printed with monetary denominations to resemble real money, but with no actual exchange value in the physical world. Families purchase it and then give it to their ancestors by burning it, making the ancestors richer in the spirit world.

Offerings of hell money are common in Hong Kong and other Chinese communities with active market economies. It's also possible to buy "hell" versions of specific objects such as cell phones, jewelry – or guns!

In **GURPS** terms, hell money doesn't cost enough to justify the major benefits that would be granted by sacrificial magic (see **GURPS Fantasy**, p. 165). Regular monthly offerings might count as a quirk-level Vow, the basis for a -1% Pact limitation on the cost of a suitable advantage. If the ancestors could make felt their displeasure at not getting the expected offering, the offering might count as a Debt (see p. B26); such a Debt could figure into a Pact limitation. Hell money could also buy cooperation from a Contact in the spirit world; see pp. B44-45.

SACRIFICIAL BROKERAGES

GURPS Fantasy (p. 165) offers rules for sacrificial magic, in which ritual offerings, usually rated in HP, are exchanged either for magical power or for improved chances of success in uncertain activities. Under those rules, a sacrifice is made to gain a specific benefit, at the time when the benefit is needed. The Roma Arcana setting in **GURPS Fantasy** allows an extension of sacrificial magic, under which a magically binding oath to make sacrifices in the future can gain the immediate aid of supernatural forces.

Sacrificial brokerages take this principle and run with it. A sacrificial brokerage is a general-purpose middleman between mortals and the supernatural. Its mortal clients set up sacrificial accounts with it, with balances counted in HP

of sacrificial offerings. These balances can be assigned to any god or spiritual or supernatural force with which the brokerage has a relationship, as they are needed. Thus, instead of making offerings directly to a specific being, the client provides offerings to the organization, and the brokerage sees that they go to the right recipient.

Most clients will maintain a positive balance in their accounts, representing investments in supernatural favor. A client can use the balance by visiting the brokerage and describing the task to which it is to be applied.

Brokerages may also accept messages carrying instructions, if there is a way for them to be certain of the identity of the client who sent them. Several methods are possible, at the GM's discretion:

- Sending a trusted servant, such as a confidential secretary who is empowered to act for the client.
- Sending a spirit messenger who is bound to the client's service.
- Sending a message sealed with the client's signet ring, or sending the ring itself in the care of a trusted messenger.
- Writing a message on a special form issued by the brokerage, which contains marks identifying the client's identity. In a setting where names, especially True Names, affect magic (as discussed in **GURPS Fantasy** and **GURPS Thaumatology**), this instrument is treated as a form of the client's name.
- In a TL8+ setting, sending a message encrypted with public-key cryptography.
- Communicating with the brokerage telepathically.

Alternatively, a brokerage may issue small tokens of sacrifices that have been made, such as candles or pieces of paper. When the client wants to use his balance, he describes the desired effect and destroys the token.

Sacrificial brokerages will let a client go into debt, up to a set limit, and pay back the debt with later sacrifices. In some cases, they will want proof of creditworthiness, such as visible personal wealth, or a record of piety and of paying debts. In others, they may let the client offer a magically binding oath – and such an oath may result in his ghost being bound to service, if he dies without paying it.

The customary fee for brokering sacrifices is 10% of the total offerings. A standard way to start an account is to offer 10 HP of sacrifices; this establishes a balance of 9 HP and earns the brokerage its first 1 HP of commission.

A character who starts out as a client of a sacrificial brokerage may have certain advantages, such as Reputation or Sacrificial Balance (see p. 17).

*Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?*

– John Keats, "Ode on a Grecian Urn"

CHAPTER TWO

MAGICAL

PRACTITIONERS

What sorts of mages live in cities? This chapter examines character creation for an urban-magic campaign. As in *GURPS Fantasy*, the supplement assumes that most fantasy

characters will operate in a low-tech environment (TL1-4). However, the rules don't insist on any particular TL, and they can be adapted to higher-tech settings.

TEMPLATES

The templates that follow are specifically for characters who deal with the supernatural. Most of them include spells. They're described in terms of the standard *GURPS* treatment of magic, with spells chosen from *GURPS Magic* and with some level of unmodified Magery.

Too many possibilities exist for magic to make it practical to include templates for all of them, or easy to justify focusing on one optional style rather than another. A GM who prefers one of the alternative treatments of magic in *GURPS Thaumatology* or *GURPS Fantasy* is encouraged to develop revised templates for these character concepts.

GURPS Fantasy provides several templates for mages and supernaturally gifted adventurers. The templates here supplement those but don't replace them.

Not all of the templates are for professional adventurers. Several are for people who might get caught up in an adventure and have to do their best to cope with it. Alternatively, they could be the supporting cast for adventurers who live in a city, or pay one a visit. The customization notes suggest ways to turn these specialists into typical adventurers while keeping their special abilities.

Some of these templates include spells with prerequisites; the prerequisites are also listed as options within the templates. When taking any spell, be sure to take all its prerequisites!

ALLIED TRADESMAN

75 points

Legends and epics describe the deeds of mighty wizards, but you're not one of them. Your intellect and magical talent just aren't good enough to let you cast spells effortlessly; you have to stick to the basics. Rather than learning many different spells, you've spent long hours of study mastering a handful. In a big city, enough demand exists for those spells that you can build a career on them. If you are caught up in an adventure, you may be unexpectedly useful.

Attributes: ST 10 [0]; DX 10 [0]; IQ 11 [20]; HT 10 [0].

Secondary Characteristics: Damage 1d-2/1d; BL 20 lbs.; HP 10 [0]; Will 11 [0]; Per 11 [0]; FP 12 [6]; Basic Speed 5.00 [0]; Basic Move 5 [0].

Advantages: Magery 0 [5]. • A further 25 points chosen from among Ambidexterity [5], Business Acumen 1 [10], Charisma 1 [5], Claim to Hospitality (Guild brothers) [5], Contacts [Varies], Eidetic Memory [5], Fit [5] or Very Fit [15], High Manual Dexterity [5/level], Higher Purpose [5], Legal Immunity [5], Magery 1 [10], Merchant Rank 1 [5], Reputation [Varies], Spirit Empathy [10], Status 1 [5], or Wealth (Comfortable) [10].

Disadvantages: Code of Honor (Professional) [-5]. • A further -15 points chosen from among Absent-Mindedness [-15], Charitable [-15*], Combat Paralysis [-15], Duty [Varies], Greed [-15*], Hidebound [-5], Honesty [-10*], Jealousy [-10], Laziness [-10], Miserliness [-10*], Odious Personal Habits [-5, -10, or -15], Pacifism (Reluctant Killer) [-5], Post-Combat Shakes [-5*], Selfish [-5*], Sense of Duty (Family or Guild) [-5], Social Stigma (Second-Class Citizen) [-5] or (Valuable Property) [-10], or Workaholic [-5].

Primary Skills: Teaching (A) IQ+1 [4]-12. • One of Administration, Merchant, or Public Speaking, all (A) IQ+1 [4]-12.

Secondary Skills: One of the following sets of skills:

1. *Entertainer:* Hobby (Juggling) (E) DX+1 [2]-11. • One of Artist (Illusion) (H) IQ+1 [8]-12 or Sleight of Hand (H) DX+1 [8]-11.
2. *Firefighter:* Area Knowledge (Village, Town, or City) (E) IQ+2 [4]-13 and Urban Survival (A) Per [2]-11. • One of Forced Entry (E) DX+2 [4]-12 or Hazardous Materials or Professional Skill (Firefighter), both (A) IQ+1 [4]-12.
3. *Healer:* Diagnosis (H) IQ+1 [8]-12 and First Aid (E) IQ+1 [2]-12.
4. *Messenger:* Area Knowledge (Barony, County, Duchy, or Small Nation) (E) IQ+1 [2]-12 and Hiking (A) HT+2 [8]-12.
5. *Purifier:* Housekeeping (E) IQ+3 [8]-14 and Urban Survival (A) Per [2]-11.
6. *Verifier of Testimony:* Detect Lies (H) Per-1 [2]-10 and Law (Native City Rules of Evidence) (H) IQ+1 [8]-12.

Background Skills: Occultism (A) IQ-1 [1]-10. • *Two* of Forced Entry (E) DX [1]-10; Current Affairs (Business) or Savoir-Faire (Servant), both (E) IQ [1]-11; Performance, Politics, or Soldier, all (A) IQ-1 [1]-10; Accounting, Finance, Law (Native City Commercial), or Pharmacy (Herbal), all (H) IQ-2 [1]-9; Mind Block (A) Will-1 [1]-10; or 1 point of skill with a melee weapon suitable for self-defense.

Spells: One of these six spell packages:

1. *Entertainer*†: Apportation (H) IQ-1 [1]-10, Complex Illusion (H) IQ+1 [4]-12, Locksmith (H) IQ+1 [4]-12, Simple Illusion (H) IQ+2 [8]-13, and Sound (H) IQ-1 [1]-10.
2. *Firefighter*: Extinguish Fire (H) IQ+3 [16]-14, Ignite Fire (H) IQ-2 [1]-9, and Seek Fire (H) IQ-2 [1]-9.
3. *Healer*†: Awaken (H) IQ-1 [1]-10, Body-Reading (H) IQ+1 [4]-12, Cure Disease (H) IQ+1 [4]-12, Lend Energy (H) IQ [2]-11, Lend Vitality (H) IQ-1 [1]-10, Major Healing (VH) IQ [4]-11, Minor Healing (H) IQ-1 [1]-10, and Relieve Sickness (H) IQ-1 [1]-10.
4. *Messenger*†‡: Find Direction (H) IQ+1 [4]-12, Haste (H) IQ [2]-11, and Quick March (H) IQ+3 [12]-14.
5. *Purifier*: Clean (H) IQ [4]-11, Purify Air (H) IQ [4]-11, Remove Contagion (H) IQ+1 [8]-12, Restore (H) IQ-2 [1]-9, and Simple Illusion (H) IQ-2 [1]-9.
6. *Verifier of Testimony*: Sense Emotion (H) IQ-2 [1]-9, Sense Foes (H) IQ-2 [1]-9, and Truthsayer (H) IQ+3 [16]-14.

* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

† Must have Magery 1; all spells include +1 for Magery 1.

‡ If ley line spells are available, replacing Haste-11 with Seek Ley Line-11 (p. 19) and Quick March-14 with Ley Running-14 (p. 19) is an option for messengers.

*I'm a dealer in magic and spells
In blessings and curses
And ever-filled purses
In prophecies, witches, and knells
— Gilbert and Sullivan,
The Sorcerer*

Customization Notes

This template represents a successful small businessman or civil servant, with reliable skill in his essential spells. A journeyman will be less well-trained and won't have the Teaching skill required of a master. He'll also have significantly fewer advantages. Although a senior member of a guild may have a few more points in spells, most of his extra points will go into political and social skills, wealth, and social position.

An adventure-ready version adds a few points of nonmagical skills, such as Soldier, Shield, a weapon skill or two, and possibly Leadership, most likely acquired in the city militia. An added disadvantage or two can pay for these skills. It's also possible to include a few extra spells – but for a character with many spells, it's better to design a mage (see *Consulting Mage*, *Forensic Sorcerer*, or *Street Wizard* in this supplement, or the mage templates in *GURPS Fantasy*).

CONSULTING MAGE

100 points

You're a freelance wizard, available for consultation on magical or mundane issues. Most of the spells in this template deal with gathering information (Seeker, Analyze Magic), but a few practical spells, such as Light, are also included.

Attributes: ST 10 [0]; DX 10 [0]; IQ 12 [40]; HT 11 [10].

Secondary Characteristics: Damage 1d-2/1d; BL 20 lbs.; HP 10 [0]; Will 12 [0]; Per 12 [0]; FP 11 [0]; Basic Speed 5.25 [0]; Basic Move 5 [0].

Advantages: Magery 2 [25]. • A further 15 points chosen from among Contact Group (Other wizards) [Varies], Eidetic Memory [5] or Photographic Memory [10], Fearlessness [2/level], Reputation +1 to +4 (As a reliable wizard; People in the magic trade in this city; All the time) [Varies], Status [5/level], or Wealth (Comfortable) [10].

Disadvantages: -20 points chosen from among Clueless [-10], Code of Honor (Professional) [-5], Combat Paralysis [-15], Hidebound [-5], Honesty [-10*], Odious Personal Habits [-5, -10, or -15], Overweight [-1], Magic Susceptibility [-3/level], Miserliness [-10*], Proud [-1], Skinny [-5], or Workaholic [-5].

Primary Skill: Thaumatology (VH) IQ [2]-12†.

Secondary Skills: Merchant, Occultism, and Research/TL, all (A) IQ [2]-12.

Background Skills: Four of Area Knowledge (City) (E) IQ [1]-12; Fast-Talk or Hidden Lore (Urban Secrets), both (A) IQ-1 [1]-11; Accounting, Diplomacy, History (City), or Law (City), all (H) IQ-2 [1]-10; Alchemy/TL or Herb Lore (VH) IQ-3 [1]-9; Mind Block (A) Will-1 [1]-11; Exorcism (H) Will-2 [1]-10; or Detect Lies (H) Per-2 [1]-10.

Spells†: Analyze Magic, Apportation, Aura, Counterspell, Detect Magic, Dispel Magic, Identify Spell, Ignite Fire, Light, Mind-Reading, Purify Air, Seek Earth, Seek Water, Seeker, Sense Emotion, Sense Foes, Trace, and Truthsayer, all (H) IQ [1]-12.

* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

† Thaumatology and all spells include +2 for Magery 2.

Customization Notes

Neither reducing the number of spells nor lowering their effective skill levels would represent the character concept well. Increasing the point budget is likely to end up creating a general-purpose mage (see *GURPS Fantasy*), due to adding several active spells. However, higher IQ and Magery could produce a mage with much more effective use of the same spells.

CRIMINAL MAGE

125 points

You're a lawbreaker whose best tools (or weapons) are spells. Unlike the street wizard (see pp. 14-15), who often relies on magic for legitimate purposes but may break the law by casting spells without getting a license or joining a guild, you use magic to steal, assassinate, or perform other acts of violence. Your choice of spells is ruthlessly practical and narrowly focused on your particular class of crimes.

Attributes: ST 10 [0]; DX 11 [20]; IQ 12 [40]; HT 12 [20].

Secondary Characteristics: Damage 1d-2/1d; BL 20 lbs.; HP 10 [0]; Will 12 [0]; Per 12 [0]; FP 12 [0]; Basic Speed 5.75 [0]; Basic Move 5 [0].

Advantages: Magery 1 [15]. • One of ST +2 [20] or DX +1 [20]. • A further 20 points chosen from among Alternate Identity (Illegal) [15], Claim to Hospitality (Criminal organization) [2], Combat Reflexes [15], Contacts (Street) [Varies], Danger Sense [15], Fearlessness [2/level], Fit [5] or Very Fit [15], Hard to Kill [2/level], High Pain Threshold [10], Reputation (Criminals, small group) [Varies], Wealth (Comfortable) [10], or additional levels of Magery [10/level].

Disadvantages: One of Enemies (City law enforcement; Hunters; 9 or less) or Secret (Imprisonment or Exile) [-20]. • A further -20 points chosen from among Bad Temper [-10*], Bloodlust [-10*], Bully [-10*], Callous [-5], Code of Honor (Pirate's or Professional) [-5], Compulsive Spending [-5*], Duty [Varies], Greed [-15*], Reputation (Law-abiding citizens, large group) [Varies], Selfish [-5*], or Social Stigma (Criminal Record) [-5].

Primary Skills: One of Innate Attack (Beam or Projectile) (E) DX+3 [8]-14; or Axe/Mace, Shortsword, or Stealth, all (A) DX+2 [8]-13.

Secondary Skills: Streetwise (A) IQ [2]-12. • One of Filch (A) DX [2]-11, Forced Entry (E) DX+1 [2]-12, Holdout (A) IQ [2]-12, Intimidation (A) Will [2]-12, Running (A) HT [2]-12, Search (A) Per [2]-12, or Tracking (A) Per [2]-12.

Background Skills: Area Knowledge (Neighborhood or City) and Savoir-Faire (Mafia), both (E) IQ [1]-12. • Two of Connoisseur (Art), Fast-Talk, or Gambling, all (A) IQ-1 [1]-11; Carousing (E) HT [1]-12; Observation or Urban Survival, both (A) Per-1 [1]-11; or Detect Lies (H) Per-2 [1]-10. • One of Brawling, Fast-Draw (Knife, Pistol, or Sword), Garrote, Guns (Pistol), Innate Attack (Beam or Projectile), or Knife, all (E) DX [1]-11; or Cloak, Smallsword, or Stealth, all (A) DX-1 [1]-10.

Spells: One of these four spell packages:

1. *Arsonist*†: Create Fire, Extinguish Fire, Fast Fire, Fireball, Fireproof, Ignite Fire, Resist Fire, Shape Fire, and Slow Fire, all (H) IQ-1 [1]-11, and Flame Jet (H) IQ+1 [4]-13.
2. *Gladiator*†: Apportation, Block, Catch Missile, Deflect Missile, and Lend Energy, all (H) IQ-1 [1]-11, and Hardiness, Haste, Might, and Return Missile, all (H) IQ [2]-12.
3. *Maledict*‡: Decay, Lend Energy, Lend Vitality, Minor Healing, Pestilence, Sickness, Steal Energy, Steal Vitality, and Test Food, all (H) IQ [1]-12, and Rotting Death (VH) IQ+1 [4]-13.
4. *Spook*†: Apportation, Blur, Continual Light, Darkness, Light, Light Jet, Night Vision, Silence, and Sound, all (H) IQ-1 [1]-11, and Invisibility and Wallwalker, both (H) IQ [2]-12.

* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

† All spells include +1 for Magery 1.

‡ Must have Magery 2; all spells include +2 for Magery 2.

Customization Notes

A lower-powered magical criminal would start by losing the boost to ST or DX. He might also have a *really* dangerous Secret that could get him killed, or his Enemies might more seriously hunt him. A higher-powered magical criminal would have a higher level of Magery, making his spells more effective. Learning Recover Energy-15 (and its prerequisites) would also be a good idea; the increased FP could save his life!

ENCHANTED ITEM DEALER

125 points

Many fantasy worlds have a big demand for enchanted items, but enchanters aren't necessarily the best judges of that demand. Enchantment and entrepreneurship call on different sets of talents, and many enchanters develop their talents by obsessive behavior that leaves little time for studying the market. Thus, there's often a gap between what the mage wants to work on and what the customer is interested in buying.

In an urban market, a niche exists for an entrepreneur who bridges that gap: the enchanted item dealer. Dealers find enchanters who've made the magical item a customer needs, or customers who want the magical item an enchanter has made. They may buy newly made items for later resale, building up a stock of such items. As an adjunct to this, they may buy used items, or assess the functions and values of unidentified ones. They encourage enchanters to work on items that people want to buy, and they may also encourage people to buy new types of magical items, or even create markets for them through advertising or by selling samples to influential people. Dealers need enough magical talent and knowledge to appraise items, but they also need highly developed mercantile skills and enough wealth to afford their stock.

Attributes: ST 10 [0]; DX 10 [0]; IQ 13 [60]; HT 10 [0].

Secondary Characteristics: Damage 1d-2/1d; BL 20 lbs.; HP 10 [0]; Will 13 [0]; Per 13 [0]; FP 10 [0]; Basic Speed 5.00 [0]; Basic Move 5 [0].

Advantages: Magery 1 [15]. • Status 1 [0]‡ and Wealth (Wealthy) [20]. • A further 10 points chosen from Business Acumen 1 [10], Charisma [5/level], Claim to Hospitality (Other brokers) [5], Contacts (Business or Magical, p. 16) [Varies], Cultural Adaptability [10], Eidetic Memory [5] or Photographic Memory [10], Fashion Sense [5], Gizmos [5/gizmo], Independent Income [1/level],* Languages [Varies], Lightning Calculator [2], Merchant Rank [5/level], Reputation (Quality or reliability; Among customers, suppliers, or other brokers) [Varies], additional levels of Status [5/level], or improving Wealth (Wealthy) to (Very Wealthy) [10].

Disadvantages: -15 points chosen from among Code of Honor (Professional) [-5], Combat Paralysis [-15], Debt [-1/level],* Greed [-15†], Honesty [-10†], Jealousy [-10], Magic Susceptibility [-3/level], Miserliness [-10†], Odious Personal Habits [-5, -10, or -15], Overweight [-1], Pacifism (Reluctant Killer) [-5], Post-Combat Shakes [-5†], Selfish [-5†], Skinny [-5], Social Stigma (Second-Class Citizen) [-5], or Workaholic [-5].

Primary Skills: Merchant (A) IQ+1 [4]-14 and Occultism (A) IQ [2]-13.

Secondary Skills: Diplomacy and Finance, both (H) IQ-1 [2]-12; and Thaumatology (VH) IQ-1 [2]-12§. • Three of Administration, Connoisseur (Visual Arts), Hazardous Materials (Magical), Propaganda, Research, Smuggling, Streetwise, or Writing, all (A) IQ [2]-13; Accounting, Expert Skill (Hoplology, p. 17); or Market Analysis, all (H) IQ-1 [2]-12; Alchemy (VH) IQ-2 [2]-11; or Detect Lies (H) Per-1 [2]-12.

Background Skills: Current Affairs (Business) (E) IQ [1]-13; History (Recent-Era Magical Arts) (H) IQ-2 [1]-11; and Savoir-Faire (High Society) (E) IQ [1]-13.

Spells: Analyze Magic (H) IQ+1 [4]-14, Detect Magic (H) IQ-1 [1]-12, and Identify Spell (H) IQ-1 [1]-12. • *One* of Conceal Magic, Mage Sense, Mage Sight, or Seek Magic, all (H) IQ+1 [4]-14. • A further 4 points chosen from other spells of personal interest or utility.

- * You cannot have both Independent Income and Debt.
- † Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.
- ‡ Free from Wealth.
- § Thaumatology and all spells include +1 for Magery 1.

Customization Notes

To represent a broker who started out as an enchanter and shifted his focus to representing other enchanters, buy up Magery to Magery 2 and add spells from the Enchantment college (and their prerequisites!). Such a character might have a “studio” or “factory” devoted to turning out magical items. To make a character who is a pillar of the establishment, rather than one of its hangers-on, buy greater Wealth, Rank, Status, and other social advantages.

EXORCIST

100 points

You’re not a wizard of any kind; your role is not to command supernatural forces but to combat them. Many exorcists are priests whose churches or temples have trained them to cast out demons. Others are skilled professionals supported by fees, or even wandering adventurers (as in the anime series *Mushishi*). For both good and bad, your familiarity with supernatural beings sets you apart from other mortals.

Attributes: ST 10 [0]; DX 10 [0]; IQ 12 [40]; HT 12 [20].

Secondary Characteristics: Damage 1d-2/1d; BL 20 lbs.; HP 10 [0]; Will 14 [10]; Per 12 [0]; FP 12 [0]; Basic Speed 5.50 [0]; Basic Move 5 [0].

Advantages: 15 points chosen from among Blessed [10], Charisma [5/level], Clerical Investment [5], Higher Purpose (Oppose supernatural evil) [5], Indomitable [15], Legal Immunity [5], Magic Resistance [2/level], Patron (Religious hierarchy) [Varies], Resistant to Possession (+3) or (+8) [2 or 3] or Immunity to Possession [5], Religious Rank [5/level], Security Clearance (Records of supernatural threats) [Varies], Sensitive [5] or Empathy [15], Single-Minded [5], Social Regard (Respected) [5/level], Spirit Empathy [10], Tenure [5], or True Faith [15].

Disadvantages: -25 points chosen from among Callous [-5], Charitable [-15*], Code of Honor (Professional) [-5], Disciplines of Faith (Any) [Varies], Duty (Often Extremely Hazardous) [Varies], Enemies (Demons; Hunter) [Varies], Fanaticism [-15], Guilt Complex [-5], Nightmares [-5*], No Sense of Humor [-10], Obsession [-5* or -10*], Pacifism (Any except Total Nonviolence) [Varies], Phantom Voices [Varies], Selfless [-5*], Sense of Duty [Varies], Social Stigma (Excommunicated) [-5], Supernatural Features [Varies], Vow [Varies], or Weirdness Magnet [-15].

Primary Skills: Exorcism (H) Will+2 [12]-16 and Occultism (A) IQ+3 [12]-15.

Secondary Skills: Research (A) IQ [2]-12. • *One* of Hidden Lore (Demon Lore or Spirit Lore) (A) IQ [2]-12. • *Two* of Anthropology, Expert Skill (Thanatology), or Theology, all (H) IQ

[4]-12; Singing (E) HT+2 [4]-14; Autohypnosis (H) Will [4]-14; or Esoteric Medicine (Shamanistic) (H) Per [4]-12.

Background Skills: *One* of Shortsword, Staff, or Wrestling, all (A) DX [2]-10. • *Two* of Acting, Administration, Fast-Talk, Hazardous Materials (Magical), Interrogation, or Streetwise, all (A) IQ-1 [1]-11; Diplomacy or Religious Ritual, both (H) IQ-2 [1]-10; Intimidation or Mind Block, both (A) Will-1 [1]-13; Meditation (H) Will-2 [1]-12; or Body Language or Detect Lies, both (A) Per-1 [1]-11.

- * Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

Customization Notes

A neophyte exorcist will probably not have lower IQ, but he may have lower HT, Will, and skills, especially the primary skills. A more advanced exorcist will likely have a wider range of secondary and background skills, may well have higher IQ or Will, and could have Religious Rank and some level of Wealth. Another option for more advanced exorcists is one or more levels of Power Investiture, along with access to spells, either acquired directly, or included in a Modular Ability (see especially Spirit Trapping in *GURPS Fantasy*, p. 130). This type of character can evolve from an exorcist toward being a general-purpose sorcerer – but in doing so, he may acquire a dark Reputation or even be tempted into black magic (discussed in *GURPS Thaumatology*).

In my name they shall cast out devils.

– Mark 16:17

FORENSIC SORCERER

125 points

One of the functions of magic is to disclose secrets and make the unseen visible. You’re a professional investigator, using magical spells to find the guilty and bring them to justice. Your magic isn’t an adjunct to Forensics, but a substitute for it, with spells taking the place of laboratory techniques.

This template includes two distinct specializations. Some forensic sorcerers use magic to solve mundane crimes, along the lines of Randall Garrett’s classic *Lord Darcy* stories. Others work against criminal mages (see *Criminal Mage*, pp. 10-11), in the manner of tribal witch doctors or medieval inquisitors – but the curses and black magic they investigate are real, and their counterspells are too.

Attributes: ST 10 [0]; DX 11 [20]; IQ 13 [60]; HT 10 [0].

Secondary Characteristics: Damage 1d-2/1d; BL 20 lbs.; HP 10 [0]; Will 13 [0]; Per 13 [0]; FP 10 [0]; Basic Speed 5.25 [0]; Basic Move 5 [0].

Advantages: Magery 0 [5]. • A further 25 points chosen from among Clerical Investment [5], Combat Reflexes [15], Contacts (Street) [Varies], Cultural Adaptability [10], Eidetic Memory [5], Legal Enforcement Powers [5, 10, or 15], Magery 1 or 2 [10 or 20], Oracle [15], Police Rank [5/level], Reputation (Investigative skills; Criminals, law enforcement, or the public) [Varies], Single-Minded [5].

Disadvantages: Duty (To police force or clients; 9 or less) [-5]. • A further -25 points chosen from among Absent-Mindedness [-15], Callous [-5], Charitable [-15*], Code of Honor (Professional) [-5], Disciplines of Faith [Varies], Fanaticism [-15], Honesty [-10*], Loner [-5*], Obsession [-5* or -10*], Pacifism (Reluctant Killer) [-5], Post-Combat Shakes [-5*], Sense of Duty [Varies], Stubbornness [-5], Weirdness Magnet [-15], Workaholic [-5], or increased frequency of Duty [Varies].

Primary Skills: Criminology (A) IQ+1 [4]-14 and Savoir-Faire (Police) (E) IQ [1]-13.

Secondary Skills: Law (Native City Criminal) (H) IQ-1 [2]-12. • *Three* of Hidden Lore (Demon Lore or Spirit Lore) or Occultism, all (A) IQ [2]-13; Diagnosis, Expert Skill (Hopology, p. 17, or Thanatology), Geography (Native city), Poisons, or Theology (Comparative), all (H) IQ-1 [2]-12; Thaumatology (VH) IQ-2 [2]-11; Mind Block (A) Will [2]-13; or Search or Tracking, both (A) Per [2]-13. • *Two* of Brawling, Guns (Pistol), or Knife, all (E) DX [1]-11; or Cloak, Shortsword, Smallsword, or Staff, all (A) DX-1 [1]-10.

Background Skills: Administration (A) IQ-1 [1]-12. • *Three* of Cartography, Research, or Writing, all (A) IQ-1 [1]-12; Artist (Drawing) (H) IQ-2 [1]-11; Thaumatology (VH) IQ-3 [1]-10; or Dreaming (H) Will-2 [1]-11.

Spells: Daze, Foolishness, and Itch, all (H) IQ-2 [1]-11; and Light, Sleep, and Spasm, all (H) IQ-1 [2]-12. • *One* of these two spell packages:

1. *Curses and Malevolent Spells*†: Identify Spell (H) IQ-1 [1]-12 and Analyze Magic, Aura, Death Vision, Detect Magic, Dream Viewing, Mage Sight, Sense Mana, and Sense Spirit, all (H) IQ [2]-13.
2. *Ordinary Crimes*: Seek Earth, Sense Life, and Shape Earth, all (H) IQ-2 [1]-11; and Body-Reading, Detect Poison, Earth Vision, Glass Wall, Keen Vision, Measurement, and Test Food, all (H) IQ-1 [2]-12.

* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

† Requires Magery 1; all spell levels include +1 for Magery

1. If this specialization is chosen, raise levels of the six non-specialty spells by 1.

Customization Notes

To upgrade this template, three main routes are available: Make the investigator more of a man of action, with additional and better attack and protective spells or weapon skills. Make him impressively brilliant, with boosted IQ, Per bonuses, or Magery, and a wider range of knowledge. Make him equally skilled at solving mundane crimes and sniffing out black magic by giving him both sets of spells.

GLAMOUR GIRL

125 points

The word “glamour” originally meant magic, especially faerie magic, and attractive women are often spoken of as bewitching, charming, or enchanting. In your case, that’s literally true. Whether you were taught by older, more experienced women, or did your own research, you’ve learned magical spells to improve your appearance and influence men’s minds. Those spells are your path to wealth and influence, whether

through marriage to a powerful man, or a successful career as a diplomat, merchant, entertainer, courtesan, or model.

City life often offers women a measure of personal independence, disposable wealth, and a variety of consumer goods, including changing fashions in clothing and accessories. Puritanical settings are less likely to have glamour girls; the Compulsive Carousing disadvantage is priced for a nonpuritanical environment.

Oh, oh, it's magic

When I'm with you.

– *The Cars, “Magic”*

Attributes: ST 9 [-10]; DX 11 [20]; IQ 12 [40]; HT 11 [10].

Secondary Characteristics: Damage 1d-2/1d-1; BL 16 lbs.; HP 9 [0]; Will 12 [0]; Per 12 [0]; FP 11 [0]; Basic Speed 5.50 [0]; Basic Move 5 [0].

Advantages: Fashion Sense [5]; Magery 1 [15]; and Status 1 [5]. • A further 20 points chosen from among Alcohol Tolerance [1], Ally (Maid servant) [Varies], Appearance [Varies], Charisma [5/level], Claim to Hospitality (Relatives) [2], Clerical Investment (God of love, beauty, etc.) [5], Contact (Fashion and Decorative Arts, p. 16) [Varies], Cultural Adaptability [10], Less Sleep [2/level], Sensitive [5] or Empathy [15], Skill Bonus 1, 2, or 3 (Fortune-Telling (Dream Interpretation); Preparation Required, 10 minutes, -30%) [2, 3, or 5], Versatile [5], Voice [10], Wealth (Comfortable) [10] or (Wealthy) [20], or additional levels of Magery [10/level].

Disadvantages: -25 points chosen from Alcoholism [-15 or -20], Bully [-10*], Chummy [-5] or Gregarious [-10], Code of Honor (Professional) [-5], Combat Paralysis [-15], Compulsive Carousing [-5*], Compulsive Spending [-5*], Dependent (Maid servant or Relative, such as parent, sister, or child) [Varies], Enemies (Rival) [Varies], Jealousy [-10], Overconfidence [-5*], Pacifism (Reluctant Killer) [-5], Secret (Serious Embarrassment) [-5], Selfish [-5*], or Social Stigma (Second-Class Citizen, Woman) [-5].

Primary Skills: Savoir-Faire (High Society) (E) IQ+1 [2]-13.

Secondary Skills: Acting (A) IQ [2]-12; Occultism (A) IQ [2]-12; and Sex Appeal (A) HT+1 [4]-12.

Background Skills: Carousing (E) HT [1]-11. • *One* of Body Language or Observation (A) Per-1 [1]-11. • *Two* of Sewing (E) DX+1 [2]-12; Dancing or Riding (Horse) (A) DX [2]-11; Current Affairs (High Culture, People, Popular Culture, Regional, or Travel), or Games (Any) (E) IQ+1 [2]-13; Connoisseur (Any), Fortune-Telling (Dream Interpretation), Holdout, Poetry, or Public Speaking (A) IQ [2]-12; Artist (Body Art, Calligraphy, Drawing, Illusion, or Painting), Musical Instrument (Any), or Pharmacy (Herbal), all (H) IQ-1 [2]-11; or Singing (E) HT+1 [2]-12.

Spells†: Aura, Clean, Colors, Daze, Detect Magic, Fascinate, Garble, Light, No-Smell, Odor, Purify Air, Restore, Sense Foes, Silence, Simple Illusion, Sound, and Voices, all (H) IQ-1 [1]-11, and Converse, Dye, Illusion Disguise, Perfume, Persuasion, and Sense Emotion, all (H) IQ [2]-12.

* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

† All spells include +1 for Magery 1.

Customization Notes

This template can be turned into a conventional “adventuring” template with another 25 points of advantages and skills that emphasize stealth and concealment, along with a combat skill or two. Another option is to raise IQ or Magery for more reliable spell use. It’s also appropriate to increase Wealth and Status. One way to make the template cost less is to substitute Power Investiture (god of love, beauty, etc.) for Magery and eliminate the unglamorous 1-point spells that are only listed to meet the prerequisites of other spells.

It’s possible to redesign this template by dropping the spells, replacing them with the Enthrallment skills (pp. B191-192) and Charisma. The GM may allow players to get creative about prerequisites, substituting Dancing, Sex Appeal, or Singing for Public Speaking. Musical Influence can be used in the same way with Singing or a musical instrument.

Another option would be an actress, dancer, or singer who relies on her magic to advance her career. Give such a character professional skills such as Dancing, Makeup, Musical Instrument, Performance, or Singing. Enthrallment and Musical Influence are plausible for this type of character, too, as natural talents or secret arts passed on from performer to performer.

POTION SELLER

125 points

You’re a specialist in magically effective preparations such as potions and powders, whether made from rare imported ingredients or from herbs gleaned in nearby fields. The biggest market for your products is in the city, so that’s where you have your shop. As a byproduct of your magical skills, you also know a fair bit about nonmagical chemistry and physiology. Depending on the laws of your society, you may hang out your sign openly or work in secret.

Attributes: ST 10 [0]; DX 10 [0]; IQ 14 [80]; HT 10 [0].

Secondary Characteristics: Damage 1d-2/1d; BL 20 lbs.; HP 10 [0]; Will 14 [0]; Per 14 [0]; FP 10 [0]; Basic Speed 5.00 [0]; Basic Move 5 [0].

Advantages: 25 points chosen from among Acute Taste and Smell [2/level], Ally (Co-worker or apprentice) [Varies], Claim to Hospitality (Other guild members) [2], Clerical Investment [5], Contacts (Scholarly or Street) [Varies], Gad-geteer [25], Gizmos [5/gizmo], Green Thumb [5/level], Higher Purpose (Any medical or spiritual goal) [5], Longevity [2], Reputation (Scholar or Wonder worker) [Varies], Resistant to Poison or a single type of poison (+3) or (+8) [Varies] or Immunity to Poison [15], Single-Minded [5], Versatile [5], or Wealth (Comfortable) [10] or (Wealthy) [20].

Disadvantages: -15 points chosen from among Absent-Mindedness [-15], Code of Honor (Professional) [-5], Combat Paralysis [-15], Compulsive Debating (*GURPS Fantasy*, p. 219) [-5*], Curious [-5*], Distinctive Feature (Burn scar) [-1], Enemies (Rival alchemist) [Varies], Greed [-15*], Jealousy [-10], Miserliness [-10*], Missing Digit [-2 or -5], No Sense of Humor [-10], Obsession [-5* or -10*], Overconfidence [-5*], Pacifism (Reluctant Killer) [-5], Reputation (Fraud) [Varies], Social Stigma (Second-Class Citizen) [-5], Wealth (Struggling) [-10], or Workaholic [-5].

Primary Skills: One of these two skill packages:

1. Alchemy (VH) IQ+2 [16]-16.
2. Naturalist (H) IQ [4]-14 and Herb Lore (VH) IQ+1 [12]-15.

Secondary Skills: Merchant, Occultism, and Research, all (A) IQ-1 [1]-13. • One of Administration, Politics, or Streetwise, all (A) IQ-1 [1]-13.

Background Skills: Chemistry (H) IQ-2 [1]-12; Hazardous Materials (Magical) (A) IQ-1 [1]-13; and Pharmacy (Herbal or Synthetic) (H) IQ-2 [1]-12. • Two of Liquid Projector (Flamethrower, Sprayer, or Squirt Gun) (E) DX [1]-10; Professional Skill (Glassblowing) (A) DX+1 [4]-11; Gardening (E) IQ [1]-14; Explosives (Fireworks), Prospecting, Smith (Any), or Teaching, all (A) IQ-1 [1]-13; Artist (Pottery), Astronomy, Cryptography, Expert Skill (Natural Philosophy), Jewelry, Metallurgy, Physiology, or Poisons, all (H) IQ-2 [1]-12; Weird Science (VH) IQ-3 [1]-11; Scrounging (E) Per [1]-14; Survival (Any land environment) (A) Per-1 [1]-13; or Esoteric Medicine (H) Per-2 [1]-12.

Techniques: 10 points to buy elixir techniques (*GURPS Magic*, p. 210) or simply raise Alchemy or Herb Lore [4/level].

* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

Customization Notes

To create a journeyman potion seller who still has to consult formularies for everything, drop IQ to a lower value and get rid of most or all of the techniques. One way to get a more expensive template is to treat alchemy as a spiritual path: Take Trained by a Master, Disciplines of Faith, Meditation skill, and additional skills chosen from Body Control, Breath Control, Erotic Art (for alchemists who practice with a suitable partner), Mental Strength, Pressure Points, and Pressure Secrets. Another option, for a potion seller whose studies have achieved a major success, is Unaging.



STREET WIZARD

100 points

Unlike most wizards in fantasy, you didn’t go to school to learn magic. An older mage took you in hand and taught you the spells he knew. You may have worked out a few on your own, by trial and error, without understanding the theory. If magic is regulated in your city, you’re not licensed to practice it, and you can’t officially charge fees or sue people for nonpayment. You cast spells for cash in hand, or as a favor to powerful people. The officially recognized mages would be unhappy with you if they caught you, so you make a point of being inconspicuous. You may cast many your spells for other people who want to be equally inconspicuous.

The majority of your spells have no prerequisites; you don’t get much chance to learn advanced spells.

Attributes: ST 10 [0]; DX 11 [20]; IQ 12 [40]; HT 10 [0].

Secondary Characteristics: Damage 1d-2/1d; BL 20 lbs.; HP 10 [0]; Will 12 [0]; Per 12 [0]; FP 10 [0]; Basic Speed 5.25 [0]; Basic Move 5 [0].

Advantages: Magery 1 [15]. • A further 15 points chosen from among Claim to Hospitality (Friends from the street) [2], Contacts (Street) [Varies], Danger Sense [15], Eidetic Memory [5], Reputation (Skill or Reliability) [Varies], Sensitive [5] or Empathy [15], Smooth Operator 1 [15], Social Chameleon [5], Temperature Tolerance [1/level], Unfazeable [15], or an additional level of Magery [10].

Disadvantages: Struggling [-10]. • A further -15 points chosen from among Callous [-5], Charitable [-15*], Code of Honor (A deal is a deal) [-5], Enemies (Legal mages; Hunter) [Varies], Flashbacks [Varies], Impulsiveness [-10*], Laziness [-10], Loner [-5*], Sense of Duty (Friends, neighbors, or other small group) [-5], Social Stigma (Criminal Record or Second-Class Citizen) [-5] or (Minority Group) [-10], Status [-5/level], Stubbornness [-5], Weirdness Magnet [-15], Xenophilia [-10*], or Wealth [Varies].

Primary Skills: Occultism (A) IQ+1 [4]-13 and Streetwise (A) IQ+1 [4]-13.

Secondary Skills: Area Knowledge (Neighborhood or City) (E) IQ [1]-12; Brawling (E) DX [1]-11; Holdout (A) IQ-1 [1]-11; Observation (A) Per [2]-12; and Stealth (A) DX [2]-11. • One of Detect Lies (H) Per-1 [2]-11 or Intimidation (A) Will [2]-12.

Background Skills: Scrounging (E) Per [1]-12 and Urban Survival (A) Per-1 [1]-11. • Two of Guns (Pistol), Knife, Thrown Weapon (Knife or Shuriken), all (E) DX [1]-11; or Cloak, Shortsword, Smallsword, or Staff, all (A) DX-1 [1]-10.

Spells†: Lend Energy (H) IQ+1 [4]-13. • Four of Apportation, Block, Climbing, Detect Magic, Find Direction, Foolishness, Haste, Ignite Fire, Itch, Keen (Sense), Light, Magelock, Purify Air, Seek Earth, Seek Food, Seek Fuel, Seek Water, Sense Foes, Sense Life, Simple Illusion, or Test Food, all (H) IQ [2]-12. • Two of Aura, Body-Reading, Continual Light, Daze, Decay, Deflect Missile, Extinguish Fire, Illusion Disguise, Jump, Locksmith, Poltergeist, Purify Water, Recover Energy, Restore, Seek Magic, Sense Danger, Spasm, Stench, and Wallwalker, all (H) IQ-1 [1]-11.

* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

† All spells include +1 for Magery 1. Make sure all prerequisites for the second set of choices are met by the first set!

Customization Notes

One variation on this template is the wizard who did get formally trained, but then disgraced himself in some way. He was expelled from school, had his guild membership revoked, or otherwise was thrown on his own resources.

THAUMATOLOGICAL SCHOLAR

100 points

You are to practicing mages what a theoretical physicist is to engineers: You work out the basic principles that their spells and enchantments apply. You don't actually cast many spells yourself; the actual magic you know is limited to spells that provide you with new knowledge. Nonetheless, you're the consultant working mages go to when they discover something new and hard to figure out.

Attributes: ST 10 [0]; DX 10 [0]; IQ 15 [100]; HT 10 [0].

Secondary Characteristics: Damage 1d-2/1d; BL 20 lbs.; HP 10 [0]; Will 15 [0]; Per 12 [-15]; FP 10 [0]; Basic Speed 5.00 [0]; Basic Move 5 [0].

Advantages: Magery 1 [15]. • A further 10 points chosen from among Claim to Hospitality (Universities) [5], Clerical Investment [5], Contacts (Academic, p. 16) [Varies], Cultural Adaptability [10], Eidetic Memory [5] or Photographic Memory [10], Higher Purpose (Advancing knowledge) [5], Language [Varies], Language Talent [10], Legal Immunity [5], Longevity [2], Patrons [Varies], Single-Minded [5], Status 1 [5], Tenure [5], Wealth (Comfortable) [10], or an additional level of Magery [10].

Disadvantages: Code of Honor (Professional) [-5]. • A further -25 points chosen from among Absent-Mindedness [-15], Bad Sight (Nearsighted) [-25],* Bad Temper [-10†], Bully [-10†], Clueless [-10], Combat Paralysis [-15], Curious [-5†], Disciplines of Faith (Monasticism) [-10], Duty (Non-hazardous) [Varies], Enemies (Watcher or Rival) [Varies], Jealousy [-10], Loner [-5†], Oblivious [-5], Obsession [-5† or -10†], Overconfidence [-5†], Pacifism (Reluctant Killer) [-5], Secret (Scholarly dishonesty; Serious Embarrassment or Utter Rejection) [-5 or -10], Sense of Duty (Students) [-5], Shyness [-5, -10, or -20], Truthfulness [-5†], Unfit [-5] or Very Unfit [-15], Wealth (Struggling) [-10], Weirdness Magnet [-15], or Workaholic [-5].

Primary Skills: Research (A) IQ+1 [4]-16 and Thaumatology (VH) IQ [4]-15‡.

Secondary Skills: Two of Administration, Public Speaking, Teaching, or Writing, all (A) IQ-1 [1]-14.

Background Skills: Occultism (A) IQ-1 [1]-14. • Two of Connoisseur (Rare Books) or Speed-Reading, both (A) IQ-1 [1]-14; Archaeology, Cryptography, Expert Skill (Thanatology), History (Magical Arts), Linguistics, Philosophy, Symbol Drawing, or Theology, all (H) IQ-2 [1]-13; or Alchemy or Herb Lore, both (VH) IQ-3 [1]-12.

Spells‡: Detect Magic (H) IQ-1 [1]-14. • One of these two spell packages:

1. *Ancient Magic:* History (H) IQ [2]-15, Seeker (H) IQ-1 [1]-14, and Trace (H) IQ-1 [1]-14. • Two of Seek Air, Seek Earth, Seek Fire, Seek Food, Seek Machine, Seek Plant, or Seek Water, all (H) IQ-1 [1]-14.
2. *Cutting-Edge Magic:* Analyze Magic (H) IQ+1 [4]-16, Identify Spell (H) IQ-1 [1]-14, and Sense Mana (H) IQ-1 [1]-14.

* -10 if spectacles are available.

† Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

‡ Thaumatology and all spells include +1 for Magery 1.

Customization Notes

The simplest way to upgrade this template is to add more spells, including some practical spells. Alternatively, take a narrowly focused set of spells, including some rare and advanced spells; maybe this particular thaumatologist is the world's greatest expert on fire magic or necromancy.

A specialist in ancient magic may have skills suited to exploring ruins in remote places, including Survival, Traps, one or more movement skills, and possibly some combat skills.

For a less powerful variant, lower IQ, to produce an instructor in basic thaumatology at a monastery, boarding school, or community college.

URBAN SHAMAN

125 points

Urban shamans speak to the city, and it speaks back. They are not necessarily mages, nor do they speak to spirits, other than the spirit of the city itself. Instead, they communicate with the city in part (buildings, pigeons) or in totality, and gain its protection. Many of this template's abilities are bought as spirit powers; see *GURPS Powers* and *GURPS Thaumatology* for more information on spirit-based powers.

Attributes: ST 10 [0]; DX 11 [20]; IQ 11 [20]; HT 12 [20].

Secondary Characteristics: Damage 1d-2/1d; BL 20 lbs.; HP 10 [0]; Will 13 [10]; Per 13 [10]; FP 12 [0]; Basic Speed 5.75 [0]; Basic Move 5 [0].

Advantages: Street Smarts 2 (p. 17) [20]. • A further 15 points chosen from among Ally (Spirits) [Varies], Animal Empathy (Only city animals, -30%; Spirit Power, -25%) [3], Auto-trance [1], Blessed (Spirit Power, -25%) [8], Chameleon 2 or 4 (Only in cities, -30%; Spirit Power, -25%) [5 or 9], Channeling (Spirit of the city only, -40%; Spirit Power, -25%) [4]; Contacts (Spirits, p. 16) [Varies], Danger Sense (Only in cities, -30%; Spirit Power, -25%) [7], Fearlessness [2/level], Night Vision [1/level], Oracle (Only in and only dealing with cities, -40%; Spirit Power, -25%) [6], Psychometry (Only in and only dealing with cities, -40%; Spirit Power, -25%) [7], Racial Memory (Passive; Deceased residents of home city, not genetic ancestors; Spirit Power, -25%) [12], Reputation (Among spirits) [Varies]; Resistant to Pollution (+3; Spirit Power, -25%) or (+8; Spirit Power, -25%) [4 or 6], Signature Gear (Ritual or enchanted items) [Varies], Silence 2 or 4 (Only in cities, -30%; Spirit Power, -25%) [5 or 9], Speak With Animals (Only city animals, -30%; Spirit Power, -25%) [12], Temperature Tolerance 4 (Only in cities, -30%; Spirit Power, -25%) [2], True Faith [15], or Unfazeable [15].

Disadvantages: -20 points in disadvantages, one of which must be Disciplines of Faith (Ritualism or other, but not Monasticism!) [-5, -10, or -15], and the rest chosen from among Addiction (Hallucinogen or other) [Varies], Berserk

[-10*], Compulsive Vowing [-5*], Flashbacks (Possibly of "racial" memories) [-5, -10, or -20], Intolerance (Non-city people, or people from outside *your* city or neighborhood) [-5 or -10], Neurological Disorder [Varies], No Sense of Humor [-10], Odious Personal Habits [-5 to -15], Phantom Voices [-5 to -15], Phobia (Wilderness) [-10*], Selfless [-5*], Sense of Duty (City residents) [-10], Status [-5/level], Trade-mark [Varies], Trickster [-15*], Vow [-5 to -15], or Wealth (Struggling or Poor) [-10 or -15].

Primary Skills: Area Knowledge (City) (E) IQ+4 [4]-15†; Occultism (A) IQ+1 [4]-12; Streetwise (A) IQ+3 [4]-14†; and Urban Survival (A) Per+3 [4]-16†.

Secondary Skills: Five of Area Knowledge (Spirit World) (E) IQ+1 [2]-12; Current Affairs/TL (City) (E) IQ+3 [2]-14†; Architecture, Fast-Talk, Hidden Lore (Urban Secrets), Professional Skill (Urban Planning), or Teaching, all (A) IQ [2]-11; Shadowing (A) IQ+2 [2]-13†; Expert Skill (Expert Skill (Urban Studies, p. 17) or Hypnotism, both (H) IQ-1 [2]-10; or Autohypnosis (H) Will-1 [2]-12.

Background Skills: Four of Administration (A) IQ-1 [1]-10; Body Language (A) Per-1 [1]-12; Detect Lies (H) Per-2 [1]-11; Exorcism (H) Will-2 [1]-11; Law (City) (H) IQ [1]-11†; Meditation (H) Will-2 [1]-11; Merchant (A) IQ+1 [1]-12†; Mind Block (A) Will-1 [1]-12; or Scrounging (E) Per+2 [1]-15†.

* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

† Includes +2 from Street Smarts (p. 17).

Customization Notes

A less capable urban shaman would have a lower level of Street Smarts or possibly none at all. His IQ wouldn't drop, but his DX and HT might be lower. He also should have no more than one spirit-granted advantage.

A more advanced urban shaman could have a long list of such advantages, and at higher levels. He might even have Modular Abilities based on being able to talk the spirit of the city into doing him favors. Look at increased social advantages as well; a highly developed shaman ought to be able to make his spiritual insights pay off in the mortal world.

ADVANTAGES

In campaigns set in cities, a few advantages could have new variants.

Contacts

see p. B44-45

In an urban-magic campaign, some new types of Contacts may come into play.

Academic: Professors, lecturers, graduate students, librarians, and high-school teachers can be sources of knowledge. It's often convenient to have them provide Research, but a specialist may instead be skilled in one science or scholarly discipline. In a fantasy campaign, this can be Occultism or Thaumatology! A high school teacher or graduate student has effective skill 12. An untenured college instructor or librarian has skill 15. A full professor or research librarian has skill 18. A world-famous scholar has skill 21.

Fashion and Decorative Arts: This person can provide consultation on questions of style, create clothing or accessories, or perform personal grooming. A hairdresser or seamstress who can work quickly and on short notice has effective skill 12. A skilled craftsman or stylist has effective skill 15. A designer who's known for original creations, and has skilled craftsmen working for him, has effective skill 18. A designer whose clientele is made up of aristocrats, millionaires, or people at the cutting edge of fashion has effective skill 21.

Magical: A magical Contact is someone who knows how to cast a particular spell; the effective skill for such a Contact is his effective level with the spell. A magical Contact always counts as having supernatural talents! Naturally, such a Contact will know more than one spell. The spell for which he's taken as a Contact will be normally an unusual one that he happens to have learned. For an enchanted item dealer (pp. 11-12), Contacts will often be enchanters; their effective

skill will apply to both Enchant and a particular spell that they use it with. Another useful sort of Contact provides Share Energy, allowing the casting of more powerful spells.

Spirits: A spirit Contact always counts as having supernatural talents! It may be able to provide a variety of useful knowledge, including Fortune-Telling (below) or Hidden Lore; or it may be able to cast a specific spell. Bribery should take the form of sacrificial offerings (including hell money, p. 8) rather than cash. Effective skill is a measure of a spirit's place in whatever supernatural hierarchy it belongs to. At the GM's option, a spirit Contact may provide the equivalent of Racial Memory (Active), but only for its own single lifespan; treat it as having "effective IQ" for this purpose rather than effective skill.

Reputation

see pp. B26-28

A client of a sacrificial brokerage (see p. 8) who maintains a good balance is likely to be viewed favorably by gods and spirits, both because he's visibly pious and because he's in a position to make offerings to them. This may help him in minor dealings with the supernatural world. Treat this as a Reputation, giving a positive reaction modifier, usually with a large class of beings (all gods and spirits), with a frequency of recognition based on how well known the brokerage is.

Skill Bonus

see p. B452

Diviners may buy ritual "Talent" for a single Fortune-Telling specialty at 2 points/level, maximum three levels. They must

Sacrificial Balance

This is a specialized application of *Trading Points for Money* (p. B26). *GURPS Fantasy* equates 1 HP of sacrifice to 20% of starting wealth for a campaign. Spending 1 character point buys 10% of starting wealth, so 2 character points buys 1 HP of positive balance with a sacrificial brokerage.

also take some level of Preparation Required (p. B114). See *Fortune-Telling*, below.

Talent

see p. B89

A new talent may be useful in urban campaigns, both for supernatural practitioners and for ordinary citizens.

Street Smarts: Area Knowledge (City), Current Affairs/TL (City), Law (City), Merchant, Panhandling, Scrounging, Shadowing, Streetwise, Tracking (only in cities), and Urban Survival. *Reaction bonus:* Other street operators. *Notes:* For the skills that require specialization (Area Knowledge, Current Affairs, and Law), the bonus only applies for cities you've lived in or studied specifically and extensively. When you live in a new city, the bonus begins to apply after six months, minus a number of months equal to the level of your Street Smart talent. *10 points/level.*

SKILLS

The following new skill variants may be available in some campaigns.

Connoisseur

see p. B185

A new specialty of Connoisseur is Fashion. This defaults to Jeweler, Professional Skill (Hairdresser), and Sewing at -3. In societies where body art is a mark of high rather than low Status, add Artist (Body Art) to that list. Among other uses, this skill provides benefits similar to those of Fashion Sense with a successful skill roll – but not for outfits thrown together from cheap or scrounged materials; you have to pay for your clothes, accessories, and grooming! Especially useful to glamour girls (pp. 13-14).

Expert Skill

see pp. B193-194

Two new versions of this ability appear in some templates in this volume or might be useful for urban characters.

Hopology: The study of how people fight, this skill seeks to classify weapons and fighting styles by their origins and capabilities. Can replace Anthropology, Psychology, or Sociology to

identify forms of combative behavior; Archaeology, Geography, or History to answer questions about a weapon or style; and Armoury or Connoisseur (Weapons) to identify a weapon. See *GURPS Martial Arts* (p. 56) for further information.

Urban Studies: The study of cities as physical and social entities. Can substitute for Administration, Architecture, Economics, Engineer (Civil), Geography, History, Law, and Sociology to answer questions about the structure and operation of cities – but not to design, build, or manage them.

Fortune-Telling

see p. B196

As discussed in *GURPS Fantasy*, some forms of fortune-telling may provide real knowledge of the future, distant events, or hidden truths. This uses the same skill roll as for psychologically manipulative fortune-telling, but entirely different modifiers. A supernaturally effective fortune-teller must take from one to three levels of Skill Bonus at 2 points/level (see p. B452), with some level of Preparation Required, representing the time required to concentrate on the question. Use the long-distance modifiers for information spells (p. B241). For attempts to look into the past or future, substitute *years* for *miles* (as discussed on p. B176).

CHAPTER THREE

NEW MAGICAL ARTS

Specialist mages in cities may devote themselves to various unusual magical arts. Here are some examples. Most of them

either affect the urban environment, or draw on it as a resource for working magic.

LAPIDISM

Lapidism is the art of shaping precious and semi-precious stones to generate magical effects. It's based on the same idea as the use of precious metals as mana conductors or enhancers: Economic value is not a convention of the market, but reflects an underlying magical quality of preciousness.

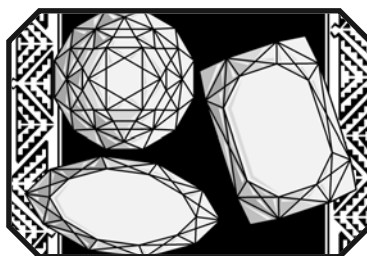
All enchanters make some use of lapidism, but in some worlds, it may be fully developed as a magical art in its own right. If so, lapidists will tend to set up shop in cities, for the same reasons that mundane jewelers do: customers with more money to spend; easier access to supplies and raw materials; and more protection from robbery.

As a self-sufficient art, lapidism's key skill is Symbol Drawing (Gemcutting). (These rules are based on Symbol Magic, *GURPS Thaumatology*, pp. 168-177.) To use it, first check whether the stone is magically aspected to any particular spell or category of spells. This depends partly on the kind of stone it is and partly on the nuances of its crystalline structure. The GM should adjust associations to fit his preferred setting. For example, diamonds could have at least a +1 Air aspect, emeralds a +1 Earth aspect, rubies a +1 Fire aspect, and sapphires a +1 Water aspect. *GURPS Magic* (p. 222) and *GURPS Thaumatology* (pp. 99, 240-241, and 247-248) provide several different and more detailed lists.

A Research roll can identify known aspects for various kinds of stones. A divination roll based on Jeweler skill (see *Urban Divination*, pp. 23-24) can reveal aspects unique to the stone. Any success identifies a predisposition to one college. For each 2 points of success, an additional +1 to a specific spell of that college is revealed; the GM gets to pick the spell. At the GM's discretion, each 5 points of success may instead grant an additional +1 to an entire college.

Now the stone has to be shaped into a permanent magic item associated with a particular spell. This requires at least three skill rolls and the usual energy investment for an enchantment. The effect must be defined in terms of the Words of symbol magic, as discussed in *GURPS Magic* and *GURPS Thaumatology*. One roll is required against the lesser of Symbol Drawing (Gemcutting) and each Word that defines the

spell; a spell must be defined by at least two Words. In addition, a roll against Jeweler is needed to do the physical cutting properly. The aspect of the stone for a college helps with the Word of that college. Both the college aspect and the aspect of the stone for a specific spell help with the Symbol Drawing roll. Neither helps with the Jeweler roll, but if the lapidist is willing to spend extra time in ritual preparations, he can roll against Jeweler as if it were Fortune-Telling (p. 17) with supernatural Skill Bonuses (p. 17) for the cutting of the stone, intuitively sensing the proper shape for it.



If all these rolls succeed, the stone is now usable to cast the spell. This casting requires a roll against the lowest of Symbol Drawing skill and skill with any of the Words to which the stone is attuned.

Example: Ali ibn Mahmud is a professional gemcutter with a private interest in the magical arts. He has the skills of Jeweler-15,

Research-11, and Symbol Drawing (Gemcutting)-14. He also has a +1 bonus to Jeweler for divining the magical powers of a stone. When he comes into possession of a topaz, a Research roll of 10 reveals that topaz gives +1 to Mind Control spells. In addition, a Jeweler+1 roll of 14 shows that this particular topaz gives +1 to Communication and Empathy spells and identifies a spell to which it can give an extra +1: Hide Emotion. Ali has never learned the symbol Control, but he has Protect-14 and Mind-12. He decides to make this into a talisman of Hide Emotion. He has to roll against both Words, because Protect is equal to Symbol Drawing and Mind is less. He gets +2 to both rolls. Taking time to attune himself to the stone's inner structure gives him +1 to Jeweler. All three rolls succeed, and for an energy cost of 200 (taking 200 days as Slow and Sure enchantment), he creates a gem that lets the wearer cast Hide Emotion-12. He notifies his regular customer, the vizier – also a student of the mystic arts with the skill of Symbol Drawing – of his creation.

LEY LINE SPELLS

GURPS Fantasy (p. 45) and *GURPS Thaumatology* (p. 53) discuss ley lines: invisible lines of higher-than-normal mana connecting high mana or very high mana areas, and forming boundaries between regions of differently aspected mana.

Ley lines have an Intensity rating, which determines how much of an effect they have on their surroundings. For naturally occurring ley lines, Intensity ranges from 1 to 6 (select an appropriate number or roll 1d to determine). Most ley lines link sites of high mana; sites of very high mana may be connected by *megalines*, which have much stronger effects and are more dangerous to interact with (see *Ley Tap*, p. 20).

Ley lines are naturally aspected to movement; see *Ley Lines and Travel* (pp. 37-38). This may include teleportation, at the GM's option; see *Teleportation* (pp. 37-38) and *Interdimensional Portals* (pp. 38-39). Most ley lines are about the width of a path or road, from 18" for the smallest to over 12' for the largest.

Given the usefulness of ley lines, magical civilizations may not be satisfied with the existing ones; they may want to create new ones. Two approaches to this are possible; the GM may choose one or allow both.

First, a spell for this purpose may be available (see *Ley Line Creation*, p. 21). Second, new ley lines can be created with the methods of sacred architecture (pp. 21-23), reshaping the land to generate natural paths for the flow of mana. Use the standard methods, except that the builder rolls against Symbol Drawing (Sacred Architecture) and Engineer (Civil). The new ley line must link two sites of high or very high mana, either natural or deliberately created with sacred architecture. Difficulty increases with distance; apply the long-distance modifiers (p. B241) based on the length of the ley line to the Symbol Drawing roll.

The Ley Lines college may be considered either a new independent college, or a subcollege of the Meta-Spells college, as the GM prefers. It includes the following spells. At the GM's discretion, these spells may be assigned to existing colleges, in addition to or instead of the Ley Lines college.

Seek Ley Line

Information

Tells the caster the direction and approximate distance to the nearest ley line – specifically, to the nearest point on that line. Use the long-distance modifiers. The caster may exclude already known ley lines before casting the spell.

If cast within close range of a ley line, the spell reveals the line's Intensity (see above) and the aspect, if any, of the mana to either side of it. Use a distance modifier of -1 per yard from the ley line.

May also be treated as a Knowledge spell.

Cost: 3.

Time to cast: 10 seconds.

Prerequisites: Magery 1.

Item

A sliver of lodestone, suspended to turn freely or embedded in a forked stick. *Energy cost to create:* 150.

Ley Speech

Information

Enables the subject, while on a ley line, to use it for communication at a distance. Despite its name, Ley Speech works for any sound the subject makes, with his own body or with whatever equipment he is carrying. The caster specifies the person who is to hear the sounds; that person is treated as a secondary subject. If both subjects are on the ley line, use the long-distance modifier (p. B241) for the distance between them. If not, the spell automatically fails.

When the spell is cast, the secondary subject's ability to hear the primary subject requires a Hearing roll; in place of the standard range modifiers for Hearing (p. B358), use the long-distance modifiers. Apply a modifier of +1 or -1 for each step the sound being transmitted is above or below normal conversation on the Hearing Distance Table (p. B358). Simpler sounds can be resolved at greater range; any rhythmic sound such as drumbeats or Morse code gives +5 to Hearing rolls, shouted single words give +2, conversation is unmodified, and musical performance or whispers give -5.

For two-way conversation, the spell must be cast a second time, with the primary and secondary subjects interchanged. The same or a different mage can do this.

May also be treated as a Sound spell.

Duration: Duration of message, as spoken by caster.

Cost: 1 per minute of message duration.

Time to cast: 10 seconds.

Prerequisites: Seek Ley Line and Voices.

Item

(a) Jewelry or musical instrument – or, at higher TLs, a radio or mobile telephone. *Energy cost to create:* 150. (b) Matching floor material, floor covers, or seats. When activated from either end, sounds at both locations are audible as if from the same relative distance. *Energy cost to create:* 500 for the pair.

Ley Running

Regular

If the subject is running along a ley line, this spell lets him regain FP equal to the ley line's Intensity each minute – but only to counter fatigue due to the exertion of running. On an Intensity 1 ley line, paced running can be sustained as long as the spell holds out. On an Intensity 4 ley line, sprinting can be sustained as long as the spell holds out. A sprinter gains partial benefit from an Intensity 1-3 line, but over time, he'll accumulate fatigue from failed HT rolls in excess of the Intensity.

May also be treated as a Body Control or Movement spell.

Duration: 10 minutes.

Cost: 2 to cast. 1 to maintain.

Time to cast: 1 minute.

Prerequisites: Seek Ley Line and Haste.

Item

Jewelry or footwear. *Energy cost to create:* 900.

Ley Float

Regular

Enables any one solid vehicle or structure to hover above the ground of a ley line. Maximum weight supported, in tons, equals the square of the Intensity of the ley line. While hovering, the vehicle is not affected by terrain, and it can be towed at unencumbered movement speed. However, it still has inertia! Determine the encumbered movement speed for carrying its full weight; this is how much its speed can increase in one second. Getting it up to full speed thus may take a number of seconds.

May also be treated as a Movement spell.

Duration: 10 minutes.

Cost: 2 to cast. 1 to maintain.

Time to cast: 1 minute.

Prerequisites: Seek Ley Line and Apportation.

Item

Staff or wand. Usable only by mages; the item must touch or point at the subject. *Energy cost to create:* 1,200.

Ley Vehicle

Regular

This spell propels a vehicle along a ley line. It includes the effects of Ley Float.

Vehicles that already support their weight through aerodynamic or aerostatic lift (aircraft), buoyancy (water vehicles), ground/surface effects (hovercraft), or levitation (maglev) must fall within 10 times the Ley Float weight limit; e.g., up to 360 tons for Intensity 6. They gain Move equal to the lesser of the caster's skill with the spell and with Shiphandling (Ship) on water, Driving (Hovercraft) on land, or Shiphandling (Airship) in the air. Halve this Move on water; double it in the air.

Other vehicles – notably conventional land vehicles and vehicles that rely on but have lost powered lift – must fall within the usual Ley Float weight limit; e.g., up to 36 tons for Intensity 6. Find Move as above, but the limit is always the lesser of spell skill and Driving (Hovercraft).

Also counts as a Movement spell and a Technological spell.

Duration: 10 minutes.

Cost: 3 to cast. 2 to maintain.

Time to cast: 1 minute.

Prerequisites: Ley Float and Ley Running.

Item

Steering wheel, tiller, or other controls built into the vehicle. *Energy cost to create:* 1,500. *Energy cost to reinstall in a new vehicle:* 200.

Ley Tap

Regular

This spell enables energy to be drawn from a ley line for use in casting and maintaining spells. Casting the spell creates an energy reserve equal to the Intensity of the ley line (see p. 19). The energy is replenished every minute for a normal ley line,

or every second for a megaline. Once cast, the spell continues to supply energy until the caster loses consciousness or moves out of range of the ley line. It's a useful trick to cast this spell just before casting Ley Running!

Ley Tap is cast at a penalty equal to distance from the ley line in yards, like any Regular spell. If it succeeds, the margin of success is the *additional* distance in yards the caster can move from the ley line without cutting off the flow of mana.

Using energy from a megaline is hazardous; treat any spell cast with such energy as if it had been cast in a very high mana area – that is, any failure counts as a critical failure, and a rolled critical failure produces a memorable disaster.

Ley Taps that are less than six feet apart interfere with each other, like Powerstones (see *GURPS Magic*, p. 69).

May also be treated as a Meta-Spell.

Cost: 1 to cast. None to maintain.

Prerequisites: Seek Ley Line.

Item

Ley Tap may be added to any enchanted item; when the item is used *on* (not *near*) a ley line, it draws its energy from the line. If combined with Lend Power, a ley line can produce a steady stream of (Intensity × 6) kW, or (Intensity × 360) kW for a megaline. *Energy cost to create:* 1,000.

Ley Buffer

Regular

Only useful if cast before casting Ley Tap. If performed on a normal ley line, the spell has no effect. If cast on a megaline, the spell allows energy to be drawn from it at the same rate as if it were a normal line and with no enhanced risk of critical failure.

May also be treated as a Meta-Spell.

Duration: 1 minute.

Cost: 1 to cast. 1 to maintain.

Prerequisites: Ley Tap and Magery 1.

Ley Supply

Special

Feeds magical energy into a ley line to boost Intensity temporarily. This works best if the energy source can be kept in operation over the long term: ceremonial circle, machine (see *The Mechanical Equivalent of Magic*, p. 26), etc. The supplied energy increases the line's Intensity above its natural value out as far as the nearest Ley Tap; Ley Taps draw off extra Intensity before affecting natural Intensity. If the nearest Ley Tap doesn't use all the added Intensity,

the line enjoys a smaller Intensity boost beyond that point.

Also counts as a Meta-Spell.

Duration: 1 minute.

Cost: 1 per point of supplied Intensity. Same to maintain.

Prerequisites: Ley Tap and either Lend Energy or Minor Draw Power (p. 26).



Ley Line Creation

Enchantment

Permanently creates a new ley line. This must link two points of high or very high mana; if either point has very high mana, the result is a megaline. The points may be natural or created with sacred architecture or the Mana Enhancer advantage. Use long-distance modifiers based on the sum of the distances to the two points being linked. A critical failure when

creating a megaline is treated like a critical failure in a very high mana area. The spell cannot be dispelled once successfully cast, but casting Suspend Mana on either endpoint halts the ley line effects, and Drain Mana destroys the line.

Also counts as an Enchantment spell and a Meta-Spell.

Energy cost to cast: 360 per level of Intensity.

Prerequisites: Ley Supply, Enchant, and Magery 3.

RATPIPING

Ratpipers practice a specialized form of magic: the use of music to control the behavior of animals, especially vermin. Despite the traditional name, they don't all play pipes; any instrument small enough to carry while marching or dancing will serve. A whimsical GM is welcome to confront adventurers with the spectacle of a sousaphonist marching down the highway followed by a crowd of rats!

In *GURPS* terms, this is a ritual magic Path: the Path of Ratpiping. However, as discussed in *GURPS Fantasy* under *Mysteries of the Trade* (pp. 162-163), it is not based on either Ritual Magic or Thaumatology. Instead, its core skill (see p. B242) is Musical Instrument; the Path of Ratpiping defaults to Musical Instrument-6. A ratpiper without his accustomed instrument can make do with a different one, at a penalty based on how similar the two instruments are.

Ratpipers have access to forms of the spells Beast-Soother, Beast-Rouser, (Animal) Control, Beast Summoning, Master, and Repel (Animal). There is a different spell for each species, taking the form of a different tune. Spells default to the Path of Ratpiping at -1 per point of racial IQ of the species affected, and they may be bought up as techniques; prerequisite count does not affect this default. At the GM's discretion, a ratpiper who has invested character points in a spell for one species may use

it on other species of the same "kind" (for example, black rats vs. sewer rats) at a further -1 penalty. Actually casting spells requires Magery, except in high mana or very high mana areas. Ratpipers often have Magery (Musical) (see p. B67), a -50% limitation, and Magery (One Path Only) – equivalent to One College Only (see p. B67) – a -40% limitation, for a total of -90%.

Ratpipers can magically control vermin, not as individuals, but in swarms (p. B461). For a higher energy cost, a ratpiper can command a *macroswarm*. Assume a macroswarm covers a circular area, and has a SM figured from the area's diameter, but with an additional +2 SM; that is, treat a macroswarm as a blob-shaped entity (see p. B19). Multiply all energy costs by $1 + SM$, as usual (p. B239). In combat, note that a macroswarm contains $3 \times R \times (R - 1) + 1$ swarms, where R is the radius (as used for Area spells in tactical combat), and each takes the usual amount of damage to disperse.

Legend tells of vengeful ratpipers turning their craft against children, or amorous ones against the objects of their passion. If a GM wishes to permit this, the penalty to the Path skill is the "racial" IQ for the subjects' age: for example, -9 for children aged 10 or less (see p. B20). A spell used against sapient beings should only work on a critical success. Ratpipers may *not* spend character points to raise this spell above default for sapient beings.

SACRED ARCHITECTURE

In addition to having magical inhabitants or patrons, a city may itself be magical. Its very streets or buildings may affect the flow of magical energies in its environment (see *Cities and Mana Levels*, pp. 27-30). If so, its inhabitants may deliberately shape their cities to generate favorable magical conditions. Such practices in a fantasy setting may be modeled on real-world traditions such as feng shui (widely used in China) or on invented fantasy traditions. These rules are a variation on those in *GURPS Thaumatology* (p. 89) that use Symbol Drawing rather than Thaumatology, elevate sacred considerations above astrological ones, and replace the need for both architectural *and* symbolic success with the option to sacrifice one to get the other.

THE LANGUAGE OF STONE

In *GURPS* terms, designing buildings to direct magical forces uses the Symbol Drawing (Sacred Architecture) skill. "Scribing" symbols by having gangs of people move quantities of

wood or stone is a bigger job than writing them on a parchment or sprinkling colored powders on the ground, but the underlying principle is similar.

Sacred architecture is normally a focus for magic use. It doesn't directly create magical effects, but it adds to the effective skill of a caster working at the site. Just like other forms of Symbol Drawing, it gives a bonus equal to half the margin of success.

The important difference is that the bonus is permanent. Actually erecting a building takes a long time, comparable to creating an enchanted object by Slow and Sure enchantment. Once created, the building stays around, and its architectural design remains effective. Whatever bonus it grants applies to all spells of the appropriate type (see *Effects*, p. 23), so long as the building is in good repair.

As the name "sacred architecture" suggests, this approach works for clerical and theological magic as well as for standard mana-based magic. For a building sacred to a particular god, Symbol Drawing defaults to Religious Ritual (same)-4.

PLACING BUILDINGS

The first step in designing a building is choosing a site. In a fantasy world, the magical qualities of the site are as important as its terrain and climate.

Some terrain is magically *aspected*, offering conditions especially favorable to a particular kind of magic. Aspected terrain provides a bonus to the magical skill for spells of the appropriate college – and possibly a penalty to spells of an opposed college (*GURPS Fantasy*, pp. 43-45). At the GM's discretion, terrain aspected at +5 can be treated as one mana level higher for the college it favors, and one mana level lower for the opposed college, if there is one.

For clerical magic, based on the aid of a god, regions do not have aspects. Rather, a region may have higher or lower sanctity for a particular god. Any spells granted by that god are cast at -5 in regions of low sanctity. Identifying regions of high sanctity doesn't take any special skill; they gain sanctity by being used for worship of a particular god, and worshipers of the god will know about them. Area Knowledge can be used to identify areas of high sanctity for one's own faith and for any publicly acknowledged faith.

Beyond these strong attunements, an area can be favorable or unfavorable to a certain type of magic in a smaller measure or in a less obvious way. This influence may not directly affect the casting of spells, but if focused through proper architecture, it may acquire the ability to do so.

To find such areas of lesser attunement to a college or a god, use the supernaturally effective form of the Fortune-Telling skill (p. 17). The specific type of Fortune-Telling must be suited to finding physical locations, such as feng shui or other forms of geomancy (p. 24). Any success locates an appropriate site for a magically effective structure. Apply half the margin of success as a bonus to Symbol Drawing skill in designing the structure.

If the area itself is aspected, then any success on Fortune-Telling reveals the obvious aspect and grants its benefits to Symbol Drawing. A fantastic outcome on Fortune-Telling may discover a site that is exceptional in a subtle way. If the bonus from half the margin of success exceeds the bonus from the region's aspect, use the higher bonus. Aspects detected with Analyze Magic or with a critical success on Magery+Perception

also grant a bonus to Symbol Drawing, but the bonus can't exceed the aspect bonus.

DRAWING PLANS

After choosing the site, the architect needs to draw up plans for the building. This requires two skill rolls. A roll against Architecture produces plans for a building that will stand up and that can be used conveniently. A roll against Symbol Drawing (Sacred Architecture) produces a building that enhances the effectiveness of certain types of magic. Any bonus from Fortune-Telling enhances the Symbol Drawing roll.

A GM may choose to allow conflicts between mundane and magical requirements for architectural design. If so, a designer may opt to accept a penalty to Architecture skill, and gain an equal bonus to Symbol Drawing skill.

If the Architecture roll fails but would have succeeded if not for the skill penalty, the building ends up with an awkward structural feature that is necessary for magical reasons. For example, it might have a convoluted entryway to keep evil spirits from getting in. If it would have failed anyway, the architect comes up with a generally bad design: The building may be awkward to use, uncomfortable to live in, ugly, or structurally unsound (-2 to HT). On a critical failure, the building collapses during construction (2d crushing damage to the members of the work crew, and the construction must start over from a new plan, at full cost).

Should the Symbol Drawing roll fail, the building's aspect is not modified. On a critical failure, it acquires an unfavorable aspect or some supernatural defect, such as Lifebane or Weirdness Magnet.

At the GM's option, the same methods can be applied to projects bigger than a building, such as a city plan, road system, or canal; if so, substitute Engineer (Civil) for Architecture. See *Ley Line Spells* (pp. 19-21) for one application.

CONSTRUCTION

Turning plans into an actual building requires a work force, usually a sizable one. Many people participating in the construction need to be skilled workmen, such as carpenters or masons.

Conflicting Aspects

What if an architect wants to create a building favorable to one college on a site aspected to a different college? What if a sculptor, painter, or decorator wants to provide ornaments that favor a college dissimilar to that of a building?

If the college is simply different, roll against Symbol Drawing (Sacred Architecture) as usual. On a success, the margin of success provides a new bonus that replaces the old bonus, which is lost. On a critical success, both bonuses are retained. On a failure, the old bonus is retained, and no new bonus is gained. On a critical failure, all bonuses are lost.

If the college is opposed, then on a critical success, the new bonus replaces the old bonus, which is lost. On a normal success, compare the new bonus to the old bonus;

the building's aspect is that of the larger bonus, reduced by the smaller one. On a normal failure, the old bonus is unchanged. On a critical failure, the GM should devise some magical catastrophe suited to the collision of opposed principles.

Example: An architect tries to set up a building favorable to Water spells on a Fire-aspected site. The site's modifier is +3. The Symbol Drawing roll succeeds by a margin of 8 points. Dividing 8/2 gives a +4 modifier to Water spells, reduced to +1 by subtracting the Fire spell modifier. A margin of 4 points would have given a +2 modifier, which would have reduced the Fire spell modifier from +3 to +1 but not actually given a bonus to Water spells.

Managing the work force requires Professional Skill (Contractor). In low-tech settings, this defaults to Carpentry-2 or Masonry-2; for iron- or steel-framed buildings, it defaults to Engineer (Civil).

Although for ordinary buildings, it's not especially important who supervises the job, for magically effective buildings, the architect needs to be personally present on the site. No additional skill roll is required, but without his leadership, the vital supernatural nuances of his design won't be properly carried out.

EFFECTS

The usual effect of a success on Symbol Drawing (Sacred Architecture) is to make the site of a building especially favorable to certain spells. The symbolic form of the building and site has to suit the spells they are supposed to aid. Apply half the margin of success as a bonus to skill in casting the spells. The bonus will help in the casting of a number of related spells, such as all the spells in a particular college, or all the spells granted by a particular god. The bonus does not usually go away after one spell is cast (but see *Ornamentation*, above). Rather, it remains in effect as long as the building stands.

If the college affected is opposed to some other college, apply the bonus as a penalty to spells from that other college. Casting Fire spells in a building designed for Water magic is going to be a struggle, for example. At the GM's option, it may be possible to make the penalty the primary effect of the building's design.

Also at the GM's option, a building that is life- or death-aspected may affect living things that inhabit it, as well as Healing and Necromantic spells. Consider the strength of a life aspect as a bonus to HT rolls for recovery from wounds or illness or for resistance to aging. Similarly, treat the strength of a death aspect as a penalty. Anyone who lives in such an aspected place for a long time may eventually gain or lose HT. Likewise, a necromantically aspected building might *enhance* the health of an undead occupant.

Ornamentation

One way to make a building magically effective is to provide it with suitable embellishments. This is equivalent to putting a runic inscription on the blade of a sword.

Ornamentation is usually just one more way of achieving Symbol Drawing bonuses, especially if the architect planned it from the start. Adding ornamentation to an already finished building is more of a challenge. It requires a Fortune-Telling roll to identify the magical qualities and potentials of the building. Treat this like the Fortune-Telling roll for choice of a site. If the roll succeeds, it's possible to add ornaments that grant lasting benefits. If it fails, any added ornament is only effective for one spell (per the standard Symbol Drawing rules). The same is true if the designer of the ornaments makes no attempt to consider the specific qualities of the site, treating it as a neutral background, or if the ornamentation is in a temporary medium such as a chalk drawing. In effect, the building rejects magical ornamentation that does not respect its spirit.

See *Conflicting Aspects* (p. 22) for other potential results when adding ornamentation to existing buildings.

If a building is shaped to support spells granted by a particular god, the repeated casting of those spells will make the god's presence a continuing feature of the building. Over time, such a building and its grounds gain high sanctity for that god. A building with a +5 bonus or better will be high sanctity from its construction; lesser bonuses will take longer, from a year to a generation of regular prayer and worship.

Buildings don't affect mana levels in the same way. Sanctity is specific to a particular god, but mana level affects all spells. However, at the GM's discretion, a critical success or failure on Symbol Drawing (Sacred Architecture) might raise or lower the mana level by one step, in addition to the bonuses to a specific college granted by any success.

URBAN DIVINATION

GURPS Fantasy (p. 150) offers a variant treatment of divination, based on skills and skill bonuses rather than spells. This system can be used with several forms of divination that are derived from some aspect of city life or urban environments.

Diviners use the supernaturally effective form of the Fortune-Telling skill (p. 17). Other methods of divination can be based on alternate skills. For example, a roll using Esoteric Medicine could help diagnose an illness.

AGORAMANCY

Merchants and investment counselors have been trying to predict market prices for thousands of years – and having to contend with the seemingly random element in those prices. Market prices may be shaped by the clairvoyance, not of a few gifted people, but of huge numbers of people all intent on knowing the future. Alternatively, supernatural

powers may use market fluctuations to send messages to believers.

An agoramancer can determine hidden truths from price trends in a market, such as the cost of various foods in a bazaar or the local moneychangers' rates. The basic skill is Current Affairs (Business). Apply a Skill Bonus (p. 17) to it in the same way as for Fortune-Telling, along with long-distance modifiers (most often for time rather than distance). In societies with ongoing stock or commodities exchanges, Market Analysis can be used in place of Current Affairs (Business).

Agoramancers don't always try to predict future prices or business outcomes – other forces, from weather to popular fads, influence markets, and agoramancers may discover any of these. Most agoramancers are interested in the economic future. Things get tricky, though, if they act on their knowledge; their actions may create time paradoxes of the sorts discussed in *GURPS Infinite Worlds* (pp. 154-160).

A further complication arises if more than one agoramancer is investing in the same market. This calls for a Quick Contest of Current Affairs (Business). If both agoramancers fail, neither gets any information. If at least one succeeds, the one with a greater degree of success anticipates the other's actions and allows for them in his plans. However, even if an agoramancer doesn't win the Quick Contest, any success will make him aware of other agoramancers, *if* they are acting on their predictions in any way that affects the market, or even giving market advice to anyone else. If all they're doing is observing, they can remain unnoticed.

DEMOMANCY

The behavior of living organisms, especially in swarms, can be a basis for divination. For example, the ancient Etruscans practiced *augury*, or seeing omens of the future in the flight of birds. The spontaneous behavior of human beings in a city's crowded streets can likewise reveal hidden truths.

Urban shamans often practice *demomancy*, or reading omens from the actions of crowds. The basis skill for this is Streetwise or Current Affairs (Regional). The hard-bitten reporter with a sense of the city's pulse may be a demomancer and not know it. It's also possible for a society to have a skill of Fortune-Telling (Demomancy).

Demomancy can be aided by having information sources. Treat these like equipment used with a nontechnological skill. A demomancer who doesn't speak a city's main language is at -5. If he relies on conversation with ordinary, uninformed people, his skill is at -2. Conversing with someone who keeps up with the city's news – a bartender, priest, or snitch, for example – confers no modifier. Consulting written records gives +1 for narrowly focused records, or +2 for an archive. With the development of public opinion polls, the bonus is +TL/2, rounded down, for a scientifically planned survey of the city's population.

GEOMANCY

The best-known form of geomancy is the Chinese art of *feng shui*, but other cultures have developed similar arts. Geomancy

can be applied to choosing sites for magically effective structures (see *Sacred Architecture*, pp. 21-24) or to identifying ley lines (see p. 19). It also can be used to reveal hidden truths. Usually it helps users to discover objects buried beneath the ground or the ruins of abandoned buildings, or favorable or unfavorable locations for a building or activity. It similarly can identify distant locations where something important is happening, with the standard long-distance modifiers (see p. B241). Roll vs. Fortune-Telling (Geomancy).

MEDIOSPICY

Mediospicy (from *medium*) is divination by mass media. It's related to the practice of picking out a text in a holy book without looking and then interpreting the indicated verse. However, mediospices don't consult any single sacred work. Instead, they seek guidance in the ever-changing content of one or another mass medium.

Mediospicy becomes widely practiced at TL6, with the emergence of electronic communications, though it had occasional earlier practitioners who read omens in old scraps of London newspaper or graffiti on Roman walls. Telegraph or telephone operators overhearing random messages, radio listeners tuning across a frequency band, and channel and Web surfers all can learn mediospicy. Depending on the medium, they may focus on Morse code, spoken or written words, or images. The skill for this practice is Current Affairs (Regional), with a required specialty in a particular medium. The GM may choose to let different forms of mediospicy default to each other at -2 (for the same type of content) or -4 (for different types of content, such as written words vs. visual images).

NUMEROLOGY

Between buying and selling in the market and measuring out plots of land, city people get a lot of practice with mathematics. Numerology, or divination by identifying numerical relationships, is a natural art for them to develop.

Treat numerology as a new form of Mathematics. It defaults at -5 to other specialties of Mathematics and to Accounting.

Effective skill is +2 for working with information that's already in the form of numbers; unmodified for working with written words that can be encoded as numbers (A = 1, B = 2, and so on), such as a person's name; -2 for working with physical objects that have to be weighed and measured (or -5 if the numerologist is working without a scale, ruler, or tape measure, by methods such as pacing off a distance). *Both* Mathematical Ability and a numerology Skill Bonus (p. 17) apply to this, cumulatively, but without at least one level of Skill Bonus, the numerologist won't learn any hidden truths.

The same numerical relationships are the basis for the art of gematria, used in Qabalistic magic (see *GURPS Thaumatology*, pp. 172, 254). Treat this as a form of Symbol Drawing with a special default to Mathematics (Numerology)-5.

Electronic Voice Phenomena

Not actually a form of mediospicy, but related to it, is the discovery of voices on audiotape recordings, also called *EVP* or *transcommunication*. Some 20th- and 21st-century paranormal investigators claim to have heard mysterious recorded voices on tapes where no such voices were recorded. The usual interpretation is that these are the spirits of the dead, taking advantage of a new communications medium. Often other listeners can't detect the voices or can't make out intelligible sounds; some EVP investigators claim that it takes special sensitivity to understand spirit voices.

If this really works, then in *GURPS* terms, it's Medium, with two limitations: Preparation Required (1 minute for cassette recorders, -20%; 10 minutes for old-style reel-to-reel systems, -30%) and Unreliable (from -10% to -80%, depending on how often the voices manifest). It may be part of a spirit power, especially for a technologically sophisticated shaman or medium.

Should it work for everyone, because reliable spirit voice recorders have been developed, it's just a skill: Electronics Operation (Communications).

CHAPTER FOUR

MAGIC IN URBAN ENVIRONMENTS

In addition to being the homes of new magical arts, cities can also provide distinctive environments for the practice of magic in general. This supplement mainly emphasizes ways

that magic can become easier, but either favorable or unfavorable conditions may occur in different cities.

ENERGY SOURCES

Cities are often big places and may need big magical spells to match – Regular spells that can affect an entire building, or Area spells whose radius encompasses the entire city. Meanwhile, various features of the city may supply extra magical power, permitting enhanced spells. All of the systems that follow are optional and to be used at the GM's discretion.

MASS MAGIC

Big cities can have huge labor forces, enough to support large-scale projects. However, standard magic can't really take advantage of these labor forces. No more than 100 nonmages without special training can take part in a ceremonial casting of a spell, contributing only 1 energy each. Mass magic provides a way past this limit. It uses systematic administrative methods to get hundreds or thousands of people all focused on the same spell, which can then be cast with much more power.

This kind of large-scale organization became common with the development of factories and mass production (see *Magical Factories*, pp. 5-6). However, earlier civilizations could recruit such large workforces for special jobs, such as the 907 workmen who moved the Vatican obelisk to its current site in 1586.

The rules presented here are more detailed than the *Mass Magic* rules in *GURPS Thaumatology* (p. 51) and should be treated as an alternative approach, rather than combined with them. This version of mass magic provides more power for the same number of people, but also takes substantially longer. Compared to the Raise Cone of Power spell in *GURPS Thaumatology* (p. 52), this type of mass magic is faster, but it has an upper limit for the total energy that can be produced and requires more skilled mages.

Casting a spell by mass magic takes even longer than performing standard ceremonial magic – multiply casting time by 60 rather than 10. (That is, a mass-magic working takes one minute per second of standard casting time.) It requires three groups of participants:

- A large number of unskilled *spectators*, who need not be mages or know the spell.

- A small group of *conductors*, who must be mages and must know the spell at level 15+ (unless lots of energy is available; see below).

- A *director*, who must meet the same requirements as the conductors but also needs Leadership or Administration skill (depending on whether the GM thinks inspiration or organization is more important; see *Long Tasks*, p. B346).

Each conductor can channel up to 100 energy from all spectators. This does not require a skill or spell roll. The number of conductors a director can coordinate is either (Will×Will)/5 or (IQ×IQ)/5 (again, depending on whether inspiration or organization is more relevant).

The director must roll against Leadership or Administration skill, *or* against his skill in the spell, whichever is *lower*. He can boost his effective skill by taking extra time (see *Time Spent*, p. B346), but not lower it by hurrying; faster casting uses standard ceremonial magic. As with standard ceremonial magic, a rolled 16 is always a failure, and a rolled 17 or 18 is always a critical failure. In some worlds, the director may need the Mass Magician perk from *GURPS Thaumatology: Magical Styles* (p. 24).

The job of the conductors is, quite literally, to *conduct* the energy from the spectators to the director. They perform elaborate rituals to do so. These rituals actually accomplish the casting of the spell, with each conductor contributing one aspect to the casting. If the effective skill of a conductor is less than 15, he can use extra energy from the crowd to raise it, just as with ceremonial magic: +1 for 20% extra energy, +2 for 40%, +3 for 60%, +4 for 100%, and an additional +1 for each additional 100%.

Example: If the extra energy were 100% of what's needed, a conductor with skill 11 would have effective skill 15.

The spectators perform small parts of complex rituals, learned by rote. Each one can supply 1 energy to each casting. Spectators must be completely willing participants.

A spectator who *opposes* the casting contributes -5 points to the total energy. Only the spectators provide energy; the mages are all busy directing the energy the spectators provide.

Mass magic can take a variety of external forms. It can look like huge religious rituals; in low-tech settings, this form is most likely. It can also look like a work force on a huge assembly line. For a different flavor, the conductors might function like cheerleaders in a crowded stadium. The cheers of the crowd might magically influence sporting events – or the field might be carefully insulated from such influences, for the sake of a fair contest.

A GM who wants to deal with organizational issues can require a skill roll to ensure that a sufficient number of spectators take part: Administration to bring together an organized force, or Propaganda or Public Speaking to recruit spectators off the streets.

Example: The army of a magical kingdom faces an invasion from a rival kingdom wielding newly invented black-powder weapons. A skilled mage from the Corps of Sorcerors, with Will 15, gathers 45 mages as conductors for a mass-magic casting of Fireproof. The night before the battle, 4,500 soldiers perform elaborate ceremonial drills lasting five hours. This supplies energy to suppress fires in a radius of 1,500 yards. Along a 1.7-mile battlefield, the enemy guns stop working, making their soldiers easy targets for longbows and catapults.

DEMURGY

Rather than drawing on the magical effort of large numbers of people involved in a magical ceremony, demurges borrow energy from even larger numbers of people who are going about their daily lives. This doesn't involve a formal ceremony. Rather, the demurge uses demomancy (p. 24) to identify specific places within a city where mana can be harvested. This requires a roll against Streetwise or Current Affairs (Regional), with the usual modifiers for demomancy. Additionally, two other modifiers apply:

- Larger communities have more energy to tap than small communities; apply the city size modifier for finding a hireling (p. B517), doubled.
- Planned communities have less spontaneous social interaction to tap: -5 for a totally planned society, including most utopias and many dystopias; -2 for a community the majority of whose adult members belong to a formal organization with an internal Rank system, such as a military base, monastery, or company town. Demurgy is actually harder to perform in a highly organized magical community!

On a critical success, the demurge harvests energy equal to his own FP, every second, for the next full minute after he arrives at the indicated location. In other words, he has located a temporary very high mana node in the city. On an ordinary success, he locates a less intense energy source, yielding energy equal to his own FP each minute. In either case, he must roll again after each minute to determine if the source is still active, at -1 per minute's yield he has already drawn. If his first roll was a critical success, an ordinary success indicates a decrease in energy flow to his own FP per minute. A critical success on a later roll does not boost the energy flow from an initial ordinary success. An ordinary failure yields no energy. On a critical failure, the mage finds a point that *drains* energy; he must roll vs. Will to resist it, losing half his FP on a success, and all his

FP on a failure. This applies only on the first roll; for later rolls, treat a critical failure as an ordinary failure.

THE MECHANICAL EQUIVALENT OF MAGIC

Using Energy spells (*GURPS Magic*, pp. 178-181), every kilowatt-hour (kWh) of physical energy converts to 10 points of magical energy. If the GM chooses, this can provide a source of magical power, either through those spells, or through enchanted devices based on them. Energy from this power source will often be aspected, giving a bonus to Technological spells cast with it but a penalty to whatever spells the GM considers opposed to these (see *Aspected Mana*, pp. 29-30), with an aspect strength equal to TL/2, rounded up.

The Conduct Power and Draw Power spells are rated in megawatts! This could supply power to run a locomotive, a ship, or a factory. The GM may wish to have less potent spells available for smaller amounts of power, such as can be obtained from a household's electrical outlets, a car's engine, or an early steam engine.

Even the modest level of power required by these minor spells is more than low-tech windmills, water mills, or treadmills could generate. For example, a human laborer turning a crank or walking on a treadmill can generate BL/200, in kilowatts. If the crew of a trireme (186 rowers) could all work the levers of some elaborate machine, they could provide the equivalent of 2-4 energy/minute for a day of steady work – but if they took part in standard ceremonial magic, they could provide several times as much. Thus, these spells only become really useful with the invention of the steam engine.

Minor Conduct Power/TL

Special

This spell is similar to Conduct Power, but the maximum power a mage can safely handle is not based on his Magery. His limit is HT×50, in kilowatts. Thus, a wizard with HT 10 can handle 500 kilowatts, or half a megawatt. If his safe level is exceeded, he must roll HT every second. On a success, he loses 1 FP per excess MW or fraction thereof. On a failure, he loses the same number of HP as well; on a critical failure, he becomes unconscious.

Duration: 1 minute.

Cost: None to cast. 1 to maintain. This maintenance cost is not reduced by high skill.

Prerequisite: Seek Power.

Minor Draw Power/TL

Special

Identical to Minor Conduct Power, but supplies power to a spell. Each 6 kW of power provide 1 energy/minute, enough to maintain many spells. Note that it takes at least a 12-kW power source for the caster to do better than break even for long-term castings.

Duration: 1 minute.

Cost: None to cast. 1 to maintain. This maintenance cost is not reduced by high skill.

Prerequisites: Minor Conduct Power and at least 1 spell from 10 different colleges.

Item

A cylinder resembling a Tibetan prayer wheel (or any other radially symmetrical object) attached to any kind of motor, engine, or millwork. Able to handle $50 \text{ kW} \times$ the Power of the enchantment. Provides 1 energy/minute per 6 kW; however, the first 1 energy/minute goes to maintain the device's magical function. Anyone can activate it, but if the user can't cast a spell to which its energy can be directed, the energy is wasted. *Energy cost to create:* 1 per 100 pounds of the device and its power source (round up); the minimum cost is 250.

MANA TRANSMISSION

If Minor Draw Power (pp. 26-27) is available, as a spell or enchanted device, then electrical power lines can be used to supply extra mana conveniently where it's needed. Casting Lend Power (*GURPS Magic*, p. 180) on the generators in the power plant lets mana go in at one end of the power line and

come out at the other. However, some magical cities may want to send the mana directly, either because they don't know about electricity, or because they don't want the mana to become aspected to electricity or technology in the process.

Ley lines (see p. 19) can be used for this purpose. Any ley line naturally conducts an amount of magical energy equal to its Intensity, which can be used to power spells with Ley Tap (p. 20). If the spell Lend Power is available, magical energy obtained with Ley Tap can power an electrical or mechanical device; each level of Intensity is equivalent to six kilowatts.

Energy can be fed into a ley line, either from living spellcasters or from engines through Draw Power and Ley Supply (p. 20). Energy that goes in at one location can be tapped at another location. Each point of energy raises the Intensity of the ley line by 1 between the source and the Ley Tap. If this raises a ley line's Intensity to 60, it turns into a megaline with Intensity 1 (that is, 1 energy/second); using its energy without Ley Buffer (p. 20) becomes much less safe!

Ex Machina

In some settings, energy can spontaneously convert itself into magic. This requires a certain threshold level of energy flow; low-tech machines can't reach this amount, but as technology advances, machinery could become a source of magical accidents. In such a world, magic might actually be safer and more reliable than technology based on the physical sciences.

Any inanimate mechanism that generates 0.1 kWh per second, or 360 kilowatts, might occasionally flash over into a mana source (producing 1 energy point per second). When inventors begin experimenting with such systems, roll the operator's skill in Mechanic or Electronics Operation once per second after starting up the machine. Treat any critical failure as a *magical* critical failure. Since there is no actual intent to cast a spell, the GM may randomly choose any spell for which sufficient power is available as the starting point for the effects of the critical failure.

The same reasoning could apply to single intense discharges of energy. For example, the detonation of three ounces of TNT releases 360 kW of energy, equivalent to 1 energy point. For other explosives, divide the required weight by the REF of the explosive (see p. B415). For example, it takes $(3 \text{ ounces})/0.4 = 7.5 \text{ ounces}$ of TL4 black powder (just under half a pound) to generate 1 energy point. On a critical failure, any large gunpowder weapon will cause a magical catastrophe! Gunpowder in such a world might really be "the devil's powder" – only desperate rulers resort to gunpowder artillery. This is one way to explain a ban on gunpowder in a fantasy setting.

In an animistic world, these magical effects may not be purely accidental: Spirits may cast Draw Power and feed on the resulting mana. Initially, they might be rare and dependent on high-energy natural events such as lightning bolts, but human technology might enable them to multiply – until human engineers gave up on high-powered machinery.

CITIES AND MANA LEVELS

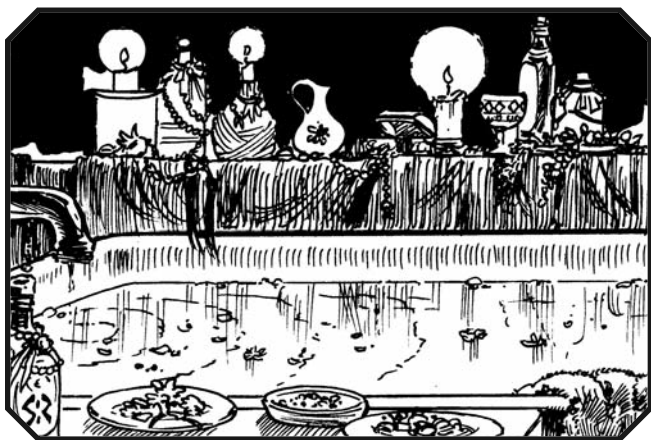
The usual assumption in *GURPS* is that the presence of cities doesn't affect the local mana level or aspect, any more than it affects the climate. Cities may be built in sites with relatively high or low mana (see *Location*, pp. 48-50), but the mana level doesn't change as a result. In some fantasy settings, though, cities may actively influence the local mana level.

How likely this is depends partly on the scale on which mana varies. If the mana level is the same over a continent, cities (other than world-cities; see p. 48) aren't likely to affect it. If a morning's walk can take a hiker through half a dozen changes of mana level or aspect, then a village, or even a single large house, might affect how the local mana flows.

Commonly, fantasy worlds assume something in between these extremes. Typically, each country has its own mana level and perhaps aspect, just as it has its own climate. (In terms of the categories used for Area Knowledge – see p. B177 – "country" means barony, county, duchy, or small nation; a large nation, or a continent, can easily have different mana levels in different regions.) If mana varies on this scale, then the smallest settlement that's likely to influence it is a metropolis, with 100,000 or more inhabitants (see *Scale*, pp. 47-48). Although this may still be smaller than a small country, it may hold a large share of a country's inhabitants, buildings, and energy flow, and influence peoples' lives in the rest of the country and even neighboring countries; its magical impact can plausibly be out of proportion to its size.

MANA DEPLETION

Cities start out with more mages than other places, because they have more people in general and possibly because mages prefer to live near other mages. That means more spells are cast there. As time passes, the local mana level may be depleted, as described, for example, in Larry Niven's *The Magic Goes Away*. Eventually the city becomes a low mana environment (or, in a low mana world, a no-mana environment), and most of the mages start looking for a less-settled place with more mana. If magic is important to a country's well-being, a ruler or a mages' guild may even establish "mana preserves," off limits to human settlers. In a "hidden magic" modern fantasy campaign, the U.S. National Forest system might be this kind of mana preserve, for instance.



RELIGION

A city's active temples may attract the attention and presence of their gods, eventually becoming high-sanctity sites. In a few cases, the entire city may be sanctified to a particular god. In some legends, magic doesn't work on holy ground – that is, high sanctity equals no mana. This effect may end sharply at the border of the hallowed ground, or it may spread out through the whole city in a weakened form, lowering the mana level. High mana may only be found far away from the temples of the gods.

In other cases, the gods forbid the practice of magic and have the power to make this stick. They may even regard human mages as a threat to their power. Alternatively, the gods themselves may be the biggest magical powers, using up all the local mana and leaving none for anyone else. In a world where magic is based on commanding spirits – the practice of *sorcery*, as defined in *GURPS Fantasy* – the gods may either take control over or shut out any spirits that enter their domains.

RELIGIOUS SPILLOVER

Big cities often *import* gods (see *Immigrant Gods*, p. 41). Gods in many religions have hosts of spirits to serve them. Some of these may be borrowed, either by ordinary people who don't really worship the god but want help with a special problem, or by sorcerers willing to turn religious symbols to their own purposes. (For example, Christian angels play a big part in some European magical traditions.) A god may be

invoked in magic long after his worshippers are gone; Harry Turtledove's *The Case of the Toxic Spell Dump* shows a world where the cults of many ancient gods receive government subsidies because those gods provide useful spells! Many of the spells of real-world grimoires are filled with names of forgotten gods. Antiquarian sorcerers may research the gods of extinct cults to bargain with them, offering small sacrifices in exchange for supernatural aid. In an *old* city, forgotten gods may have died or fallen from power, and their spirit servants may have deserted them and merged into the supernatural life of the city.

If magic is not the manipulation of an impersonal mystical energy, but the command of unseen spirits who can be approached through suitable ceremonies, then all of these spirits are resources. A large city may well have more of them, and this amounts to the mana level being higher.

AGRICULTURE

The city itself may not lower the mana level. Rather, the disturbance of wild areas to create the fields and pastures that support civilization may diminish mana. Magical energy is often tied to nature or wilderness. By imposing human order on the natural environment, a farmer may destroy the local mana sources, in favor of a steady food supply. The weeds in cultivated fields, or the vermin hiding in a city, may be enough to maintain at least low mana, but not the normal mana provided by wilderness. A completely sterile environment will have no mana at all.

Alternatively, the TL of agriculture could act as a modifier to the mana level of planted ground; see *Technology*, below.

Cities in fantasy stories are often threatened by savage hordes of invaders coming in from the wilderness to conquer or destroy them. If the wilderness has higher mana, this may explain how it can support so many invaders. An orc tribe may have mages or shamans who can find or create food and water, even in the harshest deserts, supporting an ever-growing population that spills over into civilized lands. Maybe the barbarian invasions happen when the wilderness tribes deplete their own mana, and face starvation if they don't move elsewhere.

TECHNOLOGY

In some views of magic, technology inherently clashes with magic. Cities usually have a lot of technology – in many worlds, they're the main source of new technologies. What exactly it is about technology that suppresses magic depends on the world: It may be the presence of iron, controlled energy flows, or the rational, calculating mentality of technologists.

One way to represent this is through a variant rule about mana levels: Starting from a normal mana setting, take the TL as a skill penalty to magical actions. A TL5 setting, for example, would have -5 to magical skills, the equivalent of a standard low mana setting. As technology advances, the mana level declines.

How big an effect does this have? In general, this world-building decision is in the GM's hands. For a convenient guideline, assume that nothing a man can carry will alter the local mana level; a 21st-century marine dropped into Arthur's Britain will be fully subject to its magical spells. A vehicle temporarily lowers the mana level on the ground it occupies.

Should vehicular traffic leave lasting marks on the landscape, the mana level drops on the marked ground. Any permanent structure affects the mana level on the ground it encloses (the Great Wall of China may have had significant magical effects!), plus any ground its occupants routinely visit.

MAGICAL DEFENSES

Magic is a potent military resource in many settings, especially for besieging armies. Mages can damage a city or kill its soldiers, bypass its defenses, or boost the combat abilities of the besieging troops (*GURPS Fantasy*, pp. 186-194). Nevertheless, nothing says the city has to make it easy.

The obvious way for a city to keep mages from attacking it is reduce its own mana level, to low or even no mana. However, this isn't good for the city's own mages or anyone who depends on their services.

A less troublesome method is to set up a magical "dead zone" outside the city's walls, to block attack spells and dispel spells cast on enemy troops. Ideally, it should be just inside Half-Damage Range for the city's archers or crossbowmen, and wide enough to give them two or three free shots as incoming mages sprint across it. A ceremonial casting of Drain Mana, aided by 100 patriotic citizens, would create a drained circle 10 yards in radius. A series of such castings would generate a dead zone 20 yards wide – say, from 220 to 240 yards out.

Example: The city of Eisenberg's walls are circular, and one mile in diameter, or 1,760 yards. The midline of its dead zone is 230 yards out in every direction; that makes a circle (1,760 + 230 + 230) or 2,220 yards in diameter. Multiplying by 3.14 gives a circumference of 6,971 yards. Dividing by 20 yards, the width of a drained area, gives 349 castings of Drain Mana.

Of course, setting up a dead zone has its risks. The city's own mana level may depend on the flow of mana from its surroundings. Some mana will still flow in above the height limit of an Area spell, but the ground-level blockage is sufficient to reduce local mana by one level. The city's rulers might decide they would rather have low mana, and import magic from elsewhere, than risk being conquered by magically aided armies. Over time, a fantasy world's cities may become steadily less fantastic.

Alternatively, a besieging army might put some of its soldiers to work powering Drain Mana spells, deliberately lowering a city's mana level. A besieged city deprived of the ability to create food and water, heal the sick, or put out fires might find itself compelled to surrender.

THE URBAN LANDSCAPE

A large city is itself a feature of the landscape; it affects the movement of wind and running water and the paths traveled by animals. The terrain of natural environments also shapes the flow of mana, concentrating it in certain places; the artificial terrain of cities may do the same thing, creating new points of high or very high mana. See also *Demurgy*, p. 26.

In the natural environment, mana levels are often high in hidden places that few people visit. A city has such places, too: the tops of buildings, the sewers or tunnels under the streets, and small back-alley plots of ground that can't be seen from the main streets. An adventurer who needs to find such a mana source may roll against Hidden Lore (Urban Secrets), or take

an urban shaman as a Contact; Area Knowledge rolls will usually be at -5 or worse.

An old, complicated city, with winding streets and picturesque buildings, may have magical sites nearly everywhere, giving it high mana overall.

PRECIOUS METALS

In some fantasy settings, iron has anti-magical effects. Other metals could have pro-magical effects. It may not be an accident of fashion that magic-ring makers prefer gold or silver. They may be, not just economically precious, but inherently magical. If so, low-tech cities, which typically use precious metals as money, may have more than their share of magic.

If gold and silver can do this, mages are likely to think of using them deliberately as mana sources – especially mages who are PCs! Let them, but make them pay the price. Precious metal equal to 100× starting wealth acts as one level of Mana Enhancer. The metal all has to be in contact to be effective, and it has to be all gold or all silver, not a mixture. This raises normal mana to high mana, enabling a nonmage to cast any spells he knows, as long as he's touching it. Twice as much metal increases normal mana to very high mana, enabling a mage to cast spells up to his FP, every second, as long as he's touching it. However, he can't spend any of the metal, and he has to have it with him when he casts spells, making him a target for thieves.

For example, in a medieval fantasy world with starting wealth of \$1,000, a level of Mana Enhancer would require \$100,000 in precious metal (comparable to the wealth of a Filthy Rich character). If using standard metal weights (see *Gold and Silver*, p. B515), this would be 100 lbs. of silver or 5 lbs. of gold. In a world where precious metals are commonplace, multiply these weights by 80. A highly magical city in such a world might really have streets paved with gold!

*I wander thro' each charter'd street,
Near where the charter'd Thames
does flow,*

*And mark in every face I meet
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.*

– William Blake, "London"

ASPECTED MANA

Mana can vary in more ways than being high or low; it can also be *aspected* (*GURPS Fantasy*, p. 43, and *GURPS Thaumatology*, p. 59). A city's mana might have its own aspect, favoring one college over others – or, if cities are usually low mana overall, disfavoring that college less than others. In some cases, being favorably aspected to one college goes with being unfavorably aspected to other colleges.

The likeliest aspect for a city is technology. Even a low-tech city has many tools and worked materials; it may become magically attuned to technology, just as a furnace may become magically attuned to fire. Casting Technological spells would be that much easier in most cities.

Does technology have an opposite? One possibility is life, as embodied in the Animal, Healing, and Plant colleges. An environment full of *made* things may be inimical to *grown* things. The unhealthiness of cities may be partly magical in nature; perhaps life requires a trace input of mana, or the tool-oriented mana makes living things ill at ease.

Maybe the opposite of technology is magic in general! This would go with higher tech imposing a penalty on spellcasting equal to the TL (see p. 28); that penalty would be a negative aspect. Mages casting Technological spells, however, would do so at a skill *bonus* equal to the TL. For a more moderate version, cities might be aspected in favor of Technological spells, against Meta-Spells, and neutral to other spells.

Cities also could take on an aspect of whatever their buildings are mostly made of: cities of wooden buildings would be Plant aspected, while stone or brick structures would be Earth aspected.



Finally, cities often have graveyards or crematoria. (Depending on the culture, homes may have shrines to the dead containing ashes or relics.) Maybe the natural aspect for cities is to death and the Necromantic college. Again, this would explain why life in cities is unhealthy. Over time, as the aspect grows more intense, cities might become less and less livable, until they fall into ruins inhabited only by the dead and the undead – and by death-obsessed mages looking for the perfect place to turn themselves into liches or raise armies of zombies.

MAGICAL RELIABILITY

Casting spells is a risky business. Even a highly skilled mage, whose spells succeed on a 16 or less, suffers a critical failure on a rolled 18 – and magical critical failures can be *bad*. If magic is part of a city's TL, its mages may cast enough spells so that each of them suffers one critical failure a week (according to the rules). It seems as if a magical city must be a disaster waiting to happen.

However, for routine activities, **GURPS** doesn't require a skill roll for every use of the skill, or even for every day. The standard rules are designed for adventurers, not for ordinary working professionals. Professionals make one job roll a month. On a critical failure, something bad happens, with harmful consequences – but not usually as bad as a critical failure during an adventure. The higher-risk treatment applies during adventure stories, which are supposed to contain dramatic events.

The same assumption could be applied to magic. Mages who go adventuring, casting spells in the field, without backup,

and under time pressure, risk disaster every day. Mages who cast spells as a daily routine, under mostly controlled conditions, are much less likely to have things go wrong. With one roll a month, a mage with effective skill 15 or less goes 54 months between mishaps, on the average; one with effective skill 16 or better could go 216 months (or 18 years). Furthermore, the usual consequences of failure may be a big problem for the mage, but they won't destroy a whole city. This level of improved reliability makes magic safe enough to be relied on like any other technology.

Casting spells in very high mana areas, though, should still be problematic. For mages who work in such areas, assume that any failure on a job roll is as bad as a critical failure in a lower mana area. Instead of choosing relatively mild consequences, roll against the standard *Critical Spell Failure Table* (p. B236). Especially for mages who cast high-powered ceremonial spells, a misdirected spell in a very high mana area may have serious consequences.

Enchantment and Reliability

Don't apply *Magical Reliability* to the creation of enchanted items by Slow and Sure enchantment. This process already takes weeks or months for a single success roll. Any enchantment that takes more than a month is already *less* likely to fail than under the magical reliability rule.

The GM may say that Quick and Dirty enchantment can't be made reliable in this way. After all, it *is* Quick and Dirty! Nonetheless, a GM who wants to create a world where minor enchanted items are in common use can allow magical reliability for Quick and Dirty enchantments, *if* they're done safe at home in a well-equipped workshop with ample time to prepare. A Quick and Dirty enchantment out in the field, or under serious time pressure anywhere, has the normal chance of failure.

Powerstone enchanting is a special case. The value of a large Powerstone increases much faster than linearly, because repeated castings accumulate chances for critical failures. In a month, a pair of mages with Powerstone-16 and Recover Energy-15 can cast Powerstone at least 80 times before making a monthly job roll. Permitting routine job rolls for this task, or allowing stabilizing skills (*Thaumatology*, p. 40), would both make large Powerstones much less expensive and make larger Powerstones available: Roughly, for a Powerstone of size *P*, multiply the cost listed in **GURPS Magic** by 53/54 to the power of *P*. If the GM does not want this, he can rule that Powerstone enchanting is inherently high-risk due to the delicate nature of the valuable item involved; assume Powerstone costs are as given in **GURPS Magic** (p. 20).

ESSENTIAL MATTERS

GURPS Magic describes several sorts of “essential substances” that can be created by magic, directly or indirectly. These represent archetypal forms of different sorts of matter, in which the distinctive qualities of each substance are more fully manifest: Stone is stronger, fire hotter, food more nourishing, and so on. They’re usually envisioned as being produced in small quantities for special purposes. Nonetheless, many of them are extraordinarily durable and would accumulate over time; an ancient city might have centuries’ worth of essential stone on hand. Likewise, large-scale magic (see *Energy Sources*, pp. 25-27) might provide significant amounts of them.

BUILDING MATERIALS

Wood, stone, and metal all have essential forms, which have triple DR and can support three times as great a load. Essential wood is also very slow to burn (Highly Resistant, as defined on p. B433). A building of any of these materials can weigh one-third as much as a normal building, or weigh the same and be three times as hard to destroy (see p. B558 for building weights). The superior structural strength also allows building three times as high. Daring architects may experiment with greater spans between supporting posts or walls. Putting all this together, a fantasy city might take on a futuristic look, with towering buildings rising above its streets.

Essential stone and metal are made by creating essential earth and casting Earth to Stone on it, one cubic yard at a time. They cost 11 energy per cubic yard for essential stone (about 400 lbs. per point) or 14 energy per cubic yard for essential metal (about 1,000 lbs. per point). Essential wood is made from normal wood, also one cubic yard at a time, costing 8 energy per casting (about 100 lbs. per point). Each single piece of material requires a separate casting; it’s much more economical to produce a single large block, cut it up, and shape it, even with the increased difficulty of working essential materials, than to create or transform each piece separately. The GM may specify that essential materials cause triple wear on non-essential metal tools, and essential metal can only be forged properly in essential flame.

Once essential wood, stone, or metal has been generated, a change in the mana level doesn’t destroy it. A drop to no mana suspends their special properties, making them equivalent to normal wood, stone, or metal; a return to low mana or better restores these properties. Dispel Magic has no effect on them.

ESSENTIAL ECONOMIES

Beyond their structural uses, essential materials can provide other benefits to a city’s economy. Essential food and water are much more nourishing. Essential flame burns hotter, and both essential air and essential wood also support hotter flame. This can be useful for metallurgy or as a power source for external combustion engines. Essential fuel provides similarly increased power for engines at any TL.

Essential air, earth, fire, and water can be created out of nothing, though essential fire diminishes to normal fire if the spell is not maintained. Essential stone and metal are essential

earth transformed with Earth to Stone. The other essential substances – acid, food, fuel, and wood – must be made from the common forms of these materials, imported from outside the city or, in some cases, magically created. All these processes could give rise to magical industries. For this kind of magical industrial economy to operate safely, the *Magical Reliability* rules (p. 30) will be needed.



NEW TRANSFORMATIONS

The two-step creation of essential stone and metal, by casting Essential Earth and then Earth to Stone, could be a prototype for other indirect ways of creating essential substances, at the GM’s discretion. Spells that could start out with an essential substance and transform it into a different, but still essential substance include Create Food, Create Fuel, Earth to Air, Earth to Water, and Water to Wine. (Stone to Earth is also possible, but going the other way would be more common.) Note that only magical transformations could achieve this; ordinary physical and chemical alterations of an essential substance turn it into a nonessential substance. For example, trees grown in essential earth aren’t made of essential wood!

Casting Water to Wine on essential water produces essential wine. This is comparable to distilled spirits, but doesn’t actually contain more alcohol; rather, the alcohol it contains is magically potent. Treat each drink as having the effect of three normal drinks (see pp. B439-440). In effect, essential beer has the potency of wine, essential wine of spirits, and essential spirits is even more potent than pure alcohol. However, their toxicity is not enhanced in proportion. For any HT rolls to avoid harmful effects (coma, hallucinations, vomiting, or hangovers), the drinker is at +2. This is *in addition* to the benefits of Alcohol Tolerance (p. B100) and *compensates for* Alcohol Intolerance (p. B165). Essential spirits also provide increased benefits for other uses of alcohol; for example, they remove -6 from HT rolls to avoid infection (p. B444), and they burn three times as long – but not any hotter.

Another spell that might create a new essential substance is Freeze. Essential ice has superior structural properties, like essential wood, stone, and metal. It also takes three times as long to melt (cast Freeze every 30 minutes to maintain it).

CHAPTER FIVE

THE ENCHANTED CITY

Cities don't just have an effect on magic; magic has an effect on cities. Life in a city where magic is commonplace will take advantage of it, for purposes ranging from everyday conveniences to awe-inspiring wonders.

Bear in mind that nearly all these amenities stop working if the city's mana level is reduced, whether by Drain Mana, large-scale sacred architecture (pp. 21-23), natural catastrophe, or the wrath of a god.

ENCHANTED HOUSEKEEPING

If a city can supply extra mana where it's needed, whether via high-tension electricity or artificially created ley lines, households may start using it for their chores, in place of servants.

The first step along this path is having the mana provide FP to mages, so that they can maintain spells. A higher level of investment may furnish households with enchanted items that nonmages can use to cast spells, including items that give them the use of Ley Tap (p. 20). Items mass-produced in magical factories may make this feasible, creating a world where every middle-class household has laborsaving magical devices. Finally, it may be possible to build the Ley Tap directly into the item, so that if it's on a ley line, activating it will activate the enchantment and supply it with power, up to the Intensity of the ley line. Items may even be built directly into a house from the start.

Some of the spells or enchantments that can improve the quality of life in an enchanted house are the following.

Alarm rouses a person from sleep at a preplanned time.

Clean gets rid of dirt and stains.

Continual Light (expensive but long-lasting) provides any desired level of illumination.

Cook turns raw ingredients into meals almost instantly.

Create Fire or *Heat* can warm meals or heat water for a bath.

Dancing Object can make a broom sweep a room, a knife chop vegetables, or any other inanimate object perform any repetitive task.

Illusion Shell can maintain an image – often used for art or interior decoration, but it can also create hiding places for small objects.

Magelock magically keeps a locked door shut.

Purify Air can get rid of unpleasant smells in a house, or eliminate smoke from a hearth without a chimney.

Purify Water makes contaminated water fit to drink; *Create Water* provides a source of uncontaminated water.

Tell Time lets anyone in the house know the time.

Warm and *Cool* adjust the temperature to comfortable levels.

Watchdog or *Nightingale* provides an alarm system to warn of hostile intruders.

Adding up all of these spells' energy costs can quickly exceed the Intensity of a spontaneously formed ley line; many magical houses will have to limit their active spell use. If energy is available from a megaline via Ley Buffer (p. 20), a magical house may be filled with active enchantments. Some classic animated films from Disney offer good models for such houses. For a cautionary note, remember the plot of *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*!

ENCHANTED BUILDINGS

Buildings aren't listed among the standard categories of enchanted objects in *GURPS Magic*, but enchanters can develop variant ceremonies that work on buildings.

The cost of enchanting a building is high, because of its huge size. For example, a 1,000-square-foot building could be a box (+2 SM) 32 feet on a side (+5 SM) for a total SM of +7; or it could be an elongated box (+1 SM) 20 feet wide by 50 feet long (+6 SM), also for a total SM of +7. A multistory building

with a base of 20 feet by 50 feet, and 50 feet high (3-5 stories), would be treated as a box with $SM + (6 + 2) = +8$. If it were 60-90 feet high (5-7 stories), it could be treated as an elongated box with $SM + 7$ (based on its height instead of its length) $+ 1 = +8$. This can be used as a multiplier to the cost of many enchantments in the same way that it is used for Regular spells: For a building with a positive SM, multiply the cost of the enchantment by $1 + SM$.

The Huge Subjects perk from *Magical Styles* (p. 25) could be adapted to make such enchantments cheaper to cast. For enchantments with a cost per area, just use the building's floor area – but each enchantment will only operate on a single floor.

Assume two enchanters are available to work on a building full time for five years. That's 3,650 mage-days, or 3,650 energy points. Here are some ideas for what they can do with their power.

Adjustable Clothing

GURPS Magic, pp. 58-59

A variant on this enchantment can be used on a room. The base cost is 50 energy. The building literally covers the whole body, tripling the cost to 150. It's made of solid material, which multiplies the cost by five to 750. A room that's five yards long and no more than three yards wide has SM +3, which multiplies energy cost by four, bringing the total to 3,000 points. That gives a 135-square-foot room in which the ceiling, doorways, tabletops, and furnishings all resize themselves by 10% to fit the current occupant comfortably.

Fortify

GURPS Magic, p. 66

Buildings often have very high DR, high enough so that adding 1 or 2 points would be a waste of energy; adding a layer of bricks 3" thick gives +15 or better and costs a lot less. To mitigate this, the GM may wish to adopt the following rule: When Fortify is cast on an object with DR higher than 20, it adds 5% to the object's DR for each +1 DR bonus from the standard spell, rounded down. For example, applied to a frameless stone keep with DR 780, the successive levels of Fortify would raise DR by 39, 78, 117, 156, and 195. Note that Fortify does not increase the structural strength of a building.

Hideaway

GURPS Magic, p. 61

This enchantment's cost is 50 energy for a volume of two cubic feet. Creating a volume of 146 cubic feet costs 3,650 energy. The space can hold 73 pounds of objects. That's enough for a closet seven feet high, 10 feet wide, and two feet deep on one wall of a room.

Illusion Shell

GURPS Magic, p. 96

An illusion shell can be cast on a building. Base cost is 400 energy; for an SM +7 building, total cost is $400 \times 8 = 3,200$ energy. The shell permanently transforms the appearance of the entire building. It affects fixtures, but not movable objects; for example, a library could have apparent books on its shelves, but it wouldn't be possible to take them down and read them, or to change the appearance of any real books with the same spell.

Missile Shield

GURPS Magic, p. 168

Useful for fortifications, especially after the invention of artillery. A tower 60' tall has SM +7; enchanting it with Missile Shield costs 400×8 (or 3,200) energy. Any missile fired at such a fortification swerves to miss it.

Scrywall

GURPS Magic, p. 122

Casting this permanently on an area 36' in radius (just over 4,000 square feet) costs $300 \times 12 = 3,600$ energy. The affected floor and everything on it are resistant to scrying; Identify Spell detects that the Scrywall is present.

Soilproof

GURPS Magic, p. 116

Casting this permanently on an SM +7 building costs $200 \times 8 = 1,600$ energy. This makes it impossible for the building or any of its contents to become dirty, dusty, or stained.

Watchdog

GURPS Magic, p. 167

The distance from the center of a 50'x20' room to its corners is just under nine yards. Spending 1,800 energy enchants the room to warn a specified person in the room when anyone with hostile intent enters the area.

New Spell: Awaken Building/TL

Regular

Similar to Awaken Craft Spirit or Awaken Computer, this spell grants a building awareness and sapience. It can perceive structural stresses and compensate for them, giving it +2 to HT. In addition, it can open or shut doors or windows, make creaking noises with its floorboards, and, at higher TLs, turn faucets or switches on and off. Including bells, organ pipes, or other sound generators during construction can give a structure more ways to communicate.

If the house is at high enough TL to be run by a computer, this spell does not awaken the computer; use Awaken Computer for that. However, if the computer is sapient, it will react as if its body was being possessed by an alien entity – which is exactly what has happened.

An awakened building can help secure itself against intruders, using its control of the structure to perform hostile actions. A building spirit that isn't treated with respect by the legitimate occupants may start treating *them* as intruders. A critical failure on the original casting produces a building spirit that hates everyone! Nearly all building spirits will want to protect and improve their buildings, no matter how they feel about the inhabitants.

Duration: 1 hour.

Cost: 4 to cast. 2 to maintain. Apply the cost modifier for the building's SM.

Time to cast: 10 seconds.

Prerequisites: Animation. However, to actually cast Awaken Building, the wizard needs at least five spells from a college appropriate to its main material: Earth for stone, Necromantic for bone, Plant for wood, etc.



Item

A building may be permanently awakened for 100 times casting cost. For example, a building with SM +7 would have casting cost $4 \times 8 = 32$ and could be permanently awakened for 3,200 energy.

PUBLIC WORKS

Cities often provide services to their inhabitants through infrastructure, such as water, sewage disposal, streetlights, power, and communications. In a fantasy city, magic may provide a way of meeting these needs. The *GURPS* magic system offers three different methods of doing this.

First, a spell that has a suitable effect can be cast by a mage or by a nonmage with an enchanted item. Both approaches have a limited output: 48 energy per day, or 1,200 per month, for each salaried employee. The most productive means to apply this energy are cheap spells, spells that last a long time (a day, a week, or permanently), and spells that only need to be cast a few times a day in the mage's city or neighborhood. Especially in big cities, magical "allied trades" (see *Specialists*, p. 5) may perform these spells.

Second, a mage and 100 supportive nonmages can cast a spell ceremonially. This is good for 100 energy per casting, or 4,800 energy per day – if the city can afford to tie up 100 people for a full day! Ceremonial magic is most productive with Area spells, which can affect an enormous area for this much energy. Large metropolises may apply mass magic (pp. 25-26) to get even bigger effects, if mass magic is available in their worlds.

Finally, a spell can be provided by an "always on" magic item, or an enchanted item that has been made self-powered (see *GURPS Magic*, p. 57). Enchanting the item costs \$33 per energy point at TL3 pay rates (see *GURPS Magic*, pp. 21-22). Cities that have access to industrial enchantment may be able to get them at lower prices (see *Magical Factories*, pp. 5-6).

All these options assume that the city's mages or enchanters are creating the effect. It's also possible for the city to have a unique and mysterious artifact that grants an extraordinary benefit. Such an artifact might have been the gift of a god, or the creation of mighty saints or enchanters of the forgotten past. It may even have occurred spontaneously in the natural environment. Rather than the city making the artifact, the city may have been built at that location because the artifact was there.

In game terms, one way to design such artifacts is to create them as enchanted items – but assume that they also have the Power enchantment, making their magical effects self-powered. The cost of Power doubles for each point of energy required; a Power spell yielding 20 energy would cost 262,144,000 energy to enchant! Obviously, no mortal mage is going to create such an item. Nevertheless, gods may have other ways of powering enchanted items.

Valuable magical items will tend to tempt thieves. They'll be easier to hang onto if they're permanently attached to the city, or too big to move, or if the city only needs a few and can assign guards to protect them.

Note that the examples given here are not the *only* ways to achieve these results. They illustrate the kinds of things that can be done. The GM should feel free to make different assumptions about the available resources, labor, and spells, and work out the results.



WATER

Basic life support requires two quarts of water per person per day, or more in hot climates (see p. B426). Bathing and washing require at least 60 quarts per day; city dwellers who can't stay clean are likelier to get sick (-1 HT to resist contagion). Many cities are located next to rivers or lakes, but cities in dry climates, or built on high ground for defensibility, may not have a natural water supply. Large cities, especially cities of a million or more, may have outgrown the local water resources, and need to construct aqueducts, like ancient Rome or modern Los Angeles.

Magic provides other ways of getting water. A seacoast city can turn salt water into fresh with Purify Water. One mage can generate up to 48 gallons a day, enough drinking water for 96 people. A mage with 100 ceremonial assistants can produce 4,800 gallons a day. A city could have 100 dedicated waterworks support personnel, or it could have citizens report to the water mage, in shifts, to contribute magical energy and take home water. An enchanted item based on this spell could be a bone or ivory hoop with Purify Water (50 energy) and Power 1 (500 energy). Using only the energy given by the Power enchantment, it would provide 86,400 gallons per day automatically, meeting the household needs of nearly 6,000 people.

A city on dry ground must rely on Create Water, which produces half as much per day; surviving a siege would require twice as many water mages. Alternatively, it could have one highly skilled mage leading an Essential Water ceremony (see *Essential Matters*, p. 31).

A weather mage can cast Rain to refill a city's cisterns. A ceremonial casting for 100 points has a radius of 1,000 yards, covering just over one square mile. A 1" rainfall on that area is over 18 million gallons, but only the part that falls into cisterns will be easy to use; it takes about one and a half square feet of cistern area to intercept one gallon. Of course, the spell can be recast.

A different approach is to use magic to enhance natural springs. One ceremonial casting of Create Spring, spending 100 energy, can make a well that yields 20 gallons per hour, or 480 gallons per day, indefinitely. That would supply a neighborhood or village of 1,000 people with drinking water. However, this tactic is subject to the local geology. Cities that sink wells may lower the local water table enough for the well to dry up; the same thing can happen with a magical spring. Regular sacrifices to the gods of the spring may be a good idea: Some springs may have been created by divine miracles in the first place!

Finally, mages may be able to provide the magical equivalent of an aqueduct, with a suitable new spell (below).

Transfer Water

Special

This spell lets the caster convey large amounts of water from one location to another. The two locations are chosen when the spell is cast and cannot be moved during the duration of the casting. The water will always flow from the higher to the lower elevation; it can't be made to flow uphill.

However, intervening obstacles have no effect on it. The water vanishes from the source location and instantly reappears at the outlet location. Use the long-distance modifiers (p. B241). Should the caster be at a distance from both the source and the destination, determine the modifiers for both and add them together. If either the intake or the outlet is not visible to the caster, the roll is at -5; if neither is visible, the roll is at -10.

The amount of water transported is calculated from the caster's HT and level of Magery, as $HT \times (\text{Magery squared}) \times 20$ gallons per minute. (In a longer-maintained flow, 20 gallons per minute is equivalent to 150 cubic feet per hour.) The energy to generate the flow comes from the weight of the water itself, but the mage must spend energy to keep the channel open, and this cost cannot be reduced by higher skill.

Duration: 1 minute.

Cost: 1 to cast. 1 to maintain. Not reduced by skill.

Time to cast: 1 minute.

Prerequisites: Magery 1 and Shape Water.

SEWERS AND DUMPS

Some cities use running water to carry off wastes. This makes for better public health – but not if it gets into the drinking water (consuming tainted water requires a HT-2 roll to avoid infection). One way to deal with the problem is to use Purify Water, either to treat the sewage before it reaches the stream, or to clean the stream water before using it. With Purify Water, as with Purify Earth, what happens to foreign objects carried in the water depends on their size. Small objects such as pieces of manure or rotten food are destroyed. Medium ones such as animal corpses (SM -1 or less) hang up at the surface as the water flows by the caster and can be skimmed off. Human corpses or anything larger cause the spell to fail, though it can be recast (or a self-powered enchanted item reactivated).

Alternatively, a god can permanently purify the stream with a divine blessing, so that it cannot be polluted. In Hindu religious beliefs, the Ganges has such a blessing.

Another option to get rid of trash, garbage, or sewage is a Gate spell, which dumps the refuse into a landfill or out at sea. Normally, the first step in doing this is to set up a permanent Beacon on the disposal site. Either the spell could be cast at the destination for 1,000 energy; or for 1,500 energy, it could be placed on a heavy but movable item in the city (a heavy anchor, for example, could be used as a location out at sea). City garbage collectors would then transport it to the site a certain times during the year. Note that if dumping becomes common, local spirits, or even major deities such as a god of the sea, may object and try to hinder it!

The basis for the gate is the spell Teleport. For a site 10 to 99.99 miles away, and with the aid of a Beacon, this costs 4 energy and has a skill penalty of -3. Create Gate costs 40 points to open the gate for one minute, well within the reach of ceremonial magic. This creates a rectangular gate 3'x6'. For solid trash, which is somewhat lighter than loose soil, a man with a shovel can handle 3xBL cubic feet per hour. Thus, a crew of six average men can load 54 cubic feet into a trash pit in nine minutes. Once the pit is full, Create Gate is cast, the pit empties, and the shovelers start in on the next load. So one mage, six shovelers, and 40 unskilled ritual assistants, with a pit 3' deep, can dispose of 2,592 cubic feet of trash in

an eight-hour day – in the neighborhood of 80 tons. A watertight pit 6' deep could dump twice as much sewage, and wouldn't need the shovelers. One pit would be enough for a large preindustrial city or an industrial town.

Instead of going to a distant place, a gate could go into another dimension, perhaps a hell dimension. Its inhabitants might resent being used as another world's dumping ground, or be glad to get the useful raw material. Over a very long time, this one-way outflow might deplete a world's water and biomass.

LIGHT

The simplest way to illuminate a city by magic is with Continual Light. A single mage, trained only in Light and Continual Light, can cast Continual Light 12 times per day, for brightness equal to that of a torch. Each object he casts it on will emit light for 2d days – an average of seven days. If he has a route with 84 lamps on it, 12 will shut down on an average day. Occasionally, he'll have to work overtime when an above average number stop working at once. If the city hires a few more mages and gives them only 70 lamps each, they'll almost never have to work overtime.

Permanent Continual Light avoids the need for hiring mages – but a permanently illuminated object is valuable! At standard prices for enchantment, each one costs \$13,200. Most cities will install such lamps only in special places, as much for display as for practical use – for example, the entrance to the ruler's palace might have one. Usually, the glowing object will be large, heavy, fastened in place, or kept under guard, to discourage thieves.

Another option is the Glow spell, cast ceremonially. For 99 points, it illuminates a 66-yard radius (2.8 acres) with the equivalent of torchlight. Because this also lasts 2d days, a highly skilled mage and 99 untrained helpers can maintain 70 such areas, or 196 acres, giving light to several thousand people. Permanent enchantment of such a large area isn't usually an option; a single 2.8-acre circle would cost 9,900 energy. Even so, such an enchantment might be a divine gift.

Cities of Darkness

The complement of the Glow spell is Gloom, which makes an area darker, not brighter. A nocturnal race, such as many undead races, might find this desirable. The same 99 points would dim 2.8 acres to the equivalent of a night with only starlight.

Some races might prefer to avoid extremes of both light and dark. If a mage knows both Glow and Gloom, he can cast a spell that combines their effects, making an area brighter when it's dark and dimmer when it's light. The base cost is the greater of the base costs of the two distinct spells.

Example: A settlement of elves feels that moonlit nights have just the right amount of light. Their light mage and 100 other elves can cast either Glow or Gloom with base cost 1, affecting a 100-yard-radius area (6.3 acres).

WEATHER AND CLIMATE

Real cities have technology for keeping their building interiors comfortable, from charcoal braziers at TL1 to air conditioning at TL7. A fantastic city can do better than this, using magic to protect against bad weather over large areas.

A relatively cheap means to this end is with the spells Warm and Cool, which respectively raise and lower the temperature by 10°F. Spending 100 energy can do this in a radius of 1,000 yards, spreading over just over a square mile.

Outright bad weather can mostly be dealt with by the spell Storm. This extends over an even larger area: 100 energy will cover a radius of 5,000 yards, or an area of over 25 square miles. A city's weather bureau can completely stop a local thunderstorm or break up tornado weather, but a hurricane normally will be too big for it.

The spell Weather Dome is typically too expensive for this kind of wide-area application; 99 points protects less than an acre. A powerful magical artifact might be able to handle a square mile or more.

A similar artifact could create an Atmosphere Dome, to provide breathable air on a world with a thin, dense, or polluted atmosphere in a space-fantasy campaign. On a world with no oxygen in its atmosphere, Create Air could then fill the same volume with breathable air for a much lower cost; the city would need to set up an Atmosphere Dome first to make sure the air didn't just dissipate. Purify Air could keep renewing the breathability as needed.

POWER

At TL6 and above, cities have networks of electrical power lines, which make physical energy available for machinery in dispersed location. Magical cities can have analogs of this technology at various TLs.

Some Technological spells use mana to generate physical energy in a single location; see *GURPS Magic* for more information on these spells. This section focuses on two less-common power networks.

Water Power

A canal or aqueduct isn't just a means of transferring water from place to place; it also transports the energy of the water's flow. Water from an elevated canal can flow down through a mill and turn the millwheel, generating mechanical power. The Transfer Water spell (pp. 34-35) can provide a magical supply of water to operate mills.

The available power is determined by the volume of water flow, in cubic feet per hour, and the height difference between the water source and the mill's ground level, in feet. The power potential is (water flow) × (height difference)/42,500, in kilowatts.

As a byproduct, the city can use the mill's outflow as part of its water supply.

Magical Energy Channels

Ley lines (see p. 19) can carry energy from place to place. A mechanical power source can be channeled into the ley line with Draw Power (or a machine enchanted with Draw Power and Ley Supply, p. 20). Some distance away along the ley line, a mechanical or electrical device enchanted with Lend Power and Ley Tap (p. 20) can draw power out of the ley line again. This technique makes ley lines the equivalent of electrical power lines. See *GURPS Magic*, pp. 178-181, for more on Energy spells.

The mana channeled through a ley line raises its Intensity. If this reaches 60, the line is transformed into a megaline. Drawing mana from a megaline is risky; the spell Ley Buffer is needed to make it safe (see p. 20). Megalines are thus a magical analog of high-tension power lines, and Ley Buffer, of step-down transformers.

TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION

Cities deal with several kinds of traffic: within the city, between the city and the countryside nearby, and to distant cities. Improving the conditions for traffic is a common goal for a city's rulers.

In low-tech civilizations, travel by sea is more efficient than travel by land. Historically, carrying a ton of goods a mile on a river costs about five times as much as shipping it on the open sea, and hauling it over land about five times as much as shipping it by river. The development of steam engines at TL5 – followed by internal combustion at TL6 – opens new options and shifts the cost ratios. Widespread magic can do the same – either duplicating the effect of railroads or airlines, or creating entirely different sorts of networks.

PERSONAL TRAVEL

The spell Quick March (*GURPS Magic*, p. 144) doubles the long-distance travel speed of one subject. This is useful for mages who have to go somewhere on their own. It's even better if the mage casts it on his mount. A typical riding horse can

cover 75 miles in a day on level plains or very good roads. An expenditure of 8 energy points (based on the horse's SM of +1) increases this to 150 miles. Specialist mages might serve as elite couriers, carrying urgent messages and small, expensive trade goods. The spell Haste, a prerequisite for Quick March, could help them avoid highwaymen and other hazards. If enchanted items are common, items that grant the wearer Quick March may be in widespread demand.

In a fantasy setting, sea creatures or even flying creatures may be available as mounts. Quick March will work on them as well, boosting their swimming or flight speed.

VEHICULAR TRAVEL

Magic can improve the performance of vehicles, especially ships. The biggest problem of sailing ships is the risk of being becalmed, unable to move without wind to propel them. If there's a mage on board who can cast Wind or Current (*GURPS Magic*, pp. 194-195), the ship need never be stuck.

Spending 5 energy points raises the wind from calm to a fresh breeze for an hour, enough to propel a ship at its normal Move. Expendng 8 energy points creates an 8-mph current, equivalent to the Move of typical sailing ships. Ingenious enchanters might be able to place versions of these spells in a ship's mast or keel.

Another spell that might be used is Propel (*GURPS Magic*, p. 180). This requires a vehicle with some sort of power plant. The Chinese experimented with water wheels before 1000 A.D. (TL3), getting power for them from men on treadmills. A mage with Propel-12 would spend 5 energy to drive a 12-ton ship at Move 5 (10 mph) for 10 minutes. A circle of half a dozen mages could keep this going for a full day. In a city with high enough technology to build railroads, Propel could supply power for land transportation as well.

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Magic can aid transportation by making it easier for ordinary vehicles to get to a city. In land travel, for example, a decent road should be at least 10-12' wide, to let two oxcarts pass each other, and have foundations a yard deep. A single mage who knows Shape Earth can excavate a roadbed one yard deep, four yards wide, and 12 yards long in a single day. He could fill it in with stone in two more days. In the same amount of time, he can simply turn the same volume of earth into hard, solid stone. Aided by 100 untrained supporters, he could build nearly a mile of road in four days, or 75 miles in a year. These would be at least equivalent to Average terrain, while a road made by magically fusing earth into stone could plausibly count as Good terrain, with a $\times 1.25$ travel multiplier.

Mages could similarly aid other forms of transportation. For example, they could bridge streams, dig canals or tunnels, dredge harbors, or create breakwaters to protect ships in port. A fantasy city might have canals and waterways in place of streets, as Venice has in the real world. A city of elves might travel through a vast forest city on bridges linking trees. An underground race such as dwarves, halflings, or orcs might prefer tunnels to streets.

FLIGHT

One of the oldest human fantasies is flying – gods and heroes in many mythologies have artificial wings, flying chariots, or other methods of traveling through the air. In a magical setting, flight may be achievable. It's likely to be comparatively expensive; flight spells have a high energy cost. Even Flying Carpet would be hard to maintain for as long as half an hour, giving it a range of only 10 or 20 miles. The benefits of flight spells are superior speed and access to otherwise inaccessible places.

If enchanted items are plentiful and cheap, flying carpets and other magical aircraft could be permanently enchanted, and they could furnish aerial transport at speeds of 30-40 mph. If mana levels are variable, pilots will carry navigational charts with warnings of low mana areas; a Power-20 flying carpet would simply slow down over such an area, but any

Maps and Magical Travel

Some options – such as ley lines and variable mana levels – require the GM to draw up maps, not only for places adventurers might want to reach via teleportation or flying carpets, but also for spots in between. These maps can start out basic – showing only mana levels or ley lines and little detail beyond a few important settlement locations. The GM then fills in details as the explorers check out new places. However, if making maps seems like too much trouble, then the GM can decide that such options as ley lines and mana levels have no effect on travel in progress – except, of course, under bizarre circumstances that drop the adventurers into exciting new situations.

lower Power carpet would fall out of the sky! Magical cities might have aerial terminals for incoming carpets. Giving the way magical flight is usually shown, these wouldn't need long runways; they'd be more like heliports than regular airports. Putting them in high places would also avoid using up scarce ground space and lessen the problem of navigating around buildings.

A less purely fantasy approach would be to use hot air balloons. Magic could keep the air heated, or provide winds to blow the balloons on whatever course the mage wanted, with the Wind spell. The Fortify enchantment could make the gasbag of a balloon much harder to damage without adding to its weight.

The widespread use of flight would change the nature of warfare, as cities became vulnerable to physical or magical attack from above. A wall or tower wouldn't be much of a defense. Fortification would involve basements and tunnels, kept livable with magical public works spells. Adventure stories in such a world might involve small bands of heroes leaving their safe, comfortable dungeon homes (magically supplied with light, heat, food, water, and air) and venturing up to the perilous surface world for wealth or lost knowledge.

LEY LINES AND TRAVEL

Ley lines (see p. 19), if they exist, are naturally aspected to movement and can be the basis of a transportation network. The lines won't normally aid movement within a city or neighborhood, but they can link towns and cities and give rise to long-distance trade routes.

Anyone moving along a ley line gains a bonus to Flight, Hiking, Jumping, Lifting, Running, or Swimming equal to the line's Intensity. Megalines are potent enough to affect perception; apply the ley line's Intensity to offset penalties to Perception rolls based on distance, but only along the length of the line.

Ley lines don't directly affect vehicles, other than those pulled by draft animals. However, the spells Ley Float (p. 20) and Ley Vehicle (p. 20) can enhance vehicular movement, so that ley lines can be the basis of a transportation network.

TELEPORTATION

A city with more potent magic may rely on teleportation for travel. Mages can cast Teleport to jump from one point to another in an instant. Very gifted mages can use Teleport Other to transport other people the same way.

In both cases, the energy cost becomes prohibitive for any great distance, and the skill penalties and the risk of going to the wrong place on a failed casting also discourage long-range teleportation. Ceremonial circles can help with the energy cost, but not with the risk of error. The same is true of casting in a very high mana area: A ceremonial circle could keep teleporting people all day long, but with seriously bad problems for failed spell rolls. If the GM adopts the *Magical Reliability* (p. 30) assumption, apply the skill penalty to the monthly Teleport or Teleport Other roll for job success; a large enough skill penalty may result in unusually frequent critical failures.

The spell Beacon both lowers the energy cost of these spells and makes them more accurate. A city might send out explorers carrying already-enchanted beacons, with orders to plant them in defensible places.

Ley lines (see p. 19) could make teleportation easier, if the start and end points are both on the same network of ley lines. Treat the Intensity of the line the caster is on as a bonus to skill with the spell. If the caster also knows Ley Tap, he may cast this first and use the energy reserve in casting Teleport. At the GM's discretion, the skill bonus may also be applied to IQ rolls to use the advantage Warp, whether or not its basis is magical. However, distance must be measured along the lines; the teleport can't jump from one line to another!

ENCHANTED STREETS

In some fantasy settings, there may be magical streets whose routes bypass the mundane world. Travelers taking such streets may find themselves walking to distant places in unaccountably short times, unnoticed by anyone they pass (see *Magical Travel Rates*, p. 38). Magic that is more powerful might take them to hidden magical cities in remote parts of the world, or to other planes such as the spirit world, or even to the

past or future. In a world that has ley lines, it may be possible to use a ley line as an enchanted road.

If a street has this kind of ability to disregard distance, anyone who has Magery can discover it on a Perception roll. A magical street can also be identified by casting a suitable Divination spell (see *GURPS Magic*) or by using an appropriate magically effective form of Fortune-Telling (see p. 17). Such techniques as dowsing, geomancy, and pendulum divination are suitable.

Magical Travel Rates

How long should it take to get from one place to another on an enchanted street? In general, the answer is, "as long as fits the needs of the adventure." Magical streets aren't necessarily calculable. However, a GM who wants a guideline can approach the matter in the following manner.

Treat travel on a magical street as a form of slow Warp (pp. B97-98). Any journey takes at least one minute. Because travel on an enchanted road requires a Perception roll, without penalties, the preparation time bonus to Warp needs to exactly cancel out the penalty for distance. For example, a 15-minute journey, giving a +5 bonus, would be suitable to reach a place 10 miles away, giving a -5 penalty.

For travel to other planes, parallel worlds, or another time, the GM will have to make up a suitable scale of effective distances. For example, a GM could decide that "a mile is a day," letting travelers go up to 10,000 days (or about 27 years) into the past or future with a two-hour journey.

Magical roads may link even more remote places, requiring multiple days of travel at one eight-hour journey per day.

INTERDIMENSIONAL PORTALS

In a setting where multiple dimensions or planes coexist, gates between these planes may be created, or even occur spontaneously. Should the other planes hold valuable resources, people will want to exploit or colonize them. If they are already inhabited, their inhabitants may be open to trade agreements.

The energy cost of opening a portal for one minute is 200 points, more than a group of untrained spectators can supply; it demands a circle of highly trained mages, preferably equipped with large Powerstones. If it's to be a two-way trip, they'll need to cross through as a group and start researching the return spell. Once regular traffic is established, ceremonial circles in both planes may open portals on a regular schedule. Recovery times between castings would be in the range of an hour. A very high mana site would avoid this delay, but the risk of error would be higher; if the GM adopts the *Magical Reliability* (p. 30) rules, such errors might become just rare enough to be endurable. The GM might choose to decide that portals naturally link very high mana sites on two different planes – otherwise, return trips won't occur often! Interdimensional mana channels might actually be what *create* very high mana sites.

Ley Lines and Interdimensional Travel

Ley lines (see p. 19) separate areas with different magical aspects. At the GM's option, teleportation *across* a ley line may be more *difficult* (not easier; see pp. 37-38). Apply a skill penalty equal to the line's Intensity. A critical failure may drop the teleporter into a different plane! The destination would depend on the specific ley line and the aspects on either side of it. If this rule applies, long-range teleportation may be especially risky: A journey over any significant distance is likely to cross one or more ley lines, with a chance of ending up in an entirely different world. Mages probably won't want to teleport without checking maps of ley lines first.

It may be possible to make such an "error" *deliberately*, using a variant Teleport spell (Planar Ley Teleport). This spell functions as a simpler alternate form of Plane Shift that only works at ley lines, and that only allows travel to the plane where a regular Teleport error would send someone when crossing that line. Each casting costs 6 energy. Opening a gate thus requires 60 energy (which is within the limits of an unskilled ceremonial casting). Creating a permanent gate costs 6,000 energy.

Spontaneous portals may also be more likely on ley lines (possibly at junctions or through areas of very high mana). Cities specializing in interdimensional trade will mostly be situated on ley lines.

Opening a permanent gate costs 20,000 points, making it a long-term project. However, once the enchantment is complete, journeys between planes can be made freely. Large cities may have the resources to create their own sets of portals, or cities may grow up around spontaneously formed gates, providing services to the interdimensional trade route.

From another point of view, an interdimensional portal is a vulnerable point – attackers from another dimension could use it to enter a city. Prudent city planners would isolate portals behind internal walls, or place them outside the city proper, and have guards on duty. A mage able to shut down the portal temporarily – for example, with Suspend Mana – might be kept on duty also. A city might even prefer to control *both* sides of its portals, claiming territory in other dimensions as an extra-territorial enclave, like an embassy or freeport.

CITIES ON THE MOVE

In a fantasy setting, instead of people and goods traveling to a city, the city itself may travel. Such a movable city could take one of several different forms.

A large vehicle might have both the population and the economic functions of a small city. The largest Chinese junks had a capacity of over 30,000 tons, at least enough for a town. In fantasy settings, even bigger ships might sail on water or fly through the sky. The quarters on such a vessel might be cramped, but with proper design, it could hold living areas, workshops, and warehouses. One of its decks might even be an open marketplace.

Another option would be an entire flotilla of ships or airships, such as the city of Armada in China Miéville's *The Scar*. Individual vehicles might hold no more than a few hundred people, but a few dozen such ships could make up a fair-sized city. They could either be permanently linked together by walkways and ladders, or hundreds of yards apart, with smaller boats or gliders traveling between them.

A more fantastic spectacle would be a city whose buildings could move about, either carried over the ground on huge wheels or treads, or parting the earth with their foundations. Such a building would likely move extremely slowly: Move 1 (2 mph), the speed of an oxcart, would be the highest plausible speed. Even such slow movement would subject a building to stress: Roll vs. its HT for each day's travel, at +1 or -1 for each 10% slower or faster than Move 1 it traveled. Failure causes the loss of 1d percent of the building's HP (round up).

A moving building could leave its city, like a grazing animal wandering away from a herd. It might even become a predator on other buildings, as in the opening sketch of Monty Python's *The Meaning of Life*.

A city could also be built on a movable object. A seagoing city could occupy an island that floated on the water; an aerial one could occupy an island that floated in the air, like Laputa in *Gulliver's Travels*. A high-powered variant on Cloud-Walking could enable a building to stand atop a cloud, which might be stabilized with a version of Clouds.

Another sort of movable base for a city could be a gigantic living thing, such as the aspidochelon of Roman myth (*GURPS Fantasy*, p. 211). If such a creature could be trained not to roll on the ground or dive into the sea – perhaps with the aid of Animal spells – a city could be built on its back. *GURPS Bio-Tech* offers the possibility of bioships, large plants or animals carrying passengers or cargo inside their bodies; a gigantic bioship might have room for a city's population. In a fantasy setting, the "technology" that created such bioships might be magically or alchemically based.

However a city achieved mobility, its economic relationship to its surroundings would change when it did so. Rather than depending on one region to supply it with food, it could go to new agricultural regions when its food stores got low. Mobile cities could carry their goods to new markets, or the entire city could go to war against a sessile rival. Mobile cities might bring free towns and villages under their control, or drive away other mobile cities that had grown weak, and claim their territories.

WONDERS AND MARVELS

Beyond the typical amenities, cities in magical worlds can have unique features, just as ancient Athens had the Parthenon, and modern Paris has the Eiffel Tower. Such features can't be picked from a standard list or chosen at random. They work better when they are specially designed to support the city's intended role in the campaign (see *Planning the Campaign*, pp. 51-52). Nonetheless, here are a few samples, which can serve as inspiration or be borrowed for a campaign where they fit.

THE BRONZE GIANT

Created when its city was under siege, the Bronze Giant combines the technical abilities of the skilled artificers who built its articulated frame, the artistry of the sculptor who shaped its outer form, and the supernatural gifts of the priest-enchanters who animated it. It stands nine feet tall (SM +1), weighs 1.75 tons, and has ST 30 and 30 HP. Its bronze surface has DR 50, making it effectively indestructible by normal weapons. A blow

from its massive fist inflicts 3d crushing damage (this includes the benefit of built-in "brass knuckles").

It stands above the main gate of the city, looking down on the road that approaches it – and most of the time, that's all it does. However, a handful of times in the past millennium, faced with some great threat to its survival or freedom, the spirit of the city itself has animated the Bronze Giant, which marched out to battle an invading army.

The Giant doesn't speak, and it rarely communicates even in simple gestures. The army must adjust their tactics to its actions. If the city's priests take the time to consult with its general before praying for the Giant's aid, they may have a better idea what specific action to pray for. Even so, the city's spirit ultimately chooses for itself what tactics to use, and whether to act at all.

THE ELEVATOR

Sophisticated thinkers argue that heaven is not literally above the world, nor hell below. Rather, both are spiritual dimensions.

They are only metaphorically “low” or “high.” The Elevator makes that metaphor literally true.

In the city’s tallest building, at its inner core, is a single elevator shaft. If any mortal has seen what cables support the elevator car, or what incredible engines move it up and down, he’s held his silence about the matter. Speculative theologians and engineers envision fibers with amazing tensile strength, and shaft walls that won’t collapse at any pressure or melt at any temperature. What passengers see is the interior of the car. Depending on the campaign tech level, this may hold a human-looking elevator operator, a panel of buttons and lights, a touch screen, or a wireless interface linked to an (apparently) artificial intelligence. Its walls are perfectly smooth, geometrically perfect, and impossible to mark or deface.

The elevator has access to 10 levels above the ground and eight levels below it. Travel time between adjacent levels is half an hour. There are stairs next to the elevator, but the climb is incredibly long – adjoining levels seem to be five miles apart. Someone in a hurry to descend could jump over the rail, but the shaft is too narrow for glider wings or a parachute, so the landing would probably be lethal.

The journey is moral as well as physical. Going up one level confers -5 points of “good” mental disadvantages, usually in the form of disadvantages the climber already has being raised to a higher level, or becoming harder to resist. Each further level adds another -5 points. Going down has the same effect, but with “evil” disadvantages. The people a visitor meets on one of these levels are all correspondingly “good” or “evil.”

Normally the change is temporary, lasting while the visitor is on a level and fading when he exits at the “ground” floor. A traveler who makes the journey on foot may gain permanent disadvantages. A foot-traveling person may also gain compensatory advantages, which may include various psychic or spiritual abilities.

At the GM’s option, some “good” or “evil” disadvantages may take the form of changing a quirk into a -5-point disadvantage, for a net -4 points. Likewise, a quirk-level version of a -5-point “good” or “evil” disadvantage may linger after the visitor returns to the mortal realm. Some people may use the elevator to gain personal insight (and a reason for acquiring new advantages and disadvantages).

What the levels of heaven and hell are actually like depends on the campaign. The GM may base them on the Christian heaven and hell, those of other real religions, or those of a fantasy world’s invented religion. At any rate, each level has office staff who act as gatekeepers, restricting mortal visitors’ movements.

THE KEY TO THE CITY

Traditionally, giving someone the key to a city is a symbolic gesture; the key doesn’t actually open anything. These keys, however, are more than symbolic. Thanks to a potent enchantment, they can open any lock in their city. The size of the keyhole doesn’t matter; the key reshapes itself to fit. Only an enchanted lock can resist, and this calls for a Quick Contest against the key’s Power of 16.

At the same time, the keys also have a symbolic function, as badges of office for trusted members of the city watch. They have a distinctive design that citizens can recognize. To maintain this trust,

misusing a key is punished, at minimum, by expulsion from the watch and exile from the city; stealing or counterfeiting one carries the death penalty.

THE MEMORY HOUSE

Memory houses are an ancient method of achieving Eidetic Memory: The information to be retained is associated with symbolic imaginary objects stored together in an imaginary building, so that visualizing them can provide mnemonic triggers. The builders of the Memory House started out from this technique, and gave it a physical embodiment: a large, secluded building filled with distinctive objects. Rather than using imaginary objects to trigger memories, they arranged real objects for the same purpose. Objects in each room are kept together, in roughly the same arrangement, though new ones can be brought in.

The Memory House thus serves as an aid to IQ rolls for Eidetic Memory. It provides a +4 (quality) modifier to such rolls. In the course of handling the objects, the user gains access both to his memory of the specific configuration he put them in, and to the information he associated with that configuration.

The house can provide a further benefit: It can let one user access another’s memories. Treat this as Racial Memory (Active) for the “race” of users of the house, all the way back to its original builders. This involves a roll of IQ+2 for another user the current user has personally met, or IQ for one he hasn’t. In addition, there’s a penalty for time: Use the long-distance modifiers (p. B241), but with “years” in place of “miles.” There is no penalty for memories up to six weeks old.

THE SPRING OF HEALING

Bathing is both a practical therapeutic method and a religious ritual, the basis of such rites as baptism. All through history, certain specific springs have had a reputation for special healing powers. Shrines to gods of healing, or to the healing powers of more universal deities, have grown up around them. The Spring of Healing is such a location. The site where its water flows has acquired a temple to its associated goddess (or saint, in a monotheistic culture), a hospital where other treatments can be combined with its benefits, and a substantial town to support them and to house the many pilgrims who visit it to pray for healing.

Bathing in the waters of the spring gives +2 to any HT roll to resist or recover from injury, illness, or poison. Drinking water fresh from the spring gives +4 against ingested poisons and illnesses of the digestive or urinary systems. This applies only to a condition the visitor is currently suffering from.

It’s possible to take the water away for later use, with the right preparations: It must be stored in a vessel that has never contained any other substance, and it requires a full day of prayer for each pint of water (roll against Religious Ritual for the prayer to be effective). A pint is good for four applications, either internal or external, each giving +1 to a single HT roll. Water stored in gold lasts indefinitely; water stored in ceramic or other mineral substances, for a year; water stored in wood or leather, only a month. Containers made of metals other than gold take away the water’s power within a single day.



CHAPTER SIX

SUPERNATURAL INHABITANTS

Cities aren't just the dwellings of humans. Supernatural beings may also live there. New residents might import their

gods, spirits might wander in or be attracted by the architecture, or spellcasters might create special creatures.

GODS AND SPIRIT ALLIES

Cities in the real world have many religious shrines, and every city's folklore includes stories about various kinds of friendly or neutral spirits. In a fantasy world, gods and spirits may be more visible and have a bigger impact on the life of the city they inhabit.

FAMILIARS

Familiar spirits appropriate to a city environment may attend professional sorcerers or urban shamans. A familiar may be from an urban pest or nuisance species, such as pigeons, rats, or sparrows – or even alligators living in the sewer system. It may belong to a pest-control species, such as cats or ferrets. It may be of a species that city people keep as pets, such as a fish, dog, or parakeet.

An animal familiar typically is an Ally with the enhancement Special Abilities (for granting advantages to its master) and the limitation Sympathy. A sorcerer's familiar may have the enhancement Minion; an urban shaman's usually will not.

Familiars of sorcerers most often grant their masters extra Fatigue Points usable for powering spells. Familiars of urban shamans more often grant extra levels of Talent with a spirit power. Either of these benefits also has the Accessibility limitation "Granted by familiar," -40% (see p. B38). For the Talent, this reflects the need for help in wielding spirit powers more effectively.

For stats for many familiars, see *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 5: Allies*.

IMMIGRANT GODS

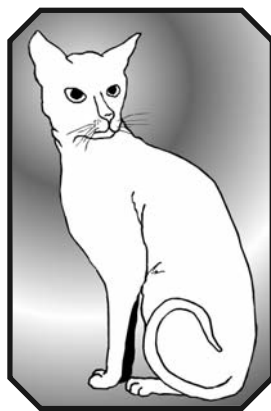
Cities attract travelers from foreign lands, and those travelers often bring their gods with them. A mercantile city or imperial capital is likely to have cults of several foreign gods. Usually the venerators are city residents of foreign birth or ancestry, but

some foreign gods find worshipers among a city's native people. In a monotheistic culture, these may have to be outright converts. In a polytheistic culture, people may go to the temple of a foreign god for help with a problem their native gods can't deal with. Temples may make extra money from providing religious tokens to people who don't know much about their gods but want the help they can provide. This kind of use for gods may survive when the gods are no longer worshipped. See *Religious Spillover* (p. 28).

MINOR GODS

Various sorts of gods with comparatively minor or specialized powers may be worshipped in cities. Some gods have powers limited to a single function, often protecting their worshippers against a specific danger. Examples include Stata Mater, an ancient Roman goddess for whom shrines were built wherever a major fire was put out, and Sitala Mata, the North Indian goddess of smallpox, who received cooling foods, drinks, and ointments through the bodies of the smallpox patients she was possessing. In *GURPS* terms, this type of god can be defined as a Contact with a supernatural power, whose effective skill is a single clerical spell, such as Extinguish Fire or Cure Smallpox (a specialized variant of Cure Disease). Alternatively, holy men may have Power Investiture (One Spell Only, -80%) at 2 points/level and knowledge of the appropriate spell.

Mortals who achieve great things may be honored after death by being deified. The ancient Greeks had many examples of such mortals – Asclepius for medicine, Heracles for strength and heroic quests, Orpheus for music. They also had a systematic theory of deification, which held that divine honors were fittingly given to any great benefactor. Some deified heroes gain widespread cults, but others are revered only in the specific community that they helped while living. In *GURPS* terms, they are typically Contacts, able to grant the skill for which they were famed in life; the GM may want to allow an effective skill higher than 21, at +1 to base cost for +3 to effective skill.



SERVITORS OF GODS

Small armies of spirits serve many gods. If the god dies, the spirit may be left on its own, drifting through the streets of a city where its god has no more worshippers. Other spirits may accompany their gods to a new city, and then break free of their servitude; “city air makes free” may be true for spirits as well as mortals. Some of these spirits may fall victim to cunning sorcerers and be bound again to service; others may provide limited favors and bargain over the terms. A city might have a floating population of formerly religion-related spirits with no fixed function or habitation.

SPIRIT ROADS

In fantasy settings where all magic is spirit-based, and mana reflects the traffic of invisible spirits, ley lines are paths that have an unusual number of spirits moving along them. In other settings, where spirits either feed off mana or use it to perform supernatural feats, the flow of mana along ley lines attracts spirits. In either case, it's easier to find spirits on ley lines; treat the ley line's Intensity as a bonus to spells to find or summon a spirit and to skill or attribute rolls with the same purpose. It may also be easier to enter the spirit world on a ley line, because portals occur more frequently there or because the lines give bonuses to relevant spells or supernatural abilities.

In other settings, spirits have no relationship to mana but have their own networks of pathways. These spirit roads have the same game effects on dealing with spirits as ley lines, but they are harder to locate.

SPIRITS OF BUILDINGS

Houses and other buildings may become the habitats of spirits, either in an animistic world, or by the same process that attracts spirits to certain springs, groves, or mountains. If only certain places have spirits, the buildings that have spirits will be the ones that are distinctive in some way. Some buildings gain this distinctiveness over time from their occupants. Others exhibit it because of their construction. Architects may deliberately seek to make their structures special, in the hope of luring in benign spirits – or boringly conventional, if they're afraid of attracting hostile ones! Sculptured threatening figures (see *Gargoyles*, p. 44) may keep hostile spirits away.

The building's spirits may hold actual memories of the people and the events that have been there. The ability to communicate with the structure's spirits can be defined as Psychometry with a special limitation, Spirit-Based, -25%. Alternatively, the spirit of a building may communicate with its occupants by its own efforts; such a spirit may become a Contact for a favored occupant.

The spirit of a building may influence the people who occupy it. Some buildings have physical manifestations, such as creaking noises or doors that open inexplicably. Others may influence the minds of their occupants, especially in their dreams. These effects can be defined as advantages possessed by the building's spirit. Alternatively, whatever strange things happen under its influence could be defined as properties of the location.

It's also possible for a mage to create a building with a spirit deliberately. Awaken Building (p. 33) is just one option. If elementals exist, an earth mage can summon an earth elemental and bind it to inhabit the substance of a stone building, or a plant mage can do the same with a wood elemental using the Necromantic spell Bind Spirit (*GURPS Magic*, p. 158). A necromantic mage inhabiting a castle shaped from bone could reanimate it with an exotic variant of the Zombie spell. The rules for sacred architecture (pp. 21-23) can also be used to influence a building's spirit.

URBAN FAERIES

Traditionally, faeries were creatures of fields or forests, either roaming about like mortal vagabonds, or living in secret communities hidden in the wilderness or underground. Some sorts of faeries might adapt to city life: Domestic faeries could help with urban households, mine faeries might be comfortable in catacombs or subways, and trickster faeries could play jokes on city dwellers as easily as on country folk. One of the most recently described types of faeries, the gremlins, first became widely known in the folklore of World War II pilots. They have since spread to every kind of machinery – and modern cities are full of machinery.

Some faeries accompany country people who migrate to the city. If a farm girl finds work as a maidservant and appeases faeries as she did in the country, country faeries might feel welcome and make the city their new home.

In the eyes of country people, all city people have some faerielike qualities – they're tricky, deceitful, and hard to pin down. Maybe traveling salesmen are a type of faerie, using glamour and a quick tongue to pawn off worthless rubbish as exotic treasures on country folk.

Faeries are masters of camouflage; thus, faeries living in a city would be quick to take on an urban appearance. The strange-looking man begging on a street corner might be a cunning faerie trickster or the leader of a powerful clan of city faeries. Shyer faeries might disguise themselves not with the green of leaves, but the gray of stone or the black of soot. In 19th-century Britain, several species of moths underwent genetic change from white, gray, or brown wings to black wings, which made them harder to see against soot-darkened walls; winged faeries could either evolve in the same way or use magic to change their coloration.

MAGICALLY CREATED BEINGS

One of the heights of the magical arts is the creation of artificial beings, usually intended as servants. Such a servant typically is Reprogrammable or has Slave Mentality. Created servants are usually made of unliving material animated by spells or other magical methods. Zombies and skeletons are

produced from human corpses; golems are shaped from clay or other materials.

It's also possible to take a sample of living human tissue, such as one's own blood, and induce it to grow into a servant. In alchemy, such a being is called a homunculus (*GURPS Magic*, p. 221).

In a magic-rich city, it may not just be powerful mages who have such servants. They may be available to rich and powerful people in general, or even to every household well off enough to afford a servant – they may even replace most servants, so that only the very wealthy have human servants. Alternatively, they may be used for heavy labor, giving rise to a kind of “industrial revolution” powered not by coal and oil, but by mana. This provides an alternative to magical power transmission via ley lines (see *Magical Energy Channels*, p. 36): Each magical automaton supplies power in kilowatts equal to its BL/200 (see *The Mechanical Equivalent of Magic*, pp. 26-27).

Other legends tell of created beings who are more than servants, such as Galatea, a superhumanly beautiful statue shaped by the sculptor Pygmalion, who then fell in love with his creation and prayed to Aphrodite to give it life. A darker version is Frankenstein’s creature, brought to life through alchemical infusions and rebelling against his creator’s harsh treatment of him.

PHANTASMS

One important use of magic is creating illusions; in some interpretations, all of magic is ultimately illusory. Many mages

can create images of objects, living things, or even people. Most illusions persist only while the mage concentrates on them, act only as he decides, and have no physical effect on the real world. Magic that is more powerful may transcend all these limits. Its creations may last for a set time (perhaps vanishing at midnight, like Cinderella’s accoutrements); until a specific condition is met (such as the touch of iron); or until they (gradually) fade away. They may be able to perform repetitious actions on their own, or even acquire actual consciousness, desires, and self-awareness. They might move physical objects or beings, or damage them – or be damaged by them. A magical city may count such enduring phantasms among its inhabitants.

A phantasm that can’t act on its own has IQ 0; in effect, it has controls that can be operated by its creator (see *Compartmentalized Mind*, p. B43). If it can act on its own, it has an IQ higher than 0, though it may also have Reprogrammable (pp. B150-151). Most phantasms have permanent Insubstantiality (pp. B62-63), but the more tangible ones may have permanent Shadow Form (p. B83 and *GURPS Fantasy*, p. 131). If they can move physical objects, give them Can Carry Objects. Most phantasms are ephemeral enough to count as Terminally Ill (p. B158).

HAUNTED STREETS

One special class of supernatural beings that inhabit cities is malevolent or terrifying spirits. They may have nearly the same traits as benevolent or neutral spirits, but their dramatic roles are different. A single, hostile creature may be an adversary for urban adventurers in a dark fantasy campaign. A city filled with such spirits can create an atmosphere of horror.

Few of the creatures described herein have character stats. They exist as unseen forces behind mysterious and creepy events in the physical world. Adventurers can deal with them through magical spells, prayers, mediumistic talents, exorcism, or similar means.

Several urban horrors that aren’t spirits are also discussed.

ALIENATION

The anonymity of city dwellers isn’t always positive. Some people feel it not as liberating, but as alienating. Immigrants from the country, in particular, may regret the loss of a village where everyone knew them. This sense of isolation can give rise to fears of dehumanization, and to legends that reflect them – and in a fantasy setting, those legends may be true.

One of the themes of urban horror is the fear that living in the city will turn people into inhuman creatures. The ungeziefer, presented here, is a human transformed into vermin.

Ungeziefer

-50 points

An ungeziefer is a man-sized bug, along the lines of a weevil or roach. The template can be applied to a human character who turns into such a creature, for example, through a magical curse. With suitable adjustments, it can apply to other humanoid races as well.

An ungeziefer has a horizontal posture, running about on six somewhat spindly legs, which can also serve as arms. He has little fighting ability, though if pressed he can grapple a foe. His eyes are wide-set and give him good peripheral vision, but no depth perception. He can eat almost any food and is tolerant of poisons. Most people will perceive him as a form of vermin, either avoiding him or trying to kill him. Family or close friends who knew him before his transformation may protect him, but they will be ashamed of his condition and not want to spend time with him.

*As Gregor Samsa awake one morning
from a troubled dream, he found himself
changed in his bed to some monstrous kind
of vermin.*

– Franz Kafka, *The Metamorphosis*

Secondary Characteristic Modifiers: Will -2 [-10]; Basic Move +1 [5].

Advantages: Clinging [20]; Discriminatory Smell [15]; DR 2 [10]; Extra Arms 4 (Foot Manipulators, -30%) [28]; Peripheral Vision [15]; Reduced Consumption 2 (Cast-Iron Stomach, -50%) [2]; Resistant to Poison (+3) [5]; Subsonic Hearing [5].

Disadvantages: Appearance (Monstrous) [-20]; Bad Sight (Nearsighted) [-25]; Bad Smell [-10]; Chronic Depression (12) [-15]; Disturbing Voice [-10]; Fearfulness 2 [-4]; Foot Manipulators (2 arms) [-6]; Fragile (Brittle) [-15]; Horizontal [-10]; No Depth Perception [-15]; Social Stigma (Vermin) [-15].

CRIMINAL SPIRITS

Some spirits can take on a human likeness and physically interact with humans. One form such interaction can take is preying on human beings in various ways, much as mortal criminals do.

Urban Doppelgangers

According to legend, a doppelganger is a spirit that takes on the form and likeness of a living person and goes about the mortal world in his guise, enjoying itself in ways that will get him in trouble. In extreme cases, the doppelganger may even entirely supplant the original, leaving him confined to a lunatic asylum, wandering the streets as a nameless beggar, or completely faded away.

In **GURPS** terms, the most straightforward way to represent this supernatural identity theft is as having an Evil Twin (p. B135) with abilities that the original doesn't possess, normally of a spiritual nature. Usually the doppelganger will be a Rival. The underlying spiritual nature of the doppelganger won't show up in play, except as a source of some uncanny abilities – the doppelganger's campaign role is as a threat to a specific person. When that threat is resolved, it will depart.

A GM who wants a doppelganger as a recurring threat that changes targets between appearances can give it Morph (Human only, -10%; Only to copy a specific individual, -10%). The base form is that of a spirit; the Morph ability lets the doppelganger become solid and human.

Hungry Ghosts

One common explanation for ghosts is that they're spirits of the dead that remain attached to the mortal world rather than going on to their proper realm. One reason for this kind of attachment is that the dead person was greedy or self-indulgent, and his ghost still has the same cravings. The *gaki* (or "hungry ghosts") of Japanese legend are this type of spirit.

Hungry ghosts don't normally haunt a specific place; they're rootless creatures, pulled about by their appetites. They may drift to large cities, drawn by having more opportunities to feed and by the chance to hide in city crowds.

People in cities may be more likely to become hungry ghosts after their deaths. It's easier to live without close social bonds in a city than in a village. Moreover, the greater variety of goods in city marketplaces gives city dwellers more opportunity to become obsessive consumers. The hungry ghost makes a plausible symbol for people's anxieties about the temptations of city life.

DISEASE SPIRITS

Many cultures have believed that malevolent spirits inflict disease on people. Doctors in such cultures often try to treat disease by inducing the spirit to leave the patient's body. In **GURPS** terms, this is Exorcism. A disease spirit resists Exorcism with HT, rather than Will; to find the HT score that it uses to resist being cast out, apply the disease's penalty to cyclic resistance rolls as an *increase* in HT above a base score of 10.

Example: A cancer victim might have to roll vs. HT at -5 to achieve remission of the cancer. If a faith healer tried to drive out the demon that was causing the cancer, it would resist him with HT 15!

This sort of explanation makes especially good sense for contagious diseases. As one patient either dies or recovers, and another one shows the first visible symptoms, it's plausible to suppose that the demon has found a new victim. For an ordinary contagious disease, the number of demons in a city will be about the average number of cases. For a virulent plague, spreading rapidly through a population, the number of demons is increasing, either because they're able to breed in some way, or because some grievous sin or sorcerous ritual has opened the gates of hell and let them out. Demons that cause noncontagious diseases presumably can't migrate to new hosts in this way; they take up residence in one body and stay there until they can carry the host off to hell.

At the GM's discretion, the disease spirit itself may be the cause of the ailment, or it may work by lowering the resistance of the disease's targets to contagion, with the actual cause of the sickness being a bacterial or viral infection. Perhaps each pathogenic species has its own genius (spirit) that seeks to protect and encourage it. A visit to a city by a pathogen genius could turn the area into a plague zone.

GARGOYLES

The legendary gargoyle started out as an architectural feature, prevalent on the Gothic churches of the Middle Ages: a grotesque, distorted face placed at the edge of a building's roof, with a waterspout draining through its open mouth. In legend, the repulsive face served to frighten away evil spirits and keep the church safe and holy. The name was generalized to other figures that didn't have waterspouts, though technically these are called *grotesques* or *chimeras*. Other cultures have had similar myths; for example, ancient Indian temples were carved with figures of *rakshasas*, a type of demons whose name comes from a root meaning "guard."

In an urban-magic campaign, a gargoyle is a spirit, often demonic, that is mystically bound to an image carved on a building. Spells, ritual magic, or prayers may achieve the binding, or the spirit may even choose to bind itself, perhaps for the promise of a reward. Suitable architecture may aid in the binding (see *Sacred Architecture*, pp. 21-23). The spirit's role is as a kind of supernatural security force, primarily to fight off freely moving spiritual intruders, though it may also be able to sense mortal intruders and repel them psychically or magically. Gods can most safely control gargoyles, so they're mainly found on temples or churches, but a confident wizard may also install them. They may even guard the house of a rich man who can hire his own staff wizard – though whether he can trust the wizard may be a different question!

These are not the same as the race of gargoyles described in **GURPS Banestorm** and **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 3: The Next Level**.

HAUNTED HOUSES

Haunted houses are common in urban legends. A house where someone was murdered or died mysteriously may remain untenanted for some time afterward, growing steadily more decrepit as time passes, and thus even less attractive as a place to live. People who venture into it may hear strange noises, or see ghostly images. In a fantasy setting, these may be actual spirits of the dead.

The presence of a ghost in a building makes the building less healthy and thus less safe to inhabit. Normally, this manifests itself as creaking noises and mysterious drafts that make it impossible to keep the building warm. The structural materials may crack or rot; some ghosts may even be able to summon swarms of rats or termites. Under stressful conditions, a failed HT roll for the building may cause part of it to collapse.

Ghosts can also make noises, such as shrieks or rattling chains; create chilling sensations; or even become visible. Generally, their appearance recalls the manner in which they died. The ghost has the power of Terror; often at a substantial penalty to the victim's Fright Check. The actual appearance of the spirit can be treated as a special effect of the Terror. Typically, a ghost's Terror costs FP to activate. At the GM's discretion, a ghost whose Terror includes penalties to the victim's Fright Check may generate a lesser degree of fear without becoming visible or audible, simply by being invisibly present; Fright Checks to resist this fear do not have a penalty.

LOST SOULS

Themes of alienation and dehumanization (see p. 43) can be reflected in spiritual as well as bodily ways. People who live in cities may be in danger of actually losing their souls, perhaps because they made the wrong contract or bargain with someone (whether a demon or a large industrial corporation). Similarly, life in a city may slowly erode away people's spiritual integrity, so that they lose their souls by small fractions.

Loss of one's soul has a number of game effects. In the first place, it causes the inability to perceive the emotional aspects of human relationships; the victim has Low Empathy. This same lack makes the victim's soullessness visible to anyone with the Empathy or Sensitive advantage – a successful roll won't necessarily reveal that the victim is soulless, but he will have an obvious wrongness or emptiness. The soulless also lose all self-imposed mental disadvantages. Soulless people are intensely self-centered, lacking the ability to care about anything but their own convenience.

At the same time, they don't take very good care of themselves. They lack sensitivity to their own bodily and emotional state, and fail to provide for their own maintenance. Anyone who becomes soulless is at -1 to HT and Will rolls; this drops to -2 after a month, to -3 after a year, and to -4 after 10 years.

Finally, the soulless are potentially Reprogrammable. If they sold or bartered their souls, the recipient can give them instructions. If they lost them at random, they have no pre-established master, but they're vulnerable to being taken over by any spirit capable of possession (in effect, they're ready-made Puppets). They're also easy subjects for human control through Brainwashing, Hypnotism, or Propaganda; they never gain the +5 to Will for resisting hypnotic commands that go against their personal convictions. Political movements may deliberately recruit soulless followers.

NECROPOLISES

An entire city may be haunted, especially one where many people have died in a war, plague, or natural disaster. Dying young and unexpectedly may leave the spirits of the dead with

unfinished business. A large number of deaths all at once may overload the city's normal funerary practices, so that many dead people aren't laid properly to rest.

Even without such catastrophes, over time, a city might accumulate a large number of the restless dead, a few in each generation. If ghosts don't spontaneously fade, and aren't exorcised, their numbers will increase. Eventually, an old city may be so haunted by the ancient dead that the living can no longer endure it. Such a city would be death-aspected (see *Aspected Mana*, pp. 29-30).

Living people in such a necropolis are likely to be sickly – roll vs. contagion at -1 or worse. Women there may bear fewer children. The death aspect may even affect animals and plants, making the necropolis unnaturally sterile.

Eventually, a necropolis may be a city entirely of the dead, with all of its buildings haunted, and homeless ghosts straying in its otherwise empty streets. Mediums and mages will find it a disturbing place to visit. The death aspect may even grow strong enough to weaken the barriers between life and death, allowing ghosts to become visible and audible, perhaps as transparent forms and elusive whispers.



THE SPIRIT OF THE MOB

Mobs are capable of terrifying violence, and they often seem to lack any normal human mentality. In a fantasy world, group members may actually not be wholly human; they may be possessed by demons. Such entities are akin to the demons that possess unnatural macroswarms of vermin (see p. 46), but they prefer crowds of sapient beings as hosts over swarms of rats or flies.

A mob spirit is attracted by angry or hostile thoughts. If it finds a large group of people, many of whom harbor such thoughts, it will settle among them and encourage them to act out their feelings. Any person influenced by such a spirit resists attempts to incite mob violence (with Propaganda, Public Speaking, etc.) at -1 to -5. Soulless people (above) are particularly easy targets for mob spirits; they can't generate evil passions, but they can be caught up in them and unable to resist.

Religious fanaticism and political revolution may provide social environments favorable to mob spirits. In other cases, mob spirits that want a fertile feeding ground may create them.

The spirit of a mob can be exorcised, but not easily. By the time the average exorcist completes his ritual, the mob may well have torn him limb from limb. Most mob Exorcism rolls thus need to be made in haste, with the resulting penalties to effective skill (see p. B346).

Ironically, mob spirits may act as counteragents to other sorts of horrifying entities. The vampire or werewolf pursued by enraged peasants carrying torches and pitchforks is a cliché of horror films. Perhaps mob spirits are a kind of psychic immune system that protects human beings against unnatural horrors – but that occasionally goes wild and turns against harmless human beings, misidentifying them as monsters.

URBAN VAMPIRES

Vampires are traditionally described as preying on humans by violence. Cities offer increased chances for this type of predation, and thus likely enough have populations of vampires to take advantage of them. However, stereotypes about city people offer other models for vampirism. City dwellers are considered thieves, purveyors of vice, or sharp traders; vampires could take any of these approaches and have suitable supernatural powers.

A vampiric thief, for example, would steal blood from his victims without overt violence. This kind of theft is harder to conceal than picking a pocket. Vampires of this sort are likely to prefer victims who are asleep or sufficiently drunk or drugged not to know what's happening to them. Some vampires may have Affliction (Sleep, +150%) to ensure that their victims *stay* unconscious. Being inconspicuous, perhaps with the aid of Invisibility, or by moving about at night, aided by Night Vision, also makes blood theft safer. Blood thieves are likely to drain blood through inconspicuous, easily overlooked punctures, possibly in less visible locations than the neck.

Other vampires may find *willing* victims, living people who enjoy being bitten. Some recent portrayals of vampires make them look like drug dealers or prostitutes. This is most plausible if the vampire's bite has Affliction (Euphoria, +30%, or Ecstasy, +100%) as a Follow-Up. Other supernatural entities

such as incubi and succubi, demons who specialize in tempting mortals sexually, may play similar roles.

Finally, vampires may simply get blood by paying for it. Blood vendors could be naive boys and girls hired as servants; desperate urban poor people ready to take any work (for example, widows with young children to support); or highly paid professionals. Public attitudes toward vampires could be anything from admiration to envy to open hatred; either of the latter two would make it safer to keep such arrangements private. Vampires might acquire their wealth simply by surviving a long time and making prudent investments, or they might have Charisma, Empathy, or Mind Control, letting them get the better of mortals in a bargain. Such bargaining might enter into their contracts with their blood vendors as well. Deals with vampires, like deals with the Devil, may be notoriously one-sided.

VERMIN SPIRITS

Malevolent spirits are often associated with vermin of various sorts. For example, the demon Beelzebub has the title "Lord of the Flies." The physical manifestation of such a spirit may be a swarm of small animals or an unnatural macroswarm (see *Ratpiping*, p. 21).

Some evil spirits simply summon large numbers of vermin and influence their actions. Others create them, perhaps by spontaneous generation from rotting food or corpses. Still others actually take on physical form, turning themselves into bats or roaches.

Whatever the reason, the swarm may demonstrate unnatural intelligence in its actions. Its members may also be unnervingly lacking in fear of humans. The mind that inhabits the group may be willing to sacrifice a few bodies to achieve its purposes.

One way to deal with such a swarm is direct physical attack. Inflicting enough injury to disperse the swarm will break the power of the spirit that created it. Another method is to drive the spirit out using Exorcism, after which the members of the swarm can be disposed of individually.

Rat Kings

Legends tell of bizarre star-shaped entities made up of multiple rat bodies joined tail to tail, called "rat kings." A number of museums have purported specimens, but most biologists believe these are the product of hoaxes. If real, they came into being through freak accidents. In a fantasy setting, they may be the products of magical experiments in bio-tech, or *the rats themselves* may create them, possibly under the direction of older rat kings.

Physically, a rat king is a swarm of rats (see p. B461), but with some differences from normal swarms, because its members are physically attached to each other. It has Move 2 instead of 4, because movement always requires some bodies to crawl backward. It cannot be dispersed in the normal way. Instead, a successful attack against the tail joint with a cutting, impaling, or piercing weapon disperses it. This is a difficult target: -3 to effective skill. Alternatively, it can simply be incapacitated through repeated

attacks. After suffering 12 HP, it must roll vs. HT 11 to remain conscious. After each additional 12 HP, it must roll vs. HT 11 to survive.

For other rats, in a fantasy city, a rat king acts as a Contact. A typical rat king has effective Urban Survival-18; recently formed or elderly ones may have lower or higher skill. At the GM's discretion, a rat king may have psychic powers granting it extra knowledge of the city where it lives. Rat kings are "somewhat reliable," but gifts of food make them "usually reliable"; rat communities keep their kings well fed. Any rat in a city that has a rat king could petition (with gifts) for an audience in the king's hiding place to gain information about traps, poisoned bait, or predators or guided to human food stores. An offended rat king might provide misleading information that results in the death or capture of the irksome rat.

CHAPTER SEVEN

URBAN SETTINGS AND CAMPAIGNS

Which of the options discussed in the previous chapters fit a given campaign depends on what role cities play in it, and

what sort of cities the setting features. Below are some ideas to help the GM decide.

SCALE

The size of a city is its most visible feature. In a world where most people come from isolated farms or small farm villages, even a small city can be an overwhelming place, too big to take in all at once. There's a limit to how much information the human mind can handle, and cities are past that limit. Being big is their greatest asset, but also the source of most of their problems. How big a city is affects everything else about how it works – including, for example, how many mages there are and how they're organized.

Permanent settlements can be classified into the following types, based partly on the size categories for search rolls to find a hireling (p. B517) or a job (p. B518). See *GURPS Fantasy* (pp. 92-96) for more on how these categories work in low-tech historical fantasy settings.

ISOLATE

An isolate is a single household or communal dwelling place, separated from others by open land. If it's a household, it may be a large one, sheltering several grown children, their spouses and children, and a few slaves or hired hands. Even so, isolates have less than 100 inhabitants (-3 to search rolls). Many isolates are farmsteads, especially in low-tech civilizations, but other possibilities include military outposts, monasteries, or inns.

VILLAGE

A village consists of many households living close together. If it's a farm community, the farmers travel out to their fields in the morning and come back when the day's work is done. Most villages have 100-999 inhabitants (-2 to search rolls). A very small village, or *hamlet*, may have less than 100.

Farmers or fishermen typically inhabit villages. Larger villages often have small markets, open on specific days. People from surrounding communities (especially isolates) come there to shop – and, often, to have a meal, drink, or smoke, and to hear the news.

TOWN

A town is a community that's organized around a market. Usually the market is open all the time, though it may shut down for legal or religious holidays. These markets make towns the centers of trade for the surrounding countryside. In return for the things they sell, they buy food and raw materials from the nearby country people.

A typical size range for a town is 1,000-4,999 people (-1 to search rolls). Many will have jobs other than farming. In a country where farmers live on isolated farmsteads, or one inhabited mainly by nomads, much smaller communities, no bigger than a large village (above), may perform the same functions, with the inhabitants running the market or providing public services.

*Until every shape has found its city,
new cities will continue to be born. When
the forms exhaust their variety and come
apart, the end of cities begins.*

– Italo Calvino

CITY

True cities are larger than towns, with anywhere from 5,000 to 100,000 inhabitants (search roll modifiers are from 0 to +3). In low-tech settings, a community of 100,000 is enormous. In high-tech settings (including settings where magic functions as technology), cities of 100,000 are commonplace.

With this many people, cities occupy a lot of land. For a city of 10,000, a quarter of a square mile (for example, a square half a mile on a side) would be typical. Many, if not most, of their people perform activities other than farming. A large city, or an industrialized one, may contain no farmers at all.

The most common function of cities is long-distance trade with other cities. Each city exports goods that are common in its area and imports goods that are scarce, for resale in local markets. Carrying on this kind of trade is a specialized occupation; the people who do so often have a lot of power or influence. See also *Transportation and Trade* (p. 49).

METROPOLIS

The largest cities, with 100,000 inhabitants or more, are typically the capitals of powerful kingdoms or empires in low-tech settings. A city of a million or more is huge and needs a great empire to support it. In high-tech settings, large cities

multiply, and their inhabitants make up a greater share of the population, or even the majority.

Such a city is effectively an artificial environment. Buildings or streets take up most of the land. Its animals are livestock, pets, or vermin. Its plants are deliberately cultivated, in pots or small gardens. A person standing at the center of the city may not be able to see as far as its limits. Regardless of the natural environment surrounding it, roll vs. Urban Survival to accomplish survival tasks within the city.

Cities on this scale don't grant search bonuses higher than +3. However, the GM may allow several search rolls in different districts of the same metropolis.

World-City

At very high tech levels, the world may no longer consist of individual cities separated by open land; rather, the whole planet may be urbanized into a world-city or *ecumenopolis*. This is most common in science fiction – a classic example is Trantor, the galactic capital in Isaac Asimov's *Foundation* series – but fantasy provides examples where the technology that keeps the world going is magical. See, for example, Walter Jon Williams' *Metropolitan* and *City on Fire*. In such a world, city streets and buildings dominate the entire landscape; open land is parks or gardens surrounded by built-up areas.

A world-city's population can be huge. If all of Earth's 57.5 million square miles of land were occupied as densely as the built-up area of a typical village, it would hold over a trillion people. Usually, inhabitants have to produce their

own food within the city itself, whether in magically aided factory farms, rooftop gardens, or hydroponic tanks, or by magical food creation.

Some fantasy worlds may have a different sort of world-city, one that doesn't cover the whole world, but dominates it, the way an early city-state dominated the surrounding villages. Rather than a trillion people, it might have a billion or less. Rather than covering a world, it might only take up 10 or 20 thousand square miles. Its magic would aim less at producing all its food in garden plots, and more at shipping it from halfway around the world. Magical teleportation may be vital to making this work, perhaps aided by ley lines – a dense network of ley lines may explain why a world-city exists in a particular place.

LOCATION

Like a living creature, a city depends on its environment. A city that can't meet its needs dies; a city with rich resources grows larger. In the end, the locations that provide the greatest advantages are the most likely sites for viable cities.

BASIC NECESSITIES

A city's most basic need is food and water for its inhabitants. Cities also depend on other consumables, usually in smaller amounts, such as fuel for cooking and in many climates for heat. In a futuristic setting or exotic environment, a city may also need a supply of air.

In most climates, rainfall and natural springs provide enough water for a small city's needs, especially if it's built on a river, as many cities are. A large city, or a city in a desert, may not be able to get by on the local water supply. Such cities may build canals, aqueducts, or dams to store water. Alternatively, they may have enchanted water works.

Real cities always import food, and cities that use wood or other plant matter as fuel must import it as well. Early cities are normally built in the middle of fertile areas, so food

doesn't need to travel far. Large cities, and most high-tech cities, bring in food from farther away, by river, canal, sea, or (at TL5 or higher) rail or truck. Magic may also provide improved food transportation.

A fantasy world's cities may benefit from improved soil fertility, aided by spells or divine favor; *GURPS Fantasy* (p. 95) discusses this in detail. Cities where magic is omnipresent may use magic to support fertile garden plots and rooftop gardens within their own walls. Alternatively, mages may simply create the food directly; people may not even remember what natural food is – or may flinch in horror when they learn about it from historians. ("You mean people used to eat the bodies of animals?")

Cities in airless environments can use Create Air to provide breathable air, and Purify Air to keep it breathable.

Magically supplied food, water, or air means that a city has to be on a site with high enough mana to keep the spells working. In effect, mana becomes its life support.

For further discussion of these concerns, see *Travel and Transportation* (pp. 36-39) and *Public Works* (pp. 34-36).

SPECIALIZED RESOURCES

A common reason for cities to develop is the presence of specialized resources. If people in one area can produce something that people in other areas want but can't produce, they can make a living selling through the export trade.

The city itself isn't usually where the basic material is produced. Farmers, herdsman, fishermen, and woodcutters do their work in the open; a city is a central collection point for what they produce. Mineral resources are more concentrated but often in inaccessible areas, and mining environments are hazardous to live in. Cities that sell mineral products are typically at least a short distance away from the mines. In fantasy, though, races such as dwarves may actually live in underground complexes of mines, workshops, fortifications, and living quarters. Similarly, fishermen in the real world live on the shore and work at sea. Fantasy worlds might have floating cities, or submerged cities with water-breathing inhabitants.

Cities may simply package raw materials for shipping, but often, they change them in various ways: spinning fiber, weaving cloth, refining ores, or firing pottery, for example. The resulting materials can themselves play the role of a specialized resource. A city of weavers can develop a clothing industry; a city of metallurgists can house smiths, armorers, or jewelers. In high-tech worlds, these secondary industries become a major source of economic growth. Materials may also be in demand for their magical qualities or uses (see *Lapidism*, p. 18; **GURPS Magic**, pp. 210-222; and **GURPS Thaumatology**, pp. 95-113, 244, 247-252, and 255).

TRANSPORTATION AND TRADE

For a city to profit from specialized resources, it needs to sell them to other cities. Cities need access to long-range transportation. Locations that offer such access are the most likely to have large cities.

Cities often develop where one kind of transportation network connects with another. Good natural harbors become seaports, where cargo is transferred between seagoing ships and in-land road networks. Large rivers also develop ports, particularly at the farthest point up the navigable part of the river. Many cities invest in improved transportation, starting with low-tech roads, bridges, and canals. As roads, canals, and (later) railroads spread, they create new favorable locations where new cities can grow.

In fantasy settings, magic may improve transportation networks or create new ones (see *Travel and Transportation*, pp. 36-39). Cities may even be linked with distant cities by teleportation, or with other planes of reality by planar travel. In worlds with ley lines, cities may typically be located on ley lines, especially where several of them come together (see pp. 37-38 and 48).

DEFENSIBILITY

To survive, cities must be able to protect themselves, or obtain protection from some other source, such as a national or imperial army and navy.

The city may take advantage of the local terrain – for example, being next to a river, on an island, in a high place (perhaps

with cliffs on several sides), or against a natural rock wall. People looking for a safe place to live may choose such a site, or settlements in such locations may survive and grow into cities while others are destroyed.

If mana levels are variable, there are advantages to building a city in a site with low or no mana, especially one that's large enough to handicap magical attackers. Frequent wars, open outlawry, or extremely powerful wizards make it worth putting up with the inconvenience of not being able to use magic. Many legends describe magical places as being far away from settled places. In a world where the legends are true, the need for protection from magical assault may explain why things occur that way.

However, a site with high mana is also magically defensible, with every adult, not just mages, being able to learn and cast spells. The same is true for a site that's favorably aspected to a suitable sort of magic, such as spells of Protection and Warning or Meta-Spells. A location whose aspect penalizes dangerous magic, like Fire spells, would be especially appealing.

MANA LEVEL

In some fantasy settings, magic itself is an economic force. If a site is particularly conducive to magic – either because its overall mana level is higher than normal, or because it's aspected to a particular type of spell – it may develop magical industries. Some of these will support the local community, improving the food supply, public health, transportation, defense, or other needs. Others may bring in trade from other local communities or from distant cities, and that trade can support the growth of a city, just as any other abundant natural resource can.

In a no-mana world, a city with even low mana has an advantage. People will come there to be cured of illnesses, or to seek answers to their questions from oracles. The city can also defend itself against sieges with magic. However, it can't export magical objects; in the rest of the world, they won't work. Likewise, any spell that creates a constant magical effect (such as Continual Light), rather than a permanent change in a physical object (such as Minor Healing or Shape Earth), will fail away from the city.

In a low mana world, a city with normal mana will attract mages, who can cast spells more easily there. It can export enchanted items, as well, but if their power is less than 20, they'll stop working once they're outside the city.

In a normal or low mana world, a city with high mana will attract both mages and nonmages to study magic. Mages don't actually have any direct advantage there, but the ability of nonmages to perform spells makes the entire city a pool of magical labor. Rather than spending their time with simple castings such as Test Food or Extinguish Fire, mages can concentrate on the more difficult spells that require one or more levels of Magic.

A site with very high mana is likely *not* to have people living on it. The risk of disastrous spell failures makes it the supernatural equivalent of a mine: able to produce valuable goods and services, but dangerous to live in or next to. Highly trained mages will settle just far enough away to be safe, and travel to the very high mana site for each day's work; and the site itself will be fenced off to keep out trespassers who might suffer from magical accidents – or cause them.

In many fantasy settings found in fiction, the high mana sites are far away from population centers, perhaps because large numbers of people deplete the local mana supply (see *Cities and Mana Levels*, pp. 27-30). Cities in such worlds act as central collection points for magical goods produced in scattered and difficult to reach magical places. Enchanted item dealers may play a big part in organizing this trade.

BUILT BY COMMAND

Sometimes the location of a city is decided by the will of a powerful ruler. Akhenaten, Alexander the Great, and Peter I of Russia all founded cities to serve their personal goals. Republics and democracies may also found new cities as their capitals, such as Brasilia, Canberra, or Washington.

A city built by a ruler's command may be in a location that has little to recommend it; both Washington and St. Petersburg were built in swamps. It may still grow and prosper, if the ruler or his heirs or successors go on funding the city. Nonetheless, it may not have the diversified economy of

a spontaneously formed city. Rather, its entire economy may be driven by a single "industry," whether religious worship, warfare, or bureaucracy. Protected by the ruler's armies, it may have little military strength of its own. In high-tech economies, large business enterprises may found "company towns" with similar limitations.

In a magical setting, the command to build a new city may really come from a god, through a prophecy. Similarly, a mortal ruler may be touched with divinity by his high Status. Divine blessings or charismatic rulers may also be able to sustain a city's economy and military strength. A powerful magical being such as a god may even be able to create a city by exerting his own will. Divinely ordained cities may have many of their needs supplied by powerful magical objects (see *Public Works*, pp. 34-36).

A city of this type may have a spirit with an especially close relationship to its founder and his heirs. In a polytheistic setting, the founder may even become a minor deity (see *Minor Gods*, p. 41).

Ruins

Some cities, particularly in RPG settings, end as uninhabited ruins. The lack of people means that many of the normal rules and standards of populated cities don't apply.

What makes ruined cities *interesting* is what the former inhabitants left behind. Lost piles of treasure, concealed magical artifacts, and mysterious tomes are the classic examples, but people can make a reasonable living scavenging for durable everyday items, such as furniture or pottery. The architecture itself can even be worth stealing: People may prefer hauling precut stone blocks to quarrying their own.

The obvious hazards of a ruined city include the crumbling buildings and unmaintained streets. Other, more

animate dangers are rival teams of looters, bandits using the ruins as a base, wild animals, and (in recently abandoned cities) feral, starving dogs. It's also possible that whatever caused the city to be abandoned (such as a plague or a dragon) is still an active menace.

From a GM's perspective, one advantage of a ruined city is the freedom to redraw the map. In a living city, roads tend to remain unblocked, buildings have clear access points, and stairs go all the way up. In ruins, none of these need be true. The GM can make getting around in the city as difficult as he likes, and he can thus guide the course of events and encounters, much as in a traditional dungeon setting.

How MUCH MAGIC?

A final question about a city in a fantasy campaign is how much, and how visibly, magic affects city life. Here are some typical cases.

Hidden Magic: The city contains magic workers and magical sites, but they aren't publicly acknowledged, and most people don't know about them. To be cognizant of the mystical subculture, you need Hidden Lore, the right Contacts, or an Unusual Background. Fantasy campaigns set in the real world usually assume this.

Low Magic: Most people know that magic is real, but they don't expect to encounter it in their daily lives. They only seek magical help when they're desperate. Mages are rare and bury themselves in scholarly pursuits or work for rich people or special government departments, such as a magical crimes

unit. If there's any publicly used magic, such as a healing shrine, the city only has one or two sites, and it's widely famed for them.

High Magic: Magic is commonly practiced – for example, in public works and public services. Most people know one or two mages and own a few enchanted items (if enchantment is possible). Magic is part of the city's technology, and raises its effective TL, perhaps by +1 or +2.

Ultra-Magic: The city has a lot of spectacular magic; miracles and wonders are a routine part of its everyday life. Citizens have the kind of amenities that are normally associated with futuristic utopias, but achieved largely by spells and enchantments. Some of the city's residents may be superhuman beings transformed or created by magic.

PLANNING THE CAMPAIGN

In choosing among these options, the GM should think about what kind of campaign he wants to run, and what dramatic function he wants the city to play in it. Do the heroes of the story hail from this place? Is it a place they pass through, on their way to some more distant destination or in pursuing some quest? Is it the goal they're trying to reach, whether as pilgrims or conquerors?

Is the city itself the setting for the campaign? In effect, this makes the city another character; one the heroes will deal with constantly. What kind of personality it has, and what sort of relationship they have with it, will affect everything else they do. This kind of treatment works best if the campaign premise naturally leads to a focus on the city, on events that occur in it, and on magic's role in those events.

Here are some possible themes. Character templates and stereotypes are discussed on pp. 9-16.

CIVIC CHAMPIONS

For an unusual hybrid campaign, put mages into flashy costumes and send them out to fight crime. Their special abilities can be spells instead of superpowers; or they may have magically granted superpowers *as well as* spells. The hero's secret identity may be necessary because magic is illegal, or because he's sworn to some mysterious organization (possibly even the Cabal, p. B543). If he uses his discoveries to fight crime rather than selling them to get rich, or giving them away to make the world a better place, this may reflect vows of secrecy. Alternatively, the vows may be taken to protect ordinary mortals from knowledge too dangerous for them.

Costumed heroes are likely rare enough to occur only in large cities. Cities with a high mana level are most likely to develop such protectors. An enchanted item broker's gear or a potion seller's elixirs could grant heroic abilities. A thaumatological scholar may uncover little-known magical power sources, or an urban shaman may gain gifts from the city itself. A "defender of justice" could be a reformed criminal mage, now with "nobler" disadvantages and, possibly, a darker Secret or Enemies. A team of costumed heroes may even include a "super normal" with no powers at all, or in this case, no magic.

THE FIRM

More than any other type, this campaign brings the economic life of the city front and center. Its protagonists are employees of, or partners in, a business enterprise of some sort, typically one based on magic – though there are other options, such as a private investigative firm that uses forensic sorcery. A suitable setting is a city big enough to create market demand for their services, either locally or for export to other locations. Scenarios will grow out of contracts or trade opportunities, and characters should be motivated by a combination of professional ethics and the profit motive. In fact, the tension between these two motives is a classic theme for this type of campaign.

Characters can be consulting mages, enchanted item brokers, or potion sellers, possibly helped by allied tradesmen. For some types of firms, an exorcist or forensic sorcerer may be useful.

GREAT HOUSE

This campaign is about a noble household that dominates the local landscape, without needing to take much actual effort to do so. Its nobles and their trusted servants don't have to deal with rivals in other cities, unruly lesser nobles on their own, or even preserving their investments against market problems. They just enjoy their vast wealth and pursue their private concerns, which are often eccentric and may well be magical. Inspirations for this kind of play can be found in such diverse resources as Mervyn Peake's *Gormenghast* novels and *The Addams Family*.

This campaign works best in a comparatively small community, typically a town, or perhaps a small city. The great house itself usually has a large population. The community will *not* have much transportation or trade, which would make for regular disturbances that would jolt the nobles out of their eccentric ways. Being built by command is a plausible backstory for such a community.

Glamour girls can fit into this kind of campaign, as can (eccentric) thaumatological scholars, and some family members may need the help of exorcists. The family may buy from enchanted items dealers or potion sellers. Some of the servants may belong to allied magical trades.

MEAN STREETS

An urban-magic campaign can focus on the use of magic by the lower classes. If magic is openly recognized in the campaign world, the emphasis will be on magical practitioners working without formal training, licenses, or regulation. If it's not – for example, in an urban-fantasy campaign set in the modern world – the emphasis may instead be on poor people, minorities, or social outcasts having supernatural knowledge and abilities that the larger society denies exists.

The GM may want to consider using a nonstandard magic system for this sort of campaign. The Path/Book magic rules in **GURPS Thaumatology** are a good fit, with their emphasis on nonobvious effects that often look like good or bad luck. Whatever the choice of magic system, good templates for this campaign include the exorcist, street wizard, and urban shaman. A potion seller who uses Herb Lore rather than Alchemy, or a glamour girl who's an actress or singer rather than an aristocrat, may also fit. The lower-class focus works well with an emphasis on economic issues and thus with cities based on specialized goods or on transportation and trade. In an "overt magic" setting, the specialized resource may be mana, with unlicensed mages taking advantage of abundant mystical resources and easy spell casting.

POLICE PROCEDURAL

Organized law enforcement was invented in Paris around 1700. It took its classic form in London a century and a half later. A police procedural campaign can have a hybrid of modern technology and sorcery, can project police methods back into the Middle Ages or ancient Rome, or make mandarins or monks into investigators.

Typically, a police procedural is a metropolitan campaign or one in which the PCs wander to various places. Smaller communities don't have enough major crimes to warrant a permanent investigative unit.

Adventures center on forensic sorcerers and their non-magical allies. Ordinary police officers may be street wizards, urban shamans, or battle wizards (*GURPS Fantasy*, p. 118). They won't be criminal mages, but they'll deal with criminals all the time. Storylines will come from the crimes they have to solve.

RIGHT-HAND MEN

In some cities, one powerful man – or woman – dominates everyone else. He may be an ancient tyrant, a Renaissance banker, or a 19th-century American city boss. Whatever his official role and status, it's his town. A campaign set in such a location can focus on the big man's trusted allies. This is similar to a "great house" campaign, but less introverted and usually focused on a less secure ruling house.

It's easier to make such a dominant figure believable in a small city or a large town. If the economy is based on one specialized resource, it's simpler for one person or family to control it. If that resource is magical in some way, it fits well into an urban-magic campaign. Perhaps, for example, the city is the world's only source for some particular potion.

Right-hand men will mostly be various sorts of criminals. They may not all be mages; some may get by on fast reflexes and a strong right arm. Whatever their skills, their job is to see that things run the way the boss wants them to run. With an unusually benevolent big man, this may even be a generally honorable job; Lord Vetinari plays this kind of role in the *Discworld* novels, though Ankh-Morpork is unusually large for this kind of city.

SCHOOL DAYS

The *Harry Potter* series made schools of magic a wildly popular theme. Hogwarts is out in the country, not in a big city, and the same is true of many other fictional schools of magic, such as Roke in Ursula Le Guin's *Earthsea* novels. Even so, many real schools have been located in cities, from Plato's Academy to the

medieval University of Paris to present-day Harvard and MIT. A school for sorcerers might find an urban location useful, giving its students and faculty access to cultural resources and work and internship opportunities. Access to the city's social life may also make the school more appealing to students.

This assumes that the students are young adults by their culture's definition – aged 14 and up in the Middle Ages, or 18 and up in a modern setting. It's also possible to focus a campaign on children, or in a modern setting, on adolescents in high school, though they'll have less freedom to explore the city on their own. The flavor of the campaign will vary with the size of the city: A school of magic may be the biggest employer in a small town, but it will exist as only one element in the larger life of a metropolis.

The thaumatological scholar is a natural character type for this setting, though often as a faculty member rather than a student. Students would be lower-cost versions of almost any type of formally trained mage. They may be exceptionally talented, but they probably won't know many spells or have more than the elements of thaumatological knowledge. Nor will they be professional adventurers; if they get in trouble, they'll have to rely on hobbies, sports, and general knowledge. This kind of campaign should encourage clever improvisations.

SOPHISTICATES

This campaign works best in a large city or a metropolis, one big enough so that no one noble family can dominate it. Instead, it has a large and lively aristocracy, intermarrying, competing for prestige, and waging private wars. The focal characters are wealthy, powerful, and cultured. Their goals come out of their involvement in the aristocratic way of life and their struggles to gain the respect of other nobles.

Aside from being big, their city will have good trade and transportation and command at least one specialized resource, probably several.

This campaign is *the* natural home for glamour girls and their male equivalents. Other characters will often have the skills of criminals, though they won't actually be criminals. Highly intellectual characters may become thaumatological scholars or collect enchanted items (though, unlike brokers, they won't often resell them).

Additional GURPS Resources

In addition to the works listed in the *Publication History* (p. 3), some other *GURPS Fourth Edition* supplements are available that GMs and players could find particularly inspirational for urban-magic campaigns. Check e23.sjgames.com for new releases in the urban-magic genre, *GURPS Classic* releases, and other books that could be repurposed.

GURPS Banestorm. The world of Yrth is filled with magic in its wildernesses and cities.

GURPS Banestorm: Abydos. A fully realized urban-magic city, complete with magical defenses, schools, and tradesmen – and necromantic secrets.

GURPS Locations: Metro of Madness. This urban-fantasy supplement features new spells, a new type of magic, paranormal phenomena, and more.

GURPS Thaumatology: Age of Gold. Set in an alternate history, this supplement gives players a pulp-fiction urban-magic setting.

Pyramid #3/1: Tools of the Trade – Wizards. Two articles in this issue are of particular interest to urban mages: *Guildhall of the Hermetic Brotherhood* and *Out of the Rough: Magic Gems in RPGs*.

Pyramid #3/7: Urban Fantasy. This issue of *Pyramid* magazine is loaded with urban-magic-related material, including a campaign, NPCs, and magic variants.

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*And the sign said, "The words of the
 prophets
 Are written on the subway walls
 And tenement halls
 And whispered in the sounds of silence."
 – Simon and Garfunkel,
 "The Sounds of Silence"*

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