

# HERMES' PORTAL



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Issue n° 8

June 2003



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# HERMES' PORTAL

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## News from the Line Editor May 2003

While the conspiracy to make the news I offer in this column inaccurate continues, at least it is getting *less* inaccurate. *Land of Fire and Ice* shipped to distributors in April, and I think the book looks great; David and Mark did an excellent job of capturing Iceland. So good that they convinced John and Michelle Nephew to stop over there on their way to GenCon UK (of which more later). *Black Monks of Glastonbury* is at the printers, and should be a June release.

Everyone who reads *Hermes' Portal* probably knows that *Ars Magica 4th Edition* is now available as a free PDF download through RPGNow.com. It's still too early to say what effect this will have on the line, but there have been thousands of downloads, so at the very least more people have been exposed to the game.

As mentioned above, John and Michelle Nephew attended GenCon UK, and I went along on the Saturday to meet up with them, and take part in a panel with John and Jonathan Tweet on the past, present, and future of *Ars Magica*. It wasn't that well attended, much like the convention, and there was distressingly little scandal aired. The main news announced was that Fifth Edition is now in playtest.

I've had a couple of questions from this column, again from Alex White.

What role does *Hermes' Portal*, and the other *Ars Magica* fan-published magazines, have in the decisions you make on what is important for the line, and what people want so see from *Ars*? How useful do you think fanzines like *Hermes' Portal* are for *Ars*, as a line? Do fanzines have any impact on official decisions? Do you or Atlas have any plans for historical sourcebooks or supplements for *Ars*, either earlier or later than 1220AD, that could explore other aspects of Mythic Europe? Antiquity with the Cult of Mercury, the Renaissance with the Rosicrucians and Masons, the Nineteenth Century with the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, etc.

The second question is the easiest to answer: No. All our time and effort is going into supporting the core game, and we don't have the resources to support other time periods as well. We haven't completely ruled it out for the future, but we have no current plans in this direction.

The role of fanzines is a little harder to address. I think that they are extremely important to the line, as Atlas cannot publish as much *Ars Magica* material as the core fans would like to see. Fanzines provide a source for that, and a venue for material which would simply not be commercially viable in a supplement,

such as alternate settings or completely different rule sets.

Fanzine articles do, occasionally, have a direct impact on the line. Some rule revisions first aired in *Hermes' Portal* have found their way, slightly modified, into the current draft of Fifth Edition, although I'm not saying which ones. In addition, as a sort of 'audition' venue for potential authors, they have an indirect impact on who gets to write for the line. Beyond that, they are a useful source of information on what the fans find interesting, and so feed into the broad decisions we take about the direction of the line.

### Publisher's corner

Only three people entered the contest and one of them is a regular illustrator, so the other two won this issue of *Hermes' Portal*. Congratulations!

#### Lucy Hewitt

The Magus: Yea little one, this is the tower of which the Redcap spoke, built in the reign of the Emperor Constantine, aligned to the midsummer sunrise and a place of great power. The spell that I have spent these last three years preparing will enable me to destroy the creature that slew the original inhabitants upon the night of All Hallows some fifty years ago. If the reports are correct, it is the size of a sheep, in the form of a great black rat with envenomed...

The Familiar: The beast is a RAT? Give me five minutes boss.

#### Michael Geller

Cat: Carry me!

Magus: Why?

Cat: To protect your back, stupid.

Magus: Sight, as you say, lazybones...

#### Alexander White

Cat: Meow

Magus: Meow? Meow? You're a bloody familiar! I spent a year imbuing you with arcane forces! Surely you can manage something more than a damn 'meow'!?

Cat: Meow

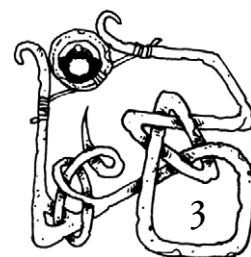


The Berkeley mailing list has been flooded with discussions concerning the fifth edition: what should be kept and what should be left out from the previous edition, and how things should evolve. With this issue, *Hermes' Portal* adds its share to the discussion.

Everybody agrees the combat system should be completely revised, so an easy way would have been to produce a combat issue filled with a new (and completely untested) combat system and tons of stats (and prices charts) of new weapons...

Too easy! Instead, we take a try with the magic system! It's supposed to be the best part of *Ars Magica*, but maybe we can make it look even better.

This issue also contains background articles, lost bits of *The Mysteries* and of *Land of Fire and Ice* (the latest Atlas release), and an unlucky candidate for the upcoming *Legends*.



# De Theoria Magica

by David Chart

This extract is taken from the opening section of Menacra of Bonisagus's *De Theoria Magica*, an introductory Liber Quaestionum on Magic Theory which has been very popular in the Order of Hermes.

## Do the Forms of Hermetic magic correspond to the forms of things?

It seems not:

- 1 Plato says that the forms are eternal and unchanging. But the Forms of Hermetic magic are temporal and changing. Therefore, etc.
- 2 As Aristotle says, the forms of things fall into the categories of substance, quality, quantity, etc. But these are not the Forms of Hermetic magic. Therefore, etc.
- 3 The form of a donkey is different from the form of a lion. But both of these creatures are covered by the Form of Animál. Similarly for the other Forms. Therefore, etc.

But against that, Bonisagus says that the Forms of magic correspond to the forms of things.

To answer this question, first I will explain what matter and form are, and then I will answer the question.

### First article

Matter is pure potentiality, the ability to be something. It is not something, but it could be anything. Forms are the kind of thing that something is. Forms are not things, but they are the power to turn matter into a thing. When a form combines with matter, it informs the matter, and a thing of the relevant kind comes into existence.

### Second article

I say that the Forms of Hermetic magic do correspond to the forms of things. Hermetic magic deals with composites of matter and form, and each of the Forms of Hermetic magic deals with a different kind of form.

Responses to the objections:

- 1 The Forms of Hermetic magic are tools for affecting the forms, not the forms themselves. Therefore, they need not be eternal and unchanging.
- 2 The Forms of Hermetic magic all fall within the category of substance. Hermetic magic can affect the other categories, but they do not have Arts dedicated to them.
- 3 Each Hermetic Form covers a number of forms. All of those forms fall under a single higher form in the hierarchy of being. Thus, all the forms covered by Animál are the forms of animals, and all forms of animals fall under the Form of Animál.

## Does Imaginem correspond to a particular form?

It seems not, because Imaginem can create the appearance of any thing.

But against that, we showed above that the Forms of magic do correspond to the forms of things.

I say that the Art of Imaginem corresponds to the forms of the species of things. Species are cast off in all directions by all objects, and carry information to our senses. Even touch is mediated by species cast off from an item, but these species do not travel far from the item before being destroyed. Imaginem can, therefore, create, destroy, and change species. It cannot affect any other type of form. The species of a tree is not a tree, nor is the species of a man a man.

But against that, someone might argue that the forms of the species are like the forms of the thing that casts off the species, and thus should be covered by the Form that covers the thing, such as Corpus for the species cast off by Socrates.

I say that the species of Socrates are nothing like Socrates, for they are not rational, mortal, animals, nor are they the same size as Socrates, nor do they have the same mass as Socrates. Socrates produces species in the same way as he produces bricks, but neither the species nor the bricks have the same form as Socrates.

The response to the main objection is obvious.

## Can Hermetic magic affect angels?

It seems so:

- 1 Everything is a composite of form and matter. Therefore angels are a composite of form and matter. But Hermetic magic can affect composites of form and matter, as we saw above. Therefore, etc.
- 2 Hermetic magic can affect faeries and spirits. But angels are also spirits. Therefore, etc.
- 3 Hermetic magic can ward against demons. But demons are angels. Therefore, etc.

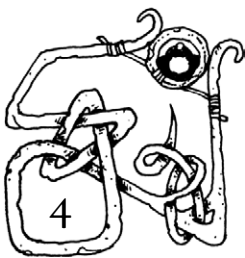
But against that, the things of the Divine are beyond the reach of Hermetic magic.

I say that Hermetic magic cannot affect angels, strictly so-called. Angels in themselves are composites of essence and existence, not of matter and form. Therefore, they are beyond the reach of Hermetic magic. However, when angels appear in the sublunar world, they inform matter. Thus, Hermetic magic can affect the manifestation of an angel, but not the angel itself.

Similarly, the celestial spheres and stars are angels, and thus Hermetic magic is not able to affect them. God Himself is entirely simple, being no kind of composite, and thus cannot be affected by any power, and certainly not by Hermetic magic.

*At this point, the following material is included from the standard gloss by Constantine of Flambeau:*

*As usual, Menacra forgets that not everyone is an expert in abstruse theology. The essence of an angel is the sort of thing that it is. These essences need not exist, so actual angels*



are a composite of essence, the kind of angel that they are, and existence, their being real angels. There are uncompounded essences corresponding to angels that God chose not to create. God's essence is his existence, and all his other properties. I'm not even going to try to explain that, and since you won't need to cast spells on God, you don't really need to know.

Responses to the objections:

- 1 Angels are not composites of matter and form.
- 2 Faeries and spirits are composites of matter and form. Matter is pure potentiality, not solid, massive stuff, and the forms of faeries and spirits inform matter, making it subtle, like fire or air. Thus, Hermetic magic can affect faeries and spirits, but this tells us nothing about angels.
- 3 Hermetic wards against demons only work against demons that have come to the earth. Such demons must be informing matter, in order to manifest. Because they do so, they fall under the power of Hermetic magic.

### Can Hermetic magic create things?

It seems so, for one of the Arts is *Creo*.

But against that, God alone can truly create.

I say that Hermetic magic cannot truly create. The Art of *Creo* merely causes a form, which already exists, to inform some matter, which already exists. This is creation only in the sense in which a craftsman creates a sword, when he causes the form of the sword to inhere in the matter of the metal.

The answer to the objection is obvious.

### Does raw vis have a form?

It seems so:

- 1 All things have forms, as Aristotle says.
- 2 Raw vis has an appearance and other properties. It could not have those properties without a form. Therefore, raw vis has a form.
- 3 Vis corresponds to the Forms of the Magic, which we have shown correspond to the forms of things.

But against that, vis also corresponds to the Techniques, which do not correspond to the forms of things.

I say that raw vis, strictly so-called, does not have a form. Rather, raw vis is formless actuality, just as matter is formless potentiality. Thus, when we use raw vis in our magic, we can make things more actual than we could without using it.

Responses to the objections:

- 1 Matter does not have a form, and raw vis is analogous to matter.
- 2 Raw vis appears associated with composites of matter and form, but it is not itself that composite. This is why it is possible, with *Muto Vim*, to move raw vis from one container to another.

*Constantine of Flambeau: This is similar to transubstantiation in the Mass. In that case, the substance of the bread and wine is destroyed, and Christ's body and blood replace them. However, all the appearances of the bread and wine are*

*retained, although they are not part of the body and blood of Christ. Similarly, a pawn of vis which appears to be a small fish is not a fish, but rather a pawn of vis with the appearances of a fish in the same place, although the appearances are not part of the pawn of vis. If the vis is moved to another container, the appearances of the fish inform some more matter, and you get a real dead fish, while the substance of the new container is replaced by the vis.*

*Mundane philosophers make a lot of fuss about transubstantiation, which is actually similar to something all magi have dealt with many times.*

- 3 Unformed actuality can still be linked to a particular kind of actualisation. Indeed, it may be that raw vis is actuality informed by a very general form, so that it is no thing, but still carries a weak form. If this were true, then truly unformed actuality could be used for any kind of magic.

*Constantine of Flambeau: Absolutely uncompounded actuality is God, as Menacra should have realised. So, yes, pure actuality can do any kind of magic, but He wouldn't appreciate being worked on in our labs.*

### Can Hermetic magic change forms?

It seems so:

- 1 Hermetic magic can make a man grow wings.
- 2 Hermetic magic can change a man into a wolf. This is a change of form.
- 3 Hermetic magic can heal wounds, which involves changing the form.
- 4 Hermetic magic can make fire cold, which changes the very essence of the form.

But against that, Hermetic magic cannot affect a thing's essential nature, and the form is the essential nature.

I say that Hermetic magic cannot change forms. The forms were created by God when he created the universe, and they cannot be altered by human power. Thus, no matter what magic I cast on a human being, I cannot change his form, and thus he remains always a rational, mortal animal.

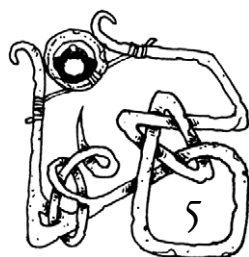
Responses to the objections:

- 1 When I give a man wings, I do not change his form. I merely add to his form the accident of having wings. As his form cannot naturally receive this accident, I must maintain the spell for as long as I wish him to have the wings.

*Constantine of Flambeau: An accident is any property that isn't part of the essential nature of a thing. My whiteness is an accident, for example, but my rationality is not, because it is part of my essential nature. [Editor's note: Every known copy of the text contains a sarcastic comment at this point, different and in a different hand in every manuscript. No-one, however, seems to have been willing to sign their interjection.]*

*A form can naturally receive an accident if it can get those properties normally. So, I can naturally receive the accident of being black, if I get a suntan, but I cannot naturally receive the accident of having feathers, because human beings do not naturally grow feathers.*

- 2 This case is like the previous one. I cannot change a man into a wolf. Instead, I give his





body the accidents that come with being a wolf. This works in a similar way to the transubstantiation of the host during Mass. The substance of the man is still a man, but all the accidents are those of a wolf. Because the form cannot naturally receive those accidents, the spell must be maintained if the transformation is to remain.

*Constantine of Flambeau: It's not much like transubstantiation, actually, because the substance, the man, actually has all the accidents of the wolf. Note that vis does not resist being in different containers, because the accidents are not part of the vis and thus do not oppose its nature. Unfortunately, matter-form composites do not seem to be able to support accidents that are not part of them, like vis and God can.*

- 3 Wounds are a privation in the form. They are not an existing thing, but rather a lack of actualisation of part of the form. Thus, Hermetic magic can cause the form to be more fully actualised in the object. Since the form can naturally be more actualised, such spells can have Instant duration. But to do so requires raw vis, which provides the additional actuality required.
- 4 When Hermetic magic makes fire cold, it does not change the form, but rather removes the actualisation of one part of it. This is the function of the Art of Perdo, which is why Perdo wounds. Since the form can naturally fail to actualise completely, this magic can have Momentary duration, and yet the effects will persist. (Some have speculated that the actuality removed by Perdo could be concentrated into raw vis. But this has never been achieved.)

### Does the limit of Essential Nature truly limit Hermetic magic in any way?

It seems not, for as we saw above Hermetic magic can change any of the accidents of a thing.

Against that, Bonisagus calls Essential Nature one of the great limits.

I say that Hermetic magic is truly limited by Essential Nature. If the form will not naturally receive an accident, the magic must be maintained, and can be dispelled. Further, the nature of the form is not dispelled, merely opposed. Thus Hermetic magic cannot make human beings immortal, for it is part of their nature to be mortal animals. It can extend their lives by opposing accidents to human nature, but this magic is always fragile.

If an injury is part of someone's essential nature, then their form cannot naturally actualise that potentiality. Thus, such an injury cannot be healed with Instant duration, and any magic cure can always be dispelled, while the long-term application of such magic may have ill effects. In some cases, such an injury cannot be actualised at all, and can only be cured by using Muto to add further accidents to the unfortunate individual.

True Love is part of the essential nature of the lover. While Hermetic magic can create hatred of the

beloved, this will still be opposed by the True Love. Perdo magic cannot cause such aspects of the form to be unactualised.

*Constantine of Flambeau: Menacra's reluctance to allow God a role in everyday life trips her up here. If True Love were merely part of the essential nature of the lover, it would be possible to temporarily suppress it, just as we can suppress the heat of a fire.*

*Early versions of the gloss contain the following:*

*This clearly shows that True Love is a product of the Divine, and indeed is God's love for creation present in an individual human being. That is why we cannot affect it.*

*Later versions replace it with:*

*True Love is thus a gift of God, but how this might be possible I leave to Holy Mother Church to decide.*

For the same reason, Hermetic magic cannot create rational non-human life, for reason is not an accident of the human form, but part of the form.

### Can Muto be used to move an item from one place to another?

It seems so, because place is an accident, as Aristotle said, and Muto is the Art concerned with addition and removal of accidents.

But against that, it is evident that moving an item from one place to another is part of the function of Rego.

I say that an item cannot be moved using Muto. Muto is concerned only with accidents in the category of quality.

*Constantine of Flambeau: You really should know the categories, but I know that some apprentices encounter Magic Theory before they do any other study. So, the ten categories are substance, quantity, quality, relation, location, time, position, possession, action, and passion. These are described by Aristotle in The Categories. Fortunately, Menacra gives examples as she discusses them below.*

Substance is covered by the Forms, and the Forms you need are determined by the kinds of substance you want to affect. Qualities, such as whiteness, heat, and wingedness, are covered by Muto. Qualities which are naturally part of a form may be affected by Creo or Perdo, by making the form more or less actualised. Muto also covers quantities, such as height and weight.

Rego covers most of the categories. Location, such as being in your sanctum, is the one most pertinent to this question. If you wish to change something's location, you must use Rego. The same is true of position, such as sitting or running, or of action, such as running or cutting.

The Hermetic arts do not seem to be able to affect the other categories directly. Relations, such as being half or being double, can only be affected by changing one of the relata so that it has the appropriate properties. When this cannot be done, as for the relation 'daughter', we cannot create the relation.

Possession can only be affected by changing the thing possessed. If we could affect this directly, then making it so that a grog had a sword would be a Corpus effect, as it would affect the form of the grog,



not of the sword. It would probably have a Terram requisite, for the form of the sword that the grog has, but it would not be possible to take that sword from that grog. There seems to be no fundamental reason why Hermetic magic cannot achieve this, and I recommend it to my sodales as a research project.

Passion, the state of having something done to you, can also not be created directly. We simulate its effect by *Creo* and *Rego*, so by making a fire burn only one person. Again, there is no reason why *Corpus*, with an *Ignem* requisite, could not put someone in the state of being burned. Such burning could never destroy them, as there is no *Perdo* in the magic. Again, this is a possible research project.

The last category is time. While Hermetic magic cannot affect the measure of time, as that is determined by the celestial spheres which are, as we saw, beyond it, there seems no reason why it cannot affect the accidents of time pertaining to a particular thing. Thus, while our magic could not make time run backwards, it could change the time at which a magus existed. As the form is naturally receptive of such accidents, the change could be made Instant.

It seems to me that relation, possession, passion, and time would all need the creation of new Techniques, although some might be drawn together in a single Art. I commend work on this fine extension of Bonisagus's theory to my sodales.

The answer to the first argument is now obvious.

## Can Intellego be used to gain knowledge?

It seems not, because all human knowledge is gained through the senses, as Aristotle says.

But against that, it is obvious that Intellego does grant knowledge.

I say that Intellego does allow a magus to gain knowledge. The magical Art allows the magus to directly intelligise the form and accidents of an object, thus gaining knowledge in the same manner as God and the angels.

*Constantine of Flambeau: 'Intelligising' is the technical term for the way you get knowledge when you use Intellego. It's as hard to explain as the difference between hearing and seeing, but try looking at and touching a stone, and then casting a Touch range Intellego Terram spell to determine what it is. Notice that, although the information is the same, the experience is utterly different.*

It is thus the Art of Intellego which gives magi the best claim to be higher than the mundanes, for it grants them the ability to think and know in a more noble fashion. All humans can actualise and reduce forms, and change the accidents of location, position, quality, and quantity. No humans other than magi, however, can directly intelligise the properties of a thing. Thus, this Art is the crown of our magic.

The answer to the first argument is that Aristotle was speaking here of mundane people, not of magi.

Translator's acknowledgements: Thanks to Neil Taylor and Sheila Thomas for comments on earlier versions of the translation.



## De Rationem Scoporum: Concerning a Theory of Targets

by David Woods

### Preface

**A**rM4 introduced the concept of spell targets to Hermetic magic, but the way these were to work was never fully defined. This led to authors using their own interpretation as they wrote spells. Inevitably, this led to inconsistencies and confusions. In particular, the spells within the *WGRE* suffer the most from these problems. Having said this, the majority of troupes continue quite happy with their own approach. Like a millipede asked how it manages to walk, most troupes do not see any problem until challenged.

If a difference of target interpretation does happen though, it can lead to protracted disagreements. For instance, if a Permanent duration, *Perdo Mentem* spell is cast on a village, are people who walk out still affected and *visa versa*? Other questions involve the application of the Limit of Arcane Connections, specifically what counts as a seen and unseen target.

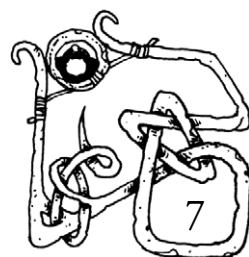
For example, if a magus wants to foul the water within a castle, does he need to see the water he wishes to affect or just the castle? How do wards work if they affect things the caster may never see?

Ideally, the storyguide might determine a position before the start of a saga and thereby avoid or minimise disagreements later. It is hoped that this article will help storyguides wishing to do this. What follows is a theory of targets that aims to be a 'best fit' to current *ArM4* canon, but others may do better or aim for something different. It is not offered as the definitive word on the subject, merely a suggestion. Quite what the theory of targets will be in *ArM5* is anyone's guess at the moment, but I hope it will be defined for future authors' reference at least.

### Goals

This theory hopes to achieve the following:

- 1 Account for the greater number of canon spells (main rulebook).
- 2 Necessitate the least change in the current rule set.
- 3 Simplicity, in that it requires little special pleading for particular spells or types of spell.
- 4 Fit with common intuitive expectations for spell effects.





## The Theory

All targets are sets. A set is a collection of items that lie within its definition. A target is not necessarily a specific object, although a specific object is often important in defining a particular target.

A slightly revised list of target definitions is given below.

**Small:** An object, small enough to be held in both hands; including any smaller items attached or contained by the main object. For example, a doll and its clothes or a purse and its contents.

**Individual:** An animate creature, including any items held or worn by the creature (as long as they qualify as Small). An inanimate object too large to be held in both hands, including Small items contained or otherwise worn by the main object. For example a large chest and its contents. This target might also be applied to a large pile of objects, up to a man's height.

**Room:** A room and everything within. Can be applied to large objects like carts and boats.

**Group:** A collection of up to a dozen Individuals (see definition of Individual), that form an obvious group at the time of casting. It might also be applied to a huge pile of Small objects (see definition of Small), like a bonfire taller than a man.

**Structure:** A structure and everything within. Can be applied to huge objects like ships.

**Circle:** An inscribed circle and everything within the spherical volume it defines.

**Boundary:** A boundary and everything within it.

**Sight:** Everything contained within a local horizon.

Boundary and Sight target definitions depend on contained areas. With a Boundary target, its definition is given by a clear natural or manmade boundary. With a Sight target, the visible horizon at a particular position provides the definition of the affected area. Structure, Room, Individual and Small targets are usually given definition by a discreet object.

In many situations, a Sight target will define an area considerably smaller than a Boundary target would. For example, if cast within an enclosed town square the local horizon might only be the surrounding rooftops. In this case, the spell would default to T: Boundary, finding the town walls. Similarly, it is possible to cast Structure target spells on a Room target and Room target spells on an Individual etc. In general, a spell will try to extend over as wide an area as possible, finding the best target within its capability. The caster does not have detailed control over this; he merely chooses a point within range of the spell and the magic does the rest.

It is helpful not to become too pedantic with these definitions. As long as items 'naturally' form a set broadly under these definitions, a spell should be able to target it. For instance, flag poles mounted on the walls of a tower are within the Structure target, as are men walking on roofs and battlements. If a desired spell effect does not sit within these definitions, it needs to be designated T: Special and given

an equivalency nearest in general size to a standard target.

Under this interpretation, spells are normally contained and present within the whole target. The following shows the implications of this approach, giving canon examples where possible.

### Non-discriminatory Spells

Once cast on a target, the spell continually attempts to operate on it for the duration of the spell. Spells neither know nor care if they can affect any items within the target; they try regardless. A magus could cast *Chirurgeon's Healing Touch* on an animal if he wanted to. The spell will continue attempting to operate on the animal for D: Sun. The fact that the spell's Form is Corpus and the target is entirely Animal means it cannot act, but this is incidental.

In the vast majority of situations, this is practically irrelevant. However, if the animal was a Bjornaer and he transformed into a human, the spell would immediately begin acting. Similarly if a wounded Bjornaer cast a D: Sun *Chirurgeon's Healing Touch* on himself and then changed form, his wound would open again. The spell would not be broken however and the wound would close whenever he assumed human form.

We can imagine that some Bjornaer magi have invented a CrCo(An) healing spell in order to avoid this issue. Nevertheless, without an explicitly defined system the consequence of casting *Chirurgeon's Healing Touch* (without vis) on a Bjornaer would have been ripe for disagreement.

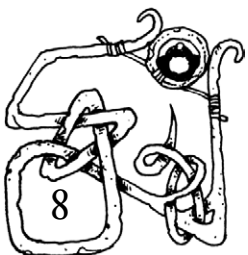
### Static and Dynamic Targets

The target definitions can be applied in two ways. Dynamic targets allow items within the target to change during the duration of the spell. Static targets fix the target set at the moment of casting and continue to affect (or not as the case may be) those specific items and only those items, for the duration of the spell.

#### *Dynamic Targets*

Dynamic targets allow the target set to change over the duration of the spell. The spell is contained within the targeted area, but it is the target definition that is fixed, not the items. For instance, a T: Room spell acts on items contained within a particular room. Items can move into and out of the room, moving into or out of the spell's influence as they do so. This principle can be seen working in various ArM spells.

For example, *Poisoning the Will* (PeMe) is cast on a T: Boundary. The spell therefore acts on the minds of everyone within the targeted town, village or field. If people enter the affected area, they suffer from the effect. If people leave, the spell no longer affects them. Everyone could leave, but the spell would remain for its full duration. Indeed, a magus could cast the spell on an uninhabited area in order to discourage settlement and no one would initially be affected.





Applying this principle to spells like *Veil of Invisibility* leads to interesting results. If a magus drops his staff while this spell is running, it becomes visible. If he picks the staff up it becomes invisible again. Critically the magus can pick up objects not present during the original casting. The spell has no memory; it just attempts to act on the target whatever it currently contains.

This dynamic aspect to targets is most common in *Intéllego* effects. A spell that spies on a T: Room will enable the caster to see people and objects currently within the room. However, it would not enable him to see objects that travel outside, even if they were initially present at the time of casting. By the same measure, he would see people and objects that enter the room.

Magic Resistance is normally tested just once, when an object or person first comes under the influence of the spell. This result stands for the duration of the Magic Resistance. Creatures with *Might* never need to re-test their resistance to the same spell, but personal wards like *Parma* need to be re-tested whenever they are renewed. Therefore, if a magus stayed the night in a town affected by *Poisoning the Will*, he would need to re-test his *Parma* at sunset and sunrise; assuming the SG rules that there is no 'window' period when the magus would be affected anyway. As wards only act to prevent effects entering, casting one after you have been affected is ineffective.

Only if the whole target has a Magic Resistance may the spell fail completely. Otherwise specific items may be protected from the spell's effect, but the spell continues to exist within the target and operates on unprotected items. To add flavour to the process of entering or exiting a spell target, the storyguide may have effects like *Poisoning the Will* fade in or out over a period of time, rather than have a simple on/off situation.

#### Static Targets

Static targets fix the affected set at the moment the spell is cast. The spell will continue to affect those objects for the entire duration of the spell, regardless of where the objects move.

If instance, a magus may want to invent a spell that permanently changes the people within a town into pigs. This spell is a *MuCo(An)*, D: Perm, and T: Boundary effect. However, the magus wishes his victims to remain in pig form even if they leave the town. To achieve this, he designs the spell with a static target. The spell, for all intents and purposes (like dispelling), generates a separate D: Perm T: Individual effect on each person within the Boundary target. People entering the town after the spell is cast are not affected and pigs leaving the town remain pigs.

The storyguide should allow such effects only if he feels it appropriate. The utility of the spell should be judged carefully and the storyguide should feel free to add magnitudes to the effect if he wishes.

#### Wards

Wards use a form of dynamic target. Wards work slightly differently in that they act to repel objects attempting to enter (even infinitesimally) the target. If the object forces its way inside the target, the ward can no longer affect it.

Under this theory, people or objects within a ward can attack each other without the ward acting to prevent it. For instance, two magi within a protective T: Circle ward can cast spells on each other without interference from the circular ward, but their *Parma Magica* would still protect them as they are T: Individual wards. The range of spell they use would not make any difference. Similarly, an enchanted device held by a person is part of his T: Individual set. An effect generated by the device would therefore bypass his *Parma* as it is generated within.

Under this theory, a magus's *Parma* is always bypassed when he casts spells on himself, activates a device (that is T: Small) or drinks a potion. The *WGRE* clarification of *Parma* comes to a different conclusion. In *WGRE* *Parma* is only bypassed on R: Personal spells. Quite what theory of targets gives this result, I leave others to work out, but it is different.

An implication of this is that you can create booby-trapped devices that bypass *Parma*. Booby-trapped items are in canon, although it is not mentioned if they bypass *Parma* or not. However, the wielder must normally deliberately activate items. They require an activation action and a moment of concentration. Thus, they cannot normally be activated remotely or accidentally. Even if the activation word or action is common, the user must be 'trying' to activate the item at the time.

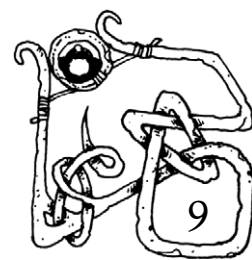
So if you managed to get your enemy to activate a booby-trapped item, more power to you. It also means you do not need to drop your *Parma* every time you wish to ride your broomstick or drink a potion. This is common practice in many sagas as it avoids a tiresome complication.

A player might suggest throwing a 'Constant Use' device or a contact activated potion-type object at the victim. However, it can be argued that such items count as active magic attempting to enter the target and so any effect would be opposed by *Parma*. This would also mean that magic weapons and beasts (conjured at less than D: Instant), are also resisted by *Parma*. This is also a change from canon.

Another often-overlooked possibility are containment wards. Such a ward would act to prevent objects leaving the target area. Such a containment ward might be designed to be static or dynamic. A static containment ward would only affect the items/entities present when the spell is cast. A dynamic containment ward could continue to trap new items/entities for as long as it operated.

#### Group Targets

The majority of the standard targets have well defined boundaries and it is easy to determine if an item is inside or outside a particular target. However,





T: Group is a potential headache, as the definition does not lend itself to this determination. A simple solution would be to assume Group targets are strictly static in nature. Nevertheless, you may want a dynamic option (or semi-dynamic). In which case, the definition below should help.

**Group:** A collection of up to a dozen Individuals (see definition of Individual) that forms an obvious group at the time of casting. If the target is dynamic the caster must nominate a single Individual to be the nucleus of the Group (this person is used to determine range). To remain under the effect of the spell the original members of the Group must remain within 15 paces of the nominated Individual. Original group members who move outside may rejoin by moving back within 15 paces.

This semi-dynamic definition is derived from the description of Parma, when extended to a group. Therefore, it is not entirely without canon precedent.

### Range

The range of a spell is the maximum distance between the caster and the target. However, as explained above, a target is not always a single object. Here is no one method to measure a distance to a set. You could take the distance to the furthest item, you could take the average distance or you could take the distance to the boundary. However, the simplest method (in the author's opinion) would be the distance between the caster and the nearest visible item.

The consequence of this is that when the caster is an item within the target, R: Personal can be used. This use of Personal range has kicked off many heated discussions.

The word Personal strongly implies a restriction to the caster, but this is contradicted by its definition. In addition, 24 main rulebook spells use R: Personal with targets greater than Individual. However, other main rulebook spells appear to have unnecessarily long ranges given this interpretation. Reducing these spells to R: Personal reduces their magnitude to absurdly low levels.

The semantic problem of using a range called 'Personal' to affect large areas cannot be denied. In my *Mythic Perspectives* 11 article, I suggested a redefinition of Personal range (as below).

**Personal:** If the spell affects only the caster's body or mind, this range can be used. When applied to magic items, effects at this range can only affect the item itself.

I also suggested another range called 'Inclusive' to sit alongside Touch range, to cover situations where the caster wishes to be part of the wider target. I still think this is a good solution, but for the sake of this article, I will be using Personal range as it is defined in *ArM4*.

Demanding that the spell's range cover the entire target does solve this issue. However, this renders useless many canon spells, requiring them to be rewritten with often absurdly high levels. So in solving

the R: Personal problem, others arise. It can be argued that this problem lies in the spell guidelines. Given this particular interpretation of range and target, new guidelines should be set. The spell level guidelines are the tuning constants of the magic system and it would not be sensible to shoehorn the definitions of range and target to fit them.

### Affecting the Unseen

In *ArM4* p. 68, the Limit of Arcane Connections forbids a magus affecting an unseen target without one. However, under this target theory the caster does not need to see each and every item for the spell to affect it. All the caster need do is see, touch or have an arcane connection to a single item, which is part of the target. Once the spell is operating on the target, the caster's perception is irrelevant.

In particular, the requirement to see 'most' of a boundary target should be dropped. If applied strictly, this requirement is virtually impossible to meet. The range of possible definitions of 'most' is endless and is ripe for intra-troupe disagreements. Simply ruling that the caster only needs to have sight of a single object to cast a spell (of whatever target) prevents this.

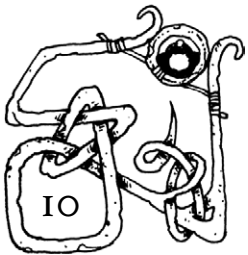
### Intéllego Magic

When applied to Intéllego spells, this target theory resolves a number of commonly pondered issues. As long as you can see a part of the target (even externally), you can learn what it contains. For Intéllego spells, the target determines the extent of the spell's investigation; the range is still the distance to the nearest item of the target.

For example: The magus Markus takes to piracy to generate income for his covenant. He invents a spell to help him select ships that carry the most gold and silver. He creates an Intéllego Terram 'detect gold and silver' spell with R: Sight and T: Structure (ships count as Structures, see *Mythic Seas*). Seeing the ship enables him to cast the spell on the Structure target. The spell then investigates every item within the target and reports back the total value of the gold and silver within.

The other way a 'detect gold and silver' Intéllego spell can work is by keeping its target at Small. Although this type of spell has many canon examples it conflicts directly with the 'Affect the Unseen' rule. To get round this, many people relax the rule for Intéllego effects, reasoning that it is a special case. However, it can be seen that there is a considerable difference in utility between the T: Structure spell and the T: Small spell. The T: Small spell can only give the caster information on one Small target. Storyguides often allow such spells to be re-targeted each round, shifting between detectable targets within range. Still this method ignores the 'unseen target' rule completely and re-targeting in this manner is also controversial.

Yet another way would be to use R: Per T: Sight. This would actually be an easier spell than R: Sight T: Structure. However, given that the T: Sight is so



huge, it can be argued that specific information is harder to obtain. The R: Sight T: Structure version may give Markus the exact number of ounces. The R: Personal T: Sight version might simply allow him to see a gold and silver aura of varying strength surrounding the ship. To increase the precision, Markus would need to add magnitudes to the spell design.

By the same principle, a R: Sight T: Sight spell would allow the caster to shift the 'eye-point' of the spell to anywhere within his own line of sight. Thus, a magus could take a bird's eye view. Markus could use such a spell to spot ships at huge distances (beyond his own horizon).

### Enhanced Sense Spells

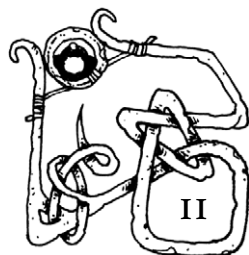
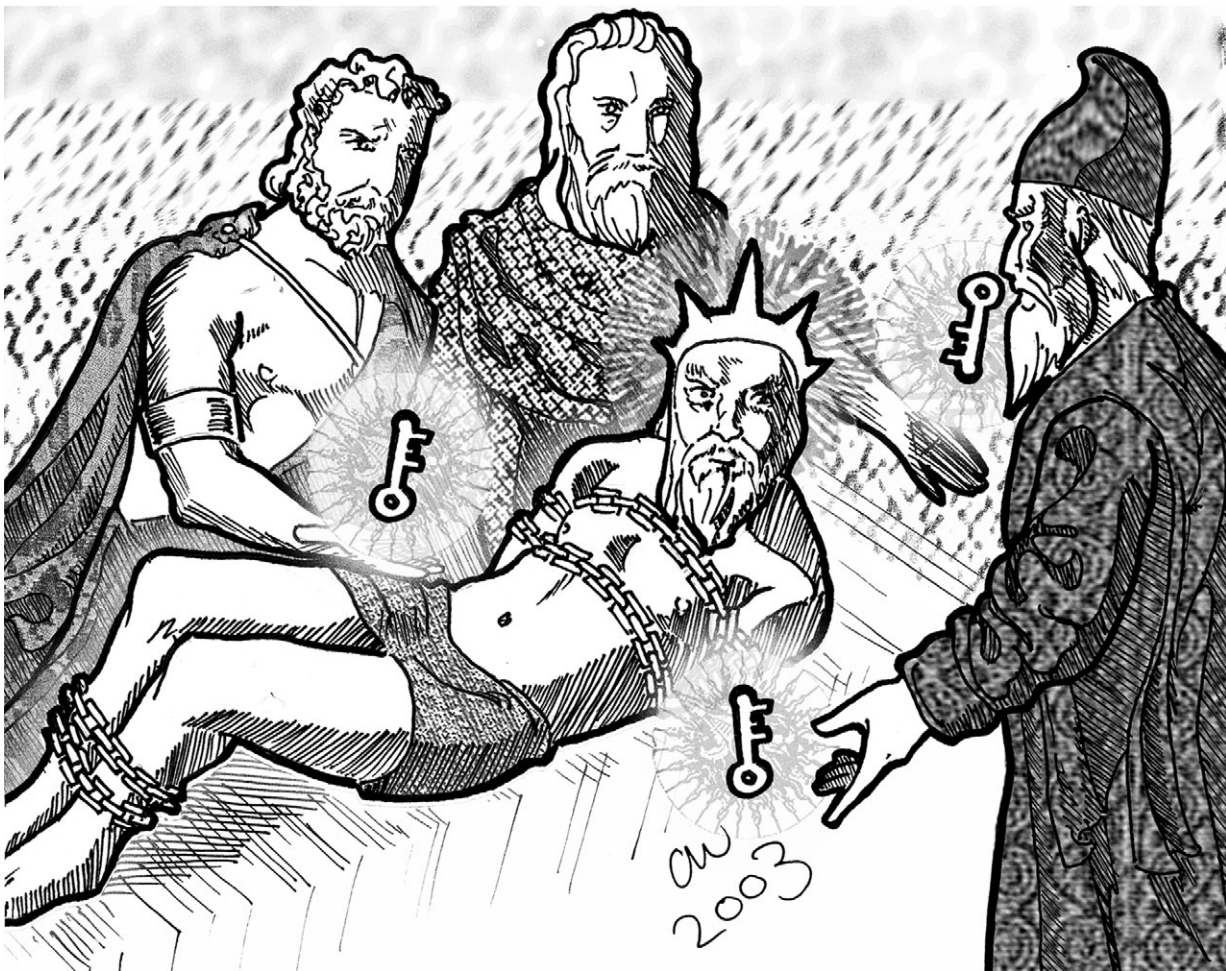
Most R: Personal Intéllego spells can be classed as 'Enhanced Sense' spells. The information, gathered by the Intéllego spell, is overlaid on one of the caster's normal senses (often vision). The target is often a simple radius about the caster and so T: Special. Most of the R: Personal Intéllego spells in canon follow this model.

An 'Enhanced Sense' spell can be given to a third party if the spell's range is greater than Personal. In this way, grogs can be given such spells as Vision of Heat's Light. In these cases, the target is a radius about the recipient rather than the caster.

### Conclusion

On the whole, this theory appears to be successful; there are few points of disagreement with current canon. Critically a troupe could successfully run a saga using this theory, as I do.

As one of the central goals was to maintain the validity of the majority of current canon spells, few effects (if any) are rendered impossible. However, in explicitly defining a theory of targets, it may have opened up possibilities some troupes would not have previously considered, or even contradict an agreed consensus on issues. As ever, if your troupe has no problem with the issues addressed here there is no reason to change.



# The Realm of Magic

by Adam Bank and Jeremiah Genest

## The Phaedro

In 1183 AD, House Bonisagus released *The Phaedro*, a short work on the realm of magic in the form of a Platonic dialogue. Magi researching its veracity claim the names, dates, and events within correspond to the records at Harco. Even as an allegorical tale, *The Phaedro* explains many of the theories and discoveries made by House Bonisagus over the centuries.

### Prologue

“Were you yourself, solades Phaedro, in the Domus with Bonisagus at the end of things, when he lost his soul to Final Twilight?”

“Yes, Philonous, I was.”

“We wish you to tell us about his death. What did he say in his last hours?”

“Did you not hear of his ordeal?”

“Yes; someone told me of his Twilight, and how he passed from this world not immediately, but long afterwards. I know nothing more, for no Criamon goes to Durenmar now, and a long time has passed since a Bonisagus has come this way in peace. Only your house, good Redcap, has escaped the dangers of this Schism War. Can you tell us more? Why did his Twilight ordeal last so long?”

“An accident, Philonous, an event unforeseen. He knew his appointed time many years before, as prophesied by Lady Trianoma, and quested to put his house in order as the day approached. A demon, whose enmity of Bonisagus lasted longer than the lives of most magi, struck terribly to stop him. He entered Twilight then but he kept the end at bay by the force of his unique will, until all was satisfied, and he left the Earth exactly as Trianoma had foretold.”

“What was the manner of his passing, Phaedro? What was said and done? And which of his friends were with him, or did he die alone?”

“Not alone; there were several of his friends with him. Criamon and Tytalus themselves paid their respects that last day as well.”

“I wish that you would tell us what passed, as exactly as you can. I hear members of your House are greatly adept in the Art of Memory so as to fulfill your role as heralds.”

“I remember the strange feeling of being with him. I did not pity him, Philonous; his demeanor and words were so noble and fearless in the hour of Final Twilight he appeared blessed, as if God himself called to him. He would be happy, if any magi ever was, when he arrived at the unknowable destination of Final Twilight. But neither could I feel the pleasure I usually felt when discussing mysteries. I was pleased, yet also pained, for I knew the Order would soon lose its cohesive light. All present shared this strange mix of feeling, and we were laughing and weeping by turns.”

“Who was there?”

“Criamon and Tytalus, as I have said. Lady Trianoma also, and her youngest apprentice Hylas. Cyril, the autocrat of Durenmar was there, and many of Bonisagus’ custodes, including the bard Evenus from Stonehenge.

“What was the discourse you spoke?”

“In the week prior, Criamon, Tytalus, and others would gather in the gardens of Durenmar to work great magic on Bonisagus’ behalf, and then I would join them to visit Bonisagus in his sanctum. On that day, however, Evenus met us at the sanctum’s entry way and bade us wait until he called. ‘For I,’ Evenus said, ‘have at last found the reagents Bonisagus asked me to fetch, and he is to pass forever from this world today. The master said those with the Gift must wait until he finishes before entering, or risk journeying with him.’ And so the magi and I waited outside until we heard Bonisagus call to us, and we found him leaning on his gold lectern, holding a vial of inky fluid in one hand, and sighing deeply as if his very soul pushed out from his heart.”

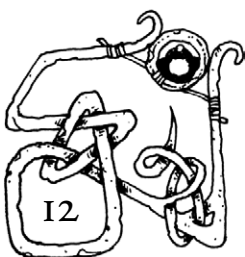
### Twilight

Toying with the potion he had just made, Bonisagus said, as if we caught him in a whimsy, “How singular is the thing called pleasure, and how curiously related to pain. The two might be thought opposites, since they never come to a person together, but those who pursue one always experience the other. They are two and separate, yet they grow out of one stem. And I cannot help thinking that if Verditius knows of them, he is at this moment striving to bring them together in a single concoction to harness their power, as alchemists are wont to do.”

Upon this Tytalus said: “I am very glad, Bonisagus, that you mentioned the name of Verditius, because it reminds me of a question he asked me. You may as well tell me, then, and I will tell him, why it is that, having never shown much interest in his techniques of magic, you have suddenly dedicated yourself to the creation of potions and enchantments.”

“Tell him,” Bonisagus said, “that I have no plan of rivaling him or his inventions. I only seek to satisfy an urge I have felt from certain dreams. In the course of my life I often dreamed of brewing potions and performing alchemic transformations in my laboratory. Until recently, I believed these dreams only meant to encourage my study of magic and the unification of its diverging forms, the greatest of all possible transformations. But I have never been certain what the dream asked me to do, and now that there is little time left, I intend no dream to go unheeded.” Bonisagus placed his strange vial on the lectern. “Relay that message to Verditius, and bid him be of good cheer. And also tell my good friend that I wish he will someday follow me into Twilight. If he be a wise man, he should not tarry.”

Tyталus shook his head and said, “What a message for such a man! I know Verditius well, and he would never take such advice and will not enter Twilight unless obliged.”





“Why,” said Bonisagus, “is not Verditius a magus?”

“I think that he is,” replied Tytalus, hiding a smile.

“Then he,” said Bonisagus, turning from the lectern to sit upon a bench, “or any other with the Gift, will be willing to enter Twilight, although he will not quicken it himself, for that is forbidden.”

At this Criamon became very interested. “Why do you say,” he asked, “that a magus ought not to deliberately bring Final Twilight upon himself, but be ready to enter it? I agree that all magi should be willing — nay, be of good cheer and happy demeanor — to enter Twilight.”

And here Hylas interrupted where he had no place to speak, but his betters understood the excitement of the situation and forgave him. “Why should magi be happy at the end of life?”

“Do you believe that Twilight exists?” asked Criamon.

“Of course,” said Hylas.

“And is Final Twilight nothing but the separation of the Gifted soul from the mortal body? And passing into Twilight the attainment of that separation?”

“To be sure,” said Hylas.

“Let me ask this: does a magus care for eat and drink?”

“What do you mean, master Criamon?”

“Does food and wine, even the finest ever tasted, help the magus learn his Art?”

“Not at all, Founder.”

And Criamon continued, “And in this same light, do magi think much of indulging the body, for the wearing of costly raiment, or other adornments of the body?”

“I think I understand, Founder, for my mistress has spoken of your wisdom much. A magus should

despise those things, for their pursuit only takes away from the study of the Art, and thus lessens his power.”

“So then, is the body a hindrance or a help to the magus and the pursuit of his Art?”

“Clearly a hindrance in this sense.”

“Thus for us to pursue our Art, we must quit from the body. We must enter our sancta and lecture halls, and put cares of the body aside. Our pursuit of magic releases the Gifted soul from the chains of the body. The true magicians study and are eager to release the soul. Is not the separation and release of the soul from the body our special duty? And is this the self-same separation of body and soul that comes from Final Twilight?”

“It must be.”

“Then, Hylas, as the true magi are always studying Final Twilight, should the attainment of the goal be joyous, or sad?”

“Why, joyous!”

And once Hylas was satisfied, Criamon turned again to Bonisagus and asked, “If all we have said is true, Bonisagus, why do you speak against suicide?”

“There is a doctrine uttered in secret,” answered Bonisagus, “that a mortal is a prisoner who has no right to open the door of his prison and run away.”

“The doctrine of Simon Magus,” said Criamon, nodding.

“This is a great mystery which I do not quite understand,” agreed Bonisagus. “But some elements are obvious: the Divine is our guardian, we are its possession, as our apprentices are our possessions.”

“It would seem so.”

“And if your apprentice took the liberty of declaring himself a magus when you had given no intimation of your wish that he should leave your service, would you not be angry with him, and would you not punish him if you could?”

At this everyone laughed, except for Hylas.

“Then,” said Bonisagus, “there may be reason in saying that a magus should wait, and not take Twilight into his own hands, until the Divine summons him, as God is now summoning me.”

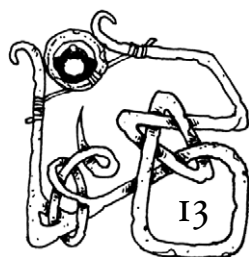
Criamon sat in silence, but Tytalus said: “I agree, Bonisagus, with the greater part of what you say. But on discussions of the soul, most remain incredulous, because of the great fear.

“You mean oblivion?” asked Bonisagus.

“Yes. Many fear that when the soul leaves the body, through Twilight or even mortal death, its place may become nowhere, and on the very day of Twilight our souls are destroyed and perish immediately. There is a child within us who fears death a hobgoblin. This child too must be made unafraid when he is alone with death in the dark.”

“The Church Fathers,” said Bonisagus, “show us otherwise, and the magic limit of the soul confirms that the soul is indestructible.”

“More so,” added Trianoma, her first words since we entered the place, “the simplest notions of magic require it.”





And thinking upon this, the great magi all nodded in agreement, but Hylas asked "How?"

Trianoma said, "Are not all things generated by their opposites? I mean to say, greater things come from lesser, and lesser from greater?"

"That is true," said Hylas, "something which becomes greater must have first been lesser, like the growing of metal from rock, or good weather turning into bad, or the strong become weak. There are many natural processes, such as division and composition, cooling and heating, which equally involve the passage into and out of one another. You have taught me, mistress, that all things in the universe are subject to an eternal process of change from one opposite to the other, and this is the fundamental principle of magic."

"And this must hold for all opposites: that they generate from one another, and there is a passing or process from one to the other of them?"

"Very true," said Hylas.

"Well, then, what is the opposite of life?"

"Death."

"And death is the opposite of life?"

"Yes."

"So they are generated from each other? Death from life, and life from death?"

"I can only answer yes."

"Then the living, whether things or persons, are generated from the dead?"

"Yes, and we can infer the soul must exist before and after the body, because it comes into it and then departs" Hylas said.

"Exactly! Now tell me, my apprentice," asked Trianoma, "is death invisible?"

"No," replied Hylas, "death is all too visible. I have seen friends die."

"Then the opposite processes, from death to life, is invisible, but still must exist. And so we can conclude from the simplest notion that there must be an

invisible world from which the dead come into the visible world of the living?"

"And this is the basic truth of magic," said Hylas amazed. "That the invisible world lies beyond the visible, forever entering into it. And the visible world is not illusion, or something to be cast aside, but the lesser half of the great mingling whole, visible for study so that we can learn of the great world beyond."

### Worlds Beyond

"But what worlds lie beyond?" asked Hylas.

"There is only one world," answered Criamon. "The first discoverers thought the world a discus, suspended in the center of the cosmos, and we can forgive them for so thinking, for the mathematics of latitude fail at the Earth's equatorial region, and it is a fair conclusion that when mathematics ends, so does the land. To balance the world, they proposed the antichthon, an upside-down discus below the Earth, a realm of strangeness. But careful understanding of cosmology shows that the universe is comprised of nothing but spheres, and ours lies at the center."

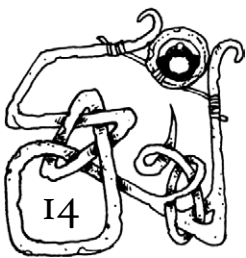
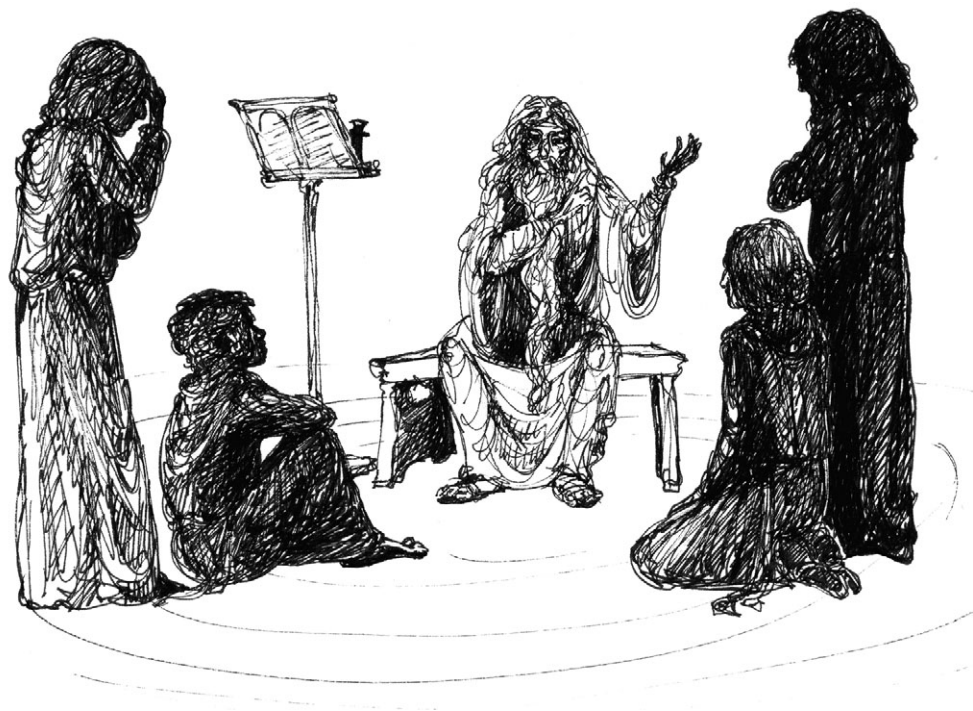
"I do not understand," insisted Hylas. "What of Arcadia? What of the invisible world which my mistress just proved?"

"There is only one world, young Hylas," said Bonisagus, "but it is more complex than the sphere of Earth we stand upon, or the sphere of Water we travel upon in ships, or the sphere of Air we soar through on wings of magic, or the sphere of Fire that heats and churns the lower spheres. These make up all that is visible, but there is much more besides."

"You speak of the realms, Founder?"

"I do indeed."

"I am torn," sighed Hylas. "I so much want to ask you of the realms, and how they fit within the world you describe, but I do not want the greatest wizard of



our age to spend his last hours wasting his time teaching the young.”

The room became very silent, and Hylas, listening to the silence, bowed his head in shame. “Forgive me, masters, for although I know I have said something disgraceful, I do not know what it was, and so cannot make amends.”

The magi looked away, but the bard Evenus approached and put a gentle hand upon Hylas’ shoulder. “Teaching,” he said softly, “is not a waste of time. Teaching is the greatest activity anyone, mortal or Gifted, filii or Founder, can perform. The art of teaching must come before the art of magic, for without the first the second would not exist. By teaching, you become part of the eternal tradition of magic, and reach the highest link on the golden chain attainable in this life. That is why these men and women came together to create their Order. That is why your mistress teaches you, and why you must teach when it is your turn.”

“I understand now,” said Hylas. “How shall I make amends?”

“By letting me teach,” answered Bonisagus, “so that I may spend my last hour doing that which is most good in life.”

#### *Auras and Regiones*

“Tell me,” asked Hylas, “Why do auras come about? How do they function?”

“Your mistress Trianoma has taught you the power of opposites?” said Bonisagus.

“Yes.”

“How does the power express itself? What are the forces of opposition?”

“Sympathy and antipathy.”

“How do they function?”

“As said before, all things constantly undergo a process of change, moving from one opposing quality to another. Sympathy is the force that pulls toward one quality, while antipathy is the force that pushes away from the other.”

“And how does this aid in magic?”

“With the aid of sympathy, a magus can work greater spells than with his will alone.”

“How so?” asked Bonisagus, as the other magi relaxed on the floor in a semicircle.

“Magic is change,” explained Hylas, “when casting a spell, the magus is making a deliberate change to the golden chain and to the universe. By working sympathetic magic a magus makes changes the universe is already eager to make.”

“So sympathy and antipathy are also the forces of magic?”

“Yes, they are the internal forces within objects that magic unleashes.”

“Does sympathy exist in small things?”

“Yes. An aquamarine, because of its color, contains sympathy with water, and thus aids in water magic.”

“And how about people?”

“Even more so. The name of a man contains power over him.”

“And places?”

“I am not sure what you mean,” said Hylas.

“Does place matter with magic?”

“Oh! Yes, absolutely. Casting a spell near a church can only be done with difficulty.”

“And casting a spell in a sanctum gives advantage?”

“Certainly. Just a few years ago I could only cast magic in mistress Trianoma’s sanctum, the aura there was so strong and my Arts so poor.”

“So places contain sympathies and antipathies as well.”

“Yes.”

“And when you asked me, ‘how do auras come about?’ What did you mean? What are ‘auras?’”

“Places where magic is harder or easier to cast,” said Hylas happily, as he began to understand.

“So then what are auras?”

“Sympathies and antipathies of places that affect magic.”

“So why do places of magic, faerie, infernal or divine, become so?”

“Because of their sympathies and antipathies with the realms. Now I understand!” Hylas cried.

“No you don’t,” said Tytalus.

“I don’t? Why not?”

“You understand how auras grow from sympathy with a realm, but do you know what the realms are, and how they function, and how they relate?”

“You are quite right, Founder,” said Hylas.

“Nothing can be gained from knowing that something pulls or pushes a place, without first knowing what that things is, or what destination places are trying to reach.”

#### **Light**

**Emanationism**, the doctrine that the universe is a product of a gradual series of emanations from a first principle, can be found in mystical traditions of many cultures. In Europe, the doctrine can be first seen in early Greek philosophy, but becomes subject to a grand and complex cosmology in Platonism. Gnosticism, Kabbalah, Christian Platonism, and medieval Islamic philosophy follow emanationism. From the first principle, the Godhead, comes a series of lesser beings, principles and states, emanating from each other like bursts of light, until the final state, usually the material world, is reached.

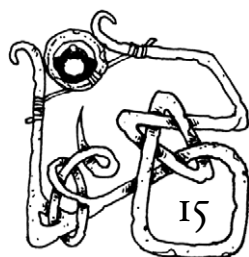
The Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 AD formalized the Church doctrine of creation ex nihilo, which opposes emanationism. Emanationism is also rejected by Aristotelian scholastics of medieval universities.

“What is the greatest force in the universe?” asked Tytalus.

“Divine will,” answered Hylas.

“Does divine will work directly or indirectly?”

“Indirectly, through the golden chain. The universe works according to natural law, not divine providence. Although God is omnipresent, and divine





providence does touches all aspects of our lives, God saw fit to rule the universe through the laws of nature, and reserves miracles for the truly faithful.”

“From where does God preside?”

“The Empyrean.”

“If divine will works indirectly, how does it reach from the Empyrean to the terrestrial spheres so far below?”

Hylas said, “By light, Founder,” but Bonisagus said, “the term ‘radiant vis’ is more accurate. The relationship between visible light and occult light, what I prefer to call ‘vis,’ remains a mystery to me. Perhaps in Twilight I will understand at last.”

“In my studies with my mistress,” commented Hylas, “using light as a metaphor, if not the actual force of magic, has helped my understanding.”

All the magi chuckled at this, and Bonisagus said, “Indeed it should, as it has helped wizards from the first. Thank you for your advice, young one. Very well, light it shall be. Continue with the interrogation, my friend Tytalus.”

“How does light carry divine will?” asked Tytalus.

“By the motions of the celestial spheres,” answered Hylas, “which themselves spin in accordance with divine will. Light from the various planets and stars within the spheres shines down to heat the sphere of Fire, and as the celestial spheres turn so do their rays of light move. As the rays of light play over the sphere of Fire, the changes of heat causes Fire to interact with the other terrestrial spheres in many complex ways, resulting in the great diversity of the mortal world.”

“So light brings about change, just as magic does.”

“Yes.”

“And what is the opposite of change?”

“Uniformity.”

“So then, would you say that there are two opposites, change and uniformity, and they are great forces in the universe?”

“Of course, Founder. Trianoma tells me the Platonists call these opposites duplicity and oneness, while others call them chaos and order, hate and love. This is the greatest and most powerful pair of opposites, expressed most simply as ‘similarity and dissimilarity.’”

“Can any one thing contain two opposing forces?”

“Yes and no. It is Zeno’s paradox. There is a constant passing between one opposite and another, but both cannot be present in one thing at the same time. As a child’s top winds down, it passes from motion to stillness, in the form of losing speed. But there is never a time when the top is both moving and still.”

“So light, as the medium of change, cannot also be the medium of order?”

Hylas sat silent for a time. “No it cannot,” he said, perplexity in his voice. “Things move only toward one opposite and away from another. They cannot move toward both opposites at the same time, or else

a top could be both moving and still at the same time.”

“Therefore light cannot bring change and uniformity at the same time.”

“It seems so.”

“But what is divine will? When God created the universe, what did he do?”

“He impressed forms into matter. He brought order out of chaos, and gave things meaning.”

“So divine will brings order out of chaos, and meaning to the otherwise unintelligible?”

Hylas was despondent. “Yes.”

“How does divine will, which is order, bring about change? How does light, which is the medium of divine will, bring both change and meaning?”

“Alas, Founder, your challenge proves too great for me. What I thought was plain as day is as murky as night!”

Tytalus nodded and said, “Do not fear, for only good can come from this. From your misery you will find understanding.”

### *Shadows*

Now Criamon spoke. “Yes, paradoxes are delicious — the very best riddles, because you possess the resolution all along.”

“I do not feel like I already know the answer,” sighed Hylas.

“Really? Continue with your metaphor of light. What does light do?”

“Light illuminates.”

“And when light illuminates, what is left behind?”

“A shadow.”

“Has your mistress told you how mortals know nothing but shadows?”

“Yes. She told me a tale from Plato... Three prisoners live their entire lives in a cave, chained to the floor. Outside the cave is a vibrant forest glade, but the prisoners never see it, because in their chains all they could see are the inner walls of the cave, every day of their lives. When the sun shines outside, it illuminates the lovely trees, and casts their shadows onto the walls of the cave. The three prisoners, never seeing the sun or trees, only seeing their shadows, think that the shadows are the true trees. For them, the shadows are real, not the trees behind them. But beside them is a pair of empty shackles, because long ago, a fourth prisoner, through the keen use of his mind, realized the shadows for what they were — ghosts of the glade outside the cave. He found his chains easy to break, and strode out into the glade and the light of the Sun.”

“I know this story well,” said Criamon. “Tell me, who are the three prisoners?”

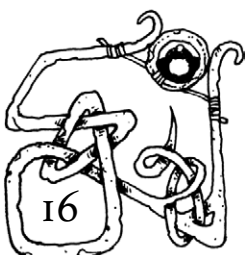
“The three estates of mortal man: nobles, peasants, and priests.”

“And the fourth?”

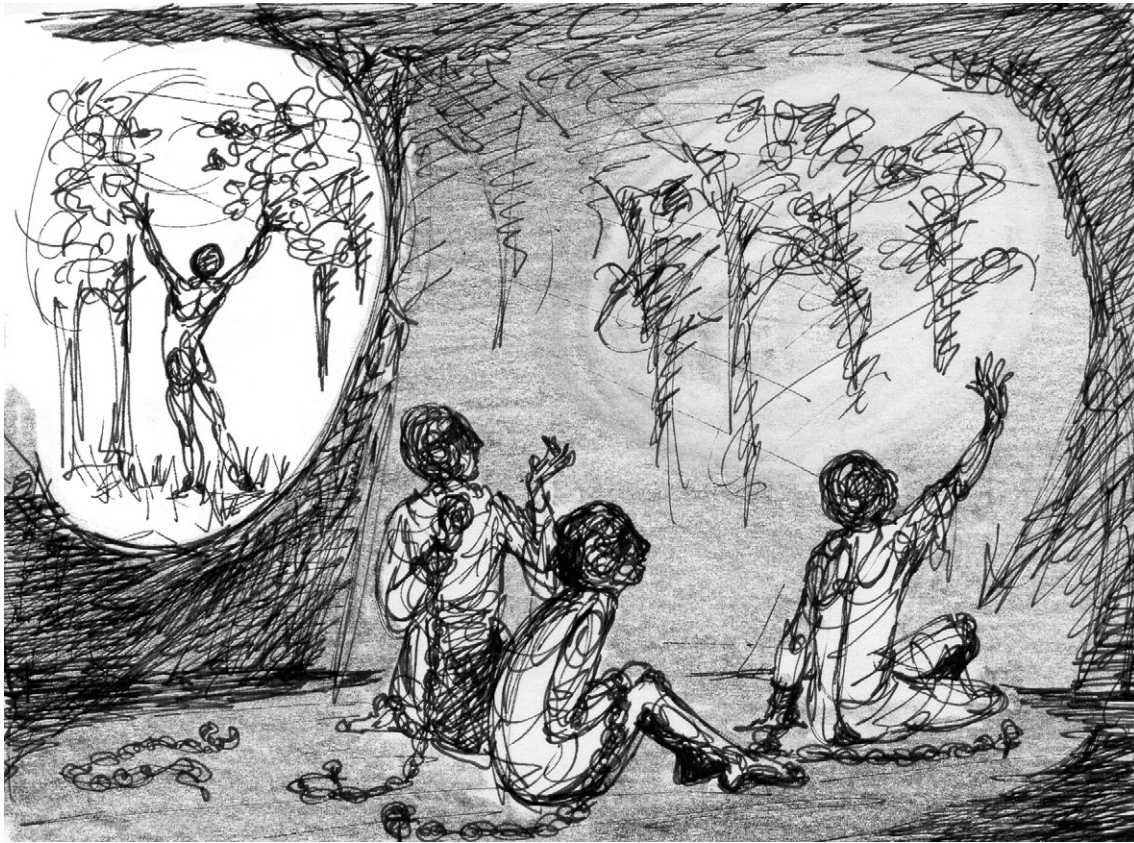
“The magus.”

“So then, what was the cave?”

Hylas thought. “The visible mortal world. The mundane realm. The shadows are the natural objects of perception.”







“And what was the Sun? What is the source of light?”

“Divine will.”

“The verdant glade you described, with its beautiful trees. What if it had not been there?”

“Then the Sun would shine directly onto the cavern walls, and there would be no shadows, nothing for the prisoners to see. The mundane world would have no shape or meaning.”

“What does that tell you?”

“That light, divine will alone, is not enough,” said Hylas, “Illuminating light must have some truth to illuminate — the trees in this story — or nothing could be known. This is the principle I spoke of before, of the God’s indirect action in the cosmos.”

“So if the cave is the mundane realm, would the Sun be the divine realm?”

“Yes, that clearly follows.”

“Then what about the forest glade, which you said was so important? Where does the magus go when he leaves kings, peasants, and popes behind?”

“The realm of magic,” said Hylas, full of wonder.

### Emanation of the Realms

“Does this help you solve the puzzle?”

“Without the trees, the Sun would have nothing to illuminate, and the prisoners would have nothing to see. That is the challenge Founder Tytalus gave me; light can only bring change. But with the trees, the prisoners see meaningful shapes, even though they are the false shadows of the true trees. Divine will, then, acts through magic to bring order and meaning. Order and meaning are products of the natural laws chosen by the Divine to rule the cosmos. Just as my mistress always taught me, the study of

magic is the study of natural law, because magic and natural law are one and the same.”

“Now you know the secret of the realms,” explained Criamon. “The divine realm is the Sun, the shining source of all else. The divine realm is a place of immortal, celestial perfection. Divine will emanates from the divine realm like light, creating the universe as God sees fit in His perfect intellect.”

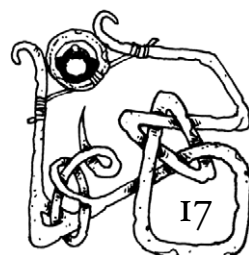
Criamon continued, “The first emanation of the divine realm is the magic realm. While the divine realm is celestial perfection, the magic realm is a place of terrestrial perfection. In the magic realm, the laws of nature and the ideals are made manifest by divine will.”

“Ideals?” asked Hylas.

“Kin to Platonic Forms,” explained Criamon, “the ideals are the pure, flawless magical objects that the objects of the mortal realm strive to imitate. No two objects in the mortal realm are exactly alike. All have imperfections or differences, no matter how minor, separating them. But all objects have their ideals in the magic realm, and from their association the human eye can make sense and see order in the mortal realm, where uniformity otherwise does not exist.”

“Through the light of divine will, the magic realm emanates the mortal realm. The natural laws of the magic realm bring order and design to the mundane realm. If the fixed and eternal laws of the magic realm did not exist, you could never cast a spell. Magic, as you said before, is change, but you left something out, something which Tytalus used to entrap you.”

Hylas thought on this, and said. “The will of the magus. Magic is willful change, a tiny reflection of the





divine will's orderly, indirect changes of the mundane world though natural law."

Tytalus smiled his famous, mischievous grin. "So you see? My challenge has made you stronger, even without a battle of force, as my brother Tremere seeks with his Certamen."

"Without the natural laws and the ideals, cast as shadows into the mundane realm," continued Criamon, "the terrestrial world would be nothing but formless, chaotic matter, and no spell could take hold."

"What of the realm of faerie?" asked Hylas.

"The realm of faerie emanates from the mortal realm," answered Criamon.

"I do not grasp your meaning," admitted Hylas.

"Think as the Platonists and Gnostics do, but do not consider matter the most vile thing in the universe. After all, is the mundane realm the source of evil?"

"Not at all," Hylas said, "the infernal realm is."

"Very good. If the infernal is further away from God than the mortal realm, then the mortal realm must partake in emanation itself."

"Yes," agreed Hylas, "the light of the divine must be so strong that mundane shadows themselves cast shadows."

"Let us use the concept of reflections, since it will help us without straying away from the metaphor of light. The divine realm is the source of celestial perfection. The magic realm is a reflection of the divine, the source of terrestrial perfection. The mundane realm is a reflection of the magic realm, but the mundane realm is one step removed from the divine, so its reflection is imperfect. Hence the mundane realm is the place of terrestrial imperfection, the everyday world. The faerie realm is the next step, an even murkier reflection of the divine."

Here Evenus interrupted with a polite bow, "I have met many of the fay in my travels and on the quests master Bonisagus sends me. I agree that the fay who dwell in mortal cities imitate the mortals who built them. But what of the wild faerie of the forests? What of the faerie gods the pagans pray to in the north? What of Arcadia itself?"

"I take it, good Evenus, that you have traveled in Arcadia," Criamon said.

"Yes, master."

Criamon pointed. "The lyre you carry. What are its powers in the mortal world?"

"It can sweeten minds and lighten hearts."

"And in Arcadia, what powers did your lyre give you?"

"Why, it gave me the powers of a wizard, master. I could make 'willful change,' as young master Hylas described it, with music and song."

"And the natural laws you heard Hylas speak of, are they present in Arcadia?"

"Hardly at all. Time, distance, and reason failed, or took on dreamlike ways."

"So then Arcadia is farther than the mundane realm from the source of natural law?"

"That seems right, but the fay of Arcadia are more powerful than any here assembled, forgive me for saying"

"We must forgive those who speak the truth," Tytalus said, but added, "though I expect soon to falsify your words. I have been studying much of faerie games as of late."

"Do you agree with my portrayal of the faerie realm, fellow archmage?" asked Criamon.

"I do. While wizards use sympathy to work their will upon natural law, the power of the fay springs from antipathy. They are a step further from the divine, from natural law, than the Gifted are, and so they can go against natural law more readily."

"I agree," Evenus responded, "for I have seen faeries and their followers do things that wizards cannot. Thus the faeries are creatures of 'antipathy,' and Arcadia is a place of powerful wildness."

Criamon turned to Hylas again. "Think in terms of Aristotelian imitation. We strive to imitate the magical realm, while the faeries strive to imitate us."

"And infernal?"

"Hell lies in darkness. Where is the darkest place in the universe, Hylas?"

"The place furthest away from the sources of celestial light. That would be the very center of the sphere of Earth, as light cannot penetrate solid rock."

"Then Hell is not mere shadow but total darkness, the complete absence of divine light," said Criamon.

Tytalus added, smiling, "Criamon and I part company in Hell." The entire assemblage laughed. "By that I mean, although I see the general truth, I disagree with Criamon on this issue. God is omnipresent, thus the Divine must have its place in Hell."

Trianoma turned to Tytalus then. "Does that mean there is meaning in Hell?"

Tytalus answered, "Yes."

A Bonisagus said, quietly, "Does that mean there is magic in Hell?"

Tytalus, unaffected said, "of course, magic can be wielded in Hell."

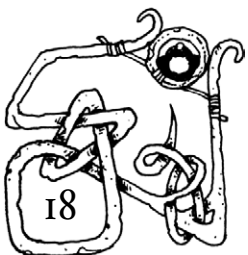
Criamon shook his head. "That is the first step of the diabolist my friend, to believe, with magic, you can beat the Devil at his own game."

Tytalus took his turn sitting in silence.

### The Magic Realm

"The divine realm and its angels rest in the Empyrean at the very boundary of the cosmos," said Hylas, "the infernal demons in Hell, at the darkest depth. The faeries dwell in Arcadia, the land forever on the other side of the hill. What is the realm of magic called, and who dwells within?"

"I believe," Bonisagus began, "that the Earth is very vast, and that we who dwell in the greater Alps are just like ants or frogs about a marsh, inhabiting a small portion only, and that many others dwell in like places. In all parts of the Earth there are hollows into which water, mist, and air collect. The true Earth is pure and in the pure cosmos, and made of pure



aether, of which this,” he said, stirring some dust on his work table, “is but the sediment collecting in the hollows of the Earth.

“We live in these hollows,” he continued. “Mermaids at the bottom of the sea fancy themselves on the surface, and think the sea to be the sky. Mortals, too, think they dwell on the surface of the Earth, having never risen as the Gifted do to the true surface to see a region so much purer and fairer than his own.

“The mundane realm is but a hollow in the Earth, and its inhabitants fancy themselves upon the surface. For this mundane earth, and the stones, and the entire region that surrounds us, are spoilt and corroded, like the things in the sea ruined with brine. The magic realm is the upper Earth of which I speak. I can tell you a charming tale of its marvelous features, Hylas, if you care to hear.”

## Olympos

The magic realm goes by many names: Plato called it the “true earth,” many books of magic call it the mundus imaginalis (“world of imagination”), shamans and animists call it the spirit world, early hermeticists called it the Nous, but most Hermetic magi familiar with its secrets call it **Olympos**. Our world is only a reflection of Olympos, the source of grandeur and magic. While Arcadia is the land of fantastic untamed wilderness, Olympos is the land of fantastic design, the ideal world of harmony and mystical insight.

### The Surface

Like the mundane world, Olympos is a vast terrestrial object floating in a sphere of Air. Where the mundane sphere of Earth is made up of the lowliest solid substance, soft earth and stone, Olympos is composed entirely of the most noble, such as gold, silver, crystal, and gems. The earliest tales of Olympos say it is shaped as a dodecahedron, the sacred geometrical shape of the cosmos and the atomic shape of the element of aether, and composed of the resplendent crystalline aether itself.

Covering the surface of Olympos is **Oceanus**, the ocean of pure elemental Water. The water of Oceanus contains none of the impurities of the mundane sphere of Water, and is clear as the palest sapphire. Looking down into the waves, one could see all the way down into the depths of Olympos, and spy on sea serpents hundreds of miles long. The light of the Sun shines through the water and catches on the lustrous metals and faceted gems that make up Olympos, and the entire sea dazzles with rainbows, flashes of light, and nimbuses of the richest colors. There is only one surface continent. No one knows the land’s name or those who live there. Some call it Atlantis. Others think it is the home of Hermes himself, ruling from his city Adocentyn. Seekers who have set foot on its beaches of gold have never been seen again.

Nineteen great, yawning pits into the underworld of Olympos are spread out evenly across the face of

Oceanus. A twentieth pit is said to be at the heart of the continent itself, making one entrance for each point of a dodecahedron. The ocean waters siphon into them, in terrible roaring falls or swirling maelstroms. The rushing waters suck in air and light, so that the depths of Olympos harbor life.

### The Hollows

Olympos is riddled with caverns, each with connecting passages filled with rivers formed from the plunging waters of Oceanus. Many spherical caverns are so grand that they house entire lands of their own. They are called the **hollows**. The ancients believed the mundane realm to be nothing but a hollow of Olympos. The planets and stars of the mundane sky were murky images of the true heavens shining through the translucent waters of Oceanus and the crystal of Olympos.

Two other hollows known to the Order are the Near Lands and Far Lands of the shamans (*The Dragon and the Bear*, page 170). Magi who seek to subordinate the faerie realm under magic claim Arcadia is a hollow. Other hollows contain the lands of gods and magical kings from tales of old. Egyptian, Greek, Roman, and Persian deities dwell in the hollows as their worshipers did on the mortal earth, in vast empires and glorious cities. There are stories of kingdoms of dragons, daemons, griffons, and noble creatures more strange.

### The Inner Rivers

Oceanus spawns hundreds of lesser rivers, streams, and springs, but three great waterways thunder through Olympos like arteries of blood. The river **Acheron** flows close to the surface, its currents opposing the currents of Oceanus above, maintaining the constant flow of water throughout Olympos. It passes through hollows of great deserts, and flows into the **Acherusian Lake**, where the spirits of pagans and animals are said to gather before being born.

The river **Phlegethon** falls into a volcanic hollow, where it churns with boiling mud in a lake bigger than the Mediterranean Sea. From there the river proceeds to other hollows as a flow of turgid mud, spitting flames and lava. It also coils around the periphery of the Acherusian Lake. The third, the **River Styx** or Stygian River, flows from hollows where no god or mortal has ever traveled, its source called the mysterious **Lake Cocytus**. Its waters are the dark-blue color of lapis lazuli and lazily curl about the shore of the Acherusian Lake across from the river of mud. The waters of all three rivers siphon through into the great central chamber.

### The Central Chamber

The central chamber of Olympos is a great mystery, an opposite twin of the surface continent. Many have tried to travel one of the rivers into it, but all have met terrible fates. Light does not penetrate the chamber’s walls, and many presume it to be a place of darkness. The Platonists called it **Tartarus**, where the souls of sinners are cleansed by the three rivers





and then borne into the next life. Magi who believe Hermes dwells on the surface continent believe Hekate to dwell within Tartarus. Because it is the most occulted place in all the cosmos, some think Tartarus must be the hiding place of the magic stelae carved by Thoth, the Emerald Tablet of Hermes Trismegistus, the metal plates of Ham and all the first and purest secrets of the universe.

### Entering Olympos

The paths to Olympos are few and much more rare than entrances to Arcadia and can be separated into two types. Some paths are created by artifice, by the deliberate efforts of Gifted magicians. The first discoverers of sacred architecture knew how to build gates into Olympos. Ancient temples and stone circles with magic auras of 8+ may contain regiones that bridge the gap between our corroded world and the pure Olympos. Early theurgists knew of daemons who could carry mortals into Olympos, but Hermetic theurgists have yet to contact them. Ancient diviners wandered Olympos in their meditations, and the mantike inherit this ability.

The second paths can only be found in high-level regiones or auras around streams, rivers or the sea. You must travel on the water itself to enter. Entering Olympos on the sea takes you to the surface of Oceanus. Paths to Oceanus can rarely be found in safe waters, and you must journey to open sea, into storms, or dangerous and uncharted places to find them. Rivers transport you to one of the three great rivers inside the hollows. On wintery nights of the new Moon, a thick fog arises on the Rhine river, and those with Second Sight can find their way through the fog into the Stygian waters. In the early dawn hours of days sacred to Osiris, the marshy reeds of the Nile lead to Acheron.

Other high level magic auras and regiones connect to Olympos, but only into the Near Lands hollow. Passage from the Near Lands to other regions of Olympos is notoriously difficult and dangerous, as one must first pass through the Far Lands hollow.

#### *Travel in Olympos*

The geography of greater Olympos never changes, although many hollows are prone to flux. Time passes in Olympos at the same speed as in the mundane realm. Unless a hollow serves the grand scheme of things as a realm of dreams, associative travel and correspondences do not function in Olympos.

Beyond the strangeness of individual hollows, travel between hollows is fraught with danger. The rivers are swift, their waters enchanted. Several Verdittius magi made powerful magic boats they believed impervious to the physical and magical challenges of Olympos' rivers, but perished as their boats smashed to splinters or burst into flames.

Bringing a mundane body into the pure realm of magic has great consequences. Visitors who travel bodily into Olympos (through regiones, for examples) gain a +10 bonus to any magic total and three

less botch dice than normal (minimum 1). Almost anything the magus can touch contains raw vis.

Olympos, however, is a place of truth; none that dwell there can tell a direct lie. If a mortal traveling in Olympos lies, he gains 1 point of Decrepitude. If a magus lies while in Olympos, he must check for Twilight. The effects of botching spells are also far more severe, as a magician's powers are greater here than anywhere in the cosmos. A single botch can permanently affect your Gift, and a double botch readily kills.

A visitor traveling only in spirit does not enjoy or suffer these consequences.

#### *Meeting its Denizens*

All beings that dwell in Olympos, from animals to fish and plants, possess the power of speech and contain an animating daemon or spirit. All follow strict codes of honor and justice although their notions of justice may seem exaggerated and alien. Each has a place in a hierarchy of superior to inferior, and never acts against its position in life. Crops live to be reaped. Wheat sings praises to the gods of the harvest even as the sickle slices through it. Wild boars relish the challenge of evading the hunt, and are glad to die a hero's death under the spear of a noble hunter.

Nothing can be taken from Olympos to the mundane realm without the permission of an intelligent being with superiority over it. Otherwise, upon transference to the mundane realm, the object corrodes and losses any magic. If taken with permission, anything from Olympos contains raw vis or enchantment. This same rule applies to slaying beasts for vis. For example, you cannot take raw vis from a stag you hunted in a forest to the mundane realm unless you gain the permission of the forest's king. The social hierarchy of Olympos is unearthly complex, and you will often have to quest far, perhaps even to a different hollow, to find the being who has the authority to grant you the magic.

#### *Themes for Adventures in Olympos*

**The Fate of Nations:** If the theories are true, and Olympos is the Aristotelian mover of the mundane world, then the events in Olympos alter the course of the mundane world. A war in Olympos could result in a war in Europe, as the mundane nobles unwittingly desire to imitate their perfect counterparts in Olympos. The changes the players make in Olympos have accidental consequences in the mundane world. Can these consequences be deliberately created?

**There is a purpose for everything under Heaven:** Something seemingly insignificant, perhaps the overconfident lord of a tiny anthill, has a great and important reason for existence. The ant king's tiny nectar cellar provides the ambrosia the dragons need to sire a High King.

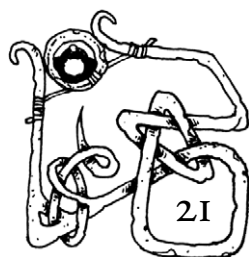
**Grand Scheme:** A delicate balance exists between several creatures, kingdoms, or hollows. The peasants of three kingdoms must each do seemingly



unrelated tasks that combine to prevent the fires of Phlegethon from destroying the region.

**Learning from Authority:** A simple dandelion could teach much on the Art of Herbam, if a magus can summon up the humility to call it “master.”

**Quest for Legends:** The emerald tablet, Hermes’ ring, the first Inyx, and the egg of the phoenix must all be somewhere in the maze of tunnels, rivers, and hollows. How do you find them, and once you do, whose permission must you gain to take them home?



# Bonisagus Redux: Magic Theory Revised

by Erik Dahl

The magic system of *Ars Magica* is arguably the best of any roleplaying game. Like many other fans, I am impressed by its versatility, simplicity, and style. However, over the years many inconsistencies have come to light: confusing differences between the various editions, poorly designed spells, and unclear definitions for what is affected by each Art. I wrote this article to present my comprehensive suggestions for revising the magic system: to correct these inconsistencies, to make it even easier to use, and to retain the aspects of the original that make it so popular. If I cannot achieve every one of these lofty goals, at least I hope to provide a collection of interesting ideas. These include:

- **Special range, duration and target categories:** The Harnessed Magic Virtue (page 61 of the *Wizard's Grimoire Revised Edition*) seems to impart special benefits that many players take for granted. Using this as a model, I have condensed all of the spells with special design features into three specific types of magic: arcane magic, controlled magic, and medium magic. By separating these effects from “normal” magic and associating them with a Virtue, it is easier to explain how they work and why all spells do not take advantage of their unusual properties.
- **Revised casting modifiers:** I've taken another look at penetration and resistance, and come up with some ideas for modifying how magic interacts with auras. In essence, I suggest that the Realms should influence resistance instead of casting totals, and on a greater scale, and that penetration should be altered to compensate. I developed these changes alongside the magic rules, as spells that affect the Realms should inherently take resistance into account. I've also examined aimed spells, requisites, and spell foci with a similar eye for consistency.
- **New vis and Ritual mechanics:** I propose that vis can boost any formulaic spell, always by one magnitude for each pawn spent. This makes it very easy to determine the cost for increasing a spell's parameters, and does not require spells to be designed with “boosting enabled,” so to speak. Rituals, though, are more expensive than spells because of their additional vis cost, yet they often have no added value. I describe how the vis cost of a Ritual should make it inherently easier to cast, effectively dividing the spell level by two. I believe these simplifications make it easier to design spells with boosted effects, and make Ritual versions of formulaic spells more efficient and worthwhile.



- **Standardized spell parameters:** I have given the same effect the same spell level, no matter what its form. Once familiar with the effects of these levels (I've tried to make them as intuitive as possible), it is easy to determine the level of a spell without searching through the guidelines. To do this, all magic of any Technique and Form must begin at the same range, duration and target. This makes it possible to quickly convert an Animal spell into a Corpus spell without recalculating the spell's level, or to easily design two similar spells with slightly different parameters. Surprisingly, I have found that most Fourth Edition spells work out to be the same level when converted.
- **House Mystae:** I designed mystae for four lineages at the heart of the Order, incorporating Harnessed Magic as well as the other principles of this article into magical Abilities and Virtues typically available only to magi of Houses Bonisagus, Guernicus, Mercere, and Verditius. As part of this, I wrote a kind of origin myth for those Houses — more legend than proposed Hermetic history — that can be used to explain the magic rules within the setting. Finally, I came up with a few Virtues that could be used by magi of other Houses to explain their intuitive understanding of common applications of Harnessed Magic, without forcing them to initiate the secrets.

I'd like to take a few words to thank Eric Kouris for publishing this article, especially for including it in its entirety. I realize it's extremely long (it's at least three years of dedicated rules tinkering), but I really couldn't find a good way to break it up into smaller parts, and so I'm quite indebted to him for the massive amount of space he has set aside for me. I'm proud to contribute to such an excellent resource for those who love the game — but of course, you already know it is or you wouldn't be reading this.

I'd also like to extend my sincere thanks to Bjarke Roth for his insightful comments and intensive testing, and to Brian Malcolm, Neil Taylor, and Alex White for their valuable advice and feedback. While there were many others who read and tried out my ideas, these individuals were of particular help, and I don't think I could have communicated or understood the more complicated concepts of this article without their excellent suggestions and support.

## Revised Effect Parameters

In order to make the mechanics for spells easier to remember, I have combined all of the different spell variables into balanced sets that encompass all of their potential applications. To describe this properly, some definitions are in order.

In this article, Range, Duration and Target are spell **parameters**. I refer to specific applications of these parameters by their title, as in “the range of the spell” or “the duration of the effect.” Inclusive terms that represent a particular parameter's level are called



**categories.** For example, Reach is a range category that includes a maximum distance of about one pace from the caster.

In examining the spell parameters, I decided I had to remove several of the categories, which I felt had confusing or inconsistent properties. I wanted to make all the basic parameters work the same way, leaving out those categories with inherently special rules (like Personal or Ring). Ars Magica players already use functionally equivalent subcategories (as with faerie magic), so I felt that if I could make the root categories consistent, special cases could build on them when necessary. This process also happened to make their number match — a nice symmetry that I greatly appreciate.

My revised categories for range, duration and target look like this:

Modifier	Range	Duration	Target
-5	Touch	Mom	Small
+0	Reach	Sun	Ind
+5	Near	Moon	Room
+10	Far	Season	Str
+15	Sight	Year	Bound
+20	Arc	Perm	All

To design an effect with a lesser or greater category, I apply the corresponding modifier to the spell's level, once for each parameter. For example, to cast a spell of Range: Touch, Duration: Moon, and Target: Room, I would subtract 5 from the spell level for the range, add 5 for the duration, and add 5 for the target. I explain the progression of categories in more detail below.

In Fourth Edition, duration could not be increased beyond Moon in spontaneous or formulaic spells — only vis boosting or Ritual magic could accomplish that — which prevented game-breaking effects like permanent healing, among other things. As you will see, though, I have come up with another way to define Instant effects, and thus I find few negative consequences for allowing spells greater control over duration. This makes all three parameters work the same way, and I think that is a great improvement.

As I play it, all effects begin with the same default range, duration and target: Reach, Sun, and Individual. In order to make the system even more internally consistent, it would be even better to make the base categories Touch, Mom, and Small. This would increase the cost of all effects by three magnitudes, but the cheapest possible spells would always be level 5. I haven't done this here, since many standard spells would become unusually difficult for starting magi to cast — *Chirurgion's Healing Touch* (CrCo20), for example, would become Level 35 — so effects as I have them can still go below Level 5, becoming Level 4, Level 3, and so on. If it were tied to a character creation scheme that could give magi slightly higher starting totals, though, I think this change would be ideal.

In the sections below, I begin to discuss different varieties of **harnessed magic** (arcane magic, controlled magic, and medium magic). In essence, these

are special subcategories that I designed to allow magi greater control over their magic, in a way that the spell guidelines suggest is possible but not commonplace. I reference them by adding a plus sign to the base category, such as R: Touch+, D: Mom+, or T: Small+. This symbol adds an extra magnitude to the spell level, so that effects of Reach and Touch+ have the same range modifier. They cannot go beyond Sight+, Year+, or Bound+ — there is no Arc+, Perm+, or All+. I think these additional parameters neatly explain many unusual spells in canon, and provide additional directions in which theorists and lab rats may develop magic.

### Range

Range is the distance from the caster to the effect. This is often described as the distance from the caster to the target, but the term “target” can sometimes imply something that isn't actually affected by the spell. For example, a spell that wards away animals should describe the range as the distance to the animals, not to something that the caster wants to protect.

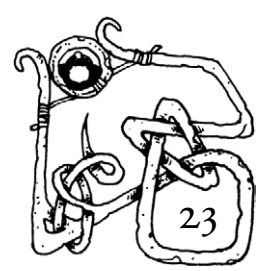
It is possible for an effect to travel out of range after it is cast, but the caster cannot exercise any control over it until it is again within range. While anything within range can usually be affected, the caster must also be able to perceive at least a small part of the target. To produce an effect that the caster cannot perceive, the spell must use a special category or be designed as a Ritual.

- Touch: The caster, or what he is touching, holding or wearing
- Reach: Within about a pace of the caster
- Near: Within about ten paces of the caster
- Far: Within about a hundred paces of the caster
- Sight: Within about a thousand paces of the caster
- Arc: Beyond sight, but somehow connected to the caster

R: Personal often causes me trouble in my sagas. I have allowed Touch to take over Personal, my logic being that if you are touching the target, you are “one” with the target, magically speaking, and that's pretty much how Personal is supposed to work. Spells where the caster targets himself can still automatically bypass the Parma Magica, though I don't really care for that rule myself as I think it creates unnecessary complications.

### Arcane Magic

An arcane connection is something that is magically associated with the target in such a way that it retains a magical connection to it. It might be a part of the target that has been separated from it, or something so similar that it is effectively part of a class of things with it (such as a variety of tree, or a particular bloodline). Since an arcane connection is magically connected to the target, it can be considered part of the target. This allows for many





interesting magical applications, which I collectively call **arcane magic**.

Many spells in canon seem to allow a magus to affect a target that he cannot see, or to target something that should require an arcane connection without actually using R: Arc. One example is *Revealed Flaws of Mortal Flesh* (InCo10). I have designed a kind of magic that allows spells to have this versatility, but makes it clear that it is not standard, without using R: Special or leaving discrepancies between the spell's parameters and description.

To describe a spell with arcane magic, the Range of the spell is increased with a plus sign. For example, Range: Touch+ means that the spell can affect a target the magus is touching, or something arcanelly connected to something the magus is touching. Likewise, a spell of Range: Near+ can affect a target within ten paces of the magus, or a target that is connected to something within ten paces of the magus.

If a magus knows a spell designed to use arcane magic, he can affect a distant target as if that target were in range by using an arcane connection to it. For example, a bit of fur from a wolf's back will allow the magus to affect that wolf as if the magus were actually touching its back, though the actual wolf might be miles away. This is because of the Law of Contagion: a part of a body, once separated, still retains a connection to that body.

In addition, spells designed with arcane magic can also affect things that are within the range of the spell, but which the magus cannot see. For example, a magus might be touching a box, but have no idea of its contents. With arcane magic, the box may be treated as an arcane connection to its contents, and the magus may thus affect the contents at R: Touch+. The contents become part of the box, and though they couldn't be affected with normal magic (because the magus cannot perceive them), arcane magic makes it possible by targeting them as part of their container.

Finally, because like attracts like (according to the Law of Sympathy), arcane magic allows a magus to perceive items that are very similar to something he has on hand, because a body has a connection to closely related bodies. As an example, a leaf from a particular kind of tree would allow a magus to target other leaves from that kind of tree using arcane magic. This allows for a useful application of Intellego spells: by casting an arcane spell on a vial of water, the caster could learn information about similar water, such as its direction.

One important thing to remember about arcane magic is that it affects the target as if the arcane connection *is* the target — a spell affecting a wolf using a bit of its fur treats the fur as the wolf. With an arcane InAn spell, the magus can learn about the wolf's physical condition, memories, appearance, etc. because they are all part of the "wolf" he is touching. However, he cannot use arcane magic to affect *the wolf's surroundings*, because neither the magus nor the "wolf" (the fur) is connected to them. The

magus is effectively holding the wolf in his hand, so a spell designed to affect the wolf's surroundings would instead tell him about the "wolf's" surroundings, meaning the area surrounding the fur.

Any magus may learn formulaic spells that have been designed to use arcane magic. However, only magi with either the Harnessed Magic +3 Virtue or the Arcane Magic +2 Virtue can invent spells that use it, either spontaneously or in the lab. This means that most magi cannot use arcane magic except in spells originally designed by others. Of course, they can still make use of arcane connections if they design formulaic spells at R: Arc.

### Duration

Duration is the length of time an effect lasts, from the moment it is cast until a certain natural event occurs. The movement of the celestial bodies of the heavens defines these natural events, which is a convenient guide for those in Mythic Europe, as their passing is generally apparent to everyone.

- Mom: A moment, no more than a minute or two
- Sun: Until the sun next rises or sets
- Moon: Until the next new or full moon
- Season: Until the next solstice or equinox
- Year: Until the next winter solstice
- Perm: Forever (or until dispelled)

To condense the durations, I combined Momentary and Diameter, as I have problems with the definition of the latter. Taking other duration categories as a model, a "diameter" should begin and end independently of when spells are cast; assuming the sun moves across the sky in two-minute units, a spell cast at 12:00:00 should last two full minutes, but a spell cast at 12:01:59 should last only a second. Since I figure that even a fast-cast spell takes at least a few seconds, and that a complicated formula with gestures and spell foci could take as long as a minute or two to cast, I have decided that there isn't much difference between Momentary and this short amount of time.

For those who rely on Diameter for a duration of "scene" length, I suggest that you just use Sun instead, since while it is then possible for scene-based effects to last as many as twelve hours, Sun does seem to be the established duration for relatively temporary effects like the Parma Magica and *Veil of Invisibility* (PeIm10). Another idea is to allow something like the subcategory Mid (Sun), which would end at either midnight or midday. Magi could cast a D: Mid spell after dawn but before noon for a shorter duration, and after noon but before dusk for a duration that lasted beyond sunset.

I have reworked Instant to be a type of Permanent effect, not a subcategory, simply described as a spell that has been made natural with vis (see "Boosting Magic," below). This means that magi cannot dispel effects cast with vis, but I think the inherent simplicity in abolishing the distinction between Permanent and Instant is worth this change.





Concentration and Ring are simply durations that use controlled magic, as I will explain below. Conc can be rewritten as Mom+, and Ring might be described with Sun+. Granted, Concentration is a very common duration in canon, and it can be a bit of a blow if most magi can't use it. However, it really does work very differently from the other durations, and separating it from them seems obvious to me. If it is unacceptable to deny access to these durations for spells that magi in your saga invent or cast spontaneously, you might consider ruling that many or all magi have access to controlled magic, perhaps because of a recent Hermetic breakthrough. Indeed, this could be done with any of the parts of Harnessed Magic I've developed, without much impact apart from some loss of the use of my ideas for House mystae. As you will see, I also have ideas for Virtues that give elements of harnessed magic to characters for whom it would be appropriate, and you might design similar Virtues to address the needs of your saga.

As I mentioned before, I've removed limits on casting spells with duration greater than Moon. This is both for consistency between the parameters (there are no such limits on range or target), and also to make up for some of the functionality lost in tying Concentration-based effects to Virtues. Since I have addressed what I believe is the strongest reason for this limitation (permanent healing without vis) by requiring vis for natural effects, I don't mind allowing formulaic and spontaneous spells to encompass all possible durations.

#### *Controlled Magic*

Spells typically last their duration, and then end. They cannot last longer than their duration, include additional targets after being cast, or end before their time has elapsed — at least not without Vim magic. This seems to be made clear in canon by the description of Harnessed Magic (*The Wizard's Grimoire, Revised Edition*, page 61), which basically gives a magus these special abilities (along with some built-in flaws). For convenience, I refer to these things as **controlled magic**. Since the Virtue allows magi to use controlled magic, it stands to reason that they can't otherwise.

Yet controlled magic is a game staple; there are many spells that last for variable amounts of time, based on circumstances. All spells with D: Conc or D: Ring use this quality of magic. Other examples are shapechanging spells based on wearing an animal's hide, and invisibility spells tied to standing in place. Yet it is clear that all spells cannot function this way, since duration should naturally last until the spell expires. Furthermore, some spells (usually Rego or Intéllego) allow for unusual control after casting, allowing the caster to continue to manipulate the effect, even changing from one target to another (as with warding spells or spells that provide information visually). I have decided to clearly outline this sort of magic, thereby making mastery of it a benefit of specialized study.

On its own, a controlled spell lasts as if it were a normal spell of its listed duration. That is, a controlled Momentary spell would last only a short time. By meeting conditions specified by the spell description, the caster can also extend the duration by an additional duration category. For example, while a Mom+ spell would naturally end after a very short time, the duration could be made to last until the next sun passed if the caster concentrated or met some other predefined conditions of the effect.

The caster can also end a controlled effect whenever he wishes. It can be cancelled completely, or even left dormant until activated again, as long as it is either maintained or its base duration does not expire. That is, a spell of D: Sun+ could be left dormant until the sun had passed, at which time it would naturally end; if the caster began to maintain the conditions of the spell before then, it could remain dormant as long as the next moon. For timing and concentration purposes, activating or suppressing controlled magic is treated like casting a new spell. Simply canceling controlled magic takes no extra time; the spell just ends when the caster wills it.

A spell with controlled duration can also be transferred from one target to another, as long as it is still active. For example, a controlled spell that detects an amount of silver could target a different amount of silver whenever the caster wished. When this transfer occurs, the spell simply ceases to affect its previous target and behaves as if it had just been cast upon the new target, using the original casting total if necessary for penetration and resistance. For timing issues, this transfer also works like casting a new spell.

Most magi cannot invent spells with controlled duration, though they can learn to cast those that have been invented by others. Only those who have the Harnessed Magic +3 Virtue or the Controlled Magic +2 Virtue may invent or cast spontaneous spells that take advantage of this kind of magic.

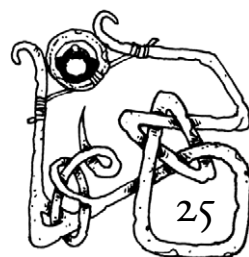
#### **Target**

I allow for many different definitions of each target category below, some as part of a larger target, others as a collection of targets within range. I've also given pointers for the Size of a target, when that is worthwhile for understanding the spell description and potential uses of the target category. I recognize that some players prefer to think of targets by their inclusiveness rather than their volumes, so to speak, and these rules attempt to combine both interpretations when possible.

Since I think of the target as described by the form of the spell, I always evaluate the range as the distance from the caster to the effect, which is usually easy to figure out. Thus, to affect a Room of people at R: Touch, the caster must be touching all of those people (perhaps by everyone holding hands). If no part of the target is within the spell's range, the spell simply has no effect.

Small: A small target (Size -4 or less)

Part of an individual (something easily carried or worn)





- Ind: An individual target (usually Size -3 to +3)  
Smaller targets within an area about one pace across
- Room: A large target (Size +4 or +5)  
About ten individuals in a group  
An area about ten paces across  
Individuals within an enclosed chamber
- Str: A very large target (Size +6 to +9)  
About a hundred individuals in a group  
An area about 100 paces across  
Rooms within a single structure
- Bound: An enormous target, as large as can be seen (Size +10)  
About a thousand individuals in a group  
An area about 1000 paces across  
Structures within a natural boundary
- All: Every appropriate thing within range

These parameters do a lot of different jobs, depending on how you like to use targets. I figure that while an Individual is defined in canon as any single, discrete thing, some single discrete things (like an elephant or a lake) are large enough to merit a greater category.

I consider the various other terms for targets as subcategories of the parameters I've named, such as Group (Room) and Circle (Str). When evaluating these sorts of targets, I rule that the units that make up the target must be within range of each other as well as the caster. For example, to affect a group of ten people at R: Reach, each member of the group must be within reach of another member of the group, and at least one of them must be within reach of the caster. In that respect, Target: Group is just as valid as Target: Room, but I decided for consistency to always refer to targets by the simpler term.

I also renamed T: Sight to T: All, as I wanted to avoid any confusion with the range category of the same name, and the associated confusion of whether the target category depends upon how much of the target the caster can see. For these rules, range governs that quality of the spell; that is, a target that cannot be seen is considered out of range, not too large to affect.

#### *Medium Magic*

There are many spells in canon that allow the caster to imbue other people or areas with discretionary powers over the effect. For example, spells like *Hunter's Lethal Arrow* (PeAn30) are held in place and transferred to another after the spell is resolved. Spells such as *True Sight of the Air* (InAu15) allow another person to control the spell as if he himself had cast it. Other spells are simply "centered" on a particular target, and while they have no effect on it, they move around with it in order to affect others. I have combined these sorts of effects into a type of object-oriented magic I call **medium magic**.

Using medium magic, spells can be "held" by a **medium**, a special kind of target, for the duration of the spell. In this sense, the caster passes control of the spell to something else. The target category

describes either the medium or the effect, whichever is larger, and the medium must be both within range of the caster when the spell is cast and within range of the intended target when the effect manifests.

A medium cannot create another medium. Unless the medium can discriminate, it will affect any target that comes into range, up to the maximum size of the effect. It is limited to the form(s) of the spell, so that a ReAn spell could only affect animals. Note also that unless it has some way to perceive the target, a medium cannot affect a target at any range greater than Touch.

A medium can be "programmed" to trigger under specific conditions. These commands must be fairly simple, such as "only affect targets larger than a certain size" or "trigger whenever it's hot." The medium can also recognize changes to itself and trigger the magic in response, activating when a door is opened, or on the instant of a person's death, for example.

If a medium spell is designed with a controlled duration, the medium can be made to maintain the conditions of the spell for the caster, and to transfer the effect from one target to another when necessary. This is like designing a magic item to maintain concentration or function constantly. Most wards are designed with controlled durations for this very reason: when a group of creatures comes into range, they are affected, and when a different group later comes into range, they are also warded away.

A spell can be designed to use a medium in such a way that its effect simply travels with a target that is not normally part of the spell. For example, *The Phantom Gift* (CrVi15) creates a powerful sense of magic somewhere within range. By casting it on a medium, that effect becomes "centered" on the target and will travel with it wherever it goes. Similarly, *Circling Winds of Protection* (ReAu15) causes winds to circle the medium by centering the effect upon it. This effect then stays with the medium until its duration ends.

Mediums use the caster's Gift to invoke the magic; it is as if the medium is activating the effect in the caster's stead. Note that because of this magical relationship between caster and medium, a medium can be used as an arcane connection to the caster for the duration of the spell. Because of this, medium spells with Permanent duration are very dangerous, as they effectively create a permanent arcane connection to the caster. For spells that require lasting effects, it is usually better to enchant an invested device.

I have avoided requisites for medium magic, as I feel the Virtue encompasses the essential knowledge needed to apply medium magic to any object, unless the magic somehow affects the medium in addition to the target. That is, I don't believe a magus must be as good at Herbam as he is with Animál to cast *The Hunter's Lethal Arrow* (PeAn30), since the arrow is more like a spell focus than an effect of the spell. Of course, requisites can still be added into the formula if you disagree with my reasoning.



All magi may learn or cast formulaic spells designed to use a medium. However, they cannot invent medium spells, nor can they use a medium with their spontaneous magic. I also rule that only medium magi can use the principles of medium magic with invested devices, creating enchanted objects that maintain concentration for the caster or function constantly. Thus, only magi with the Harnessed Magic +3 Virtue or Medium Magic +2 Virtue can invent spells, devices, or spontaneous effects of this nature.

### Harnessed Magic Summary

**Arcane magic** is a class of special ranges that allow a magus to affect targets he cannot otherwise perceive. He can affect a target from a distance using an arcane connection as a stand-in; he can consider within range a target that he cannot perceive but which is part of a target he can; and he can treat something very similar to his target as an arcane connection to it.

**Controlled magic** is a class of special durations that allow a magus exceptional control over his spells for as long as he meets particular conditions. He can extend the duration up to one additional category; he can cancel or hold his spells dormant; and he can exercise unusual control over his effects after they have been cast, effectively choosing new targets or changing how he manipulates them.

**Medium magic** allows a magus to impart control of his spells to another person or even an inanimate object. He can create spells that trigger under simple conditions; he can give control over his magic to another; and he can center an effect on an unrelated target that may thereby carry it to others.

All magi can learn formulaic spells and Rituals that use Harnessed Magic, but only magi with the relevant Virtues can invent them or cast them spontaneously. Effects that use arcane or medium magic remain arcane connections to the caster while he lives, and controlled effects cease immediately upon his death.

### Effect Modifiers

Spells can be modified in many different ways. Some modifiers are applied before a spell is cast, such as those for vis boosting and spell foci, and others are applied after casting, such as penetration and finesse. I also look at requisites, general spells and Rituals in this chapter.

#### Penetration and Resistance

I must say that other authors have written clearer and better ideas for how to deal with Penetration. However, I have found I also want to deal with auras as more of an environmental factor, rather than part of the casting process. I'd also like to remove extra die rolls; I think that for penetration, chance is well represented by the casting roll. Otherwise, in this section I'm basically advocating ideas originally proposed by David Chart, Bjarke Roth, and Neil Taylor,

and I refer you to their articles on this subject for more comprehensive treatment.

I have come to recognize a need for mundane characters to have more defense against the supernatural, but I don't want to get bogged down with more natural resistance rolls. One way to do this is to make auras more important. Auras currently have little influence on magic — a higher chance of botching is their greatest drawback — and in my opinion the mechanics don't really capture the Realms' mythic "feel." If a peasant fears a powerful magus, he will seek safety in a church, or someplace with a high divine aura. As things are now, even a level 10 aura seems little more than a slight irritation to that magus.

Thus, I propose treating auras like a kind of environmental resistance: a divine aura would always protect those within it from the powers of other Realms, a magic aura would aid magical and faerie powers but hinder divine and infernal, and so on. To make this ambient resistance more of a threat, and to bring it in line with Parma Magica, I suggest multiplying the bonus or penalty by 5. Thus, in a divine aura of 1, everyone would effectively have a magic resistance of 5, and an infernal resistance of 15.

I apply this aura modifier to Penetration, rather than the casting total. This prevents magical and faerie auras from boosting the maximum level of spell a magus can cast, and I think that makes more sense, since I don't think an aura imparts greater knowledge of magic. As I see it, if he can't cast a formulaic spell without an aura, he can't cast it anywhere. Players can then determine whether a spell is cast or not (and thus whether or not they lose Fatigue) without any information about the aura from the storyguide, and I like that some mystery remains, after penetration and resistance are applied, of how much of the resistance was the aura and how much was the target.

Penetration as written seems to have very little bearing on magic totals, in that most of the penetration total depends upon the die roll. To correct this, I propose dropping the roll and multiplying Penetration by 5. In that sense, Penetration would function like the Parma Magica.

These changes make Penetration an interesting ability, defined as a character's arcane talent for dealing with the Realms. A magus with a strong affinity for the Dominion might increase his Penetration to help him overcome the penalties associated with magic in a divine aura, and a character with low Penetration would suffer harsher penalties in an opposed aura. Characters who rarely leave the covenant might even develop their Penetration to take better advantage of their local aura.

After penetration and resistance are compared, the results may be lower than the level of the spell. I find it very interesting to use this total to determine the scope of the effect, scaling down the magic when necessary. I can reduce the level of effect, or I can even pull back the effect's range, duration, or target.





The effect guidelines I propose below make it very easy to do, and it's a lot of fun to decide how magic will adapt to a hostile environment, so to speak.

### Penetration and Resistance

Here is the procedure I follow to deal with Resistance and its related factors, according to the guidelines I outlined above.

1. The player figures out the casting total, including the casting roll, but not including the aura. Fatigue is spent, if necessary, based on this total. If this is less than (spell level - 10) when casting a formulaic spell or Ritual, there is no further effect.
2. The player multiplies his character's Penetration by 5, and adds this to the casting total to determine the penetration total.
3. If an aura is involved, the storyguide multiplies the Realm modifier by 5 and applies this to the penetration total.
4. The storyguide then subtracts resistance, if any, from the penetration total, to determine the level of effect for the resisting creature.
5. If the result is at least equal to the level of the spell, the effect manifests as described; if less, the level of effect may be reduced accordingly.

Here's a few examples of these rules in action.

Gratia of Flambeau is fighting a demon with Infernal Might 25 in an infernal aura of level 5. She casts a formulaic spell, *Demon's Eternal Oblivion* (PeVi+), which she knows at Level 40. Her casting total is 35; she is fatigued, but the spell is cast. She has Penetration 2, so her penetration total is 45. The infernal aura reduces this by 25 (magic/infernal:  $-5 \times 5$ ), leaving 20. The demon's resistance is 25 (Might), and 20 is less than 25, so Gratia's spell has no apparent effect. She knows the spell went off, but she cannot be sure if it was the demon or the infernal aura that stopped it.

After she escapes, Gratia lures the demon into a level 3 magic aura. This time she tries to harm its physical body with a spontaneous Perdo Corpus spell. Her casting total is 20 after spending Fatigue, making her penetration total 30. The aura increases this by 15 (magic/magic:  $+3 \times 5$ ), or 45. The demon's resistance is 25 (Might). 45 minus 25 results in a spontaneous PeCo effect of level 20, causing the demon medium wounds.

She soon finishes the creature off, and later magically attempts to find the diabolist who summoned it. She knows he is hiding somewhere inside the church crypt (Divine 4). Her spontaneous InTe spell is level 15 after Fatigue, and her penetration total is 25. The Dominion resists her magic with 20 points of resistance (magic/divine:  $-4 \times 5$ ), so the effect is only Level 5. Her information is very hazy, but it's enough to see him through the stones.

Gratia finally tries to kill the diabolist with *Clenching Grasp of the Crushed Heart* (PeCo35), after chasing him into the nearby forest (Faerie 6). Her casting

total is 25, so she just barely casts the spell, making her penetration total 35. The faerie aura boosts her penetration by 15 (magic/faerie:  $+3 \times 5$ ), for a total of 50. He does wear a charm that gives him infernal resistance of 15, but he still falls dead on the spot from the resulting level 35 effect.

If the target includes multiple resistance totals, I can figure out the effect using the lowest resistance, and then continue subtracting the difference for the higher totals. For example, were Gratia to return to the infernal aura, she would discover the rest of the diabolist's coven. One of them wears a similar charm, and another has an even stronger one with infernal resistance 30. Using a lot of vis, she casts a spontaneous CrIg50 spell at the group, with a penetration total of 60. The infernal aura reduces this total to 35 (magic/infernal:  $-5 \times 5$ ) and ten of the witches are incinerated. Alas, the eleventh is only badly burned, as if affected at level 20, and their leader is hardly affected at all.

### Finesse and Aimed Spells

Many spells require special control after being cast, not because they use controlled magic, but because they require unusual precision. Hitting a mark with a spear is just as hard to do with magic as it is with physical skill, and just as an archer must have a good eye to hit his quarry, a magus must see sharply to aim a magical missile.

Aimed spells are very different from spells that target something within range. A PeCo spell that causes damage directly to a person is not aimed, because the person must only be within range to be affected. On the other hand, a spell that hits the person with a rock targets the rock, and while no roll is necessary to affect the rock, making the rock hit the person requires special control.

A Perception + Finesse roll after a spell is successfully cast determines how accurate the caster is, with the total perhaps used as an attack roll or compared to the ease factor chart to describe the results. A poorly aimed spell might still succeed, but with a reduced effect; for example, a flash of light might only partially blind the target.

In some cases, a player would like a spell to succeed particularly well in a way that is not specifically addressed by the magic rules. For example, suppose I want to change myself into a bear, and not only that, I want to appear to be a very specific bear. The spell level to turn into a bear is clearly outlined below, but what about the added difficulty of emulating a recognizable specimen? Rather than complicating the spell with extra magnitudes, I consider this to be another quality of Finesse — calling for an Intelligence + Finesse roll — which may be compared to the ease factor chart to determine my success.

I also use Finesse in place of Concentration for controlled magic. I think one's ability to control a spell should be part of the ability that represents skill with magic, not an ability to concentrate. When I need to check how well a character can maintain a spell over long periods of time, or avoid distractions



while working magic, I use Stamina + Finesse. When the results are bad, the spell can briefly falter, fade, or even lose some of its potency, temporarily reducing the level of effect.

### Animate Magic

Hermetic magic occasionally deals with animate effects — by animate, I mean when a spell allows something to move under its own direction when it couldn't before, giving it a sort of magical brain. Animate magic is most often found in Creo effects, but there are also several Muto effects that can animate a target. I don't consider animate those spells that merely affect an animate target, or which command a target to do the caster's bidding — if the target is already animate, the magic isn't doing anything extraordinary.

I think of magical animation as a collection of small magical "building blocks" (or **animi**) that provide the target with motion and impetus. Each of these blocks might be described as a kind of invisible life force that holds the effect together. *Ars Magica* doesn't have a perfect mechanic for this, but I have decided that Fatigue levels work well enough. Only animate things have them, and while some animate things don't, I can work around that. So, as I describe it, the amount of magical energy needed to animate one Fatigue level (or Fatigue level and its accompanying Body level) is one anima. A typical human being has six animi.

Say I want to design a CrAn spell that creates a dog. It should create a living dog, animate and able to think on its own, not just the corpse of a dog. Therefore, besides the standard cost of the spell, I must account for the dog's life force within the spell's parameters. To do this, I add one magnitude for each Fatigue level beyond the first. Since a dog has four animi, I would add 15 to the spell's level.

Incidentally, animi correspond to Body levels as well as Fatigue levels, either when creating a living creature as above or when something like a healing spell involves multiple Body levels. The animi cost can be used to represent this additional effect; for example, *Incantation of the Body Made Whole* (CrCo40) heals five Body levels, and would thus have an animi cost of +20A.

Some animate targets don't actually have Fatigue levels, though. Let's say I want to create an animate illusion of a dog that can think and move, as a dog would naturally do, without requiring my direct control. While this image would not truly have Fatigue levels, since it has no substance, I should design the spell as if it did. For all those who see the illusion know, it's a real dog with real Fatigue, and the extra magnitudes make it react as a real animal would.

I don't have any rules for creating varying levels of animation — I figure that if an effect is animate, it is only paid for based on the Size of its model — and I suppose that how the target behaves when animated is representative of the caster's Sigil. I also calculate animation separately from the spell's target parameter — if I want to create a pack of dogs, I pay

the animation cost for a single dog, but increase the Target to Room.

Spells designed to have an animate effect must be designed with that specific purpose in mind; they cannot be changed during casting. That is, a spell that creates a fish must always create the same sort of fish, defined by the spell; it cannot be adapted to create a different kind of fish or a larger or smaller fish. Increasing the target of the spell would cause multiple fish to be created, but they would always be the same basic kind of fish.

### General Spells

In Fourth Edition, there are many spells that can be designed at any level, since their effects vary depending on the target's Might or other mechanical factors. However, I don't feel the model works perfectly, because it seems to me that it assigns range, duration and target at no cost. *Ward Against the Faeries of the Waters* and *Ward Against the Faeries of the Air*, both designed to repel creatures with Faerie Might 10, should have different spell levels, since their parameters are all the same, but the default targets for those forms are Small and Individual. As they don't, the effect level for warding faeries must be somewhat arbitrary.

I agree that a spell to control water faeries with Might 10 should be base level 10. That's easy to remember and makes sense; a spell to affect Might should have a spell level at least equal to the Might. Increasing the range, duration and target should increase the spell's level, though. The Fourth Edition spells don't do this; they effectively say that the spell is level (Might - cost), and I think that's kind of awkward. They also don't account for resistance; if Might is subtracted from the level of effect, as many troupes play it, the spell actually works out to be level (Might + Might - cost).

To correct this, when designing general spells, I first determine the cost of the spell's parameters, and then I describe the spell as that (base level + X). That is, the parameters of *Ward Against The Faeries Of The Water* make it at least base level 10. A level 15 version would repel water faeries with up to 5 Might, and it would affect more powerful faeries at a higher level. To make this easier to read, I denote a general spell by placing a plus sign next to the base level: (ReAq10+). At a specific level (say, level 25) I write it like so: (ReAq10+15). It is easy to see what part of the effect is modified by the spell parameters, and that it is designed to affect faeries with 15 Might. It is also clearly a level 25 spell.

Wards and other spells that target Might do become more expensive under this system. However, I have found that they are typically cast in a beneficial aura, and with my revised rules for penetration the effects usually get boosted enough to compensate. Characters who often cast these kinds of spells tend to increase their Penetration fairly rapidly, which also increases the amount of Might they can overcome. Together, I don't think these rules are too





limiting, and I am particularly happy with how well they work together.

Some spells simply cause damage, providing an easy way to determine their base level. However, not every form is ideal for this. For example, I have difficulty imagining wind dealing much physical damage. If I wanted to design a spell to do so, more than from simply falling down, I think it would have to be a subjective effect (i.e. “this is unnatural wind”), and then I would need to evaluate the amount of damage that effect would be capable of dealing — *Talons of the Winds* (MuAu20) deals only +5 Damage, for example. Additional damage might increase the base level of the spell; a +10 Damage variant could perhaps be designed at level 25.

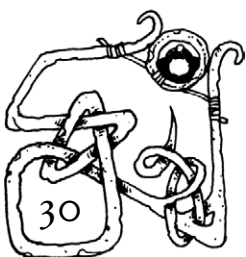
### Requisites

For the most part, I have tried to remove requisites from these rules. I like requisites and use them often in my game, but as different troupes do not agree on when they are needed, I think the rules are better if they do not set unnecessary constraints. The forms as I define them here are wide-ranging enough that common applications can overlap, so I won't describe requisites unless a spell obviously needs them, as when changing from one form into another. If a spell does involve multiple Arts, I still use the lowest technique and form to determine the final casting total.

I handle casting requisites slightly differently, though. I think they make formulaic spells much more useful (effectively making them multiple spells in one) because they can target whatever form is most appropriate to the situation. I don't think the requisites should simply be tacked on during casting. I believe the spell should be *designed* with those additional forms as requisites, limiting the lab totals of magi inventing or learning the spell, so that only the forms actually targeted by the spell are used to calculate the casting total. For example, a ReTe spell that can move objects, people, and animals would be designed and learned as ReTeAnCo, but would be cast as ReCo to only affect a person.

Along those same lines, only techniques or forms that are implicitly part of the spell should be needed as casting requisites — a spell that lifts things would need a Corpus requisite to lift a person, and an Animal requisite to lift an animal, but would not need an Herbam requisite to lift a stick the person or animal might be holding, since by lifting the person or animal one incidentally lifts the stick.

Sometimes a player designs a spell to incorporate several effects that aren't directly related. To address this need, I allow magi to cast multiple formulaic spells at the same time. This is different from multicasting, because each spell has a different effect or perhaps builds upon the others. For example, a spell that changes me into a dog might be MuCoAn10, and a spell that lets me read another animal's mind might be InAn25. To change myself into a dog that can read other animals' minds, I must cast both spells at once, with all Arts treated as requisites and the



casting total compared to the sum of all spell levels. In this example, the spell is effectively MuCoInAn35, with two sets of spell parameters — one for the transformation, and another for the mind reading — but even though they are cast together, both spells are designed and learned separately.

### Spell Foci

Many spells are designed to use a spell focus when cast, and doing so adds a bonus to the wizard's casting total. A spell is designed with only one spell focus, though different versions of the spell can take advantage of different foci. As there are no guidelines for what can be used as a spell focus, or how powerful a bonus should be, I find it easiest to use the Form and Effect table(s). That is, when inventing a spell with a spell focus, I use one of the objects on that list for the bonus most applicable to the spell. Of course, the spell description might also suggest something particularly appropriate.

### Boosting Magic

I propose that a pawn of vis spent during casting can boost any formulaic spell by one magnitude, thus allowing for the customized effects “on the fly” that players expect, without requiring a system for designing spells that can be boosted. This boost could be used to increase a spell's range, duration, or target, or simply to increase penetration. For example, a Sun spell could be boosted to Permanent by spending four pawns of vis (Sun to Moon, Moon to Season, Season to Year, Year to Permanent). This change allows magi some control over the parameters of spells they know, without needing to resort to spontaneous variants.

Magi can use vis to boost controlled spells after they have been cast, as long as the effects have not yet expired. For example, a magus could extend his Sun+ spell to Moon+ by spending a pawn of vis at any time before the sun had passed, or before the moon had passed if he were maintaining the conditions of the spell.

Vis may also be spent to increase the duration of spells cast by a medium. The vis can be spent any time after the spell is cast, and is sort of incorporated into the medium — it becomes part of it, and is automatically triggered when the spell's conditions are met. The vis boosts the effect, without boosting the spell that creates the medium. For example, the spell: *Healer's Ring* (CrCo55\*) is D: Sun. With invested vis, the medium could boost the effect to D: Perm. When the sun passed, the medium would go away, but the healing effect would last forever.

When vis is spent on an effect, I suggest that the effect simply becomes natural; from then on it cannot be undone with PeVi or other spells that target magical effects, in the same way that the power inherent in vis cannot be undone by magic. I see vis as a natural force; spells boosted with vis become mythic reality. This means that a D: Sun healing spell boosted to D: Perm would become “real”, allowing natural healing to continue. The same spell boosted to D:

Season would last until the seasons changed, and then the wounds would reopen again. A basket of figs created at D: Mom and boosted to D: Sun would provide me with temporary nourishment, but I would become hungry again as soon as the sun passed, whether I had eaten in the meantime or not.

This “vis makes it natural” rule would not apply to formulaic spells that use harnessed magic, however. Arcane magic must still retain its connection to the caster. If I can cancel a controlled effect, so can others. While the effects of spells that use a medium can be made natural, a medium itself cannot. Thus, harnessed magic is both a benefit and a limitation, for harnessed spells are always inherently magical.

This change creates more opportunities to use vis, and thereby, in my experience, encourages players to apply it towards their magic instead of hoarding it. The ability to make a spell have natural effects, even temporarily, is quite powerful and desirable for magi. Remember that only formulaic spells can be boosted, though. While vis can be spent on spontaneous magic, it only increases the casting total and boosts penetration; it never makes an effect natural or changes it after casting.

### Rituals

Rituals surpass many of the limitations of Hermetic magic. They can affect a target larger than the magus can see, including the past or the future (in a limited fashion), and because they are cast with vis, they cause magical effects that are indistinguishable from nature. Rituals can also be used to accomplish effects that otherwise bend the rules of Magic Theory, either by incorporating ancient knowledge, Hermetic breakthroughs, or strange magic of non-Hermetic origin (*Hermes' Portal* (ReTe75\*), *Aegis of the Hearth* (ReVi25+\*), and *Enchantment of the Scrying Pool* (InIm60\*) are good examples of these sorts of spells).

A Ritual spell can also be a formulaic spell that doesn't bend the rules, but has more powerful effects than a formulaic spell of the same level. This logically follows, as Rituals cost vis, but it is rarely cost-effective to design a Ritual this way under Fourth Edition rules, since the same effect is usually much cheaper with vis-boosting, both in level and amount of vis spent. I feel that there should be mechanical reasons why magi might design a Ritual version of a formulaic spell — all that extra effort and vis should do *something* — and I can't think of any reasons as things are now.

After much consideration (and several ideas rejected in playtest), I have decided to treat Rituals as formulaic spells that are inherently boosted with vis. That is, the effect of a level 10 Ritual would be the same as that of a level 10 spell that has been boosted with two pawns of vis: a level 20 effect. To look at it from the other direction, casting a level 20 Ritual would cost the same as boosting a level 10 spell to level 20. So, to prepare a Ritual, I calculate the level of the spell as normal, but divide it by 10 (rounded up) to determine the number of pawns of vis I must

spend. When casting it, I add 5 to my total for each pawn spent, and use the results to determine whether or not the Ritual succeeds.

Here are some examples of these rules in action.

Suppose I want to cast a level 55 Ritual. I spend six pawns of appropriate vis (55 / 10) and determine my casting total: 25 (my roll and stats) + 30 (the vis). The Ritual succeeds with an exact total of 55.

I then try to cast a simple level 10 Ritual. I spend a pawn of vis (10 / 10) and look at my casting total. I have 25 (same roll and stats) + 5 (the vis), and the Ritual goes off with a comfortable margin, 30.

Cocky, I try to cast a level 80 Ritual. I spend eight pawns of vis, and I get 25 (stats + roll) + 40 (vis), which is only 65. This falls short of the necessary margin for error, and my Ritual fails.

Ritual effects cannot be dispelled, even if they use harnessed magic. The inherent vis used in the Ritual causes a natural effect that can't be cancelled (even by the caster), but it still retains an arcane connection to the caster and can be controlled as normal. Because the vis increases the casting total so much, I think it's a good idea to drop Concentration from the formula. Concentration seems unnecessary to me anyway; Stamina takes the role of willpower and resistance to physical distraction. I also think spell foci should be allowed in Rituals.

These changes would make Rituals the same as other spells, and basically trade ease of casting for greater Fatigue loss and time. They would be harder to learn than to cast, and so would probably be most commonly read from texts. That's exactly the role I want them to fill in my saga.

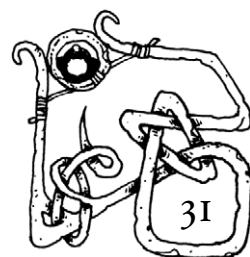
### Effect Guidelines

With this extremely simplified version of the spell guidelines, all spells have the same basic effect at the same level, according to the following chart. This remains constant no matter what the Technique or Form.

- Lvl X: Affect a Level X effect. Affect +X Damage.
- Lvl 5: Affect an insubstantial or superficial target.
- Lvl 10: Affect a common or natural target.
- Lvl 15: Affect an uncommon or artificial target.
- Lvl 20: Affect a rare or unnatural target.
- Lvl 25: Affect a unique or supernatural target.

Notice that each level has two criteria for evaluating the effect (such as common or natural, uncommon or artificial). Using this system, you always use the greater factor for the spell level, and the storyguide determines which terms apply. So, if you want to affect a common artificial target, the spell would be Level 15, artificial being the greater of the two. This is especially true for spells that change one thing into another: both spells that change a rare target into a common target and a common target into a rare target would be Level 20. More detail is provided below for evaluating the different kinds of targets.

If a spell causes damage — such as a spell that hurls a rock with force or a spell that destroys an





amount of flesh — the level of the spell must at least match the amount of damage it can cause. Rocks or flesh may be common and natural, but if a spell can do +20 points of damage, the spell level must be at least Level 20. Other effects of the spell may increase its level beyond that. Some spells might get around this — a spell that creates a rock might incidentally lodge it in a person's windpipe with deadly results — but on the whole this limitation keeps spells in check by assuming that the magical force needed to cause harm increases as the harm increases.

I'm afraid a great deal of what is called "hand-waving" is inherent in this system, since it occasionally requires that the storyguide judge whether an effect is (for example) rare or unique. However, since much of the time the characters are casting a set collection of common spells, the storyguide can standardize for the most part what spells are being cast. This is done by assigning levels to those specific effects, rather than trying to modify the guidelines on the fly to accommodate different interpretations. I maintain that some amount of waving will always be necessary in a magic system as rich as *Ars Magica's*, and at least these rules are easy to remember.

### Creo

This Technique can be used to create a target, which typically behaves naturally. It is possible to conjure inanimate objects with some amount of force — the target can be created in motion — but anything more complicated than a magical throw in a particular direction requires a Rego effect. Limited control of animate targets is also possible, but nothing more complicated than a simple, general instruction (the mental equivalent of throwing it at something).

Creo can repair a target, undoing damage and removing malign effects. The spell uses the target to determine what a whole version would look like, and replaces damaged or missing bits with magical material. This material retains its magical nature, and thus prevents any sort of natural regeneration until the spell wears off. If vis is spent on the spell, natural healing can resume, but if the duration later expires, all that healing will be undone when the flesh vanishes and the wounds reopen.

A note on healing: since I have decided to integrate damage directly into the spell guidelines, healing spells work slightly differently. Rather than mending a certain number of Body levels, Creo spells heal a specific amount of damage. That is, a spell that heals +20 Damage heals a single Body level up to Medium Wounds. So, *Chirurgeon's Healing Touch* (CrCo20) heals any Body level up to Heavy Wounds, while *Bind Wound* (CrCo10) heals no more than Light Wounds.

Creo magic can also cancel the effects of malign magic and supernatural powers, restoring a target to its normal, natural state. This doesn't work on effects that have been boosted with vis, as they are considered natural, and it doesn't undo damage caused by a

supernatural effect, since that damage isn't itself unnatural.

When a Creo spell ends, its effect disappears. In most cases, this means the target reverts to its natural state: wounds reopen, symptoms return, and conjured materials vanish into nothingness. Magical materials such as food or water cannot provide nourishment unless vis is used to make their effects natural.

### Intéllego

These spells give the caster magical understanding of a target. Information is usually conveyed mentally to the caster, though the effect may sometimes make it possible for the target to communicate in other ways (giving the caster a temporary ability to speak and understand the target's language, for example). Normally, mental communication is not reciprocated — the target is not necessarily aware of the effect.

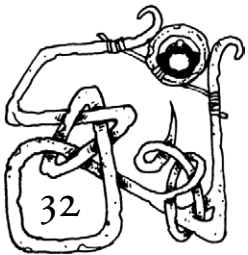
The level of the effect varies depending on the rarity of the target, but also on the depth of information obtained. A mental image of a target is superficial, as is the ability to see through it. Natural information includes its general health, integrity, shape and material. When artificial, information might include direction relative to the caster, or human concepts like distance, weight or age. Unnatural information could include memories or other "subconscious" properties. At a supernatural level, the caster can mentally interact with the target, and even question it directly.

Information is conveyed in real-time, because magic cannot place knowledge directly into the caster's mind. The caster's perception simply extends to the information conveyed by the spell, which he must then interpret. For that reason, the difference between "memories of the last few minutes" and "memories of the last year" is one of duration; the caster sets a starting point and then watches everything as it happens. With controlled magic, he can jump around more easily within those memories, but he still must identify what he is looking for before he can view it. Thus, spells like *Peering into the Mortal Mind* (InMe25\*) are a little cheaper, but more time-consuming to resolve.

### Muto

Muto is used to alter a target, modifying its shape or material. All Muto spells actually change their targets, and as with Creo magic the target will revert to its natural state when the spell ends. While the target is changed, however, it can be manipulated to take advantage of the change; for example, rock changed into clay can be spread into a shape that will harden back into stone, and a boulder changed into a pinky ring will crush its wearer when it changes back.

Spells that modify a target's shape, by making it larger or smaller or giving it increased or decreased stability, are designed by rating the rarity or complexity of either the original shape or the new shape, whichever is greater. For example, changing an





## Form Guidelines

I have compiled some guidelines for how the very general keywords I've assigned can apply to the Hermetic forms. Of course, I might resolve things differently in different situations, but I've found these definitions are useful for most applications.

### Insubstantial or Superficial Effects (Level 5)

Insubstantial targets have little to no apparent substance, and are so common that they are almost universal; this places them one step above "common" on the spell effect chart. Superficial targets involve mundane properties that are entirely natural in that they may be perceived through mundane means, but which affect the target's physical appearance rather than its substance.

Animál:	A beast's smell, fur
Aquam:	A liquid's taste
Auram:	Air, sound, scent
Corpus:	A person's appearance, hair
Herbam:	A plant's color, texture
Ignem:	Light, the sensation of heat
Imáginem:	A shadow, a reflection
Mentem:	A few words, a thought
Terram:	Loose dirt, dust
Vim:	A Wizard's Sigil, sense of the Gift

### Common or Natural Effects (Level 10)

What is common in a saga depends a lot upon its location and the relative experience of the magi. Natural refers to targets with properties that are more than superficial, and exist in a form found in nature.

Animál:	A common animal (horse, dog)
Aquam:	Water, seawater
Auram:	Clouds, fog, wind
Corpus:	A person, a body, general health
Herbam:	A common plant
Ignem:	A fire, flames
Imáginem:	An image affecting one sense (sight, sound, smell, touch)
Mentem:	A state of mind (sleeping, dreaming)
Terram:	Packed earth, clay, natural stone
Vim:	Vis, magic

### Uncommon or Artificial Effects (Level 15)

This category includes concepts that humans understand and define, such as direction, and natural objects that have been fashioned or worked in some way.

Animál:	An uncommon animal (deer, wolf)
Aquam:	Wine, grease, oil
Auram:	Active weather (rain, snow), smoke
Corpus:	A disease, a minor affliction
Herbam:	An object fashioned from wood
Ignem:	An unusual fire, an explosion
Imáginem:	An image affecting two senses
Mentem:	A specific emotion (fear, desire)
Terram:	Carved stone, metal or glass
Vim:	Spell levels, parameters, Arts

## Rare or Unnatural Effects (Level 20)

Rare targets are those that are certainly not common or uncommon, but which are not specifically Mythic. Unnatural targets are generally a source of fear or wonder for the majority of the population.

Animál:	A rare animal (toad, lion)
Aquam:	Acid, venom
Auram:	Severe weather (tempest, lightning, hail)
Corpus:	A major affliction, physical attributes
Herbam:	A rare plant
Ignem:	Unnaturally hot fire
Imáginem:	An image affecting three senses
Mentem:	A memory of an event or scene
Terram:	Gemstone, rare metals
Vim:	Regiones, an arcane connection

### Unique or Supernatural Effects (Level 25)

#### Unique or Supernatural Effects (Level 25)

These targets include anything that cannot easily fit into another category. It also serves as a catch-all for spells designed with bizarre or game-breaking effects.

I've noticed that players often disagree with regards to what defines a "unique or supernatural" form, and what defines "rare or unnatural." For example, I might consider molten lava to be a kind of supernatural fire, a unique manifestation of Ignem. Others might prefer it as a rare form of Terram. Differences on these sorts of judgment calls are precisely why I designed this system to be so open-ended.

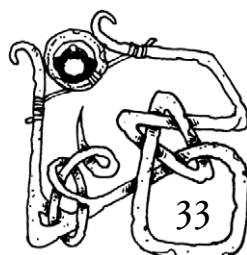
Animál:	A Mythic animal (griffon, dragon)
Aquam:	Bizarre liquids (mercury, molten glass)
Auram:	Strange weather (St. Elmo's fire, ball lightning)
Corpus:	Plague, a unique disease
Herbam:	Animate trees, mythic fruit
Ignem:	Supernatural fire, dragon-fire
Imáginem:	An image affecting all physical senses
Mentem:	A mind, sensation, language
Terram:	An earthquake, magical metal
Vim:	Ritual magic, residual magic

### General Effects

These effects involve either direct damage or other magical effects that are keyed to a numerical spell level. They are designed depending upon the target. For example, an effect might target a spell, or a creature with Might.

When a spell targets a creature with Might or a magical effect, the base level of the spell is at least the level of the target. A spell designed to repel a creature with 15 Might would be Level 15. If its range were increased from Reach to Near, it would become Level 20.

If a spell affects damage, the base level is equal to the Damage involved. A spell that can cause +20 Damage is Level 20, while a spell that heals Heavy Wounds (+25 Damage) is Level 25.





unnatural creature into a natural creature is considered an unnatural change, but a natural liquid changed into an artificial liquid is artificial.

I usually require requisites only when changing material that is obviously from one Form into another, such as when changing a person into an animal. The greatest effect between the two forms ultimately determines the level of the spell. I think Muto is really the only form that must regularly use requisites, so spells of higher level in this technique are always limited to some extent.

That's good, because Muto spells have been the most affected by my standardizing of the guidelines. Many of them become much cheaper under certain conditions. For example, a spell that turns a person into a common animal would be base level 10, which means that I could affect myself at level 5, and even with requisites that's pretty easy. It does seem to me that such spells appear often in legend and should occur with more frequency — I imagine peasants fear being turned into a toad more than they fear having their hearts crushed — and since most spells like this come with their own problems, similar to invisibility, I haven't really had trouble with the reduced levels.

### Perdo

Perdo spells damage and destroy their targets. They negate aspects of existing material to undo the whole. When the spell ends, they cease this negative influence, but in many cases their damage has been done. A Momentary Perdo spell is very effective, since its damage will last even if the spell does not. Perdo spells with longer duration do not cause additional harm to the target over an extended period of time, but they do prevent natural healing and restoration of the target until their effects have ended.

Some Perdo spells simply cause damage directly to the target. They are designed using this damage as their base level. Other Perdo spells destroy or suppress properties of an object, preventing the target from naturally “regenerating” for the duration of the effect. For example, a spell designed to remove an image would keep that image hidden for as long as the spell remained active. A spell to prevent magic could similarly dampen spellcasting.

A few Perdo spells can cause negative conditions that are conducive to malign effects. For example, a Perdo spell can imbalance a person's bodily humours, and thereby attract disease; or destroy heat, to the point of causing freezing temperatures. It might be easier to classify such effects as Creo or Muto (summoning a disease spirit or changing temperature), but the canon clearly allows Perdo spells that cause these sorts of effects, and I don't think it's a good idea to change what has become a fundamental application of the Art. Perhaps such effects can be accomplished in more ways than one.

### Rego

These effects are used to control a target, usually confined to altering its physical location or position.

The level of the effect is determined by considering the target and the type of control that acts upon it. An effect that simply repels or lifts a target in place is superficial. Natural control might involve throwing or steering it. Artificial control could hold the target rigid, or cause it to circle the caster. Unnatural control involves more complicated commands or instantaneous transportation. Complete control — effectively possessing the target — is supernatural.

Rego spells cannot change the material of a target (Muto is needed for that), but they can concentrate a large amount of material into a smaller area, as with weather or light. For example, Rego could gather all light within range into a single bright spotlight, as with *Light Shaft of the Night* (ReIg20\*).

Controlled magic is particularly common with Rego, as many spells require the caster to guide the effect after casting. This is not always necessary, though, as a spell that commands an animal to achieve a particular task is just as valid as a controlled spell that gives the magus direct influence over its methods. However, I have included two +1 Virtues at the end of this article, to explain how Rego specialists might have an intuitive understanding of harnessed magic when it comes to this Art.

## Spells

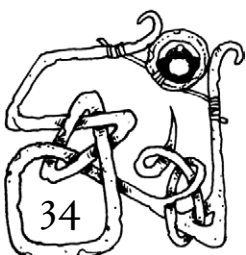
I have gone through the Fourth Edition list of spells and revised them appropriately, according to the guidelines above. Other storyguides may (and should) differ with me on how to evaluate things like what is common or uncommon, but these effects tend to be fairly standard. I've marked the spell level of any spells that I think I changed noticeably from Fourth Edition with an asterisk, but it almost always means that the spell level is slightly different, not that I altered the effect or the spell parameters.

I don't think I can take the space in this magazine to include a breakdown of every spell in Fourth Edition. Instead, I have chosen one for each technique and form, which I think are most representative of the various kinds of magical effects available. That is, I have a healing spell, a warding spell, a damage-dealing spell, and so on. The list is kind of weighted toward spells that use harnessed magic, so that I can provide more examples of when it would be used, and I've also noted when I think a spell is very similar to other spells in canon because it operates under the same premises.

If you'd like me to send you my notes on the complete grimoire, or to discuss my interpretation of any particular spell, you can of course write to me, and I'll be happy to oblige you.

### Animál

Animál spells affect living animals and objects made out of animal products, like leather. They also affect the emotions and desires of animals, much in the same way that Mentem spells affect the minds of humans. I don't require requisites based on the environment to affect animals like birds or fish, and



spells designed to affect liquid animal products like venom or blood might simply use Aquam instead.

Insubstantial animals might include animals that are so common that you forget they are there, such as lice and other insects, or flimsy animal materials, such as fur or feathers. Other targets will vary depending upon the environment of the saga; animals common to Provence may not be as common in Iceland. Creatures with Might are always considered supernatural, though I handle Might separately when creating or changing an animal.

#### *Curse of the Ravenous Swarm*

CrAn 50, R: Sight, D: Moon, T: Bound, Ritual

Creates a plague of locusts that terrorizes an area. These are animate creatures, but they have only one body level each. (*Create uncommon animals: L15 +0A +15R +5D +15T*)

See also *The Shadow of Life Renewed* (CrCo80\*), *The Shadow of Human Life* (CrIm40)

#### *Hunter's Sense*

InAn 30, R: Near, D: Sun+, T: Room+

Spell Focus: The eye of a griffin (+3)

Sense the shapes and motivations of all animals within range. The spell uses your mind (or another's) as a medium, which conveys the information to you in a dream if necessary; controlled magic affects multiple animals beyond the first, up to about ten at a time. You can modify the basic conditions of the spell, so that you only sense animals of a certain size (larger than a fox) or with certain intentions (predators). (*Sense natural properties of animals: L10 +5R +5D +10T*)

#### *Beast of Outlandish Size*

MuAn 15, R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind

Spell Focus: A giant's heart (+5)

Changes any normal animal (from Size -2 to +2) into a runt or a gigantic version of its kind. Its Size is adjusted by either +1 or -1. (*Change to an unnatural animal: L20 -5R*)

#### *Cripple the Howling Wolf*

PeAn 20, R: Reach, D: Mom, T: Small

Spell Focus: Leg bone of a wolf or dog (+3)

Causes a grievous wound to a limb, breaking an animal's leg. (*Cause +30 Damage: L30 -5D -5T*)

See also *The Falcon's Hood* (PeAn20), *Clenching Grasp of the Crushed Heart* (PeCo35\*), etc.

#### *Commanding the Harnessed Beast*

ReAn 25\*, R: Reach, D: Sun, T: Ind

Spell Focus: Lion's tongue (+5)

The target animal will attempt to accomplish a specific task, outlined at the time of casting, until the spell's duration expires. (*Control supernatural properties of an animal: L25*)

### Aquam

Aquam deals with all kinds of liquid, not just water, though water is the most common application. It can also affect the water within objects or people, which when removed can dry out the target. Increasing or decreasing watery properties of a target,

usually with Muto, can affect its coolness just as Ignem affects heat. Ice is closer to Terram, just as steam or mist is more like Auram, but you can change water into any of its natural forms with this Art.

Aquam can also affect damaging liquids like poison or acid, or cause water to move with great force. When creating a liquid that does damage, the base level of the spell must be at least equal to the amount of Damage the liquid can inflict when touched or ingested; if intended to cause an affliction, the level should be at least equal to the level of severity; for example, a rare affliction would be base level 20.

#### *Lungs of Water and Death*

CrAq 20\*, R: Near+, D: Mom+, T: Ind

Spell Focus: Black onyx (+1)

Using arcane magic, this spell fills a nearby container with water. A common application is to affect a person's lungs, causing them to choke and spend several rounds coughing up water. (*Create water: L10 +10R*)

See also *Alleviate the Serpent's Bite* (PeAn10), *Curse of the Desert* (PeAq20)

#### *Call of the Rushing Waters*

InAq 15, R: Touch+, D: Mom+, T: Ind

Spell Focus: Hazel divining rod (+1)

The caster perceives the direction of water, similar to water he has on hand (as from the same source), using arcane magic. (*Sense artificial properties of water: L15*)

See also *The Inexorable Search* (InCo15\*), *The Hunt for the Wild Herb* (InHe15\*)

#### *Lungs of the Fish*

MuAq 10, R: Touch, D: Mom+, T: Ind+

Spell Focus: Powdered scales of a fish (+3)

Req: Auram

Changes water into air whenever you breathe it. This spell uses a medium to control the effect — and so may be cast on someone else — and maintains a conditional duration (as long as you are breathing water) thanks to controlled magic. (*Change water into air: L10 -5R +5D*)

#### *Calling the Odious Drought*

PeAq 35, R: Touch+, D: Season, T: Bound, Ritual

Spell Focus: Breeze from a desert (+3)

Destroys water from within the target area using arcane magic. So little moisture remains in the earth that rain does not fall for months, even after this spell's duration has ended. (*Destroy water: L10 +10D +15T*)

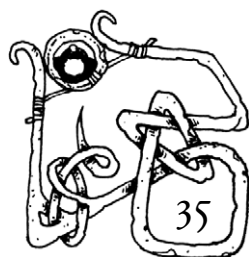
See also *Breaking the Perpetual Drought* (CrAq45\*), *Winter's Icy Touch* (PeIg15)

#### *Ward Against Faeries of the Waters*

ReAq 10+\*, R: Touch, D: Sun+, T: Room+

Spell Focus: Star ruby (+3)

Using a medium (a ring inscribed upon the ground), this wards away water faeries from an area about ten paces across. The spell affects any water faeries and their magic, up to about ten at once, and





lasts for about a month, or as long as the ring remains unbroken. (*Repel water magic*: LX -5R +5D +10T)

See also *Aegis of the Hearth* (ReVi25+\*), *Ward Against the Beasts of Legend* (ReAn10+), etc.

### Auram

Auram affects air and other weather phenomena. Auram can also affect physical properties of air, such as sounds and smells, or temperature, affecting both warm and cold air. Muto Auram might even change a target's "airiness," making it seem heavier or lighter.

Auram spells can produce poisonous smoke and gale-strength winds by using their damage as the base level of the spell, similar to other forms. They can also create deadly lightning and other electrical phenomena, usually at the level of damage caused (+45).

Durations of Auram effects also seem to work differently than other spells. For example, a cloud created at D: Mom doesn't vanish as soon as the effect ends, because air "regenerates" at a very slow speed. The natural air where a magical cloud was formed will take several minutes to reassert itself, or possibly sooner if a strong wind is blowing. Until surrounding air has been refreshed, though, Auram effects may seem to linger.

Fourth Edition Auram spells are probably the hardest to convert, because so many of the effects were designed at incredible ranges and targets. To deal with this, I have assumed that many canonical weather spells were designed using arcane magic: if the caster is touching the surrounding air, that air is touching the air in the distance, and so at R: Touch+ he can affect any air he can see as long as no other material intervenes.

This reduces the range cost of weather spells, making them a little closer to the canonical levels. However, I think that many of these spells should be cast as Rituals anyway, as their effects are very far-reaching. It may not seem like much to cause rain to fall, but as it can affect an entire region, it makes sense that most magi would have to design *Clouds of Rain and Thunder* as a Level 45 Ritual. Weather specialists with a theoretical bent can get around this using arcane magic, and in fact I designed the Weather Magic +1 Virtue (found later in this article) for this very reason.

#### *Clouds of Rain and Thunder*

CrAu 30\*, R: Touch+, D: Mom+, T: Bound  
Spell Focus: Essence of an air elemental (+3)

Causes a severe thunderstorm. (*Create weather*: L15 +15T)

See also *Clouds of Summer Snow* (CrAu30\*)

#### *Whispering Winds*

InAu 10\*, R: Touch+, D: Mom+, T: Room  
Spell Focus: Three oak leaves (+1)

You hear the sounds in the air, using arcane magic, from anywhere you can see as long as no solid material intervenes. (*Sense superficial properties of air*: L5 +5T)

#### *Talons of the Winds*

MuAu 20, R: Touch+, D: Mom, T: Room  
Spell Focus: Claw of a hawk (+1)

Changes wind into an abrasive substance, capable of +5 Damage. (*Change to unnatural weather*: L20 -5D +5T)

#### *Quiet the Raging Winds*

PeAu 20, R: Touch+, D: Mom, T: Bound  
Spell Focus: Branch of ash (+1)

Calms all winds within the area. (*Destroy wind*: L10 -5D +15T)

#### *Gathering of the Stormy Might*

ReAu 35\*, R: Touch+, D: Mom+, T: Bound

Surrounding weather is pulled into a storm. (*Control unnatural properties of weather*: L20 +15T)

See also *Light Shaft of the Night* (ReIg20\*), *Gather the Essence of the Beast* (ReVi25\*), *Wizard's Communion* (ReVi+\*)

### Corpus

Corpus spells affect human bodies, living or dead. They can also affect materials associated with the body, like blood or skin, and even physical aspects of human bodies, like disease or Body levels. It would seem like a spirit of the body could be summoned with a CrCo spell or banished with ReCo, but diseases seem to be more commonly caused by PeCo and healed with CrCo, and in the absence of clear guidelines I figure any method is acceptable.

Corpus spells can also hurt humans directly, and like other forms the base level of the spell should be equal to the amount of Damage caused by the effect. For example, a spell that creates a disease capable of +20 Damage must be at least Level 20. This total also represents the affliction's resistance to magical healing and medicine; you can treat each magnitude of the effect as a Body level for the purposes of treatment and recovery time.

#### *The Surgeon's Healing Touch*

CrCo 20, R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind  
Spell Focus: Bloodstone (+3)

Heals one Body level of Heavy Wounds or less. This spell is usually vis-boosted to D: Perm, to allow natural healing. (*Heal* +25 Damage: L25 -5R)

See also *Bind Wound* (CrCo10), *Soothe Pains of the Beast* (CrAn20).

#### *The Eye of the Sage*

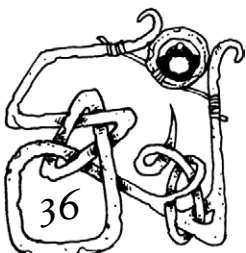
InCo 30, R: Arc, D: Mom+, T: Room  
Spell Focus: Griffin's eye (+3)

Shows you a person and his surroundings from his perspective. You can see anything within about ten paces of the person to whom you have an arcane connection, or the entire chamber if the target is enclosed. (*Sense superficial properties of a body*: L5 +20R +5T)

See also *Eyes of the Flame* (InIg30\*).

#### *Eyes of the Cat*

MuCo 5, R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Small, Req: Animal  
Spell Focus: Hair from a cat (+3)



Changes a person's eyes into those of a cat, (*Change into an uncommon animal: L15 -5R -5T*)

See also *Disguise of the New Visage* (MuCo4\*), *Evil Eye* (MuCo5\*), *Arm of the Infant* (MuCo20)

#### *Curse of the Unportended Plague*

PeCo 50\*, R: Sight, D: Mom, T: Bound, Ritual

Afflicts a target with a supernatural disease, which after a few months will spread and kill one out of every ten people it infects. (*Cause a unique affliction: L25 +15R -5D +15T*)

#### *The Leap of Homecoming*

ReCo 35, R: Arc, D: Mom, T: Ind

This spell transports a person to a distant location, one to which you have an arcane connection. (*Control unnatural properties of a body: L20 +20R -5D*)

See also *The Seven-League Stride* (ReCo35), *Hermes' Portal* (ReTe75)

### **Herbam**

Herbam spells affect plants and plant life. Most plants, while alive, are not animate and thus can be created at very low magnitudes. Animate plants are very rare, and are usually found only in faerie forests or magical auras. Food created with Herbam is not nourishing unless it is boosted with vis. Likewise, plants created from nothing can live and grow, but their fruit and seeds provide no lasting benefits if consumed or planted.

Plants naturally grow from the earth, and so growing plants are considered part of the ground. Thus, it is easier for a magus touching the ground to affect them with arcane magic, designing spells to affect them at R: Touch+. Note that this is not appropriate for every form, but is rather a special quality of Herbam — you cannot affect, say, a person at R: Touch+ by touching the ground, because unlike a plant a person is not really “one” with the ground. I designed a +1 Virtue to allow Herbam and Terram specialists an intuitive understanding of this property of harnessed magic, which may be found at the end of this article.

#### *Restoration of the Corrupted Plant*

CrHe 15+, R: Touch, D: Perm, T: Ind, Ritual

Cancels a malign Herbam effect of this spell's (level - 15) or less. This spell restores the target to its natural state, undoing the effects of any non-Ritual, non-vis-boosted Herbam magic. (*Restore Herbam: LX -5R +20D*)

See also *Full Health of Beast and Bird* (CrAn15+\*), etc.

#### *Intuition of the Forest*

InHe 10, R: Touch+, D: Mom+, T: Room

Spell Focus: Chips from a faun's hoof (+5)

Gives you an intuitive sense of the surrounding forest. You commune with the trees and plants that grow in your immediate area, though this connection tells you nothing more than how to avoid causing them harm. (*Sense natural properties of trees: L10 +5T*)

See also *Eyes of the Treacherous Terrain* (InTe20).

#### *Twist the Living Tree*

MuHe 20, R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Room

Spell Focus: Pearl (+3)

Allows the caster to bend and shape a large tree. (*Change into an unnatural shape: L20 -5R +5T*)

#### *Treading the Ashen Path*

PeHe 30, R: Touch+, D: Mom+, T: Room

Spell Focus: Black onyx (+1)

For seven miles of traveling, any inanimate plant life within ten paces of you dies. The spell uses controlled magic to repeatedly affect a room-sized area, though only plants you touch or that grow from the ground are considered to be within range. (*Destroy all plants: L25 +5T*)

#### *Lord of the Trees*

ReHe 25\*, R: Reach, D: Mom+, T: Ind

Spell Focus: Bark from a century-old tree (+3)

Allows gross movement of a tree under the caster's direct control. This assumes that the tree is a material that can easily bend and move; if you could not physically move the tree in the manner you intend, you must change the tree with a Muto requisite. (*Control supernatural properties of a tree: L25*)

### **Ignem**

Ignem affects fire and heat in much the same way that Aquam affects water and cold. CrIg can conjure flames and light, and changing the heat of a target with Muto can cause it to become too hot to touch or to freeze.

Note that a magical fire can spread, but it is still limited by its duration. That is, if you create a fire at D: Sun, it will continue to burn and spread until the sun passes, but then the whole fire goes out.

While I have standardized damage for each form, some forms do have a natural advantage. For example, while poison that does +20 damage is a Level 20 Aquam spell, typically that poison must be ingested to have its full effect. A Level 20 Ignem spell, in contrast, can deal +20 Damage to those who simply come into contact with it. Thus, Ignem is naturally the better choice for aggressive magic, and I think that's a good balance.

#### *Arc of Fiery Ribbons*

CrIg25, R: Reach, D: Mom, T: Room

Spell Focus: Yellow diamond (+1)

Causes a burst of a half-circle of flames, doing +25 Damage to those within one pace of the caster, and one less for each pace beyond. (*Create +25 fire: L25 -5D +5T*)

See also *Mighty Torrent of Water* (CrAq15), *Pilum of Fire* (CrIg20).

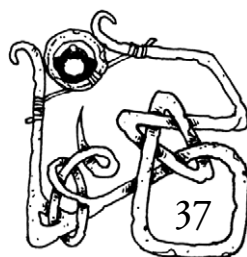
#### *Vision of Heat's Light*

InIg 20, R: Touch+, D: Sun+, T: Str

Spell Focus: Cat's-eye gem (+3)

Lets you perceive heat in the surrounding area. (*Sense insubstantial fire: L5 +5D +10T*)

See also *Eyes of the Bat* (InAu20\*), *The Miner's Keen Eye* (InTe20).





### *Flames of Sculpted Ice*

MuIg 30\*, R: Near, D: Mom+, T: Room, Req: Aquam

Spell Focus: Essence of a water elemental (+3)

Changes flames into ice, which it remains until it melts halfway. (*Change fire into ice: L20 +5R +5T*)

### *Well Without Light*

PeIg 30, R: Touch+, D: Sun+, T: Str+

Spell Focus: Black Onyx (+1)

Removes light from the surrounding area, using a medium to affect a specific location. While this spell is active, magically created light will also be negated unless it is uncommonly bright (level 15+). (*Destroy level 10 light: L10 +5D +15T*)

### *Leap of the Fire*

ReIg15\*, R: Near, D: Mom, T: Room

Aimed: +2

Spell Focus: Cat's Eye Gem (+3)

A bonfire leaps up to ten paces in any direction you specify. (*Control fire: L10 +5R -5D +5T*)

### **Imáginem**

Imáginem spells affect images, including sights, sounds, and smells. An image can mimic the effects of any tangible form, since the image can appear to be real, and it is not necessary for the caster to fully understand the limits of the form it takes, allowing for fanciful and imaginary shapes — even those that do not exist in Mythic Europe. Creating images is like painting art on the canvas of reality.

Images are mostly based on how many senses they affect. For example, an image that can be seen and heard is Level 15. There aren't artificial or uncommon images per se; an "uncommon image" is simply one that affects two senses. Also, for convenience, I consider smell and taste to be the same sense. While Imáginem cannot imitate substance, it can affect the sense of touch through temperature, texture and the like; one might feel an image as a light touch upon the skin.

Reflections and shadows can be affected by Imáginem, but are not affected by changes to their source. Illusions have no substance, and do not cast shadows or reflect in mirrors. To affect shadows, you must target them separately; a crafty mage can conjure an illusion of reflection as needed.

Animate images can be created as described above, but the caster can create a similar effect by manipulating an inanimate image using controlled magic. An illusionary dog might be directed to walk alongside the caster, though it would have no will of its own. It could even be sent on an errand, though it could not respond to events or alter its course once out of range. In this way there is no additional cost for adding movement to an image, as long as it does not gain any kind of cunning or intelligence.

### *Phantasmal Animal*

CrIm 20, R: Near, D: Mom+, T: Ind

Spell Focus: Topaz (+3)

Creates the appearance of an animal, which can make appropriate sounds and which you can cause to

move and react using controlled magic. It must remain within range for you to direct it; once out of range it can only follow simple, preset commands like "run to the castle, bark three times at the gate, then return." (*Create two senses of an image: L15 +5R +5D*)

See also *Phantasm of the Talking Head* (CrIm15\*), *Phantasmal Fire* (CrIm20), *Phantasm of the Human Form* (CrIm20\*).

### *Summoning the Distant Image*

InIm 20\*, R: Touch+, D: Mom+, T: Room

Spell Focus: Rock crystal (+1)

See and hear a room-sized image using arcane magic. You perceive what transpires as if you were the object to which you are connected. The range of this spell might appear to circumvent the limit against targeting an area with arcane magic, but as the target is actually a large image, the whole thing is in range if you can touch part of it. (*Perceive two senses of an image: L15 +5T*)

See also *The Ear for Distant Voice* (InIm15\*), *Eyes of the Past* (InIm40\*).

### *Image Phantom*

MuIm 30\*, R: Near, D: Mom+, T: Ind

Spell Focus: Cocoon (+1)

The target image appears to all senses as if it were something of similar size and shape. The effect remains as long as the target does not behave in a way that destroys the illusion. (*Change all senses of an image: L25 +5R*)

### *Invisibility of the Standing Wizard*

PeIm 10\*, R: Reach, D: Mom+, T: Ind

Spell Focus: Fern seed (+3)

The target is invisible as long as it remains in one place, though it still casts a shadow and a reflection. Controlled magic makes this spell versatile, since it can be effectively cancelled at will. (*Destroy one sense of an image: L10*)

See also *Veil of Invisibility* (PeIm10), *Chamber of Invisibility* (PeIm20).

### *Wizard's Sidestep*

ReIm 10, R: Reach, D: Mom+, T: Ind

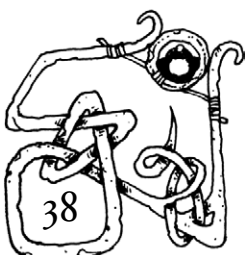
Spell Focus: Opal (+3)

Moves an image within one pace of its source. Controlled magic allows you to affect the image more than once; whenever the illusion becomes disrupted, you can move it to somewhere else within range. (*Control one sense of an image: L10*)

### **Mentem**

Mentem spells affect the human mind, as well as human thought and ideas. Thus, Mentem can affect language, and even written words. It also governs all sorts of human reactions and states of mind, such as emotions, dreams, truth and the ability to reason.

Mentem spells are the least straightforward of all the forms, because it is often difficult to rate a particular emotion or thought as "uncommon" or "artificial." Fourth Edition does refer to "natural" and "unnatural" emotions, but I suspect that there is no



easy way to completely generalize Mentem effects. The best tactic I have found is to just look at what is affected, and rate the spell accordingly. For example, a fleeting thought or few words might be superficial, while a powerful emotion could be uncommon. A person's spirit or ability to reason is probably unique.

Most Mentem spells used R: Eye in Fourth Edition. Here, I use Touch+, as I figure eye contact is a kind of arcane connection between two minds. For magi designing similar spells without arcane magic, simply calculate the distance to the target normally.

#### *Panic of the Trembling Heart*

CrMe 15, R: Touch+, D: Sun, T: Ind

Spell Focus: Mouse (+1)

Causes an overpowering fear of a specific person, place or thing. (*Create an uncommon emotion: L15*)

See also *Panic of the Elephant's Mouse* (CrAn15\*).

#### *Frosty Breath of the Spoken Lie*

InMe 20, R: Touch+, D: Mom+, T: Ind+

Spell Focus: An almond (+1)

Air, as a medium, turns to mist when it forms a lie. (*Perceive an uncommon emotion: L15 +5T*)

See also *Tracks of the Faerie Glow* (InTe20\*).

#### *Emotion of Reversed Intentions*

MuMe 15\*, R: Touch+, D: Sun, T: Ind

Spell Focus: Ruby (+3)

A dominant emotion becomes its opposite. (*Change a feeling into another feeling: L15*)

#### *Blessing of Childlike Bliss*

PeMe 25, R: Touch+, D: Sun, T: Ind

Spell Focus: Lock of a child's hair (+1)

The target mind is reduced to a three-year-old level. (*Cause a unique affliction: L25*)

#### *Snap of Awakening*

ReMe 10, R: Near, D: Mom, T: Ind

Spell Focus: Twig (+1)

Wake a target. (*Control a state of mind: L10 +5R -5D*)

See also *The Call to Slumber* (ReMe10)

### **Terram**

Terram spells govern the earth, products of the earth, solid objects and properties like weight. Muto Terram might make an object heavier or lighter. This form is often used as the default for spells that affect solid targets, with casting requisites for other materials.

Like Herbam spells, Terram spells that affect the earth are more easily cast with arcane magic when the caster is also touching the ground; a spell that targets the earth can be cast anywhere at R: Touch+ as long as the caster is also touching the ground and can perceive the effects of the spell.

#### *Conjuring the Mystic Tower*

CrTe 35, R: Touch+, D: Moon, T: Str, Ritual

An elaborately carved tower rises from the ground. You determine the design of the chambers within. An Int + Finesse roll may be necessary for particularly fine craftsmanship. (*Create unnatural stone: L20 +5D +10T*)

See also *Wall of Protecting Stone* (CrTe25)

#### *Stone Tell of the Mind that Sits*

InTe 20\*, R: Reach, D: Mom+, T: Small

Spell Focus: Dirt in your mouth (+3)

Senses how an object would respond to questions. (*Sense unique properties of earth: L25 -5T*)

See also *Voice of the Lake* (InAq25), etc.

#### *Rock of Viscid Clay*

MuTe 15, R: Reach, D: Sun, T: Ind

Spell Focus: A bit of a dwarven pick (+5)

Temporarily change stone into clay, making it easy to mold and shape. (*Change stone: L15*)

See also *Earth That Breaks No More* (MuTe15\*), etc.

#### *Fist of Shattering*

PeTe 10, R: Near, D: Mom, T: Small

Spell Focus: Bit of shattered rock (+1)

Breaks apart a small object made of stone. (*Destroy an object: L15 +5R -5D -5T*)

#### *Wielding the Invisible Sling*

ReTe 10, R: Far, D: Mom, T: Small, Aimed: +2

Spell Focus: Sling (+3)

Throws a stone at something up to 100 paces away. (*Control stone: L10 +10R -5D -5T*)

### **Vim**

Vim affects magic and magical effects. Any supernatural Realm can be affected with this Art, though the Divine is usually immune (but not always: an InVi spell might identify the Dominion). While Vim is incredibly powerful in that regard, it almost always targets supernatural effects or entities with some kind of Might, which means that the level of the Vim spell must be greater than the target's resistance to have any effect — the rules for Magic Resistance make this disparity inevitable.

The rules suggest that resistance is a ReVi effect, controlling magic and moving it away like a ward. However, I suggest that a similar effect can be achieved with CrVi, creating a passive magical substance that overpowers magic up to its level. An example of a spell that does this would be *Circle of the Faerie Stone* (CrTeVi30), or any spell that creates a creature with Might. I don't think there's any need to include a Rego requisite since the spell is not actually controlling anything, only creating a sort of magical shield.

A few of the Vim effects in Fourth Edition are difficult to convert; in order to be consistent with other spells, for example, Intéllego Vim is difficult to make work the way it is described. With these rules, because they are consistent for every technique, it must be harder to detect a fifth magnitude effect than it is to detect a first magnitude effect, just as it is harder to create a fifth magnitude effect than a first magnitude effect.

By evaluating spells based on their properties, though, I have found you can discover quite a lot with low-level InVi spells. For example, a superficial property of magic is the Wizard's Sigil, made more





obvious with a level 5 spell. Simply sensing magic might be level 10. Perhaps detecting the magnitude of a spell is an artificial effect, allowing one to identify the strength of nearby magic at level 15. In this way, it is possible for InVi to work independently of spell levels. Specific information about an effect would still need a spell of equal or greater level, and would require at least a season of lab work to investigate if the effect involved vis.

#### *The Phantom Gift*

CrVi 15, R: Near, D: Sun, T: Ind+

Spell Focus: Bat wings (+1)

This spell surrounds an individual with a magical shell, radiating the sense of magic that makes people and animals uncomfortable. It has no noticeable effect on those who already have the Gift. (Create *superficial magic*: L5 +5R +5T)

#### *Sense the Nature of Vis*

InVi 5, R: Touch, D: Mom+, T: Small

Spell Focus: Sapphire (+5)

You can sense the Hermetic Art associated with vis. (*Sense artificial properties*: L15 -5R -5T)

See also *Scales of the Magical Weight* (InVi5)

#### *Wizard's Boost (Form)*

MuVi 5+\*, R: Reach, D: Sun, T: Ind

Spell Focus: (varies)

Boosts a (Form) spell with level less than this one by 5 for this spell's duration. When it expires, the target spell reverts to the lower level. This spell may only be cast as another spell is being cast, so the range is most easily described as the distance to the target spell's caster. (*Change magic into increased magic*: LX+5)

#### *Demon's Eternal Oblivion*

PeVi +\*, R: Near, D: Mom, T: Ind

Spell Focus: Pure red coral (+3)

For each magnitude of this spell, a demon loses 5 Might. Of course, the spell must also penetrate the demon's resistance to have any effect. (*Destroy power*: LX +5R -5D)

See also *Lay to Rest the Haunting Spirit* (PeMe+\*)

#### *Watching Ward*

ReVi 20+\*, R: Touch, D: Perm, T: Ind+, Ritual

Causes a magical medium to hold one or more spells and release them when simple conditions are met. The level of the held spell (or sum of the spells' levels) must be at least this spell's (level - 20), and should be cast immediately after this Ritual is completed. (*Control magic*: LX -5R +20D +5T)

See also *Waiting Spell* (ReVi25+\*)

### **The Origins of Magic Theory**

To describe how the unusual qualities of Harnessed Magic may have come about, I imagine the following to have taken place as part of the Founding of the Order. According to canon, Bonisagus did work closely with Verditius, and Houses Guernicus and Mercere have traditionally had special ties to the Order. Perhaps, then, this origin myth for these four Houses' roots will not seem terribly far-fetched.

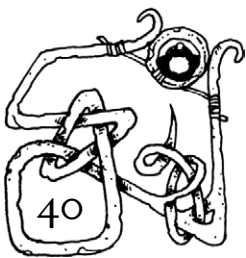


In the years before Bonisagus developed the *Parma Magica*, magi were generally very secretive and distrustful. But Trianoma's vision of the Order (and the theories conceived by Bonisagus) gave many magi a common ground. Three of the Founders — Mercere, Guernicus, and Verditius — became deeply involved with Bonisagus and his theory of magic, and together they helped him form the basic structure of the Hermetic Arts.

Mercere was one of the first wizards to join the Order. A master of transformation, he worked with Bonisagus to investigate the foundations of Hermetic magic, and together they discovered that magic is essentially changing reality by transforming the radiant vis that makes up the physical world. By identifying fifteen types of vis, Bonisagus found he could create a structure whereby most of the world's properties could be isolated and manipulated.

Mercere loved travel, and had collected many contacts and magical allies over the years. He eagerly agreed to escort Trianoma to meet with them. The first magus that she recruited was Guernicus. He and Mercere knew each other well, as both lived in Northern Italy, and Trianoma convinced the dour wizard to return with them to the Black Forest to learn from Bonisagus. Guernicus was skeptical of their plans, but eventually agreed to trade knowledge.

Guernicus was very skilled with the properties of physical objects, being a geomancer, and was also a master of contagion — he understood that things that are whole and become separated retain a connection to each other, and that when you





affect a part of a thing you affect the whole of the thing. His magic was very rigid. Mercere, in contrast, had amazing control over his magic, and could activate and deactivate his spells at will, often extending their durations over long periods of time as he concentrated, walked a path, or remained in one place. Through study of their differences, Bonisagus was able to design the first building blocks of Hermetic magic, what we would call range and duration, and discovered many of the principles of arcane and controlled magic that they possessed.

Many of the Order's most common spells were developed during this early time, between Bonisagus, Mercere, Guernicus, and Trianoma. It was then that Mercere suffered the calamity that destroyed his Gift. Bonisagus was quite accomplished with many kinds of magic, but particularly excelled at controlling power and breaking it down. Mercere had always worked with other magi, for he used many of the principles of Mercurian magic to boost the effects of others. When Bonisagus and Mercere used such a Ritual to combine their magic in the lab, in an attempt to strengthen the Parma Magica, the union inadvertently destroyed Mercere's Gift.

Mercere found that Bonisagus could not restore his powers, and decided that the best way to find aid would be to seek out other wizards for Trianoma's great project. Guernicus became very jaded and lost interest, returning to Italy on his own, some say taking with him many secret spells and rituals that he hadn't yet translated into Hermetic theory. Mercere and Trianoma continued to Sicily, where they met with another acquaintance of his, Verditius. Verditius was very excited at the prospect of meeting Bonisagus, for he too realized the great potential of the Parma Magica. He felt deeply for Mercere, for his magic was similarly limited, but he could do nothing for him but make him enchanted devices to use. Throughout their long lives, these two magi maintained a close friendship, and Verditius eventually gave the Founder and his House many of his finest creations.

As Mercere and Trianoma continued to seek out other magi, Verditius remained at Durenmar. Verditius was very earnest, and tried very hard to learn everything Bonisagus knew, but the great wizard's experiences with Mercere had made him wary of performing magic upon Verditius directly,

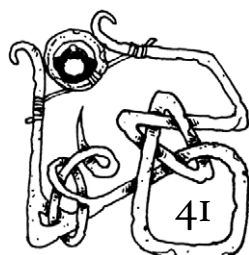
for fear of destroying what powers the mage already possessed. Verditius excelled at imbuing physical objects with magical properties, however, and Bonisagus learned much from him. Together they developed a third aspect of Magic Theory, that of standardizing the size and shape of an effect, or the spell's target, and they began to understand and integrate the properties of Verditius's special medium magic into Hermetic magic.

The two continued to work together periodically, but Verditius could never master the casting of spells and Rituals. It was Verditius's filia, Fenistour, who later developed spell foci, which made it possible for her and others of her House to cast Hermetic spells. Verditius did discover how to adapt the Parma Magica into a magical skill, so that he and his followers could cast it. This knowledge took some time to distribute throughout the Order, as it was closely guarded at first, and many early magi learned the Parma only as a formulaic spell. Verditius and Bonisagus also developed other specialized Abilities (the *Armae Magicae*), based on the experiments with Guernicus and Mercere, which they felt were too esoteric to be shared with any but their closest circle.

The successors of Bonisagus eventually codified all of these concepts into his Magic Theory, and soon the Art was developed enough for any wizard to understand it. With the contributions of other magi, spontaneous magic and vis boosting were also integrated into general practice. The formulaic spells and Rituals common to the Order were eventually adapted to conform to the newer guidelines. Thus, most magi in 1220 can design spells and create invested devices that use the versatility of range, duration, and target; they can cast formulaic spells that use the principles of harnessed magic; and they can use spell foci and vis to boost the power of their magic.

### Hermetic Mystae

Some of the special qualities of the magic of the Founders are unusual enough that they are not taught to all magi as part of standard Magic Theory. They require a special aptitude and philosophy about magic and the Order that is not commonly found outside of four Houses: Bonisagus, Guernicus, Mercere, and Verditius. In that sense, these skills can be seen as specialized mystae, initiated by these lineages to





those who dedicate themselves to magic and the Order.

Of course, followers of Bonisagus are always obliged to share their knowledge with other magi, so these “mysteries” are not secret, per se. However, they represent skills that are taught only to those of special prestige, as it is believed that only those who demonstrate exceptional magical aptitude can ever hope to fully understand them. Magi may easily see or hear of followers of Bonisagus who possess these Virtues, and while they may discuss the basic concepts openly with others, the theoretical applications rarely make sense to outsiders.

On the opposite extreme, members of House Guernicus are very secretive and protective of their mystae. Legends abound of the secret rituals and ancient wisdom that members of the House uncovered in their search for tradition in the Order. Quaesitores go to great lengths to avoid discussing these and their other special abilities around those who have not convinced them they are completely loyal to the Order. Many within House Guernicus believe it is better to keep all of their arcane knowledge confidential, to maintain their reputation as dangerous adversaries and keepers of law to be respected and feared.

House Mercere does not have as many members with the Gift. Those who do have the power to work magic and who serve loyally and humbly — assuming they demonstrate an interest and are talented enough to master them — may initiate these mystae from older Redcaps or members of the other Houses. The House as a whole is usually careful not to demonstrate magic overtly (for fear of belittling their sodales who do not have the Gift), and therefore they rarely acknowledge their magical skills openly, just as they might keep whether or not they have the Gift a secret.

Conversely, while House Verditius is quite open about their members’ magical skills (as they include quite serious limitations), followers of Verditius are typically more loyal to their House than to the Order as a whole, and they don’t like to teach their craft to outsiders. Like followers of Bonisagus, they may discuss what they can do, but share their methods only with others whom they believe worthy. They are thus the most “exotic” of these Houses, since they usually learn the mystae from members of their own House, but they still retain strong ties to Bonisagus and Mercere as a legacy of their Founders’ relationships.

Societies that initiate members into specialized study of Magic Theory might be House-specific, like a Bonisagus study group, or might include members from two or more of these Houses, with the focus on the topic more than the magi. Since initiation is based on the ability of the mage, ordeals probably tend towards demonstration of merit through Good Works, Initiation Quests, Pledges, or Obligations. First and foremost, however, the charge to those

involved in these groups is devotion to the Order of Hermes and its continuing study of magic.

### Outer “Mysteries”: Hermetic Status

One of four Virtues is required for any magus who belongs to one of these Houses. None of them is exclusive to the others, as they all have their own advantages and disadvantages, so it is certainly possible to initiate more than one. Furthermore, followers of other Houses who demonstrate unusual abilities or devotion to the Order might be initiated into one of these outer mystae, and thus proceed to learn the inner mystae as they prove their worth and circumstances allow (for example, non-Guernicus quaesitores, Hoplites, honorary Redcaps, or those who have otherwise been adopted into one of these Houses).

**Hermetic Prestige +1** (Bonisagus): Because of some great achievement or demonstration of loyalty on your part, you have special prestige among your Hermetic peers. Many magi respect you and admire you; others may envy you and perhaps even expect you to measure up to an impossible ideal. You gain a positive Reputation at level 3 within the Order. This Reputation is usually associated with your magical potential, or unusually passionate devotion to the Order.

**Quaesitor +1** (Guernicus): You have been appointed a judge of the Order of Hermes. Other wizards respect you, though they do not necessarily like you, but House Guernicus treats you more or less as one of its own. You have specific duties and responsibilities to fulfill according to your office, for which you are often compensated appropriately, and you start with a positive Reputation at 3 within the Order, to represent your impartial status.

**Redcap +1** (Mercere): You have been appointed a special messenger of the Order of Hermes, either assigned to one covenant or in support of several. In exchange for your services, you receive a modest stipend (usually about 4 silver pennies each visit) and hospitality from any covenant you visit, as well as all the privileges of a member of the Order. You have a positive Reputation of level 2 within the Order, and others outside the Order may accord you special protection in deference to your office and the wizards you serve.

**Verditius Magic +1** (Verditius): Your specialized magic requires the use of small casting tools, and does not function without them. For most magi, this condition would be considered a -2 Flaw. However, you also have a special Magical Affinity with invested devices and other enchanted items, which includes your longevity potion and any of your spells that involve a medium. For members of other Houses, this would be designed as a +2 Magical Affinity: Enchanted Items, combined with a +1 Magical Affinity: Medium Magic. Your Affinity that incorporates both of these is called Verditius Magic, which you begin with at 1.



### Armae Magicae (+2 Virtue)

The Gift allows a wizard to create and shape magic, and Bonisagus used its inherent power to develop the Parma Magica, the shield ritual that deflects unwanted effects and protects magi from supernatural harm. According to the origin myth, Guernicus and Mercere also taught Bonisagus to harness many unique properties of their own magic, and thus helped him develop other spells along the same lines. These three rituals are referred to together as the Armae Magicae, or a wizard's "magical weaponry." The legend says that Verditius later adapted these spells into Abilities, just as he did with the Parma Magica, so that he too could learn them and use them. Thus, while spell versions are easily learned and invented, these Abilities are rare and special, taught only to those with special standing in the Order.

Each of these three Abilities is a +1 Virtue on its own, but a player can stack all of them together as a single +2 Virtue. Like the Parma Magica, each Virtue gives the character a Hermetic Skill, which can be increased through experience. Or, if fewer Abilities are desired, characters can instead use only their Parma Magica score (perhaps renamed Armae Magicae) to represent their skill with any of the four Abilities, reasoning that they rely on similar concepts. In that case, they can also use Armae in place of Penetration, since each of the skills is designed to make use of a different Technique, and with Penetration all five are represented.

**Galea Magica** (the magical helm) allows you to examine and identify nearby magic. The ritual takes about two minutes to activate, and allows you to determine the magnitude, Technique, and Form of any magical effect upon which you concentrate, if the effect is of equal or lesser magnitude to your Galea Magica score. At the storyguide's discretion, you can even sense magical residues that remain after a spell is cast if your Galea Magica is at least twice the expired effect's magnitude. This includes enchanted items, Ritual magic, and spells made natural with vis. The investigation lasts only a moment, and you must be within ten paces of the effect while you examine it.

**Machaera Magica** (the magical sword) destroys magical effects in much the same way that the Galea detects them. Whenever you use this ritual, which takes a minute or two to cast, you cancel one magical effect, including a spontaneous or formulaic spell or the effect of an invested device, but not a Ritual or an effect that has been boosted with vis, unless it uses harnessed magic. This cancellation is similar to a PeVi effect; it's a sort of active magical resistance that "punctures" the effect and thus dispels it. Harnessed magic affected in this way might still be reactivated, as if the caster had himself cancelled it. The level of the magic you destroy must be at least equal to your (Machaera Magica  $\times$  5), and you need to be within ten paces of the effect when you perform the ritual.

**Manica Magica** (the magical glove) makes it possible for two or more wizards to combine their power to cast a spell that one of them knows. They clasp hands and perform the short ritual together, with the lowest Manica Magica score among them limiting how many magi may participate. After the ritual, each participating wizard rolls as if casting the spell, and if all of them succeed they contribute their casting totals (each no more than Manica Magica  $\times$  5) towards the final result. The ritual has its roots in Mercurian Magic, but while other magi are descended from this same ancient tradition, they usually learn it as a spell — *Wizard's Communion* (ReVi+\*) rather than as an Ability.

### Harnessed Magic (+3 Virtue)

Originally appearing in the *Wizards' Grimoire Revised Edition*, page 61, this Virtue seems to encompass benefits that many players take for granted. With the special kinds of ranges, durations and targets described in detail above, the Virtue makes a lot more sense, and becomes much more valuable, similar to other +3 Virtues.

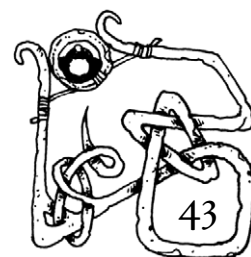
**Harnessed Magic +3** (revised): You have great control over your spells. You can use arcane connections to increase your range, you may alter a spell's duration, and you can use a medium as a target. You may also invent spells or devices that use this enhanced magic, and use it with your spontaneous magic. However, all of your harnessed effects (spells or devices) are intimately tied to your Gift and may be used as arcane connections to you for as long as they endure, and cease to function upon the instant of your death unless made natural with vis.

For convenience, this Virtue has been divided into separate Virtues and Flaws below, for those players who wish their characters to have some of the benefits and weaknesses of harnessed magic without necessarily taking the whole package.

**Arcane Magic +2:** You can use arcane magic when designing spells, either with spontaneous magic or formulaic spells you have designed. Other magi may learn and cast these spells. However, all of your spells that use arcane magic, including those caused by enchanted items you create, are arcane connections to you for their duration.

**Controlled Magic +2:** You have exceptional control over your magic, allowing you to extend or prematurely cancel the duration of your spells. You may invent spells that allow other magi to use this kind of magic, though when you die all control over these effects, either spells or effects of magic items you designed, will end abruptly unless boosted with vis.

**Medium Magic +2:** You are able to use a magical target as a medium, which holds the effect in place and can transfer or trigger it under certain conditions. Other magi may use this magic by learning spells that you have invented. This also gives you additional control over enchanted items you design. Unfortunately, any medium or enchanted item that





you create is an arcane connection to you for as long as it is active.

**Personal Magic -1:** For some reason, all of your formulaic and spontaneous spells are intimately tied to your Gift, and thus remain arcane connections to you for as long as they last.

**Mortal Magic -1:** When you die, all of your magical effects not boosted by vis fail, and any enchanted items made by you forever cease to function.

**Branded Magic -1:** Any magic items you create, including potions and lesser devices, are arcane connections to you for as long as their effects last.

**Fettered Magic -2:** All your spells and magical effects are arcane connections to you for as long as they last, and all cease immediately on the instant of your death unless boosted with vis. Magical items you have created no longer work after your passing.

#### **Material Magic (+4 Virtue)**

Fenistour was the first follower of Verditius who was able to cast formulaic spells by using casting tools to create a physical representation of the effect. Now, every wizard in her House learns this skill, and magi throughout the Order are able to invent spells that take advantage of her discovery by using spell foci: specific casting tools that a spell has been designed to use for additional benefit.

Fenistour's greatest discoveries were more than just spell foci or casting tools, however. Like Natural Magicians and other hedge wizards have discovered in the thirteenth century, nature can be harnessed to boost the practice of magic through the Law of Sympathy. By using natural properties of mundane objects, Fenistour was able to strengthen all of her spells, and design formulaic spells that were even more powerful when cast with spell foci.

Most magi, when designing a spell, choose one spell focus that aids the casting of the spell. This may be as simple as a twig or as powerful as the blood of a dragon, but it is set when the spell is designed. The spell is cast with that particular focus or none at all. Fenistour, however, learned to use her casting tools as spell foci with all of her spells, including spontaneous magic, and even with other spells that were originally designed to use a specific focus.

Initiates of this Virtue gain the ability to do as Fenistour did. When casting a spell, instead of using the spell focus, the character may use any appropriate casting tool at hand, and add one bonus to the casting total from the Form and Effect Bonuses Table (*ArM4*, page 84 and elsewhere) for that casting tool. For example, if Fenistour were casting a Muto Corpus spell and had a piece of amber, she could add 3 to her casting total. If the spell were designed to disguise her features, she might use a mask for a +7 bonus.

In addition, Fenistour discovered how to harness the natural vis inherent in spell foci. When using the focus that a formulaic spell was designed to use, magi with this Virtue may treat the focus as a number of pawns of vis equal to the bonus, in place of any bonus that would otherwise be gained from spell

foci. Thus, a material magus who casts *The Chirurgeon's Healing Touch* (CrCo20) with a bloodstone (+3) could use that bloodstone as three pawns of vis. The focus can only be used once in this way, just as vis can only be used once; the object becomes magically useless after this natural, inherent vis is used.

Note that as with spell foci, casting tools and spell foci must be natural, not magically created. This means that any casting tools conjured with Hermetic magic will need vis for them to have any effect, and magically-created spell foci cannot be used for inherent vis.

#### **Related Virtues**

The Virtues outlined above, while representing a specialized branch of Magic Theory, should not be entirely unavailable to magi from other Houses. Many wizards might stumble upon the knowledge naturally, or learn how to use it from others who practice their specific style of magic. Followers of Bonisagus, too, may have shared the secrets with others as part of how they interpret their Oath, leading to different Virtues becoming available to different lineages and magical socii.

Here are several examples of Virtues that might be used to initiate characters from different Houses into Harnessed Magic or its related Virtues. I use these in my saga to explain characters that do not fit into one of the four House lineages above, yet who should have access to some aspects of Harnessed Magic based on the sorts of spells at which they usually excel.

**Manipulation Magic +1:** You are naturally accomplished at magic over which you exercise unusual mental control. You understand intuitively how to use the secrets of controlled magic within the Art of Rego, allowing you to manipulate effects and invent spells of this technique in all respects as if you possessed controlled magic. This Virtue is particularly common among magi of House Tremere.

**Nature Magic +1:** Your magic is strongly associated with plants, trees and the earth embodied in nature. Because of this, you understand intuitively the arcane connections between earth and root, and can use the secrets of arcane magic with both Herbam and Terram; you can affect things that touch the ground you stand upon as if you were touching them yourself. This power does not apply to targets that do not themselves touch the ground, even if they touch something else that touches it, as in *Invisible Hand of the Thief* (ReTe15).

**Ward Magic +1:** Your magic is attuned to the power of wards and runes, and the ability to better affect things that come into an area you have prepared in advance. You understand intuitively how to use a medium and controlled magic when creating a ward like *Ward Against the Beasts of Legend* (ReAn 10+\*), and do not need either of the related Virtues to invent or spontaneously cast such spells.

**Weather Magic +1:** Your magic is strongly associated with the sea and sky, and you have unusual control over the weather. You understand the secrets



of arcane magic intuitively when applied to either Aquam or Auram, allowing you to affect the entire sky and the hidden depths of the ocean simply by touching the water or breathing in the air around you.

## Summary

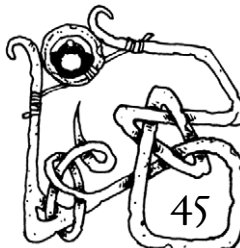
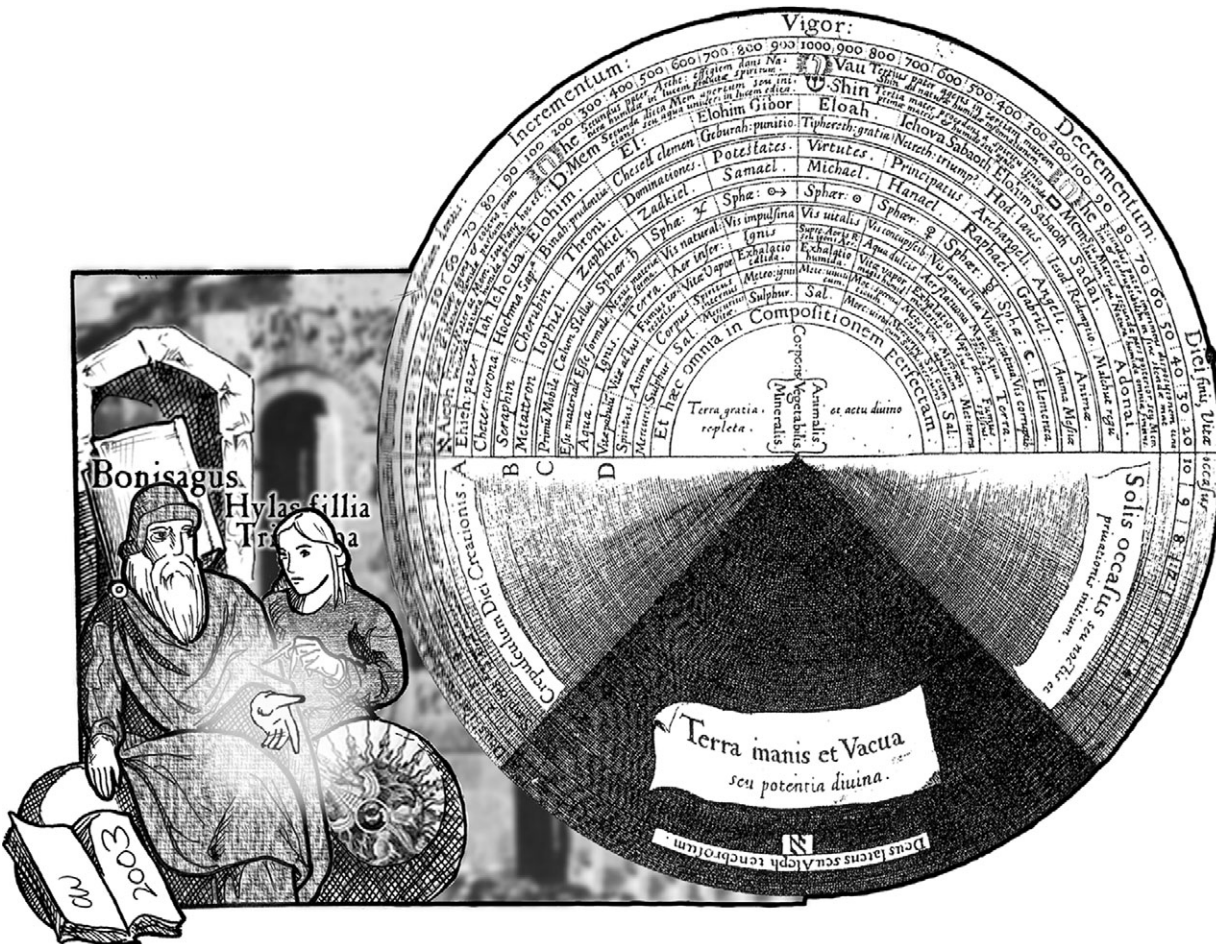
In closing, I hope my suggestions for simplifying Ars Magica's magic have given you something you can use to improve your saga. I had three test criteria that I used to gauge whether or not these changes would make the game easier, and I was very pleased on all counts.

- *Consistency.* Effect levels seem to be fairly consistent with 4th Edition spells. Many of the canonical spells cannot be invented by most magi, as they do not have Harnessed Magic, but since these spells are commonly distributed throughout the Order, that won't hurt many magi except those with extremely poor libraries — and, if the data from the Covenants Project is any guide, this is a good thing, since poor libraries don't seem to hurt much as things are now. There are a few spells (mostly Muto), that become a little easier to cast, but this is an acceptable tradeoff to me as they usually have requisites.
- *Simplicity.* I can remember the rules for spontaneous magic without consulting the rulebook, and so can other players. Those in my troupe

have not had much difficulty, since spontaneous magic under this system involves more storytelling than searching through the rules, and formulaic spells are designed in advance. Furthermore, questions about what magic can target and how long spells last have become incredibly easy to solve. I would say these ideas have had a noticeably positive impact on my game.

- *Creativity.* It is important for the system not to stifle new ideas for spells and research. I want to make sure that all of the things that make Ars Magica's magic fun and interesting to play with are supported by the rules I am suggesting. While the Harnessed Magic concept means that characters will have more limitations when designing spells, they also give characters with a theoretical bent more opportunities to do things that others can't, as I hope my suggestions for House mystae have demonstrated. So far, I haven't found myself smothered, but rather encouraged. I hope that others experience the same phenomenon.

Enjoy, and please feel free to write to me (erikt-dahl@yahoo.com, or indirectly through the Berkeley mailing list) if you have any questions, suggestions, ideas, or stories you'd like to share concerning your impressions of this article.



# The Galdor Mysteries

by David Woods

**T**he galdramen are a tradition of hedge wizard native to Scandinavia and now principally found in Iceland. They were written (in part) as an example of the sort of tradition the Order assimilated on the mainland centuries ago. In *Land of Fire and Ice*, Iceland lies in glorious isolation from the Order, a land to all intents and purposes ignored or unknown. Such a situation is unlikely to last indefinitely, so the issue of galdramen joining the Order and converting to Hermetic magic may become relevant in a saga. *The Icelandic Wars* supplement explores the background of such integration in detail, but this article gives the mechanics of the transition.

I would like to thank Mark Shirley for his contribution to this article.

## The Conversion

Galdramen are just one variety of Icelandic magician detailed in *Land of Fire and Ice*, but they are the only tradition that can learn Hermetic magic directly. Trollsons and Vitkir (from *Ultima Thule*) cannot learn Hermetic magic at all, as their own magic is vastly different. The other Icelandic wizards, such as seithkonur, do not normally have the necessary Gift that would allow them to manipulate Hermetic magic. All these wizards can join the Order (see *Hedge Magic* p. 33), but it is highly likely that only House Ex Miscellanea would accept them.

To join the Order, a galdraman must find a sponsor from the House he intends to join. Once the potential for galdramen to learn Hermetic magic has been revealed, magi from Houses other than Ex Miscellanea might be willing to sponsor a galdraman. It is possible that House Bonisagus may claim the right to induct all galdramen, or alternatively they may join a number of different Houses — because of their philosophies, Houses Merinita, Jerbiton and Criamon may be interested in sponsoring galdramen. Naysayers in the Order may be worried about an open society that crosses House boundaries, concerned that they would have more loyalty to each other than to the Order or their House. Whether this is true is dependent on the individual saga.

Once brought into the Order, galdramen can immediately be taught Parma Magica, but discovering a way to teach galdramen Hermetic magic is a long and difficult process. No one within the Order is obliged investigate how this might be achieved and so it might seem that the galdramen may never learn Hermetic magic. However, the galdramen have something to offer would-be teachers.

Galdramen are theurgists, they conjure spirits to achieve magical effects. They possess detailed knowledge of the local spirits (landvaettir) and enjoy the favour of many of their most powerful leaders. *The Mysteries* introduced Hermetic theurgists and so these magi may naturally be interested in the galdramen's

knowledge and contacts. Also, galdramen often possess substantial vis sources and may be able to pay their teacher directly. Assuming an experienced Hermetic theurgist takes an interest in galdor magic, given time he is able to work through the metaphysical differences that divide the traditions.

Of course, not all galdramen are interested in learning Hermetic magic. Apart from having to start again learning a new tradition, Hermetic magi require a very expensive lab and virtually full-time devotion to magical study. The majority of galdramen do not have the resources or time to support this lifestyle. Most have wives, husbands, children and other dependants to look after. Therefore, it is likely that only a minority of galdramen are interested and only if they can join a covenant capable of supporting them and their family.

## Hermetic Initiation

How long it takes to develop an initiation method is up to the storyguide, taking into account the needs of the saga. In the end, a player character galdraman wanting to convert should not be frustrated unreasonably. With the collaboration of an experienced Hermetic theurgist and galdraman, the problem should be solved well within a decade. If the storyguide wishes, he may run this as an Arcane Experiment, *WGRE* page 83-87. Once developed, the initiation method may be written up in a single season and employed by any Hermetic theurgist who studies it for a season.

A Hermetic theurgist can initiate the galdraman in merely two seasons using this method. However, the initiation requires that the galdraman learn Latin to a score of 4, Scribe Latin to 2 and Magic Theory to 3, beforehand.

The first generation of Hermetic galdramen wield a very limited form of Hermetic magic, focused entirely on theurgy. During the intensive six months of initiation rites, the subject acquires the following Flaws as Sacrifices of Power (16 points, see *The Mysteries* p23):

Slow-caster -1

Necessary Condition (Singing) -2

Deleterious Circumstance (touching the ground; Common, Severe) -3

Exclusive Thaumaturgist\* -4 (As Unstructured Caster, except that the flaw does not apply to Theurgy effects.)

Non-spontaneity -6

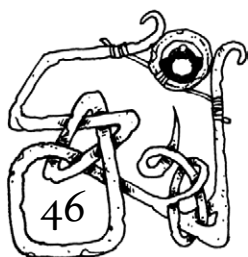
They retain their Premonitions, Second Sight, and any galdor initiation such as Hamfaring, but they lose their ability to summon landvaettir in the traditional way. However, they emerge from the initiation rites with the following Virtues:

Hermetic Theurgy +1

Sorcerous Music +1

Hermetic Galdor +4

After initiation, they have a score of 0 in all Arts and no spells. From this point, they can pursue their Hermetic career independently. Due to the Exclusive Thaumaturgist flaw, Hermetic galdramen have little



use for normal Hermetic spells. The only spells they may usefully learn are those involving spirits and creatures with a Magic Might score.

Galdor Wisdom knowledge is relabelled as Hermetic Theurgy. In addition, their scores in Galdor Songs become affinities for the relevant landvaettir. Hermetic Theurgists may also gain these affinities if they are initiated into Hermetic Galdor and introduced to the relevant landvaettir lord (see Galdor Initiation, *Land of Fire and Ice*).

## Hermetic Galdor +4

Landvaettir cannot be summoned Hermetically unless the caster has been initiated into Hermetic Galdor and gained the favour of one or more landvaettir lords. The caster can only summon the minions of those particular lords, and only to a maximum Might of five times his score in the relevant affinity (Galdor Song). However, once these requirements are met, landvaettir are relatively easy to call upon and can generate a variety of effects. Magi who cast these spells without the appropriate level of relevant affinity receive no response.

All Hermetic Galdramen have the Virtue Sorcerous Music (*The Mysteries*, Page 28), enabling them to utilise a special Duration: Song. The effects of the spell last as long as the caster continues to sing. For level purposes this is counted as Duration Concentration.

### Conjuring

Landvaettir summoning spells are all Rego Vim effects of the following format:

*Summon the [Song]-Spirits*

Rego Vim, General Level

R: Spec D: Spec T: Ind

Effect: Summons a specific type of landvaettir with Magic Might equal to the level of the spell. There is a separate spell for each Galdor Song, thus there is Summon the Ol-Spirits, Summon the Yfel-Spirits, etc. The landvaettir will generate one non-ritual spell-effect, up to its Might in level and within its capability (which depends on the spirit type). The spell created by the spirit cannot have a duration greater than Song, unless a bargain has been struck with the spirit's master (see *Land of Fire and Ice*). Unless the desired effect has Momentary duration, the level is calculated as Concentration duration. Range is calculated from the summoner to the target. The landvaettir must be instructed within a minute of being summoned or it will depart. This spell will only summon landvaettir within their homeland.

*Summon the Servant of the [Song]-Lords*

Rego Vim, General Level

R: Spec D: Spec T: Ind; Ritual

Effect: Summons a specific type of landvaettir with Magic Might equal to the level of the spell. There is a separate spell for each Galdor song, thus there is Summon the Servant of the Lim-Lords, Summon the Servant of the Orlog-Lords, etc. The landvaettir will generate one spell-effect (including rituals), up to its Might in level and within its

capability (which depends on the spirit type). Unlike normal Hermetic rituals, vis is not expended casting the spell. However, landvaettir of this type always require payment for their services. The caster needs to have previously struck a bargain with the spirit's master for the effect (see *Land of Fire and Ice*). Such deals are for a specific effect on a specific target, but once made the magus can invoke the deal as many times as he wishes. Only if the summoning spell is cast successfully does the magus need to pay the spirit its price. The landvaettir must be instructed within a minute of being summoned or it will depart. This spell will only summon landvaettir within their homeland.

### Enchantment

Hermetic galdramen can freely create invested devices and potions with effects that fall within the scope of their Exclusive Thaumaturgist flaw.

To create other effects, the Hermetic galdramen must bind landvaettir into items. Like their traditional counterparts, they must strike a deal with a landvaettir lord before doing this binding. He then journeys home and prepares an item suitable to house the spirit. Treat this investment as a ReVi effect equal to the Might of the intended spirit. If the Hermetic galdramen only wishes a single service from the bound spirit, treat the investment of the binding object as a potion. Otherwise, the object should be treated as a lesser or greater enchantment (as desired). He then summons the assigned spirit with a *Summon the [Song]-Spirits* spell and gives it the agreed sum of vis; servant level spirits will not agreed to be bound. Once done, the landvaettir enters the item and generates the agreed effect when activated (asked).

It should be noted that although the term binding is applied to this process, the spirit is able to leave the item at any time. As with traditional galdor enchantments, the terms and conditions of the contract can be quite convoluted. If the galdramen (or any other user), breaks these terms and conditions, the spirit can decide to leave. The spirit is quite aware of its surroundings and might even decide to break the contract itself, if it takes objection to the user. Additionally, it is possible to bind more than one landvaettir within a greater invested device. However, not all landvaettir are happy sharing accommodation,



### The Toframen

The Toframen offer the following initiatory rites:

Virtue	Required Sacrifice of Power
Hermetic Theurgy +1	Slow-caster -1
Premonitions +1	Necessary Condition -2 (Singing)
Second Sight +1	None
Sorcerous Music +1	Deleterious Circumstance -3 (touching the ground; Common, Severe)
Hermetic Galdor +4	Exclusive Thaumaturgist -4

All the +1 virtues must be possessed before Hermetic Galdor can be gained. Once the Hermetic Galdor virtue has been obtained, the magus can petition the landvaettir lords for other initiations as galdramen (see *Land of Fire and Ice*).



even if they are the same type. The storyguide is free to use the potentially fraught internal struggles of such spirits as a story seed.

If a spirit leaves an item for whatever reason, it might be persuaded to return. If the galdraman broke the bargain or otherwise insulted the spirit, he may have to apologise and offer compensation. If the spirit broke the deal, the galdraman can complain to its lord. Depending on the circumstance, the lord might persuade the spirit to return and/or offer compensation. If the spirit decides to return the item operates as before.

### The Second Generation

Even with the crippling flaws of Non-spontaneity and Exclusive Thaumaturgist, the advantages of Hermetic magic normally lead it to dominate the galdraman's magical life. In consequence, he probably initiates his apprentice in Hermetic magic first. Only later does he initiate his apprentice into the deeper roots of galdor magic.

In addition, a master might take special care to ensure his apprentice receives training in aspects of Hermetic magic where he is deficient. Therefore, it is possible that an apprentice might not inherit the Non-spontaneity flaw.

Given this attention, a second generation Hermetic galdraman normally reaches gauntlet with the following Flaws.

- Slow-caster -1
  - Necessary Condition (Singing) -2
  - Delirious Circumstance (touching the ground; Common, Severe) -3
  - Exclusive Thaumaturgist -4
- They normally possess the following Virtues:
- Hermetic Theurgy +1
  - Premonitions +1
  - Second Sight +1
  - Sorcerous Music +1
  - Hermetic Galdor +4

Since his master is unlikely to know any normal Hermetic spells, any that he does know would have to be learnt independently. Access to the covenant library during apprenticeship provides this opportunity. Later generations may learn very little of their galdraman heritage, perhaps only learning Hermetic Theurgy during apprenticeship. Galdor traditions would then be preserved as a mystery cult (see insert).

### Power Considerations

Hermetic Galdor might be seen as functionally similar to spontaneous magic. Even a moderate score in a song talent (5) allows the magus to generate 25th level effects in a reasonably wide field. With only a handful of Rego Vim spells a Hermetic galdraman can generate effects tailored to specific situations at formulaic potency; this may appear overpowered.

There is no denying this utility. However, consideration should be given to the associated restrictions, costs, and comparisons before a judgement is made.



These costs, restrictions and comparisons are discussed in detail below.

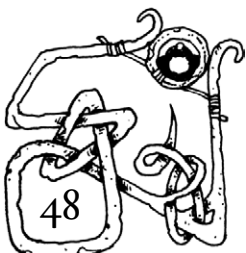
### Comparison with Thaumaturgy +4

The innermost mystery of Hermetic Theurgy, Thaumaturgy, allows a very similar ability (see *The Mysteries* p. 133). With this virtue, the magus conjures a spirit of a particular Hermetic Form, using a Creo Vim spell with the Form requisite. This spirit can then be instructed to generate effects within its Form. Assuming the canon precedent of Thaumaturgy is accepted, Hermetic Galdor should be considered in this context.

### Song Talent Restriction

Song talents cannot be taught or trained. The only method of increasing these talents is practise, story experience or seasonal activity. This makes gaining a score of 5 relatively swift, but the increase slows down considerably beyond this. Practising a song talent beyond 6 is effectively futile given that 1exp can be gained from a seasonal (lab) activity. Therefore, after a score of 5 the principle method of advancement is lab experience.

Given that a song talent cannot exceed the galdraman's Hermetic Theurgy (Galdor Wisdom), even an obsessive specialist must split lab experience between two abilities. Raising an ability from 5 to 15 takes around 100 seasons (25 years) of effort. Of course he also needs to develop his Rego and Vim Arts in order to invent/learn the spell. A further 25 years of Art study allows him to achieve an Art score of 31 in both Rego and Vim (average 10exp per season). This gives him a lab total of about 100, enabling him to invent a 75th level spell in 3 seasons.





So, in all, the galdraman would need 75 years of concentrated effort to achieve a 75th level galdor spell. Another 25 years would allow him to develop other galdor spells to the same level.

A period of 75 years would allow a normal Hermetic theurgist to achieve a Creo score of 54 and a score of 38 in Vim and another Form, possibility achieving a lab total over 100. In addition, the normal Hermetic Theurgist is able to invent 50th level spells even in Forms where he has an Art score of zero.

### Geographical Restriction

The landvaettir only respond to calls within their homeland (usually Iceland). Landvaettir of similar types exist in other Nordic lands, but the galdramen needs to become familiar with the local lords and invent new spells to call their minions and servants. Outside Nordic lands, a galdraman needs to gain the favour of spirits with which he is entirely unfamiliar. This means developing new song affinities and new summoning spells.

### Landvaettir Lords

Galdor magic is essentially non-coercive. The landvaettir minions serve galdramen because they find their songs pleasing. The landvaettir lords foster relationships with galdramen because they enjoy the songs and praise. Galdramen wishing to generate ritual effects or even effects with more than Concentration duration must come to a bargain with a lord. This will not always be possible or it might be far more expensive than a normal Hermetic effect. Effects that may upset another lord or would otherwise stir up trouble are likely to be refused. So whereas it may seem that galdramen can produce ritual effects with greater ease than a normal Hermetic theurgist, galdramen do not have a totally free hand in the effects they generate.

In addition, galdramen serve an important role in the rivalries between the spirits. The more links a galdraman forms with landvaettir lords the more complex his relationships become. Occasionally two lords become hostile and a galdraman with links to both may find himself in a difficult position. Unless he conducts himself with diplomatic skill, he may find himself estranged from one or both courts, rendering him unable to summon the respective landvaettir. Given this situation, galdramen often cooperate with each other to bring peace between warring factions. This is another reason why the landvaettir lords respect them. Still, the more contacts a galdraman has, the more time he may need to spend as peacemaker.

### Elín Vifilsdóttir of House Ex Miscelanea, Hermetic Galdrakona

Age: 24, Size: +0, Confidence: 3

**Characteristics:** Int +2, Per +0, Pre +1, Com +3, Str -1, Sta +0, Dex +0, Qik -2

**Virtues and Flaws:** Close Family Ties +1, Mighty Fylgja +3, Enemy (ex-husband) -2, Cursed (magic used for personal gain has double botch risk) -2

**Hermetic Virtues and Flaws:** Hermetic Theurgy +1, Sorcerous Music +1, Hermetic Galdor +4, Slow-caster -1, Necessary Condition (Singing) -2, Deleterious Circumstance (touching the ground; Common, Severe) -3, Exclusive Thaumaturgist -4, Non-spontaneity -6

**Galdor Initiation:** Second Sight +1, Premonitions +1, Hamfaring +2

**Personality Traits:** Generous +3, Brave +1, Honourable +1

**Reputations:** Galdrakona +2, with people of Snaefellsnes; Unwomanly +1, with people of Snaefellsnes

Weapon	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam	Fatigue
Brawl (dagger)	+3	+5	+0	+2	+3

Soak: +1

Fatigue Levels: OK 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Body Levels: OK 0, -1, -3, -5, Incapacitated

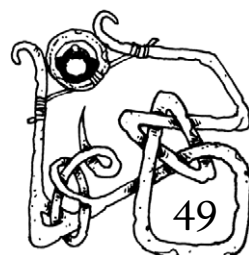
**Abilities:** Awareness 2 (sheep), Brawl 1 (dagger), Craft - Clothing 3 (wool), Farming 1 (animals), Hamfaring 3 (duration), Hermetic Theurgy 6 (conjuring), Legend Lore 3 (sagas), Magic Theory 3 (spirits), Occult Lore 2 (undead), Icelandic Law 2 (procedures), Parma Magica 3 (Vim), Premonitions 2 (trolls), Ride 2 (rough ground), Scribe Latin 2 (original), Survival 2 (mountains), Sing 5 (conjuring), Second Sight 3 (landvaettir), Speak Latin 4 (church), Speak West Norse 5 (casual)

**Galdraman Songs:** Biarg-galdor 4, Lim-galdor 3, Ol-galdor 4, Brun-galdor 2

**Arts:** Cr 0, Mu 0, In 0, Pe 0, Re 9, An 0, Aq 0, Au 0, Co 0, He 0, Ig 0, Im 0, Me 3, Te 0, Vi 10

**Spells:** *Summon the Biarg Spirits* (ReVi 20), *Summon the Servant of the Biarg Lords* (ReVi 20), *Summon the Lim Spirits* (ReVi 15), *Summon the Ol Spirits* (ReVi 20), *Summon the Servant of the Ol Lords* (ReVi 20), *Summon the Brun Spirits* (ReVi 10), *Vision of the Haunting Spirit* (MuMe 5), *Demon's Eternal Oblivion* (PeVi15)

**Roleplaying Notes:** Elín is a tall woman, with blond hair and blue eyes. She is a moderately powerful Hermetic galdrakona and discreetly helps farmers about the region. Her traditional galdraman father owns a farm on the Snaefellsnes and is generally well respected in both the mundane and magical communities. Her father was the first galdraman to meet the Hermetic magi who settled in Iceland and was an important figure in the events that followed. Recognising Elín's Gift, Vifil decided to face the disapproval of his peers and train her in galdor magic. Once her galdor training was complete, Vifil introduced Elín to the local Hermetic magi and through them she learnt Hermetic magic. She has a short temper and a sharp tongue, which led to her first marriage ending in divorce. This was not helped by her preference for wearing breeches, which provided her husband grounds for the divorce. Elín's mother is desperately seeking another suitable match; which is narrowed by her daughter's Gift and vocation. Elín's fylgja appears in the form of an arctic eagle.



# The martyrdom of Issidoros

by Timothy Ferguson

## The Martyrdom of Issidoros and the gum mastic

Gum mastic is the resin of a tree found only on the southern coast of the tiny island of Chios in the Theban tribunal. The mastic, locals say, is found only on their island because it was created by the martyrdom of Issidoros. In 249, a Roman naval officer was ordered to turn from the faith or be put to death. Issidoros refused to renounce Jesus, and was executed. His captor ordered him to be dragged by a horse from Chora to Neochori. The shrubs on the route, aware of his deep suffering, wept tears of clear liquid, the first mastic. His day of remembrance is 14 May. His friend Myrope was martyred for giving him honourable burial, then a friend of hers was martyred for giving her an honourable burial.

Mastic gum is gathered by cutting mastic trees, then allowing the resin to slowly coagulate on the tree trunks and ground. It is gathered from July to September, using precise techniques. The resin that has not touched the ground is the most valuable. Mastic is initially a pale green, but as it dries it goes translucent, then white, then a pale yellow.

Mastic has so many uses it forms the basis of the island's export trade. It has been famous since classical times for its medicinal properties. It is recorded as being good for stomach illnesses, and Galen used it, mixed with turpentine, for snakebite. It is used as a flavouring agent, either powdered or burned, in a wide variety of food. Mastic is the base flavour for araq, a type of alcohol. Mastic is also used to make incense, scented oil, candles and varnish. Ancient Egyptian theatrical performers sometimes used mastic masks. Gum mastic also has cosmetic uses. Roman ladies used mastic toothpicks to whiten their teeth. The wealthy of the eastern Empire and Asia Minor chew blocks of mastic gum to clean their teeth and freshen their breath.

### Sources

#### Original

The story of Saint Issidoros,

Mastic is mentioned in Dioscorides *De Materia Medica* and in Galen.

#### Modern

I used the web page of the Chios Mastic Gum Growers Association ([www.gummastic.gr](http://www.gummastic.gr)),

Runciman, S (1994), *A History of the Crusades*, London: Folio.

A modern version of the martyrdom of Issidoros is available at the Orthodox Archdiocese of America page at [www.goarch.org](http://www.goarch.org). They use the English version of his name, Isidore.



### Adaptation

Gum mastic is used as a medicine, flavouring agent, scent and varnish, but of greatest interest to the Order of Hermes is its usefulness as a chewing gum. Although the potion is still the preferred type of single-use magic item, mastic blocks are becoming increasingly common in the eastern Tribunals. Mastic does not spill, like potions or powders, nor does it spoil, like magical biscuits or cakes. The one disadvantage of chewing gum as a delivery mechanism is that the magus needs to swallow all of the gum's juice before the effect commences, so the mastic blocks need to be small enough to swallow, without chewing, in emergency situations.

Those magi who create mastic blocks using the potion creation rules have a new duration available to them, "while chewing", which substitutes for the Concentration duration. It does not require a concentration roll to chew a mastic block while performing other actions. Chewed mastic blocks cannot last longer than fifteen minutes, although a magus whose mastic block is losing its flavour can chew a fresh one to keep the effect active without an interruption.

Although mastic is insufficiently powerful to distort Hermetic magic, swallowing it destroys disease spirits with Might scores of 15 or less, if they affect the stomach or the lungs. Galen thought it particularly effective in the case of those spitting up blood, and Mastic of Virtue cures pneumonic haemorrhaging, if caused by mundane means or a spirit with a Might of 30 or less. Cures prevent the spirit causing further damage, but any damage already incurred must be healed naturally, and the cure does not prevent the accrual of Decreptitude from particularly serious cases.

### Chronology

Since mastic can only be found on Chios, this makes it sufficiently valuable that it attracts the attention of outsiders. Most raids have resulted in brief occupation of the island, and had few long-term consequences. One exception is the Venetian

#### Addition to the Form and Effect Table:

##### - Mastic

*Mastic collected from the trunk of the tree*

Stomach or lungs +6

Breath +4

Teeth +2

*Mastic collected from the ground*

Stomach or lungs +3

Breath +2

Teeth +1

*Mastic incense*

Lungs: +6

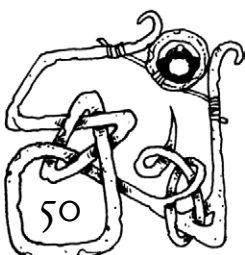
*Mastic varnish*

Preserve colour: +3

*Mastic wood*

Teeth +3

Breath +2



invasion of 1124, after which the relics of Saint Issidoros were removed to Venice, where they remain in 1220. After Constantinople was conquered in 1204, Chios was claimed as part of the extensive personal demesne of the Latin Emperor Baldwin, but he was never able to exercise that authority. In practice it became part of the Nicean successor state briefly, and then was conquered by the Venetians. In 1220 their hold is tenuous.

### Plot Hook 1

The mastic supply comes from a group of villages along the southern coastline of the island. The farmers from these villages band together and form a price-fixing cabal.

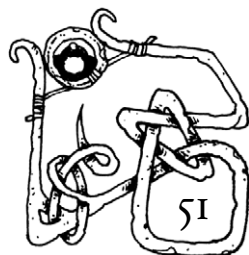
Prices of mastic double, and as it wasn't cheap to begin with, this makes mastic smuggling a lucrative and dangerous business. When a Redcap is caught smuggling a pound of mastic, and sentenced to have his left ear amputated, do the characters intervene? Do they assist the new mastic smuggling rings that spring up on Chios, and how do they deal with the shadowy group who control the mastic cabal? Do they switch sides when the mastic producers become

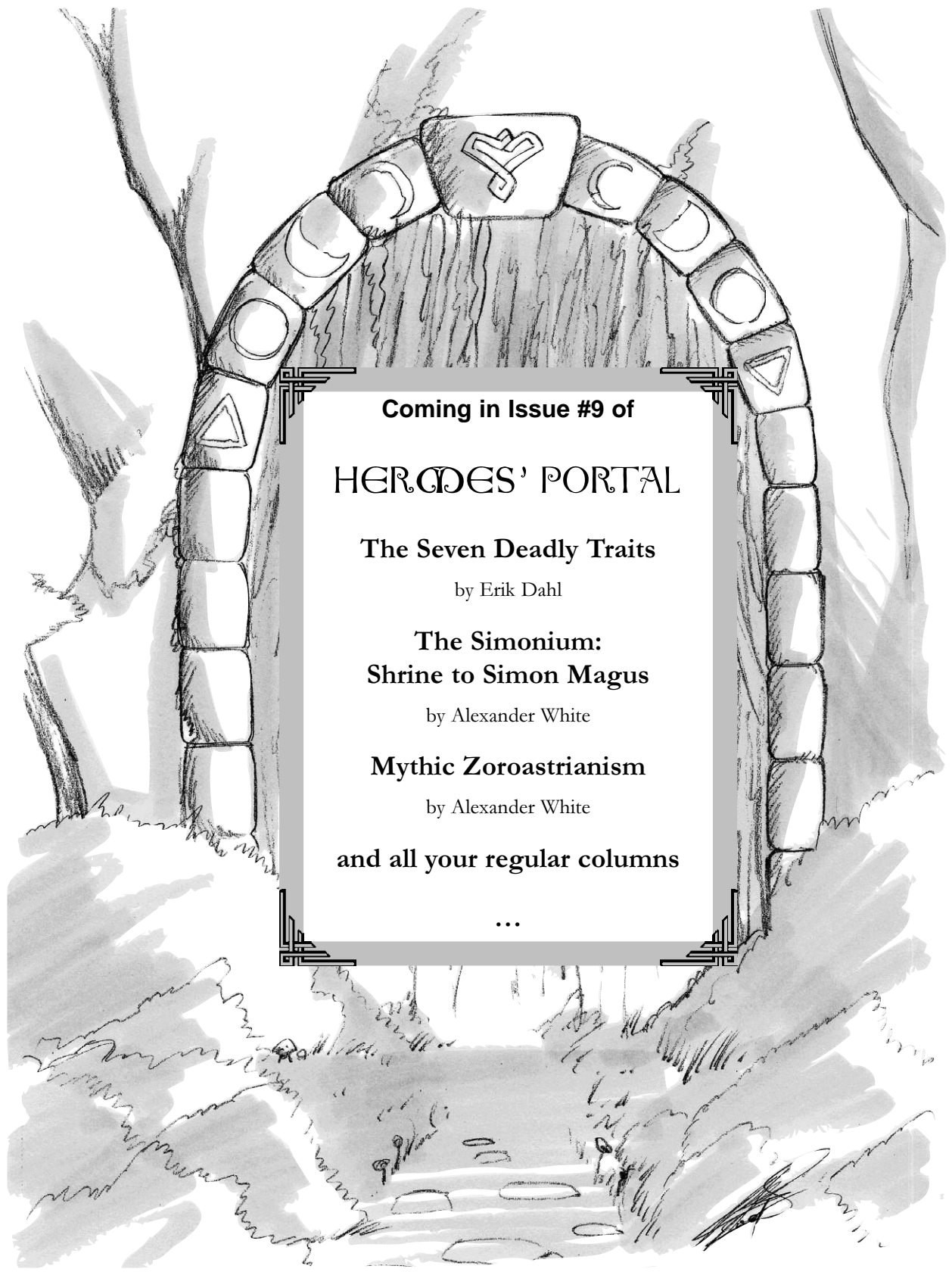
rich enough to buy magic items, or do they deal with legitimate and clandestine sellers alike?

### Plot Hook 2

Mastic production has been falling off for years, much to the alarm of its users, both Hermetic and mundane. The player characters discover that a group of mastic farmers are planning to re-enact the martyrdom of Issidoros. Who gave the farmers this idea? If the farmers do ritually sacrifice a person to the mastic trees, will it ensure bountiful crops, or will Issidoros, patron of the mastic, withdraw his presence entirely? Can the characters find the cause of the crop failures, and then prevent the sacrifice of the local priest?

One solution is to bring the relics of Issidoros back to Chios. This is difficult, because they are kept in the Doge's palace in Venice. Venice is a special city for Hermetic magi, with chapter houses of most of the Roman Tribunal's covenants active in city affairs. Even if they steal the relics, they discover that somehow the skull has been misplaced. It is within the Doge's palace, but they have to locate it separately, using non-magical means.





Coming in Issue #9 of

## HEROES' PORTAL

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